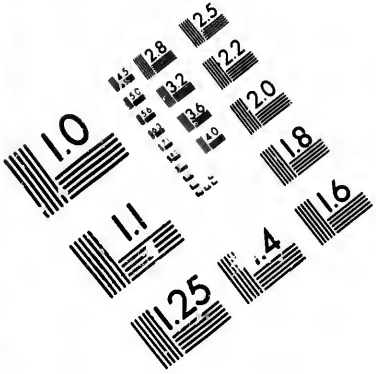

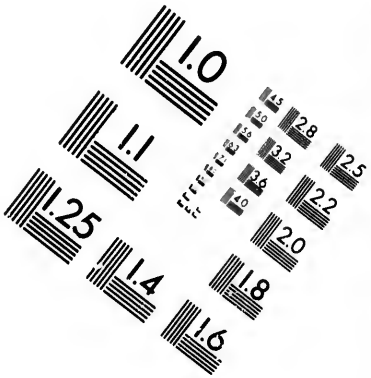

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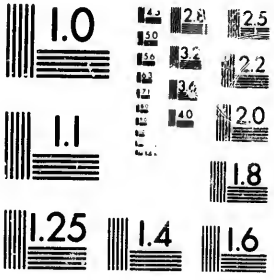

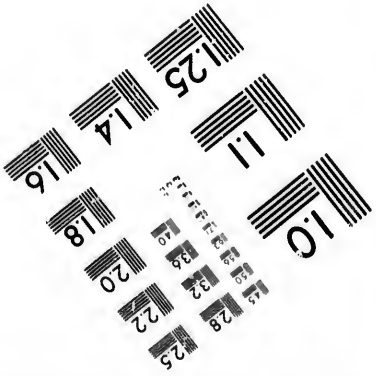

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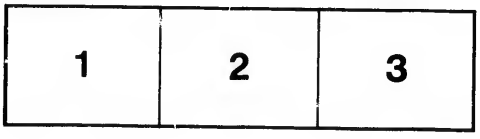

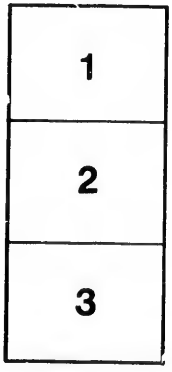

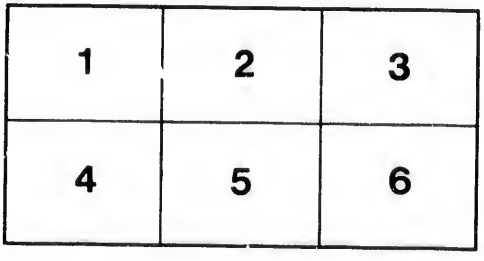

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PRELIMINARY STAGES
OF THE PEACE OF AMIENS:

THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE FROM THE FALL OF THE DIRECTORY TO THE DEATH OF EMPEROR PAUL OF RUSSIA, NOVEMBER 1799–MARCH 1801.

BY

H. M. BOWMAN, B.A.

PREFACE.

This essay was first submitted in English to the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Leipsic as a doctoral dissertation, but the Faculty felt unable wholly to suspend its regulation that such dissertations should be submitted in German. On condition however that the entire thesis should appear in English the Faculty consented to accept a portion of it—the introduction and first chapter—in German as sufficient for the purpose of the examination. This portion accordingly has appeared in German (under the title "*Die englisch-französische Friedensverhandlung, Dec. 1799—Jan. 1800*") and I now avail myself of the opportunity to publish the whole in the History Series of University of Toronto Studies.

It is with diffidence that a writer lays his first effort, however unpretentious, before the public, and to this feeling I am not insensible, but in the present instance no choice is left me in the matter. The subject may seem not altogether untimely. It treats of the relations of France and Great Britain when the French were in temporary possession of Egypt at the opening of this century. The issue then raised in the Levant soon fell into abeyance and lay dormant for some eighty years, but it has been revived in our own day by the British occupation of Egypt, and the entire question has taken a great step toward solution by events still fresh in the memory of all.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Marcks and Dr. Salomon of Leipsic for a kindly interest in my work and welfare at that University; to Mr. Hubert Hall of the Public Record Office, London, for his courtesy and assistance while I was

collecting material in the British archives; and to Professor Wrong and Mr. H. H. Langton of the University of Toronto for assistance in preparing the essay finally for the press. I should however be guilty of an injustice, did I merely include in this general category Professor Buchholz of Leipsic, at whose instance I attempted this essay. In it as well as in all my work he has taken a lively and judicious interest, withholding neither praise nor censure, where he felt them deserved. I know not whether I was worthy of the one, but I sought to profit by the other, and I trust that he will remember me as a faithful and a willing pupil.

H. M. B.

University of Toronto,
December, 1899.

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Chapter III.

Great Britain and France from October 1800 to the death of Emperor Paul of Russia, March 1801.

Appendices.

ABBREVIATIONS, ETC.

(1) *Corr. Nap.*—Correspondance de Napoléon I.

(2) *Parl. Hist.*—Parliamentary History of Great Britain (Hansard.)

(3) P. R. O.—Public Record Office.

(4) *Papers of this Negotiation* (in 2nd Chapter,)—The Papers on the Negotiation with France, submitted to Parliament on the 13th November, 1800, and printed in *Parl. Hist.* vol. 35, col. 540 *et seq.* They are numbered consecutively from 1 to 47.

(5) Citations from vol. 30 of Bonaparte's Correspondence refer to the page of the volume; in other volumes the reference is to the number of the letter, not to the page.

(6) Citations from Stanhope's Life of Pitt are from the edition of 1879; those from Bignon, *Histoire de France jusqu'à la paix de Tilsit*, are from the Brussels edition, 1836.

INTRODUCTION.

NEGOTIATIONS AT PARIS AND LILLE, 1796 AND 1797.

§1. Great Britain and France in the wars of the French Revolution.

In the period of the French Revolution the enmity which had subsisted for centuries between France and Great Britain developed an unprecedented intensity. The end of the seventeenth century found France in a state of weakness and disintegration, caused by the wars of Louis XIV; the eighteenth century was marked by a steady decline of her power both in and out of Europe. With this decline of France was associated closely the rise of Great Britain, whose enormous colonial expansion in the eighteenth century was secured chiefly at the cost of France. The *rôle* once played by the latter passed definitely to her rival in 1763, and not even the loss, serious in itself, of the American colonies undermined the predominance of Great Britain. Commercially, the lost British colonies were still dependent upon the mother country; Britain's trade with India was steadily increasing; she threatened to monopolize even the markets of Europe.

The Revolution in France first disturbed this situation. In spite of the excesses attending it, the Revolution effected a national rejuvenescence, and with fresh strength and energy France renewed the old struggle with Great Britain. The position which the monarchy had lost, the Jacobins and Bonaparte sought to recover.

The conflict arising from this situation lasted upwards of twenty years, and was marked by various abortive attempts at pacification. In 1796 and 1797 unsuccessful negotiations

were opened at Paris and Lille. The Peace of Amiens in 1802 was itself in reality but a truce. I purpose here cursorily to review the preliminary efforts at Paris and Lille, and to discuss fully the circumstances which led to the later formal peace.

* * * * * * *

§2. The negotiations at Paris and Lille, 1796 and 1797.

On the 8th of December, 1795, a message from King George III informed the Lords and Commons at Westminster that the crisis in Paris[1] had resulted in a government with which he was prepared to conclude a general peace whenever it could be effected on just and suitable terms.[2] Such a declaration, in itself nothing remarkable among warring nations, had its significance in this contest. Hitherto Great Britain had refused to recognize the work of the Revolution in France; now she accepted the newly established Directory as the *de facto* government of the Republic, and declared her readiness to negotiate with it. Peace had become a possibility Little more than this can however be said. The way to negotiation was opened, but the efforts of Great Britain to obtain peace still remained long without result, and this ill success was partially due to her own attitude. Her overture of March, 1796, directed to the French Minister at Berne, invited discourtesy on the part of the French by the systematic substitution of "France" for "Government of France," even in places where the first was a ridiculous expression and the second the only proper one.[3] The French reply bluntly questioned Great Britain's sincerity and so the negotiations ended. As early as September of the same year Great Britain took steps to renew them, but her advances, although in this instance courteous in expression and correct

[1] Crisis of the 13th Vendémiaire (5 October, 1795) leading to the installation of the Directory on the 5th Brumaire, IV (26 October, 1795).

[2] *Parl. Hist.*, Vol. 32, col. 569.

[3] Note from Wickham to Barthelemi, 8 March, 1796, and from Barthelemi to Wickham, 26 March, 1796, *Parl. Hist.*, Vol. 32, cols. 1407-1408.

in form, met at first with a rude rebuff which Pitt, in order to attain his object, had simply to ignore.[4] In the end, negotiations were opened at Paris in October, 1796; they terminated on the 20th of the following December in an order of the Directory to the British Plenipotentiary, Lord Malmesbury, to quit Paris and France forthwith.

Little blame can be attached either to Great Britain or to France for the ill success of these negotiations. The obstacle to a settlement was the situation in the Austrian Netherlands, and upon this question the difference between the two governments was irreconcilable. In the course of the war the possessions of the Emperor in the Netherlands had been overrun by the French, who had claimed and organized these provinces as an integral part of the Republic. For centuries, however, it had been a cardinal point in England's policy to prevent the absorption of this commercial and industrial centre by France. Great Britain was, moreover, at the time bound to Austria by an alliance guaranteeing the integrity of the Austrian dominions, and the Emperor, while willing enough in general to exchange his distant possessions for a compensation in territory nearer his hereditary states, was at the moment opposed to a negotiation between France and Great Britain, and found an easy means to prevent it by insisting on the literal fulfilment of the guarantee.[5] In this matter, then, Great Britain had no choice. Her obligations and her own interests alike required her to separate the Netherlands from France. The French, however, were in secure possession, and were determined to remain, and Great

[4] Letter from Grenville to Jarlsberg, 6 September, 1796; note from Grenville to the Directory, 6 September, 1796; letter from Jarlsberg to Grenville, 23 September, 1796; letter from Koenemann to Jarlsberg, 19 September, 1796; letter from Grenville to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Paris, 24 September, 1796;—*Parl. Hist.*, Vol. 32, cols. 1409-1411.

[5] Extract from a despatch from Eden, British Ambassador at Vienna, to Malmesbury, 22 November, 1796, enclosed in a despatch from Malmesbury to Grenville, 3 December, 1796—London, P. R. O., *France*, Vol. 602.

Britain was without the means to expel them. The negotiations could end only in rupture.

I shall not discuss the question whether Pitt entered upon these negotiations solely with a view to peace or from a desire merely to force from the Directory a refusal which should strengthen his government at home. It is the opinion of an historian, whose impartiality on this question is above suspicion, that Pitt aimed at neither object exclusively, but at both,[6] and this view is confirmed by a letter of Pitt to his brother, in which he expresses the belief that an effort at peace would relieve the financial difficulties of his government.[7] "If we can persuade the people," he writes in substance, "that we have done enough for a general peace, the continuation of the war, even with the addition of Spain to our enemies, should not embarrass us."

In attempting to criticize the conduct of the Directory in these negotiations, especially their abrupt dismissal of Malmesbury from Paris, one must distinguish sharply between Pitt and his agents. Malmesbury, not Pitt, was the point of contact with the Directory, and it is but too evident that Malmesbury was from the beginning uncertain of Pitt's object in the mission,[8] and that he finally concluded to effect a rupture of which the blame should rest with France.[9] Malmesbury gained this end but too completely for his own purpose. The very fullness of his success aroused suspicion of his object in the negotiation, and thus the rupture rather weakened than strengthened Pitt in Great Britain. Instead of relief to the finances there came a crisis, and in February, 1797, the Bank of England was forced to suspend specie pay-

[6] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, IV, 327.

[7] Letter from Pitt to his brother, Lord Chatham, 4 Sept., 1796. Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, II, 156.

[8] Despatch from Malmesbury to Pitt, 11 Nov., 1796. Malmesbury, *Diaries, &c.*, III, 305.

[9] Letter from Malmesbury to Canning, 27 Nov., 1796. Malmesbury, *Diaries, &c.*, III, 322.

ments. A mutiny in the fleet, which was quelled with difficulty, aggravated the situation in England, and meanwhile the military successes of Bonaparte in Italy forced the Emperor in April, 1797, to the separate peace of Leoben.

Great Britain, in difficulty at home and isolated abroad, resorted once more to a negotiation, which opened at Lille in July, 1797. Malmesbury again was the plenipotentiary, but upon this occasion Pitt made it clear to him that he must seek, not a creditable rupture, but anything short of a dishonourable peace.[10] Malmesbury devoted himself to his mission with skill and with fidelity to the views of Pitt, which he appears to have shared and certainly followed,[11] against the prejudices even of his immediate chief, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Grenville. Grenville strongly opposed the negotiation from the outset, because the Directory, in the face of the Treaty of Leoben, which provided for a general congress of the belligerents, limited the objects of the meeting to the arrangement of a separate peace between France and Great Britain.[12]

The conditions of peace offered by Malmesbury at Lille in the name of his government are dangerously near the limit of concession which Pitt had allowed him. The Republic was to remain in undisturbed possession of her conquests in the Netherlands and in Italy; she was also to receive back her lost colonies. Against this undue expansion of France in Europe Great Britain reserved for herself an inadequate compensation out of her conquests from Spain and Holland,

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[10] Malmesbury, *Diaries, &c.*, III, 369; letter from Pitt to Malmesbury, 11 Sept., 1797, *ibid.*, III, 554.

[11] Malmesbury, *Diaries, &c.*, III, 369 and 516; letter from Malmesbury to Canning, 29 Aug., 1797, *ibid.*, III, 517; letter from Malmesbury to Pitt, 18 Sept., 1797, *ibid.*, III, 576.

[12] Treaty of Leoben, (18 April, 1797), Article 4, De Clercq, *Recueil des Traités de la France*, I, 319; Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, II, 217 and 218; Grenville, in the debate in the Lords upon this Negotiation, 8 Nov., 1797, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, col. 980 ("*defensive* peace" erroneously for "*definitive* peace"); also Malmesbury, *Diaries, &c.*, III, 369, 516, and (4 Oct., 1797) 595, and letter from Malmesbury to Canning, 29 Aug., 1797, *ibid.*, III, 517.

namely, Trinidad, the Cape, and Ceylon. A settlement upon these terms deserved and seemed to be well within reach of success, but in the end the alternative of peace or war was not decided at Lille. The entire question was involved in the party struggle progressing at Paris, which after months of intrigue ended in the crisis of the 18th of Fructidor (4th of September, 1797). With the aid of Bonaparte the revolutionary party prevailed in this crisis, and their victory meant a rupture at Lille.

A change of *personnel* in the French plenipotentiaries was the first indication at Lille of the altered spirit prevailing in Paris. The end was soon reached.[13] Malmesbury at his first conference with the new plenipotentiaries on the 15th of September was called upon to say whether his powers enabled him to restore the conquests made by Great Britain during the war without exception—those from France as well as those from the allies of France. The constitution and treaties of the Republic, it was avowed, required that this should be the basis of the negotiation. A similar claim had been made in July, but was promptly rejected by Malmesbury, and France had since tacitly and by implication abandoned it. Malmesbury now rejected it again, but he was at once summoned, in case his powers did not cover the required basis, to depart to his Court within twenty-four hours in order to secure others which did. The affront to Great Britain involved in this demand ranks perhaps with the gravest ever offered to an enemy as yet unsubdued. The purpose evidently was to end the negotiation. Still Malmesbury requested another interview, and at this last conference on the 17th of September he strove, with a due regard for the dignity of his office and for the honour of the country which he represented, to alter the resolution taken by the French plenipotentiaries. The effort was vain.

[13] For the closing incidents of this negotiation see the despatch from Malmesbury to Grenville, 17 Sept., 1797; Malmesbury, *Diaries, &c.*, III, 561; the same despatch is printed also in *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, col. 949.

§3. Bonaparte and the rupture at Lille

The rupture of this negotiation and Bonaparte's share in the crisis which led to it, together form an event of prime importance. Bonaparte at this moment became the great exponent of tendencies which were rife in France at the time and had governed her policy for centuries. Henceforth he makes the struggle with Great Britain his life-work. As early as August, 1797, a casual utterance of Bonaparte's shows how thoroughly he was imbued with the idea that the "destruction of England" was the natural and necessary aim of France.[14] Later in the same year he traces clearly the lines of this policy. "Austria," he writes, in substance, in his defence of the Treaty of Campo-Formio,[15] "is fallen, nor was she ever a danger to us. Our real enemy is England. The French Republic must either destroy the English Monarchy or expect to be destroyed by it. Let us devote ourselves to our navy and overthrow England. That done, Europe will be at our feet." From the task which Bonaparte here set himself, he never really swerved. Hereafter, wherever he is—in Egyptian deserts or on the plains of Lombardy, in Spain, in Germany, or even in remotest Russia, there lies behind the special object of the moment an unvarying resolve, to reach and destroy his insular opponent.

While these tendencies were decisive in the counsels of France, peace could not be hoped for. In the closing days at Lille, Malmesbury and even the plenipotentiaries with whom he had to deal were in reality but helpless spectators, while France, under the influence of a traditional policy which here concentrated itself in the person of her greatest leader, was entering upon a new phase of the struggle with her hereditary foe.

[14] *Corr. Nap.*, III, 2103, 16 August, 1797.
[15] *Corr. Nap.*, III, 2307, 18 October, 1797.

CHAPTER I.

BONAPARTE'S OVERTURES OF PEACE, DECEMBER, 1799, AND JANUARY, 1800.

§1. Effect in Great Britain of the rupture at Lille.

The rupture of the negotiation at Lille involved Great Britain in humiliation abroad but brought her advantage at home. It convinced the English people that the hope of conciliation which they had cherished was vain and that their national existence was at stake in the war with France. The French Directory could have done the Government of Great Britain no better service.[16]

Pitt was now established in a position never again called in question. The strength which his ministry drew from the impolitic diplomacy of the Directory at Lille became apparent on the opening of Parliament in November. The Address of Thanks in reply to the Speech from the Throne was adopted in the Lords and Commons without division,[17] and later a joint address upon the unsuccessful negotiations was adopted in both Houses, also without dissent.[18] In the debates upon these addresses the leaders of the regular Opposition did not appear in either House.[19] In the Lords, of non-supporters of the Government, Lord Lansdowne alone spoke upon the Address of Thanks and the tenor of his speech was as much

[16] Letter from Grenville to his brother, the Marquis of Buckingham, 20 September, 1797, Buckingham, *Memoirs of Court and Cabinets of George III.*, II., 383: (On the rupture at Lille) "I really think in the manner of doing the thing, the Directory have done everything they could to play our game."

[17] Debates in the Lords and Commons on the Address of Thanks, 2 November, 1797, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, cols. 857 and 886.

[18] Debate on negotiation with France, in the Lords, 8 November, in the Commons, 10 November, 1797; *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, cols. 979 and 987.

[19] Except the Duke of Norfolk, who, as hereditary Earl Marshal, could not absent himself from the opening of Parliament. See debate in question, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, col. 880.

despair as disapproval.[20] He was not a member of the regular Opposition, led by Fox in the Commons; they, convinced of Pitt's sincerity in the negotiation,[21] and unable to excuse the conduct of France, absented themselves from the debates. The ministers in consequence found themselves strangely forced into the *rôle* of these absent opponents in seeking to moderate the attitude of over-zealous supporters who advocated relentless warfare upon republican government in France. Earl Fitzwilliam in the Lords and Earl Temple in the Commons were emphatically warned by Grenville and Pitt[22] that the form of government prevailing in France was in itself no concern of Great Britain; the ministry preferred indeed the restoration of monarchy, but the survival of the Republic would be no hindrance to peace on suitable terms. This attitude is convincing evidence of the improved position of the ministry. Fox in fact gave up the struggle; with him, absence from the House became habitual: his party, already weak in numbers, was demoralized afresh, and his influence broken. The election of 1798 returned the old majority in favour of Pitt and his colleagues.

§2. Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt; his return. The consulate.

Internal unity enabled Great Britain the better to overcome the dangers of her isolated position after the treaty of peace between France and Austria at Campo-Formio. Bonaparte had effected this peace in order personally to conduct an invasion of England; on investigation, however, he found the plan impracticable,[23] and relinquishing it he promptly sailed

[20] See debate in question, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, cols. 872 to 879.

[21] Debate in the Commons on the Assessed Taxes Bill, 4 January, 1798, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, where both Sheridan (col. 1197) and Fox (col. 1252) admit the sincerity of Pitt in the negotiation at Lille.

[22] Grenville in debate in the Lords on the Address of Thanks, 2 November, 1797, *Parl. Hist.*, vol 33, col. 871, and Pitt in debate in the Commons on the negotiations with France, 10 November, 1797, *Parl. Hist.*, vol 33, cols. 1000-1001.

[23] Bonaparte to the Executive Directory, 23 Feb., 1798, *Corr. Nap.*, III, 2419: "L'expédition d'Angleterre ne parait donc être possible que l'année prochaine; et alors il est probable que les embarras qui surviendront sur le continent s'y opposeront. Le vrai moment de se préparer à cette expédition est perdu peut-être pour toujours."

to Egypt, in 1798, with a view to establishing himself firmly in that country, and ultimately threatening the position of Great Britain in India. This hope was also dashed by the destruction of the French fleet at Aboukir, and only as a refugee did Bonaparte return to France in 1799. He was, however, welcomed eagerly. In his absence Suvoroff, with the forces of the Second Coalition, had expelled the Republican armies from Italy in the campaign of 1799, and France was facing the danger of an invasion. Her internal disorder contributed to a widespread desire of peace, and instinctively the people recognized in Bonaparte the one who could best secure it for them. Within a month of his landing at Fréjus the crisis of the 18th of Brumaire (9th of November, 1799) placed him in control of the government of France.

§3. Bonaparte's overtures of peace, December, 1799.

The rump of the Five Hundred in formally committing the provisional administration of France and the reorganization of her government to Bonaparte and his fellow consuls[24] laid upon them the specific duty of negotiating an 'honourable peace.' That Bonaparte suffered himself to be influenced by this legislative body, which had just been violently dissolved and never again came into existence, it is impossible to conceive. Nevertheless the resolution adopted by it is remarkable, inasmuch as it is the concrete expression of a feeling which had assisted Bonaparte to power. France desired peace, and Bonaparte was expected to obtain it; little as he might regard the directions of his fallen predecessors, he paid strict attention to the wishes of the nation itself. It was therefore natural that one of Bonaparte's first official acts was designed to meet, at least in appearance, the universal desire of his countrymen for peace. On the very day of his formal entrance upon office as First Consul, he prepared overtures of peace to be despatched to London and Vienna.[25]

[24] On the night of the 18th of Brumaire, (9 Nov., 1799). See Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 569.

[25] Bonaparte to the King of Great Britain, &c., and Bonaparte to the Emperor, both letters of 25 Dec., 1799, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4445 and 4446.

Bonaparte's real object in these overtures is a debatable question. The common view is that they were but diplomatic feints intended to represent the First Consul before Europe, especially before France, as the champion of peace, his opponents meanwhile bearing the odium of a campaign which he himself expected and even desired.[26] There is much to encourage this suspicion. The outward form of the overtures lends countenance to it, and it is corroborated by the curt rejection of Bonaparte's offer in London, as well as by his brilliant success in the struggle which his enemies thus forced upon him. This view, once fairly started, found general acceptance at the hands of historians partial and impartial, until in our day it has acquired something of the strength and authority of a tradition. I wish to combat it. Although Bonaparte himself at St. Helena denied his sincerity in these overtures,[27] I maintain and hope to establish the contrary. In a subsequent portion of this chapter the question will be examined in some detail; here it will be necessary, *first*, to sketch the general situation at the moment; *secondly*, to describe the course and fate of the overtures themselves.

§4. The general situation with regard to peace. Bonaparte's need of peace. His limitations in securing it.

At Bonaparte's accession to power in France two difficulties in her relations with foreign powers awaited solution, the continental war with Austria and the naval war with Great Britain. Apparently, if viewed from the standpoint of France, the two form but one question, but in reality they are distinct.

[26] Bignon, *Histoire de France depuis le 18 Brumaire jusqu' à la paix de Tilsit*, pp. 13 and 16 (It is noteworthy that this writer, whose authority is not so much that of an historian as that of a contemporary French diplomatist in the service of Bonaparte, wavers in his adherence to the prevailing view. Apparently he is unwilling to give up the idea that Bonaparte desired peace: see p. 13, "Que veut donc le Premier Consul? ou obtenir la paix, ou frapper les esprits en France," and p. 16, "C'était donc répondre à ses intérêts, peut-être à son secret désir, que de rejeter ses propositions"); Lefebvre, *Histoire des Cabinets de l'Europe, 1800-1815*, I, 35 and 39; Thiers, *Consulat et l'Empire*, I, 186; Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 588-589 and 600-602; Häusser, *Deutsche Geschichte*, II, 276; Lanfrey, *Napoleon I*, II, 57 and 58; Fournier, *Napoleon I*, I, 189-191; Oncken, *Zeitalter der Revolution, des Kaiserreichs und der Befreiungskriege*, II, 44 and 45.

[27] *Corr. Nap.*, XXX, pp. 491-494.

The war with Austria threatened France directly, and was, accordingly, Bonaparte's nearest danger; that with Great Britain brought no immediate peril to his government, but in the Mediterranean it was creating a situation which would permanently cripple his world-policy. As to its object, that policy continued unchanged. Bonaparte's purpose was still to overcome Great Britain, although for the second time he now saw himself forced to alter the means whereby he hoped to effect this. The attempt to attack her by way of Egypt had failed, and the partial success with which the expedition had opened, involved Bonaparte in a peculiar difficulty. He had expelled the former rulers of Malta and Egypt apparently but to open the way for Great Britain to secure the prize. Without provocation Great Britain would at that time scarcely have thought of interfering either in Malta or in Egypt, but now she was on the point of expelling the French from both and of securing at least Malta for herself. Bonaparte, since his flight to France, was no longer able personally to intervene, and while in the case of Egypt the alliance between Turkey and Great Britain manifestly would debar the latter from confiscating this possession of the Sultan after reconquering it from France, the case of Malta was different. Malta had no legitimate owner. Bonaparte himself, by seizing the island on his way to Egypt in 1798, had given the dying Order of the Knights of St. John a stroke from which it never recovered, and apart from a not too excessive regard for the illegitimate claims of the Russian Emperor to the Grand Mastership of the Order, which could scarcely be said to exist, there was nothing to keep Great Britain from converting this fortress into a second Gibraltar.

Against the two-fold danger from Austria and Great Britain Bonaparte was forced to take an immediate stand. In order to maintain his position in France he must, either at once by skilful diplomacy or later after a successful campaign, secure from Austria a peace upon more or less favourable terms. But

as against Great Britain there was not this alternative. In order not to cripple his policy permanently, he must anticipate the capitulation of Malta by an *immediate* peace with its besiegers. The French in Malta were under close blockade; they would presently have to choose between starvation and surrender, and Bonaparte who had left both garrison and supplies in the fortress in 1798 knew their situation tolerably well.[28] His difficulty here is illustrated by the similar, though not identical position of affairs in Egypt, especially by his farewell letter to General Kleber,[29] the unwilling successor to his command in that country. This letter directed Kleber to maintain himself as long as possible by force, but if his position became untenable, to begin a negotiation with Turkey for the restoration of Egypt; in that case, however, he was to arrange that the actual evacuation should not take place till the signature of a general peace, or at least not till the treaty of capitulation should be ratified at Paris. In Egypt, where the French position depended upon a more or less determined defence, this plan to keep Great Britain from obtaining a footing was, perhaps, feasible; but in Malta, where the fate of the garrison was a question of food, Bonaparte's only hope was in a general peace, speedily effected, which should include an arrangement with Great Britain for the surrender of Malta to some neutral power. His letter to Kleber shows that he had such a peace under consideration. In seeking peace with Great Britain, Bonaparte, being helpless at sea, was restricted to purely diplomatic resources, and the only question was whether he should resort to these at once or after a struggle with Austria. No advantage in delay was apparent. A victory over Austria would strengthen him immensely upon the continent, without, however, improving his position at sea, and, at best, the winning of it would require time, which, as the event proved, he could not afford. Few campaigns have been quicker in

[28] Note from Talleyrand to Panin, 26 August, 1800, Tratschevski, *Russia and France*, I, 3 (Paper No. 2).

[29] Letter from Bonaparte to Kleber, 22 August, 1798, *Corr. Nap.*, V, 4374.

execution or more decisive in result than that ending in Marengo; but victory came too late. While the subsequent negotiations were still in their preliminary stage, Malta fell, and, as Bonaparte probably anticipated and certainly feared, Great Britain once in possession would not surrender the fortress, in spite even of her pledge in the Treaty of Amiens. She holds it to this day.

Manifestly, the situation in the Mediterranean called for immediate peace. Still Bonaparte dared not simply yield to this pressure. The Five Hundred had required an "honourable" peace, and while the French people, depressed by their reverses in 1799, might for the moment have quietly submitted to humiliating terms, their inward resentment would in the end have proved dangerous to the government responsible in negotiating them. It is, perhaps, not difficult to perceive the distinction which the average Frenchman would have made between "honour" and "dishonour" in the settlement of peace at this time, and it is certain that the line between the two would have been drawn with but little reference to the needs of Bonaparte's policy in the Mediterranean. Revolutionary France was penetrated with the traditional enmity of the nation towards Great Britain, but she expected the fight to be in the Channel and in the Netherlands, not in Egypt and the Indies.[30] Bonaparte himself by an utterance in a somewhat suspicious connection has shown—what in reality needed no proof—that in the settlement of peace the Netherlands question was the tenderest point in French public opinion. In the same passage of his writings at St. Helena in which he denies having desired negotiation or peace, Napoleon, in ill-concealed contradiction to this denial, enumerates the advantages which negotiation would have brought Great Britain and Austria had they chosen to accept his overtures[31] at

[30] See the despatch from Malmesbury to Grenville, 28 November, 1796, Malmesbury, *Diaries, etc.*, III, 330, *et seq.* especially pp. 334 and 335.

[31] *Corr. Nap.*, XXX, pp. 491 and 492.

the time. According to him, Austria would have become the paramount power in Italy, France would have evacuated Holland and Switzerland, Egypt would have been restored to the Porte, Malta to the Order of St. John, and finally, Great Britain, by retaining the Cape and Ceylon, would have secured the keys to India.[32] To this statement one may attach what credit one will; it shows, at least, that Bonaparte, when he made it, in looking back over the past, regarded the surrender of the Netherlands[33] at the time of his overture as an impossibility. The "natural boundaries" which France had sought so long, and which the Revolution had secured, Bonaparte, who was the Revolution's heir and claimed to be its consummator,[34] dared not again surrender. It is in this connection that Bonaparte's proclamation to the army, which is of the same date as his overtures to London and Vienna, appears in its true significance. It is a warning to his enemies that he will not shrink from war in order to obtain a suitable peace.[35]

§5. The course of the overtures. Great Britain rejects them. The grounds of this rejection.

Bonaparte's proposals were despatched from Paris on the 26th of December, 1799. An introductory note from Talleyrand to Grenville accompanied them, but the overture itself was a personal one, in which Bonaparte ignored the existence of the Ministry and addressed himself to the King.[36] In other

[32] It is worth notice that Bonaparte, while confirming Great Britain in the possession of the Cape, and thus closing one way to India upon himself, wishes to have Malta returned to the Order, in order that the other, which was the shorter and for France an especially convenient road to the East, should not also fall into the hands of his rival.

[33] Here and elsewhere in this essay the expression "Netherlands" is used uniformly of the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium), never of *Holland*.

[34] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4422, 15 December, 1799.

[35] Bonaparte aux soldats Français, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4449, 25 December, 1799.

[36] Bonaparte to the King of Great Britain, etc., and Talleyrand to Grenville, both letters of 5 Nivôse, VIII (26 Dec., 1799), *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, col. 1197. The date given in the *Parl. Hist.*, 5 Nivôse, VIII, agrees with the originals (London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 612), but this date—5 Nivôse, VIII—is the 26th Dec., 1799, not the 25th, as given in the *Parl. Hist.* Bonaparte's letter is an exact copy of the *draft* in *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4445 (4 Nivôse, VIII, 25 Dec., 1799).

European monarchies this course, though unusual, was not inadmissible—Bonaparte's contemporary overture to Austria was also addressed to the Emperor[37]—but a like step in London was more than an ordinary departure from custom. The decision even of questions of foreign policy, which in continental monarchies is peculiarly the province of the sovereign, rests in Great Britain not with the King, but with the Cabinet. Bonaparte in acting contrary to this principle violated British constitutional usage. One can scarcely suppose that he did this in ignorance;[38] he did it rather with a deliberate purpose, which is tolerably clear from the overture itself. This consisted of philanthropic platitudes; Bonaparte regretted the sufferings entailed by the war, expressed his belief that the King shared his own pity for a stricken world, and indirectly invited him to take part in a "second attempt"[39] at a general peace.[40] The letter is plainly theatrical. In name addressed to the King, in reality it is addressed to France, and for this reason, in spite of its courtesy and lofty sentiment it has little significance as a sincere overture. It deserves in fact the criticism of Pitt, that it contained nothing specific either as to basis or terms of treaty, or mode of negotiation;[41] and even the modern opinion of Sybel that Bonaparte knew that he could never begin a serious negotiation in this fashion, is justifiable.[42] But these faults in the overture, which none will deny, do not in themselves prove

[37] *Vertrauliche Briefe Thuguts*, edited by Vivenot, II, 441, Note 61.

[38] If one may believe a secret agent of the British Government in Paris. Bonaparte took the step against the advice of Talleyrand and of the rest of the French Ministry. (Letter from Perron, 5 May, 1800, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 612.)

[39] The first attempt is of course the Peace of Campo Formio.

[40] A general peace through separate negotiations, as will appear by Bonaparte's second letter in these overtures- not through a Congress of the belligerent powers, such as Great Britain desired.

[41] Letter from Pitt to Addington, 4 Jan., 1800, *Life and Corr. of Lord Sidmouth*, I, 248.

[42] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 588.

insincerity. The overture at best had but slender chances of acceptance, and Bonaparte, fearing though not necessarily desiring its ill-success, might cast it in rhetorical form in order to heighten the effect upon France in the too possible case of its rejection.

Bonaparte, by thus adopting a theatrical tone in his overture, plainly injured its prospect of success. On the other hand it has escaped notice that he made a specific effort to prevent its failure. Through the French banker and senator Perregaux, who had business relations with Lord Auckland, the colleague and confidential friend of Pitt, Bonaparte assured the latter that the French Government really desired peace.[43] In determining Bonaparte's real attitude in the question of peace, this secret communication is of greater weight than the public overture. For, if the overture were but a diplomatic feint which Bonaparte desired should fail of its ostensible object, it is inconceivable that he would deliberately lessen the chances of rejection by a secret communication of the above character. Rather must we assume that Bonaparte wished by it to make good the faults of the official overture. Had he indeed awaited an answer to the *secret*, before sending the *public* overture, he would be open to the suspicion of wishing only to be sure that Great Britain would reject his offers before compromising himself by official steps. It appears however that Perregaux's letter reached Pitt only on the 25th of December, and although Pitt forwarded it to Grenville at

[43] Letter from Pitt to Lord Auckland, 25 Dec. 1799, *Journal and Corr. of Lord Auckland*, IV, 104: "I hope your correspondent's [Perregaux's] assurances on the subject of the '*rentes viageres*' deserve more credit than I can give to those respecting the disposition to peace. I have however thought it best to communicate the letter immediately to Lord Grenville." See also the letter from Auckland to Pitt, 19 Jan., 1800, *ibid.*

Although these letters have been published since 1862, it is not strange that their connection with this question has not been noted. Pitt mentions indeed that he had sent Perregaux's letter to Grenville (the Foreign Secretary); nevertheless one would not suppose that the communication originated with Bonaparte, but for the later (Dec. 1800—Feb. 1801) correspondence between Grenville, Auckland and Perregaux, printed in Appendix B *infra*.

once, the two had barely discussed it on the 30th of December and decided against negotiation, when the official overture itself arrived on the 31st.[44]

The grounds of Pitt's unwillingness to negotiate at this moment are not difficult to discover. The general situation which urged Bonaparte towards peace naturally encouraged Great Britain to continue the war. In Malta and Egypt, in Italy, on the Rhine, and even in France, symptoms of an early collapse of the once powerful Republic seemed apparent. Despatches from Kleber to the Directory which had been intercepted by British vessels in the Mediterranean and forwarded thence to England, had just revealed the hopeless situation which Bonaparte had left behind him in Egypt.[45] In the case of Malta, information equally precise was wanting, but the capitulation of its garrison seemed imminent. Eventually it was even more certain than that of Egypt itself. On the continent the Coalition had just completed an unusually successful campaign, and the British finances, which had improved gradually since the crisis of 1797, were equal to the strain of continuing the contest.[46] Prospects of a successful attack upon France were good. Though the Coalition was weakened by the Tsar's dissatisfaction with Austria, there

[44] Letter from Pitt to Dundas, 31 Dec., 1799, Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, II, 339 also in *Corr. of Lord Cornwallis*, III, 154: " . . . I have now to tell you . . . that to-day has brought us the overture from the Consul in the shape of a letter to the King. . . I think we can have nothing to do but to decline all negotiation at the present moment on the ground that the actual situation of France does not as yet hold out any solid security to be derived from negotiation. . . This is my present view of the subject, and is very conformable to what seemed Grenville's opinion (in a conversation I had with him yesterday before the letter had arrived) as to that of Lord Spencer and Windham, who are the only members of Government I have seen since." Pitt's use of the expression "*the* overture," instead of "*an* overture," shews that Perregaux's letter led him to expect such an offer from the French Government.

[45] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 548-549 and 601.

[46] Debate in the Commons on the Overture from France, 3 Feb., 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, Vol. 34; Pitt (col. 1351): "When we consider the resources and spirit of the country, can any man doubt that if adequate security is not now to be

was reason to hope that he might yet allow Suvoroff and his army to share in the opening campaign; in any case Paul was still on the best of terms with Great Britain. Twenty-five thousand of his troops were wintering in the island of Jersey in the Channel, in preparation for the next campaign, and Pitt was planning to use them in connection with a considerable force of British troops which should land and co-operate with the Royalist insurgents in the west of France.[47] The leaders of this insurgent movement, which was supported by Great Britain with money and arms,[48] had in the previous autumn established themselves sufficiently to negotiate an armistice with the government at Paris, and there seemed reason to hope that they would yet overturn it. On the Rhine and in Italy, Austria, in spite of the threatened withdrawal of Russian support, was prepared to continue the work begun by Suvoroff which if completed would drive the French from Italy and Switzerland and might even compel them to surrender the Netherlands in return for peace; while, on the contrary, if Great Britain at this moment undertook to treat with France, Austria, unable to depend upon Russia and needing a British subsidy in order to continue the contest, would also enter upon a separate negotiation. In this case the Emperor, being being freed of all obligations to consider British interests in the Netherlands, would simply consult his own by ceding these provinces to France in return for suitable compensation elsewhere. In this situation war appeared to be advantageous, negotiation detrimental to Great Britain, and Pitt would have resorted to the latter only if assured that Bonaparte would

obtained by treaty, we have the means of prosecuting the contest without material difficulty or danger, and with a reasonable prospect of completely attaining our object? I need not dwell on the improved state of public credit, on the continually increasing amount of our permanent revenue."

[47] See letters from Pitt to Dundas, 22 Dec., 1799, and 11 Jan., 1800, Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, II, 338 and 340. Also letter from Pitt to Dundas, 31 Dec., 1800, *Corr. of Cornwallis*, III, 154. The letter of 11 Jan. is also in Cornwallis, III, 157.

[48] See Appendix A, *infra*.

yield voluntarily what Great Britain might expect to obtain by a slight effort. Of this there was no guarantee. On the contrary Pitt and his colleagues were doubtful both of the permanence of Bonaparte's power and of his sincerity in negotiation;[49] at best it seemed to them most probable that the Consular government and all its measures would soon disappear together. Accordingly they rejected the overture, but this decision had still to be justified before the public, and the efforts at justification gave a peculiar form to their reply to France.

This reply which was prepared with designed haste, was discussed by the Cabinet on the 2nd of January, submitted at once to the King,[50] and, after receiving its final form on the 3rd,[51] was dated and despatched to Paris on the 4th of Janu-

[49] The best proof of Pitt's distrust is in his letters, to Lord Auckland, 25 Dec., 1799, and to Addington, 4 Jan., 1800, cited on pp. 24-25 above. Apart from these we have only his own and his colleagues' utterances in Parliament. It is difficult to discover Grenville's exact opinion in the matter. In the debate in the Lords on the Overture, 28 Jan., 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, he attacks (col. 1215 *et seq.*) Bonaparte's personal good faith, and questions (col. 1217) whether the Consul, if he desired negotiation at all, would allow it to advance to a peace and not rather break off negotiation as soon as he felt able to renew the war. Later Grenville appears to have gone over wholly to the view that the overture was insincere; see his speech in debate in the Lords on the Address of Thanks, 11 Nov. 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 35, col. 508: "If the noble Lord will contemplate the posture of affairs at that period he will find that the power of Bonaparte was suspended by a fine thread and that his proposition for negotiation was not so much from a desire of peace, as to confirm him in his precarious power." But Grenville's opinion here is affected by the results of the battle of Marengo, the importance of which in its effect upon Bonaparte's position Grenville is in fact emphasizing in this very passage. Had that battle been a French defeat, opponents might have credited Bonaparte with sincerity in his effort to avoid the disaster.

Grenville's idea that Bonaparte perhaps desired a negotiation, but not peace, is emphasized by Pitt and Dundas in the debate in the Commons on the Overture, 3 Feb., 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, cols. 1339 and 1249 respectively.

[50] Grenville to the King, 2 January, 1800, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 612. In submitting the draft of the reply for the King's approval, Grenville recommends haste, "as so speedy an answer will remove all appearance of hesitation."

[51] Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham, 3 January, 1800, Buckingham, *Memoirs of Court and Cabinets of George III.*, III, 4.

ary.[52] From the diplomatic standpoint it was a blunt and even discourteous rejection. Bonaparte had addressed himself to the King, the answer was from minister to minister. Less than this was scarcely to have been expected, but Grenville in a letter accompanying the official note sharpened the implied rebuke by an open censure of Bonaparte's deviation from usage, and a similar strain of reproach and reproof characterizes the official note itself. Bonaparte in his overture professed to regret that the two most enlightened and powerful nations of Europe should sacrifice the tangible blessings of peace to vain ideas of glory. Grenville denied that his country was engaged in any such contest. On the contrary, he maintained, Great Britain was resisting a system which had been a curse to France and to every country to which France had succeeded in extending it, and Great Britain would continue to resist until the system was changed and until she had received a sufficient proof that the change was real. The best and most natural proof that France could offer, Grenville held to be a Bourbon restoration, and Great Britain, without insisting on this as the only and indispensable pledge, would accept it at any moment as sufficient security. She desired security only, she did not see it in Bonaparte's government, therefore she could not negotiate; but whenever, and in whatever form, sufficient security were offered her, she would hasten to accept it, and in concert with her allies she would arrange a general peace with France.

This answer has met with criticism unfavourable almost to

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[52] Letter and official note from Grenville to Talleyrand, both of 4th January, 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, col 1198. The letter of this date is the first paragraph of the draft submitted to the King on the 2nd of January. In the records of the Foreign Office there is no indication of this re-arrangement of the draft, but the papers as printed in the *Parliamentary History* were doubtless the final form of the reply.

unanimity ever since it was first made public.[53] Its purpose in fact has been misunderstood. It is peculiar, but it is not, as some have assumed, aimlessly insolent; its attack on the system of France was not an attempt to preach; its suggestion of a Bourbon restoration was not made in the hope that Bonaparte would thereby be induced to surrender to the claims of legitimacy the position which he had won by the sword. It is true that since 1797, Grenville, whose sterner temperament could appreciate, better perhaps than could Pitt, the irreconcilable nature of the contest with revolutionary France, had hardened gradually in his feelings towards her,[54] but he himself was much too cool, and Pitt was far too great a statesman to indulge in a policy of vain propositions or frivolous insult. They rejected Bonaparte's overtures because they distrusted him, and, in order to justify their decision in the eyes of the nation, they had to propagate a like distrust. Hence in Grenville's answer, which was not so much a reply to

[53] Debate in the Commons on the Overture, 3 February, 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34: Erskine (col. 1286): "The question is . . . whether the House of Commons could say, *in the face of a suffering nation and a desolated world*, that a lofty, imperious, declamatory, insulting answer, to a proposition professing peace and conciliation, was the answer which ought to have been sent to France or to any human government," and Fox in the same debate, (col. 1355): "I must lament that both in the papers of Lord Grenville and in the speeches of this night, such license has been given to invective and reproach." Erskine and Fox belonged to the Opposition, but Speaker Addington, Pitt's friend and successor, characterizes (See letter to Riley Addington, 9 January, 1800, *Life of Lord Sidmouth*, I., 249) this answer of the 4th of January as "caustic, opprobrious, lacking in dignity and moderation." See also Lefebvre, *Histoire des Cabinets de l'Europe*, I, 37; Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 601; Lanfrey, *Napoleon I.*, II, 60; Oncken, *Zeitalter der Revolution, des Kaiserreichs und der Befreiungskriege*, II, 44-45; Rosebery, *Life of Pitt*, p. 142-143.

[54] Compare Grenville's speech in the debate in the Lords on the Address of Thanks, 2 November, 1797 (after the rupture of Lille), *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 33, col. 871: "I believe that even with the French Republic as now constituted, peace may be both practicable and permanent," with his speech in the debate in the Lords on the Russian subsidy, 11 June, 1799, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, col. 1065 (in reply to Lord Holland, who had complained that the war was pursued without definite object): "For one I will avow my object, I want security; not a security to which the present government will be a party, but a security resting on the tried good-faith and justice of a well-tempered government."

the overture as a manifesto to Great Britain and France,[55] doubt was cast upon Bonaparte's sincerity, and the strength and permanence of his government were questioned. It was with this object that Grenville attacked the system of France —not the Republic or the republican form of government in itself, but the systematic pursuit of conquest which had characterized the *régime* of the Republic, and of which Bonaparte himself was the greatest and most successful exponent.[56] With the same object this condemnation of the system embodied in Bonaparte was in Parliament converted into an incomparably sharper attack upon Bonaparte's *personal* char-

[55] Letter from Pitt to Addington, 4 January, 1800, *Life and Corr. of Lord Sidmouth*, I., 248: "We have felt no difficulty in declining all negotiation *under the present circumstances*, and have drawn our answer as a sort of manifesto both for France and England, bringing forward the topics which seemed most likely to promote the cause of royalty, in preference to this new and certainly not less absolute government; but taking care at the same time to disclaim all idea of making the restoration of royalty (however desirable) the *sine qua non* of peace. We mean to print the papers immediately . . . they seem likely to produce a very good effect." Also the letter of Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham, 1 January, 1800, Buckingham, *Memoirs of Court and Cabinets of George III.*, III, 4 (on Bonaparte's overture): "I send you for a New Year's gift a curiosity. I need not tell you that we shall say, no. I am occupied in studying how to say it in the manner the least shocking to the numerous tribe of those who hate the French and Jacobins, but would to-morrow sign a peace that should put us at the mercy of both."

[56] See the passage in Grenville's note to Talleyrand, where, without mentioning Bonaparte, a direct attack is made upon him and his Egyptian expedition: "To this indiscriminate spirit of destruction, the Netherlands, the United Provinces, the Swiss Cantons (his majesty's ancient friends and allies) have successively been sacrificed. Germany has been ravaged. Italy, though now rescued from its invaders, has been made the scene of unbounded rapine and anarchy. His majesty has himself been compelled to maintain an arduous and burthensome contest for the independence and existence of his kingdoms. Nor have these calamities been confined to Europe alone; they have been extended to the most distant quarters of the world, and even to countries so remote, both in situation and interest, from the present contest, that the very existence of such a war was, perhaps, unknown to those who found themselves suddenly involved in all its horrors."

acter.[57] His past furnished abundant material for censure, and this was supplemented at the moment by Kleber's despatches to the Directory, which, with Bonaparte's farewell letter to him,[58] had lately been captured in the Mediterranean and in these very days were being printed in London and given to the public as convincing proof of Bonaparte's dishonesty.[59] By this brusque and contemptuous attitude Pitt hoped not only to strengthen his own position in Great Britain but to weaken Bonaparte's in France. Especially was the latter his object in naming the Bourbons in the official reply Without pretending to make the restoration of the Monarchy a *sine qua non* of peace[60]—this idea the reply itself specifically

[57] In the debate in the Commons, 3 February, 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, Pitt, cols. 1331-1341; Dundas, cols. 1246-1248; Canning, col. 1277. In the debate in the Lords, 28 January, 1800, *ibidem*, Grenville, cols. 1215-1218. Lanfrey, *Napoleon I*, II, 68, correctly says: "Il n'en reste pas moins vrai que le principal obstacle au succès de cette négociation fut le défiance qu'inspirait le caractère et le passé de Bonaparte; et si ce ne fut pas là le motif déterminant de Pitt, ce fut incontestablement celui qui lui servit à entraîner l'opinion publique. Toutes les discussions du Parlement portèrent sur ce point unique."

[58] Bonaparte to Kleber, 22 August, 1799, *Corr. Nap.*, V, 4374. In this letter Bonaparte directs Kleber, if driven to it, to negotiate with Turkey for the surrender of Egypt, but, under one pretext or another, to delay evacuation for the time being. See page 21, *supra*.

[59] The "Intercepted Letters from Egypt." See Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 548-549. Also in the debate in the Lords, 28 January, 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, Grenville, cols. 1216 and 1218; and in the debate in the Commons, 3 February, 1800, *ibidem*, Pitt, cols. 1338, 1339 and 1340; Dundas, cols. 1247, 1248; Canning, col. 1277, and Whitbread, a member of the Opposition, col. 1255, *et seq.*, "Every topic that can revile, and every art that can blacken, has been resorted to, for purposes of political slander; and I am very sorry to see that the *Intercepted Correspondence from Egypt*, strengthened, and embellished with notes, and perhaps, too, garbled, has made its appearance with a view to prejudice the country against the chief consul, and thereby to set at a distance every hope of a negotiation for peace."

[60] See the passage quoted from the letter from Pitt to Addington, 4 January, 1800, on p. 30 above. In Parliament the Opposition charged the Government with making the restoration of the Bourbons an indispensable condition if not of peace at least of *immediate* negotiation; still one of the Opposition leaders, Lord Holland (Debate in the Lords, 28 January, *Parl. Hist.*, vol 34, col. 1237), noted also the character of the reply as a manifesto to France, "On our part the note of the Ministers was a manifesto to the Royalists, and framed for that purpose."

disclaimed—Grenville attempted to strengthen the royalist cause in France by indicating Bonaparte to the great mass of luke-warm and indifferent republicans as the last barrier between them and the coveted peace.[61]

Pitt had looked upon Grenville's answer as closing the correspondence with France,[62] but this hope was disappointed. In a note of the 14th of January, addressed on this occasion to the proper minister, Talleyrand renewed the offer which Great Britain had so bluntly refused.[63] Those who see in the overture only a diplomatic manoeuvre must answer the question why Bonaparte, by re-opening the matter which presumably Great Britain had settled exactly to his wish, endangered a success already won; especially why Bonaparte throughout the text of the second note shows the same courtesy which characterized the first. Grenville's answer had given abundant justification for a contrary tone, but, instead of seizing the opportunity to return censure for censure, Bonaparte continues to treat Great Britain with manifest civility. He did not, indeed, out of civility, forget that this as well as his first overture must pass review before France. Grenville's assertion that Great Britain was on her defence in the contest implied that France was the aggressor, and half of Talleyrand's lengthy answer is devoted to a skilful effort to refute the charge. But even this apology is comparatively courteous.

[61] See debate in the Commons, 3 February, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, cols. 1269 to 1272, where Canning avows the relation between the British Government and the royalists, and expresses his hope and belief that the majority of Frenchmen, disgusted with the disorder and tyranny prevailing under the Republic, would take no offence at the suggestion of a Bourbon restoration in Grenville's note.

[62] Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, II, 342.

[63] Note from Talleyrand to Grenville, 24 Nivôse, VIII, 14 January, 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, col. 1200. It is an exact copy of Bonaparte's draft, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4530, 26 Nivôse, VIII, 16 January, 1800 (date présumée), an erroneous date, for Talleyrand's note in the Public Record office (*France*, vol. 612) is dated, as in the *Parl. Hist.*, 14 January, 1800, hence Bonaparte's draft must have been of this or of an earlier date.

Great Britain is mentioned in it but twice; first, where Bonaparte complains of the precipitate dismissal of the French minister from London at the opening of the war, and again when he reproaches her with "the deadly animosity with which she had wasted her resources in an effort to destroy France." This passage, by far the strongest in the note, is but the counterpart of similar passages in Grenville's;[64] moreover, its sharpness is tempered by the confession which accompanies it that his predecessors in the government of the Republic at times had failed in moderation toward foreign powers. With these exceptions Bonaparte confined himself in this defence to a vindication in general terms, and in the second part of his note, where particular reference to Great Britain was unavoidable, he preferred adroit insinuations to direct reply. The mention of the Bourbons in Grenville's note offered an excellent point of attack. Bonaparte scarcely used it, but contented himself with a passing reference to the fact that the dynasty reigning in Great Britain was itself a vindication of the right, inherent in every people, to choose its own form of government, without interference or suggestion from abroad, and that there had been a time in the previous century when revolution and republicanism had prevailed in Great Britain herself. For the rest, Bonaparte included in this note the definite proposition, the absence of which had been a chief fault in his first overture; he proposed that plenipotentiaries be nominated who should meet at once in Dunkirk, or any other city equally convenient to Paris and London, to negotiate

[64] "For the extension of this system, and for the extermination of all established governments, the resources of France have from year to year, and in the midst of the most unparalleled distress, been lavished and exhausted. . . . While such a system continues to prevail, and while the blood and treasure of a numerous and powerful nation can be lavished in its support, experience has shown that no defence but that of open and steady hostility can be availing. . . . His Majesty cannot place his reliance on the mere renewal of general professions of pacific dispositions. Such professions have been repeatedly held out by all those who have successively directed the resources of France to the destruction of Europe."

peace between France and Great Britain, and he offered the necessary passports for this meeting.

Here for the first time Bonaparte suggested separate negotiation. If his first overture, which hinted at a *general peace*, had found so little acceptance, the much less welcome proposal of a separate peace could only aggravate suspicion.[65] The London Cabinet, we have seen, looked on Grenville's note of the 4th of January as closing the correspondence. In fact they had fixed a date for publishing Bonaparte's letter and their reply,[66] when Talleyrand's note of the 14th arrived in London on the 18th of January. It gave them no trouble. Their answer which was completed and on its way to Paris by the 20th,[67] was prepared within a shorter interval, and was if possible blunter than the first. It refused to enter into the "refutation of allegations universally exploded"; with respect to the object of Talleyrand's note it referred him to the answer already given; and a reference in the French note to Bonaparte's "oft-proven zeal for peace and rigid observance of treaties," which Talleyrand cited as an especial inducement to negotiate, Grenville made the occasion of a personal insult by treating this ill-grounded appeal to Bonaparte's record in the past as a promise for the future, thus presenting him to the world, not as a model of fidelity, but as a repentant sinner who intended to reform.

[65] Grenville in debate in the Lords, 28 January, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, col. 1219; "If Bonaparte had really shown a particular desire for a general peace, the offer would be less an object of suspicion." Pitt, in corresponding debate in the Commons, 3 February, *ibidem*, col. 1331: "Though he had hinted at general peace in the terms of his first note; though we had shown by our answer, that we deemed negotiation, even for general peace, at this moment, inadmissible; . . . . what was the proposal contained in his last note? To treat, not for general peace, but for a separate peace between Great Britain and France."

[66] Letter from Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham, 16 January, 1800, Buckingham, *Memoirs of Court and Cabinets of George III.*, III, 5.

[67] Note from Grenville to Talleyrand, 20 January, 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 34, col. 1203.

Grenville's note of the 20th of January crossed the Channel on the 21st.[68] On the 22nd there landed in Dover[69] a French transport-commissioner for the exchange of prisoners, but this duty, which usually fell to a military officer, not of the highest rank, was here entrusted to a gifted diplomat, Otto, up to this time Secretary of the French Legation at Berlin. Otto remained in London till the conclusion of peace in 1802; in the interval he negotiated the preliminary peace signed at London in October, 1801, and from the signature of this treaty to the conclusion of the definite peace at Amiens in the following March, he was the accredited Minister of France in Great Britain. The thought suggests itself that a similar mission was his from the beginning.[70]

§ 6. The sincerity of the overtures: examination of this question.

The question whether Bonaparte was sincere in his offers to negotiate still awaits solution. We have seen that in a later utterance at St. Helena he denied all sincerity in these overtures. The conditions of peace—he maintains in the passage in question—which the situation of France at the time must have forced him to accept, being less advantageous than those obtained by him at Campo-Formio, would have lowered his prestige and undermined his authority. In order to suppress the Revolution and establish a solid and permanent *régime* in France it was necessary that he should prosecute the war to a favourable issue, and Great Britain's reply, which gave him every excuse, and even forced him to continue the contest, agreed exactly with his interests and with his wishes.[71] At first sight this utterance might seem once for all to debar the view that Bonaparte was sincere in these overtures. It is true

[68] Letter from Stowe to Frere, Dover, 21 Jan., 1800, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 612.

[69] Letter from Stowe to Frere, 22 Jan., 1800, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 612.

[70] This too in spite of the fact that Talleyrand proposed Dunkirk as the place of negotiation. Otto could conduct the preliminaries in London till the regular negotiation was under way at Dunkirk, and even throughout the latter his presence in London would be useful.

[71] *Corr. Nap.*, XXX, p. 493, (Napoleon is writing in the third person of himself): "Napoléon avait alors besoin de guerre: les campagnes d' Italie, la

in general that Napoleon's memoirs written at St. Helena deserve little or no confidence; this particular utterance, however, might be regarded as, in a sense, a confession made when time and circumstances had removed him to a state of political inactivity, in which he was apparently without inducement to conceal or to distort the truth. But the very confessions of the untruthful are unworthy of blind belief. Napoleon is not necessarily unbosoming himself merely for the sake of the historian; though separated from the event by an interval of twenty years he remembered the affront offered him by Grenville and Pitt, and by the simple device of representing them in the light of unconscious tools, he could spare his own memory some humiliation and expose the policy of Pitt to the ridicule of history. Is he seeking this revenge here? If he be, he is posing, and if we would know the truth, we dare not accept him in this or any other pose; we must take him when off his guard.

In a private connection Bonaparte has referred to the question in three places. First, a note to his brother Lucien,[72]

paix de Campo-Formio, les campagnes d' Égypte, la journée du 18 brumaire, l' opinion unanime du peuple pour l' élever à la suprême magistrature, l' avaient sans doute placé bien haut; mais un traité de paix qui eût dérogé à celui de Campo-Formio et eût annulé toutes ses créations d' Italie eût flétri les imaginations et lui eût ôté ce qui lui était nécessaire pour terminer la révolution, établir un système définitif et permanent; il le sentait. Il attendait avec impatience la réponse du Cabinet de Londres. Cette réponse le remplit d'une secrète satisfaction. Plus les Grenville et les Chatham se complaisaient à outrager la révolution et à montrer ce mépris qui est l' apanage héréditaire de l' oligarchie, plus ils servaient les intérêts secrets de Napoléon, qui dit son ministre: 'Cette réponse ne pouvait pas nous être plus favorable.'" It is quite conceivable that Bonaparte in any case used these words before his minister, for they express a qualified truth. Whether or no he desired the rejection of his offer, the manner in which Great Britain rejected it was certainly an advantage to him. Pitt and Grenville 'insulted' the Revolution in order to influence public opinion in Great Britain and to encourage the royalists in France, but this policy inevitably gathered the republicans to Bonaparte's support.

[72] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4474. Lucien Bonaparte was named Minister of the Interior on the 25 December, 1799. The words quoted are the opening passage of a lengthy note of advice to the new Minister on the management of the *communes* of France.

which, though undated, appears by its contents to belong to that time, contains this sentence: "Were war not necessary for me, I should inaugurate a new era of prosperity for France in the *communes*." Secondly, in a letter to Talleyrand of the 13th of January, 1800, he says concerning the evacuation of Flushing:[73] "Were it the case that in return for this object we could secure from Holland twelve millions before the end of April, eighteen before the end of next September, and from ten to fifteen millions during the year IX,[74] I think that in our present position this negotiation would be of equal importance with that which we may open with the Court of London or of Vienna." Thirdly, there are Bonaparte's instructions of the 14th of January, 1800, to General Brune,[75] the newly appointed commander of the "Army of the West."

This last—the most important evidence—we shall consider first. The Army of the West consisted of the troops massed by Bonaparte against the re-opening of hostilities with the royalist insurgents in the northwestern Departments and in La Vendée. The armistice with them expired on the 21st of January, and in these instructions of the 14th General Brune, who was then at the point of leaving Paris to take command of the Government troops in the expected struggle with the insurgents, was charged to execute a preliminary movement in close connection with the second overture to Great Britain. Bonaparte writes: "The Army of the West is composed of more than 60,000 men under arms. You will actively pursue the brigands and seek to bring this war to an early finish; *on its termination now depends the peace of Europe.* . . . The armistice concluded between General Hédouville and the Chouans lasts only to the 1st of Pluviôse [21st January].

[73] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4519, 13 Jan., 1800. Article 13 of the Treaty of the Hague (16 May, 1795), gave France an exclusive right of garrison in Flushing, "in peace and in war, till other arrangements be made between the two nations"—DeClercq, *Recueil des Traités de la France*, I, 236.

[74] The year IX corresponds to 23 Sept., 1800—22 Sept., 1801.

[75] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4523.

Georges, who commands the rebels in Morbihan, is not included in it. I calculate that by the evening of the 27th [Nivôse, 17th January] you will be at Angers. Remain there only the few hours necessary to start the 60th demi-brigade, with such troops as you can draw from this Department, on their way to Morbihan; then proceed to Nantes. From there you will march to Morbihan, where you will find the 22nd and the 72nd. Disperse Georges' forces, seize his cannon and his stores of grain (he has on the coast a great quantity of it which he sells to the English). In a word let the rebels of Morbihan begin to feel the burden and horrors of war, so that by the 1st of Pluviôse [21st of January] you are certain, (1) That the English vessels moored on the coasts of Morbihan no longer have any communication with Georges; (2) That from the head of the masts they may see the banners of the Republic dispersing the brigands and destroying their hopes. *The most important diplomatic interests require that in the first five days of Pluviôse* [21st-26th January] *the English should know that a large body of troops is pursuing Georges, so that they will send the news of it to England.*"

The bearing of these instructions upon our question is unmistakable, and their date is especially significant. The diplomatic interests can only be Bonaparte's second overture to Great Britain; at the very moment that this overture is started on its way from Paris, Bonaparte orders a movement which shall insure it a good reception in London. Talleyrand's note, we have seen, reached London on the 18th and was answered on the 20th of January, but this speedy decision was scarcely to be expected. Bonaparte certainly had not expected it; rather he had hoped that, by prompt action on the part of Brune, the news of Georges' overthrow[76] might reach London

[76] It should be noted that, of all the royalist leaders, Georges was in closest communication with the British Government, and that Morbihan, where Brune was ordered to make his attack, was the Department in which Pitt wished to land his expedition.

in time to affect the decision on the overture. By Grenville's first answer Bonaparte had seen how largely Pitt depended upon the royalists overthrowing the Republic, and with the intent of inclining Pitt and his Cabinet favourably to his offer of negotiation Bonaparte wishes to give them a telling proof, in the crisis of their decision, that their hope is a vain one, and that he is in fact, as in name, undisputed master of an undivided France.

For the real wishes of Bonaparte as to peace, these instructions are positive and contemporary evidence, and there is nothing in reality to shake the conclusion which we must draw from it. The passage quoted from the note to Lucien Bonaparte might indeed under some circumstances seem not to harmonize with such a view: "Were war not necessary for me," writes Bonaparte here. But necessity may have a double origin. A thing may be necessary because it is indispensable; it may also be necessary because it is unavoidable; which of these meanings attaches to Bonaparte's words here, depends entirely upon the date of the note. If it was written before Grenville's answers, when the question of peace or war was still an open one, we must interpret, *indispensable*, if after, *unavoidable*. The note is undated. The editors of Napoleon's Correspondence have placed it between documents of the 28th of December—before even Grenville's first reply—but this arrangement is quite arbitrary. There is neither internal nor external evidence as to its exact date; where such evidence existed in the case of undated letters, the editors, we have seen, attached supposed dates even at the risk of error.[77] The note must belong to the time after Lucien Bonaparte's appointment as Minister of the Interior on the 25th of December, 1799, and evidently it has been placed where it is now found, only because it must have been written within a reasonable interval after that date. This does not however fix its *exact*

[77] Page 33, note 63 above.

date, which may just as well have been in the end of the following January. As to Bonaparte's sincerity in desiring peace, nothing is proven by the note either for or against. It has indeed been cited as evidence that Bonaparte desired war at this time ;[78] but with equal justice and with greater probability one may maintain the reverse—that Bonaparte wishes to represent the war as an unwelcome, unavoidable necessity. We must remember to whom his words are addressed. If Lucien Bonaparte was the Consul's brother, he was also a prominent statesman of France ; under the Directory he had been President of the Five Hundred, and he was now a Minister of State. In a semi-official note to this dignitary, are we to find an unblushing and *unnecessary* confession that the greatest need of France is to be sacrificed to the personal ambition of her ruler ?

Bonaparte's third utterance on this question—in the note to Talleyrand—is as easy of explanation as that just considered. Apparently it slights the importance of the negotiations at London and Vienna, but closer examination will weaken and even reverse this impression. The utterance occurs in one of three similar notes written by Bonaparte in succession to the same person and treating in turn of the relations of France with Holland, with Hamburg, and with Portugal.[79] Each of the notes is concerned with monies to be exacted of these foreign communities in order to relieve the financial difficulties of France, and in each there is an estimate, similar to this in the case of Holland, of the effect the amounts thus obtained will have in the approaching crisis. Four or six millions extorted from Hamburg by threatening her with Prussian occupation might be worth a successful campaign. Were Portugal to purchase peace for eight or nine millions, the

[78] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 588, Note.

[79] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4519, 4520, and 4521, all written to Talleyrand on the 13 January, 1800. By the concluding words of the last (4521) all were written on the evening of the 13 January.

indemnity would increase French chances in Italy thirty in the hundred and would almost ensure the reconquest of that country. If Holland will pay a considerable sum for the evacuation of Flushing, the negotiation with her would be as important as that with Great Britain or Austria. These notes were written under the influence of Grenville's first reply. At the time Bonaparte was facing the probability of war not only with Great Britain but—should the latter's influence prevail at Vienna and St. Petersburg—with Austria and Russia as well, and his resources for the contest were so meagre that in these very days the French Treasury could only with difficulty raise 600,000 francs for Moreau's needy army upon the Rhine.[80] Exactions, which under other circumstances might appear insignificant, when viewed in the light of these facts gain all the weight that Bonaparte claims for them. The arrangement with Holland—the most important of the three—he considers of equal importance with the negotiations for peace. *A negotiation which shall secure him the sinews of war, he holds as of equal importance with a negotiation which may relieve him of its necessity.* This is no more than a truism.

My argument is finished. I shall only refer to a point which in itself decides nothing, but, if placed in its proper connection, strongly corroborates the view I maintain. Grenville's answer to Bonaparte's second overture reached Calais the 21st of January. On the 25th Bonaparte ordered the formation of the 'Army of the Reserve' which was to invade Italy. This measure was a turning-point in Bonaparte's policy for the year, for with him it marked the opening of the campaign. The order, which was intended to be a close secret, might have been issued at any moment; given as it was, directly on the arrival of Great Britain's final refusal to negotiate, its connection with the latter seems evident, and likewise the conclusion to be drawn from it.

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[80] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4522, 14 Jan., 1800.

CHAPTER II.

The Abortive Attempt at a Naval Armistice and General Negotiation, August to October, 1800.

§1. The progress of the war till Marengo.

Bonaparte himself has given us a brief but graphic description of the position of France when he landed at Fréjus in October, 1799.[81] The outlook was gloomy, but Bonaparte overcame the chief difficulties of the situation—not, however, as some conceive, by slavish dependence upon good fortune for success; his triumph was due to the patience and energy[82] which made his progress not a succession of leaps and bounds guided by chance to a happy issue, but the quick and elastic, yet measured and massive tread of one conscious of a purpose and sure of attaining it. His success was not uniform. On land he obtained results surprising to others and perhaps to himself, but at sea his failure was absolute. France was without an adequate fleet and without the means to create one; and while the war lasted, she was denied the admission to the open seas, which alone could have tested the efficiency of a fleet, when once created, or have afforded proper training. Bonaparte was alive to the situation[83] and struggled against it with spirit but without success. In the commercial marine of his rival he detected a principal source of her strength; hence at this time no quarter of the globe, from India to the Arctic,

[81] Bonaparte to Desaix, 14 May, 1800, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4786: "A mon arrivée en France, j'ai trouvé la République perdue, la Vendée aux portes de Paris; l'escadre, au lieu d'être à Toulon, était à Brest, et déjà désarmée; Brest même menacé par les Anglais. Il a fallu détruire la Vendée, trouver de l'argent, réarmer l'escadre."

[82] Bonaparte to Gaudin, Minister of Finance, 28 March, 1800, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4698.

[83] Bonaparte to Forfait, Minister of Marine, 24 July, 1800, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5020: "Le peuple français veut une marine, il la veut fortement; il fera tous les sacrifices nécessaires pour que sa volonté soit remplie." Also 5021, 5022, and 5023, *ibidem*, 24 July, 1800.

was free of his tiny expeditions to harass British commerce as much as his limited resources would allow.[84] Chance might bestow some success upon these efforts, but Bonaparte was unable to alter the naval situation in general or to effect his particular object in the Mediterranean. His plan to break the blockade of Brest in order that the French and Spanish fleets there imprisoned might escape and carry aid to Malta and Egypt was spoilt by the refusal of Spain to co-operate,[85] and his later attempts to relieve Malta by systematic blockade-running,[86] though incessant, were vain. The supplies of the garrison diminished steadily, and in Egypt the hopes which sprang from the French victory at Heliopolis in March, 1800, disappeared with the assassination of Kleber in the following June. The officer next in rank, General Menou, was unfit for supreme command, and the French position, which Kleber himself had despaired of maintaining, became more than hopeless under his incapable successor.

But Bonaparte could find consolation at home for these disappointments abroad. By the end of February General Brune had subdued or scattered the royalist insurgents in western France. It had been in conjunction with these and with Russian troops wintering in Jersey that Pitt had hoped to invade France, but at the same time with Brune's success over the insurgents Russia withdrew her support. Angered beyond measure at the insult which an Austrian officer had offered the Russian flag at Ancona the Tsar definitely recalled his troops from Germany in January, 1800, and when Great Britain continued to seek an alliance with Austria, he withdrew his forces from England also. Thus abandoned, Great

[84] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4429, 19 Dec., 1799; *ibidem*, 4495, 4 Jan., 1800; 4538, 18 Jan., 1800; and 4670, 14 March, 1800.

[85] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4612, and 4613, 22 Feb., 1800; *ibidem*, 4618, 24 Feb., 1800; 4625, 28 Feb., 1800; 4636, 4 March, 1800; 4647, 7 March, 1800; 4675, 17 March, 1800; and 4688, 4689, 4691, and 4692, 20 March, 1800.

[86] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4637, 4 March, 1800; *ibidem*, 4700, 28 March, 1800; 4775 and 4776, 11 May, 1800; 4928, 19 June, 1800; 5034, 28 July, 1800; and 5084, 5 Sept., 1800.

Britain and Austria drew closer to each other. Their combined resources apart from Russia were still superior to those of France, but Bonaparte could set against his disparity in point of strength the advantage of his fiery energy over the sluggishness of his opponents. Great Britain's belated efforts to co-operate with Austria on the continent earned only ridicule even at home,[87] and Bonaparte, after a short and decisive campaign, reconquered Italy at Marengo on the 14th of June.

§ 2. The Austro-British alliance. Opening of negotiations with France at Vienna. Bonaparte proposes a naval truce in London.

As recently as in the previous January Great Britain had refused to consider peace, but this decision was taken in the confidence, justified by events, that Austria would likewise evade negotiation. If Austria, voluntarily or as a result of disasters such as Marengo, resorted to negotiation with France, Great Britain desired to join in it, for only by negotiation in common with Austria could she affect the fate of the Netherlands,[88] which was her chief concern on the continent. Hence she offered Austria a considerable subsidy in return for a pledge from the Emperor to enter into no peace apart from Great Britain. It chanced that the negotiation of this arrangement by the British Ambassador at Vienna, Lord Minto, culminated in a *projet* which was sanctioned by the Emperor and despatched to London for approval on the 19th of June.[89] On the morrow the news of Marengo arrived at Vienna, and

[87] Letter from Cornwallis to Ross, 17 Sept., 1800, *Corr. of Lord Cornwallis*, III, 291: "Would to God we had peace on almost any terms, for it is evident we cannot make war." Also letter from Cornwallis to Ross, 6 Nov., 1800, *ibidem*, III, 300: "What a disgraceful and what an expensive campaign have we made. 22,000 men, a large proportion not soldiers, floating around the greater part of Europe, the scorn and laughing-stock of friends and foes." Cornwallis, although (as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) connected with Pitt's Administration, was much dissatisfied with most of its members.

[88] As they had been in the possession of the Emperor at the opening of the war and were now in the occupation of France, the disposition of them would be regulated in a separate negotiation between Austria and France without regard to the interests of Great Britain, and in a later separate negotiation between Great Britain and France the question would have no status.

Letter from Thugut to Colloredo, 19 June, 1800 *Vertrauliche Briefe Thuguts* (edited by Vivenot), II, 227.

on the same day Thugut and Minto converted the *projet* of the 19th into the definitive treaty of alliance of the 20th of June.[90] In London the first report of Marengo arrived on the 24th of June, [91] and Grenville who was then in ignorance of the occurrences of the 19th and 20th at Vienna, feared that Austria would separate her interests from Great Britain and enter into a separate negotiation with France.[92] But the *projet* of the 19th of June arrived in London on the 4th of July [93] and was followed by the definitive treaty of the 20th. The latter was ratified at once, and under its terms Grenville directed Minto to urge the prosecution of the war if feasible, or, in the contrary case, to claim admission for Great Britain to any negotiation opened between Austria and France.[94]

An Austro-French negotiation was then already on foot. The armistice of Alexandria, in which Austria recognized her defeat at Marengo, had been signed by Bonaparte with a view to an immediate Austrian peace; and Thugut, though averse to negotiation, for the moment was unable to refuse it. When Bonaparte offered Austria a general armistice in the theatrical letter [95] which he wrote to the Emperor professedly from the field of Marengo, the Emperor accepted the offer but insisted that the negotiation to follow should respect his obligations to Great Britain, and be conducted with a view to a general

[90] I cannot demonstrate a connection between the arrival of the news of Marengo and the signature of the treaty, although it seems that such must have existed.

[91] Letters from Lord Grenville and Thomas Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham, of 24 June, 1800, Buckingham, *Memoirs of Court and Cabinets of George III*, III, 83 and 85.

[92] Despatch from Grenville to Minto, 27 June, 1800, London, P.R.O., *Austria*, vol. 59.

[93] Despatch from Grenville to Minto, 4 July, 1800, London, P.R.O., *Austria*, vol. 59.

[94] Despatch from Grenville to Minto, 17 July, 1800, (No. 1 of this date), London, P.R.O., *Austria*, vol. 59.

[95] *Corr. Nap.*, VI., 4914, 16 June, 1800. It appears that, although dated at Marengo, for the sake of effect, it was written some days later at Milan.

peace. Count St Julien, the Austrian officer who had carried Bonaparte's letter to Vienna, was entrusted with this reply,[96] and, although his mission was merely to deliver it and to receive the French answer, Bonaparte and Talleyrand induced him to sign preliminaries of a separate peace with Austria. The violation of her pledge to Great Britain, which Austria was thus invited to commit, Bonaparte attempted to palliate by an assurance, which the Emperor was empowered to use at London, that France would negotiate peace with Great Britain after making peace with Austria.[97] But the letter containing this assurance was never delivered. Its bearer, Bonaparte's aide-de-camp Duroc, who accompanied St. Julien from Paris, was stopped at the Austrian headquarters, while St. Julien, on proceeding to Vienna, was disgraced and his work disowned. Thugut replied to Talleyrand [98] insisting afresh on a general peace and transmitting an offer from Minto on behalf of Great Britain [99] to co-operate in a general negotiation.

Duroc received this answer at the Austrian headquarters on the 15th of August and carried it forthwith to Paris. On the 24th, Transport-commissioner Otto in London offered Lord Grenville a general negotiation in return for a naval truce, corresponding to the land-armistice in Germany.[100] On the same day, without awaiting the answer to this overture, without so much as hinting, in the note to Vienna, that the

[96] The Emperor to Bonaparte, 5 July, 1800, *Vertrauliche Briefe Thuguts*, II, 239.

[97] Bonaparte to the Emperor, 29 July, 1800, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5038.

[98] Note from Thugut to Talleyrand, 11 Aug., 1800, *Vertrauliche Briefe Thuguts*, II, 257. Also in *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 35, col. 584, Appendix A.

[99] Note from Minto to Thugut, 9 Aug., 1800, *Vertrauliche Briefe Thuguts*, II, 477. Also in *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 35, col. 585, Appendix B.

[100] Letter and note from Otto to Grenville, both of 24 Aug., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, nos. 1 and 2. Throughout this chapter the citation "Papers of this Negotiation" refers to the papers submitted to Parliament, 13 Nov., 1800, *Parl. Hist.*, vol. 35, cols. 540 *et seq.* They number consecutively from 1 to 47.

overture had been made, Bonaparte announced the Austrian truce.[101]

§ 3. Bonaparte's object in a naval truce : to save Malta. The three stages in the negotiation for the truce.

Bonaparte's object in a naval truce was to save Malta. This point has been recognized in a general way, but not with clearness; historians have seen in the proposal an effort to better the French position in Malta and Egypt, but it has escaped notice that on Malta's fall Bonaparte suddenly lost all interest in a naval truce with Great Britain and abandoned the negotiation of it when the terms of such a truce were at the point of being successfully arranged.[102] The failure of the negotiation is usually ascribed to a difference concerning Egypt Nevertheless Egypt was minor importance to Bonaparte in comparison with M Great Britain could eventually expel the French from both, h -the point has been mentioned in the previous chapter—on the expulsion of

[101] Note from Talleyrand to Thugut, 24 Aug., 1800, *Vertrauliche Briefe Thuguts*, II, 260. Without mentioning the French overture in London Talleyrand states that the Emperor, by requiring the admission of Great Britain to the negotiation without first requiring her to concede an armistice with France, had made the re-opening of hostilities inevitable ; and the note concludes as follows : "Que d'événements vont donc naître encore ; combien de nouvelles victimes immolées à l'Angleterre ; si les nations du continent ne posent les armes que lorsqu'il pourrait convenir à l'Angleterre, la génération actuelle y périra. Ce n'est pas certes ce que le peuple français avait droit d'attendre, et lorsqu'il mettait une foi entière dans les déclarations qui lui étaient faites des dispositions pacifiques de sa Majesté Impériale, il ne prévoyait pas qu'elles étaient encore dépendantes des volontés de la Cour de Londres."

[102] Bignon, *Histoire de France*, pp. 63 *et seq.*, gives Malta no real place in the negotiation ; see on page 63 : "La vérité était que le premier consul comptait pouvoir envoyer avec ce nombre de frégates plus de trois mille hommes [i.e., to Egypt.] Cet envoi était le seul grand intérêt que la France avait réellement dans l'armistice navale." Lefebvre, *Histoire des Cabinets de l'Europe, 1800-1815*, I, 76, gives as the motive of Bonaparte in asking a naval truce : "Un seul, mais tout puissant, l'espoir de sauver Malta, qui, faute de vivres, était sur le point de succomber, et l'Égypte . . ." But he ascribes (p. 78) the failure of the negotiation solely to points of difference regarding Egypt, not mentioning the fall of Malta in connection with the rupture. Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 628-629, states that the purpose of the naval truce was to provision Malta and to send reinforcements to Egypt, but that Bonaparte's end was by no means attained if Malta were provisioned *merely according to consumption.*

France from Egypt, the Sultan, its legitimate owner, would claim and receive it of his British ally, while Malta, which was practically ownerless, would in like case become a British possession. Bonaparte could prevent this by a naval truce in its simplest form. The garrison of Malta was near starvation, and if left to itself must soon surrender, but under a naval truce it would be furnished regularly with supplies throughout the negotiation, and at the conclusion of peace France would evacuate the fortress for a compensation without giving place to Great Britain. The latter, after besieging Malta for two years, would sacrifice her reward for this exertion on the very eve of success.

The history of the negotiation on Bonaparte's proposition of a naval truce falls into three stages: the *first*, from the opening on the 24th of August to the 5th of September, in which period Great Britain apparently did not take the proposition seriously, but expected to obtain a general negotiation without making the sacrifice required by France; the *second*, from the 5th to the 26th of September, a period of serious negotiation, in which the British Cabinet, now convinced that Bonaparte would abide by his terms, accepted the naval truce in principle and attempted to arrange its details; the *third*, from the 6th to the 9th of October, when Bonaparte, who had heard in the interval of the fall of Malta, promptly broke off the negotiation.

§ 4. The first stage of the negotiation, August 24th to September 5th. Great Britain evades the proposed truce. France adheres to her proposal. Great Britain yields.

Otto, in his note opening the negotiation on the 24th of August, requested an explanation of Minto's overture at Vienna. Grenville was not in a position to give it. He had authorized Minto to make the overture in the despatch of the 17th of July, but these instructions had been of a most general character— Minto should cast his influence in favour of war; if, however, Austria determined upon negotiation with France, he should seek admission to it. Of the subsequent events in Germany, including the steps taken by Minto at Vienna, Grenville was as yet ignorant, and in these circumstances, after waiting two

days apparently in the hope of receiving a despatch from Minto, he requested Otto through Captain George to send to the Foreign Office under seal the papers to which his note of the 24th referred.[103] Grenville worded his message thus loosely in order to conceal its meaning fron George, but Otto, manifestly begrudging information to diplomatic opponents, availed himself of the indefinite wording to send his *powers* which had also been mentioned in his original note of the 24th. While George was on this errand to Otto, despatches arrived from Vienna with copies of Minto's and Thugut's notes of the 9th and 11th of August,[104] and George, who was now entrusted with the secret of his errand, interviewed Otto forthwith, [105] and accepted responsibility for Minto's overture at Vienna. The proposition of a naval truce, however, he opposed on a variety of grounds detailed in a letter of instructions which he had received from Grenville[106]—such a truce would be premature and without precedent, while in its application it would entail endless disputes which would hinder, not facilitate, negotiation. In reply Otto ignored rather than answered these objections, simply stating that, since his instructions required an answer by the 3rd of September, he anticipated a re-opening of hostilities on the continent about that time, if Great Britain rejected his proposition. But this insinuated threat failed of its intended purpose. Grenville underestimated the weakness of Austria at this crisis; he believed that France also had an interest in the continental armistice and that she

[103] Letter from Grenville to George, 26 August, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 3. It appears that Captain George was the Transport-commissioner for the exchange of prisoners. As such he would be in continual communication with Otto and could be used by Grenville without attracting public notice to the negotiation on foot.

[104] Letter from Grenville to George, 28 August, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 5; also no. 4 (Otto's full powers.)

[105] Letter from George to Grenville, 29 August, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 7.

[106] Minute of Instructions from Grenville to George, 28 August, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 6.

would continue it without regard to a naval truce, so long as her advantage in the arrangement counterbalanced its inconvenience.[107] Hence Grenville, on receiving George's report of the interview together with a hint from Otto for a written answer respecting a naval truce, for reply merely copied [108] the passage bearing on the point in his instructions to George. It was a virtual refusal, though it closed with an inquiry how the French Government, which professed to assimilate the naval to the continental truce, conceived that the principles of the German armistice regarding blockaded towns could be applied to the naval ports and arsenals of France.

Otto sent the answer to his Government on the 29th of August [109] and ordinarily a lull must have followed in the negotiation. But if Malta was to be saved, it was necessary to act quickly; without awaiting a reply from Paris, Otto offered Grenville [110] a *projet* of a naval truce on the 30th, at the same time repeating his suggestion that hostilities might re-open on the continent by the 3rd of September, unless Great Britain yielded in the interval. Grenville had closed his note on the 29th with a question which the *projet* might be expected to answer, but in reality he had intended the note and question as a refusal.[111] Instead then of accepting the proffered *projet*, Grenville directed George on the 2nd of September [112] to inform Otto that Thomas Grenville [113] had been appointed British plenipotentiary in the negotiation opening at Luné-

[107] Despatch from Grenville to Minto, 30 August, 1800, London, P. R. O., *Austria*, vol. 59.

[108] Letter from Grenville to George, and note from Grenville to Otto, both of 29 August, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, nos. 8 and 10.

[109] Letter from Otto to Grenville, 30 August, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 11.

[110] Note from Otto to Grenville, 30 August, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 12.

[111] Despatch from Grenville to Minto, 30 August, 1800, cited above.

[112] Letter from Grenville to George, 2 September, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 13.

[113] Thomas Grenville was a brother of Lord Grenville.

ville and that he awaited the French passport necessary to start upon the journey thither. But George was absent from London at the time, and the message in consequence reached Otto only on the 5th of September. He returned the significant answer that the passport would be forthcoming when the result of the London negotiation rendered Mr. Grenville's journey necessary [114]

In the meantime the negotiation had entered upon a new stage. The reply of the French Government to Grenville's note of the 29th of August was in Otto's hands by the 4th of September, and on the same day he transmitted it to the Foreign Office.[115] Though courteous in form, it was clearly an ultimatum. It charged the rejection of the St. Julien preliminaries at Vienna to Minto's intervention, and stated that for this reason, unless Great Britain conceded a naval truce, hostilities with Austria would re-commence on the 11th of September, and that the First Consul would then no longer consent, with regard to that power, to any but a complete and separate peace. Grenville altered his attitude at once; he now asked for the *projet*,[116] which Otto had offered on the 30th of August. The claims advanced in it[117] were absurdly excessive. Grenville, nevertheless, in a provisional answer on the 5th of September, promised a final reply on the 7th, and suggested meanwhile that Otto should warn his Government by courier that Great Britain entertained the discussion of the truce only with a view to facilitate peace, and that consequently the renewal of hostilities on the continent would

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[114] Letter from Otto to George, 5 September, 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 21.

[115] Note from Otto to Grenville, 4 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 15.

[116] Letter from Grenville to Evan Nepean, 4 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 16.

[117] Translation of a *projet* in M. Otto's, 4 Sept. 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 18.

remove all inducement on her part to accept the French proposals.[118]

§5. The second stage of the negotiation, Sept. 5th — Sept. 26th. Efforts to arrange the terms of a naval truce.

Up to this point Great Britain had evaded the question of a naval truce: here, for the first time, she faced the proposition seriously. Grenville's reply of the 5th was an implied assent to the proposal, and on the 7th he definitely committed Great Britain to a naval truce in some form, by submitting a counter *projet*[119] to Otto's *projet* of the 4th of September. The *projet* and counter *projet* are in sharp contradiction to each other. In order to judge intelligently between them one must recall the principle underlying all armistices, which forbids a combatant to secure, by the terms of the truce, such advantages as at the time of signature he neither possessed nor could reasonably hope to secure. The principle cannot be applied with the same exactness at sea as on land, for the sea cannot, like territory, pass into the undisputed occupation of either belligerent. Still, at this time Great Britain dominated the sea. She held Brest and Malta and the ports of Egypt under close blockade; to maintain the relative position of herself and France as belligerents she must require these blockades to continue unbroken, while the interest of France, on the contrary, was to evade as far as possible this correct principle in the truce. In this direction Otto's *projet* went to an extreme. It removed every conceivable restriction upon the conveyance of reinforcements and stores to Egypt and Malta; it claimed the liberty to change the stations of the French fleets at will; and it sought to extend the benefits of the truce to the French allies without suggesting a like favour for those of Great Britain. Under this arrangement Bonaparte could transfer the French and Spanish fleets from Brest to Toulon; thus, in a sense, he

[118] Note from Grenville to Otto, 5 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 19.

[119] Counter *projet* in Lord Grenville's, 7 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 25.

would undo the work of Nelson at Aboukir and re-open the entire question of the control of the Mediterranean. Bonaparte's purpose in such claims can only have been to secure a margin in his demands, within which he would recede much or little, according as resistance to them in London was great or small. Grenville rejected them bodily. His counter *projet* forbade all movement of French vessels of war during the armistice, and restricted the importation of stores at Malta and Alexandria[120] to the single item of provisions, according to the amount actually consumed by the garrisons. Otto was unable to accept this offer; he referred it to his Government.[121]

It chanced that the decision on this question was taken at Paris at the same time with a kindred decision on the Austrian truce. This truce had been denounced at the Austrian headquarters on the 29th of August and expired on the 10th of September.[122] But at this crisis the Emperor left his capital to take command of his army in person, and at his request Moreau, professedly on his own responsibility—he claimed to be under orders to renew the contest on the 10th, unless the Emperor ratified the preliminaries signed by St. Julien—suspended hostilities during a fresh reference of the matter to Paris.[123] The reply from Paris was a demand that the Emperor, in return for an extension of the truce, should surrender his fortresses within the French lines in Germany, Ulm, Philipsburg, and Ingolstadt. On the 20th of

[120] The offer to admit provisions at Egyptian ports was made merely to place them logically in the same category with Malta. It conferred no real advantage on the French at these ports, where supplies could be easily drawn from the interior of Egypt.

[121] Letter from Otto to Grenville, 8 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 26.

[122] Despatch from Minto to Grenville, 2 Sept., 1860. London, P. R. O., *Austria*, vol. 60.

[123] Despatch from Minto to Grenville, 12 Sept., 1800. London, P. R. O., *Austria*, vol. 60.

September he submitted to these terms in the convention of Hohenlinden. Meanwhile Otto was instructed to offer Grenville a choice between separate negotiation with a naval truce on Grenville's terms *or* a general negotiation with a naval truce according to the French *projet*. Since the peculiar advantages involved in the latter had been claimed by France as a compensation for the extension of the continental truce, this offer is manifestly out of harmony with the demand enforced from the Emperor. In fact Bonaparte knew that at this moment the fate of Malta hung in the balance;[124] and fearing that it had actually fallen, in which case a naval truce would be of little value to him, he sacrificed consistency in order to secure in these German fortresses a tangible compensation for the very object still put forward in London as ground for claiming a naval truce.

Otto submitted this offer to Grenville on the 16th of September,[125] at the same time requesting an opportunity to explain it in person. Explanation it certainly needed, for the choice which it professed to give between a general and separate negotiation was an empty one. Great Britain had conceded a naval truce, even on her own terms, with the sole object of obtaining a general negotiation, and her pledge to the Emperor to negotiate only in common with him had been public since July. Hence Grenville answered on the 20th,[126] with some vexation, that since the French Government knew that Great Britain would not separate her interests from Austria, the proposed alternative amounted to nothing more than the renewal of a demand already rejected; while with regard to any explanations which Otto might desire to offer, he might submit them in writing, if he were authorized to make new proposals consistent with the terms of the British

[124] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4775, 11 May, 1800.

[125] Letter and note from Otto to Grenville, both of 16 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, nos. 27 and 28.

[126] Letter and note from Grenville to Otto, both of 20 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, nos. 29 and 30.

counter *projet*, and if they then appeared to form sufficient ground for discussion, a proper person would be appointed to meet him. Otto submitted a fresh *projet* on the 21st.[127] In it he advanced a new claim, that British troops should not be landed in Italy during the armistice; but in other respects he made large concessions. The unhindered navigation claimed in his first *projet* for all vessels of war was restricted in this to frigates, corvettes, and other smaller craft, the movement of double and triple-decked ships of the line being wholly forbidden; and the importation of reinforcements and stores, which also had been unrestrained in the first *projet*, was here confined, in the case of Malta, to provisions at the rate of ten thousand rations per day,[128] in that of Egypt, to six frigates, which should be allowed to sail to Alexandria from Toulon and return thither without inspection at any part of the voyage. Wide as these terms were of Grenville's counter *projet*, they were such an approach to it that he at once appointed his under-secretary, Hammond, to interview Otto on the points of difference still open between the Governments.

It is a question to what extent Grenville's bluntness at this point of the negotiation was due to Talleyrand's tirade against England in his note to Thugut of the 24th of August. This note had been communicated to London in the interval, and the circumstances which it revealed regarding the denunciation of the Austrian truce were an occasion of controversy between Otto and Grenville, carried on independently of the negotiation proper.[129] In the latter Great Britain made

[127] *Projet* in M. Otto's, 21 Sept., 1800. *Papers of this Negotiation*, No. 32.

[128] Doubtless with a view, if possible, to anticipate the capitulation of Malta, the *projet* required also that the British officer who bore the news of these arrangements to the Mediterranean should pass by the direct route through France to Toulon, instead of by Gibraltar.

[129] Besides the note from Grenville to Otto, 20 Sept., cited above, see letter and note from Otto to Grenville, 21 and 23 Sept. [1 Vendémiaire IX = 23 Sept.], and the latter's reply, 25 Sept., *Papers of this Negotiation*, nos. 30, 31, 33, and 38.

no concession beyond her previous offer. Grenville's instructions to Hammond[130] for the interview with Otto discuss at length the points at issue, but in the end simply insist on the terms of the counter *projet*. Some of these differences, distinctly of minor importance, had been a source of friction throughout the negotiation, but in themselves were no real barrier to its success. Amongst them was the question of the rights of the allies on either side to take part in the truce. France wished to include her own arbitrarily, while Great Britain, disinclined to a like attack on the independence of hers, contended for voluntary accession of both. The real differences between the Governments related to Malta and Egypt, and to the degree of liberty to be allowed France in sending reinforcements and stores to these points and to her isolated colonies beyond sea. Otto still claimed the privilege of provisioning Malta at the rate of ten thousand rations per day, an amount much in excess of the actual consumption, which Great Britain insisted should be the basis of the arrangement. The garrison numbered some three thousand men; hence, even allowing for a certain number of non-combatants who, it was asserted, were also present, ten thousand rations per day would supply immediate needs and permit a rapid storing of provisions throughout the armistice. The Egyptian question was equally difficult. Bonaparte desired a safe-conduct for six frigates sailing to Alexandria. Besides reinforcements, these would carry to Egypt a capable successor to Kleber, whose death had become known at Paris in the beginning of September.[131] The negotiations on this point were complicated by Great Britain's relations with Turkey. In the previous winter Great Britain had innocently prevented the fulfilment of the Convention of El Arish, under which Kleber was to have evacuated Egypt, and the Sultan's dis-

[130] Letter from Grenville to Hammond, 24 Sept., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 36.

[131] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5086, 6 Sept., 1800.

satisfaction at this, which Bonaparte sought to increase,[132] would have been kindled afresh, had Great Britain now forced the Turkish fleet off the coast of Egypt to admit French reinforcements at Alexandria. In this circumstance alone there was abundant reason for rejecting a demand which was manifestly without justification under the principle of the truce.[133]

The interview between Hammond and Otto occurred on the morning of the 25th.[134] In the course of it Hammond warned Otto that Great Britain would not unduly prolong the armistice even on her own terms, if the general negotiation failed of speedy results. While Hammond thus emphasized the resolute attitude of his Government, Otto showed a marked tendency to further concessions. The point as to Malta Otto practically yielded, after a curious attempt to justify the ten thousand rations by a novel law of gastronomics which proportioned the human appetite to the military rank of its possessor.[135] In the discussion of the other principal issues, Otto maintained his position with some vigour, but when brought to the test by Hammond, ventured only an *opinion* that his Government would not yield, even in the question of the six frigates for Egypt, to which the rupture of the negotiation is usually ascribed. None of these questions—not even that of Malta—was definitely settled at the interview. Otto reserved

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[132] *Corr. Nap.*, VI., 4964, 4 July, 1800.

[133] See Grenville's caustic criticism in his Instructions to Hammond, Letter of 24 Sept. cited above, which Hammond communicated to Otto: "It is natural to ask by what article of the German armistice Ulm or Ingolstadt are to receive in covered waggons as many troops, as much provisions, and as great a quantity of every species of arms, ammunitions, and stores, as might be conveyed to Egypt in six French frigates." France professed to assimilate Alexandria to Ulm and Ingolstadt.

[134] Letter from Hammond to Grenville, 25 Sept., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 39.

[135] Hammond, in letter to Grenville, 25 Sept., just cited: "Otto . . . briefly remarked that the quantity of rations was not to be exactly apportioned to the precise returns of the garrison, but that a certain number of rations in proportion to their respective ranks was to be allowed to the General and Staff Officers."

them for consideration, and in a *résumé* submitted on the 26th[136] he proposed that Malta be supplied at the rate of ten thousand rations per day only for the first month, during which interval commissioners of the two Governments could fix the matter definitely. This offer was within measurable distance of the arrangements desired by Great Britain, but the concession did not affect her attitude on the remaining points of difference. Otto requested a counter *résumé* of Hammond,[137] but the latter in reply merely expressed the regret of his Government that their requirements could not be met, and suggested that the difficulty be referred to Paris.[138]

Otto acted upon this suggestion and, from the trend of the negotiation at this stage, it appears certain that, if the situation at Paris had remained unchanged, Bonaparte would have conceded the points still remote from settlement in order to save Malta. But Malta had capitulated on the 5th of September, and in the interval the news of its fall had reached Paris.[139]

§6. The third stage of the negotiation, Oct 6th-Oct. 9th. Bonaparte's withdrawal from the negotiation on the fall of Malta.

In an interview with Hammond on the 7th of October, Otto reported the answer of his Government: that the relative position of France and Great Britain had been so essentially altered since the last conversation by the events in Germany and the fall of Malta, that further discussion of a maritime truce was useless.[140] In a letter of the 8th, written at Hammond's request,[141] Otto transmitted a formal statement that "the last exchange of notes, and several important events,

[136] Note from Otto, in Otto's letter of 26 Sept., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 41.

[137] Letter from Otto to Hammond, 26 Sept., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 40.

[138] Note from Hammond to Otto, 26 Sept., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 42.

[139] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5120, 30 Sept., 1800.

[140] Letter from Hammond to Grenville, 7 Oct., 1800, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 611.

[141] Letter from Hammond to Otto, 8 Oct., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 45.

on which the professed armistice was to have been established had put an end to the negotiation on foot; but notwithstanding the difficulties in the way of a naval truce, the First Consul was invariably disposed to receive overtures for a separate negotiation between Great Britain and France."[142]

With Malta fallen Bonaparte's interest in a naval truce had disappeared. His offer of separate negotiation Great Britain could not accept at the time; while Austria was true to her alliance at the risk of disaster, Great Britain dared not be false to it in the midst of comparative ease.[143]

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[142] Letter from Otto to Hammond, 8 Oct., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 46.

[143] Letter from Hammond to Otto, 9 Oct., 1800, *Papers of this Negotiation*, no. 47.

CHAPTER III.

Great Britain and France from October, 1800, to the Death of Emperor Paul of Russia, March, 1801.

§ 1. The position of France in October, 1801. Austria and the Battle of Hohenlinden.

If the exact bearing of the situation in Malta upon the naval truce is overlooked, Bonaparte's policy with respect to the latter becomes a mystery. First to offer Great Britain a general negotiation and an extension of the Austrian armistice in return for a naval truce; at the same time to pursue an exactly opposite policy in Vienna; finally to break off the negotiation of the naval truce in London at the moment that its success seemed assured—such a series of acts Grenville might, with every appearance of justice, term the reverse of peaceful.[144] The key to the enigma is the situation in the Mediterranean. It was in the interest of France to negotiate separately with Great Britain and Austria, but in order to save Malta Bonaparte offered to deal with these powers in a general negotiation. When Malta fell, he simply reverted to the old policy of separate negotiations.

In doing this Bonaparte had to reckon with resistance, for Great Britain and Austria, by the alliance of the 20th of June, were bound to insist on a general peace. In the case of Great Britain Bonaparte's means of effecting his purpose was in Portugal. Portugal was a British ally, and her harbours were the only breach in the wall of exclusion raised against

[144] Debate in the Lords on the Earl of Darnley's motion for a Committee on the State of the Nation, 20 March, 1801, *Parl. Hist.* vol. 35, Grenville (col. 1194): "His lordship [*i.e.*, Grenville] next vindicated the language of his correspondence with the French government from the charge of asperity, and contended that Bonaparte never showed a desire for peace, except on grounds on which he knew it could not be accepted. Thus when he knew that we were engaged by treaty with the Emperor, he proposed a separate peace; afterwards he proposed a naval armistice, as the preliminary; and when he found we were likely to agree to it, he broke off the negotiation."

British commerce on the coasts of western Europe. Great Britain in turn had guaranteed the integrity of Portuguese territory, and Bonaparte, seizing the opportunity to reach Great Britain through her ally, in September, 1800, ordered Spain to invade Portugal.[145] But only in the following spring after repeated urging did Spain actually take the field against her neighbour.[146] Austria, on the contrary, was exposed to direct and immediate pressure from France. Moreau's army was massed along the borders of the Emperor's hereditary states, and Bonaparte was determined to effect his purpose if necessary by a winter campaign. In the face of this danger Austria nerved herself for a final effort, but on the 3rd of December her defeat at Hohenlinden destroyed the last elements of resistance in the Imperial states. The Emperor had no choice but submission to France.

§ 2. Bonaparte's secret overture of peace in London, December, 1801. Grenville's reply.

Bonaparte was now in much the same position as he had been after the peace of Campo Formio. He had overcome all opposition upon the continent and was in effect dictator of central and western Europe. But, as in 1797, so now he was unable to strike a direct blow at Great Britain. Against her his position had become even weaker. In the interval since 1797 Great Britain had recovered from her financial embarrassments, she had subdued the Irish revolt, and, as a direct result of Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt, she had reasserted [147] her supremacy in the Mediterranean. Hence Bonaparte, whatever might be his immediate success on the continent, whatever his naval plans for the future, was forced for the moment to seek peace of Great Britain; the news of Hohenlinden had in fact scarcely arrived in Paris, when he again suggested negotiation at London. The overture was made confidentially through

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[145] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5120, 30 Sept., 1800.

[146] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5165, 8 Nov., 1800, and 5258, 7 Jan., 1800; *ibidem*, VII, 5562, 13 May, 1800. Also Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 688-689.

[147] Great Britain, on withdrawing from Corsica in 1796, also withdrew her fleets from all points in the Mediterranean east of Gibraltar.

Perregaux and Auckland, and its contents are not before us, but a bare outline of it may be reconstructed from Grenville's reply. It criticized the action of the British Government in interfering with the Austro-French negotiation and in laying the papers of the recent unsuccessful negotiation in London before Parliament—both measures, according to the overture, being of a character to block pacification—and it broached the question of peace so definitely that Grenville in answering asked for the terms which France was prepared to offer.

Grenville's reply is in the form of a letter to Auckland of the 26th of December.[148] At that time the disaster of Hohenlinden was known in England, but not in its details. A fuller account was first received on the 29th of December;[149] and the subsequent disasters, with the resolution taken by Austria on the 22nd to open a separate negotiation with France, were reported in London only in January.[150] Hence Grenville, in his reply of the 26th, adhered to the basis of the Austro-British alliance, although the latter was then in fact dissolved. In answer to the criticism of British policy Grenville explained that the publication of the papers relating to the recent negotiation, of which France complained, was unavoidable under British constitutional usage; the papers of every *unsuccessful* negotiation of peace must be laid before Parliament. Grenville further deprecated the suspicion entertained of Great Britain's efforts to promote a joint negotiation; at the same time, however, he owned to a like feeling on the part of his own Government that the policy of France had aimed at the complete

[148] Letter from Grenville to Auckland, 26 Dec., 1800, Appendix B, I, p. 76 *infra*.

[149] Minto's despatch to Grenville, 7 Dec., 1800, received at London on the 22 Dec., reports the defeat but no particulars; the despatch, from Minto to Grenville, 16 Dec., 1800, with an opinion on the consequences of the defeat, was received in London on the 29 Dec., London, P.R.O., *Austria*, vol. 61.

[150] Despatch from Minto to Grenville, 22 Dec., 1800, London, P.R.O., *Austria*, vol. 61.

isolation of Great Britain from continental Europe.[151] As the best means of overcoming this mutual suspicion, Grenville suggested that France should lay her terms of peace before Great Britain in a confidential communication, authentic but not official, since the failure of such steps, if official, placed a British Government under the necessity of laying the correspondence before Parliament. If the Government at Paris felt sufficient confidence in the London Cabinet to take the step suggested, Great Britain, Grenville declared, would welcome it, and if the terms offered were consistent with her engagements to her allies and with her own naval interests, she would discuss the matter at Vienna and bring it to a point where a general congress, if convened at all, would be a mere formality.

§ 3. Great Britain threatened by Russia and the Armed Neutrality. Bonaparte reverses his policy toward Great Britain.

Auckland embodied this answer in a letter to Perregaux, which the latter laid before the French Government. Bonaparte took no notice of it.[152] A sufficient explanation of this might perhaps be found in the circumstance that Grenville in his reply had again suggested a general peace—a proposal which was without hope of acceptance at Paris; but there was an additional and weightier reason for Bonaparte's silence.

[151] This feeling was not an idle suspicion. See the interesting passage in Bonaparte's Bulletin of the Army, 18 June 1800, *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 4927: "La Belgique fera partie du territoire du grand peuple. La Batavie et l'Espagne réunies d' intérêts et de passions, redoubleront d' efforts contre les tyrans des mers, et l'Anglais, exilé six mois de l'année sur son île, devra attendre que l'Elbe soit débarrassé de ses glaces pour avoir des nouvelles du continent. L'Angleterre deviendra, par son arrogance, sa vénalité, sa corruption, l'opprobre et le mépris du Français, comme de l'Autrichien et du Russe." Also Bonaparte's letter to the Emperor of Russia, 27 Feb., 1801, *Corr. Nap.*, VII, 5417: "Si Votre Majesté tient la main à ce que les Anglais ne fassent aucun commerce avec les puissances du nord, si le corps de M. de Sprengporten se porte dans le Hanovre pour ne mettre aucune espèce de doute à la fermeture de l'Elbe et du Weser, un corps d'observation que j' ai envoyé à Bordeaux forçant le Portugal à fermer ses ports à l'Angleterre, et ceux de Naples et de la Sicile leur étant également fermés, les Anglais n'auront aucune communication avec l' Europe."

[152] Letters from Auckland to Grenville, 5 Jan., and 3 Feb., 1801; from Perregaux to Auckland, 16 Jan., 1801. Appendix B, II, III, IV, pp. 76-78 *infra*.

When he received the reply he no longer desired peace with Great Britain. Bonaparte, we have seen, had sought a temporary peace with Great Britain in order to reopen the contest when once he felt able to cope with her at sea, but at this moment a movement in the states of northern and eastern Europe suddenly threatened Britain's maritime supremacy. In the previous winter the Tsar Paul had abandoned his alliance with both Austria and Great Britain in disgust and anger: subsequently when Great Britain refused to give up Malta,[153] which Paul claimed as Grand Master of the Knights of St. John,[154] he determined finally to take action against her. Encouraged by Bonaparte,[155] he created the Armed Neutrality of the North, a league composed of Russia, Prussia and the Scandinavian powers, with the object of compelling Great Britain to relax the rights of blockade and of search, then exercised by her in a very extreme form to the great annoyance of neutrals. As Great Britain was determined to continue her practice in these matters, war with the Armed Neutrality

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[153] *i.e.*, after the French garrison in Malta capitulated to Great Britain in September, 1800.

[154] Paul's election to the office was illegal and the Order itself was in fact defunct, but Great Britain, when still in alliance with Paul, had shown a disposition to recognize his claim. Naturally she ceased to do so, after he had given up his alliance with her and manifested an inclination to become her enemy. Bonaparte on the contrary, when his own hold upon Malta was on the very verge of extinction, by a clever stroke of policy, offered to surrender the fortress to Paul, as Grand Master of the Order. On this offer see the note from Talleyrand to Panin, 26 Aug., 1800, Tratschevski, *Russia and France*, I, 3, (Paper No. 2.)

[155] *Corr. Nap.*, VI, 5208, 7 Dec., 1800, a note to be sent to allied and friendly powers: . . . "le Gouvernement français, ayant principalement à coeur de s'opposer à l'envahissement des mers et de concourir avec les autres puissances neutres à faire respecter leurs pavillons, et appréciant le zèle vraiment patriotique de l'Empereur de Russie pour la cause commune de toutes les puissances continentales, ne traitera de la paix avec l'Angleterre qu'autant que ces principes sacrés seraient reconnus, et que les pavillons russe, danois, suédois, américain, prussien, seraient respectés sur mer, comme les armes de ces puissances le sont sur le continent, et qu'il serait reconnu par l'Angleterre que le mer appartient à toutes les nations."

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

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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 . . . brusquer, car la paix avec l'Empereur [*i.e.*, German] n'est rien en comparaison d'une alliance qui maitrisera 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.

forced Austria into a separate peace.[160] The chief hindrance to a settlement, Pitt felt, was the presence of the French in Egypt.[161] Another obstacle to peace was the disagreement as to its desirability among the members of his own Cabinet.[162] But when Austria signed her separate peace with France at Lunéville on the 9th of February, 1801, the second of these difficulties was solved, and the other was well on its way to solution. In the interval the Abercromby expedition, which finally expelled the French from Egypt in the following summer, had been organized and was in the Levant; and the obstacle to peace within Pitt's Cabinet had disappeared. In the beginning of February Pitt had resigned on the question of the Catholic tests, and his friend and successor, Addington,

[160] Letter from Pitt to Addington, 8 Oct., 1800, *Life and Corr. of Lord Sidmouth*, I, 263: "The negotiation for an armistice is at an end . . . . An opening is left which will remove all difficulty or awkwardness in setting on foot a negotiation, if Austria makes a separate peace, which I rather expect. And I am inclined to think in that event, if we are firm, and our domestic difficulties do not increase, we may secure creditable and adequate terms. But as long as Austria does not withdraw and submit to a separate peace and France refuses joint negotiation, we cannot yield to that pretension by making it our act to separate ourselves from our ally."

[161] Letter of Pitt to Addington, 29 Sept., 1800, *Life and Corr. of Lord Sidmouth*, I, 262.

[162] See the statement on this point submitted by Dundas to Pitt, 22 Sept., 1800, Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, II, 367: "Some of us think that the only solid hope of peace lies in the restoration of the Bourbons. Some, without going so far, think that there should be no peace with a Revolutionary Government, and that the present Government of France is such. Some are for negotiating with the present Government of France, but only in conjunction with the Emperor of Germany. Some are for negotiating on our own foundation singly, with a just sense of our dignity and honour, and of the conquests we have made outside of Europe" . . . . Dundas after observing that these differences are not theoretical, but practical, presenting themselves in every discussion either on the prosecution of the war or the prospect of peace, concludes the statement thus: "It is earnestly hoped that Mr. Pitt will take these observations into his most serious consideration before it is too late." Lord Stanhope adds the opinion: "From this statement it certainly appears that Pitt might find it requisite to make some changes in the Cabinet, before he could hope to renew the negotiation with effect." The question has occurred to me whether this opposition of an influential section of the Cabinet to Pitt's views of peace may not have been a subsidiary factor in his resignation in February, 1801.

who accepted office by Pitt's advice[163] and with a pledge of the latter's personal support,[164] immediately re-opened negotiations with France. It is difficult to regard this step as other than the direct continuation of the policy of Pitt, since the latter assisted by advice in the course of the negotiations and towards the end even conducted them himself.[165] Pitt resigned in the beginning of February, but the illness of King George delayed his actual departure from office till the 14th of March; on the 21st Lord Hawkesbury, Grenville's successor at the Foreign Office, made an official overture of peace to Otto.[166] Before taking this step Hawkesbury had sounded the Government at Paris as to whether negotiations would be acceptable at the moment.[167] The answer of course was favourable, but in reality negotiation at the time was not in the interests of France, and at Paris there was no intention of entering into the matter seriously. France, in consequence of her recent victories and of the newly-won friendship of the Tsar, was now in a position of exceptional strength on the continent and was even making headway against Great Britain. She had dictated terms of peace to Austria at Lunéville. In Italy her armies had occupied the Kingdom of Naples and closed its ports to Great Britain.[168] A similar movement was on foot against Portugal,[169] and Sardinia on seeking peace was required, as a preliminary of negotiation, to open her ports to French, and to close them to British vessels.[170] Prussia finally, yielding to Russian pressure, was on the point of occupying

[163] *Diaries and Corr.* of George Rose, I, 291.

[164] Malmesbury, *Diaries and Corr.*, IV, 75 (20 Oct., 1802).

[165] Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, III, 27.

[166] Notes from Hawkesbury to Otto, 20 and 21 March, 1801, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 622.

[167] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 684.

[168] *Corr. Nap.*, VII, 5413, 25 Feb., 1801; *ibid.*, 5430, 2 March, 1801.

[169] *Corr. Nap.*, VII, 5417, 27 Feb., 1801; *ibid.*, 5562, 13 May, 1801; Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 688-689.

[170] *Corr. Nap.*, VII, 5468, 18 March, 1801.

Hanover[171] and excluding Great Britain from Hamburg, Bremen and the entire North German coast. Great Britain's isolation was complete, and even at sea her prospects for the moment were not of the best. Parker and Nelson with a powerful fleet were on their way to the Baltic to attack the Northern powers, but this fleet would be operating in enemies' waters without a base of supplies, and a reverse, if it did not destroy, would seriously impair Britain's commanding position at sea. Hence Bonaparte, just as Pitt in a similar position had rejected negotiation in January, 1800, now felt it to be in the interest of France to continue a struggle which offered prospects of speedy success. Still the French Government did not reject negotiation outright; in response to Hawkesbury's official overture of the 21st of March, it requested passports for a French courier who should bear its reply to London.[172] By this means Bonaparte could inform Otto of his real attitude towards negotiation without revealing it to Great Britain;[173] moreover a delay of six days was gained, the answer to the overture being presented to Hawkesbury only after this double communication between Paris and London, on the 2nd of April.[174] In presenting it Otto desired a pledge of secrecy on the negotiation, which Hawkesbury gave without difficulty.[175] The negotiation at London, if it became

[171] Note from Bonaparte to the Emperor of Russia, 27 Feb., 1801, *Corr. Nap.*, VII, 5417; Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, 34, Note 2.

[172] Notes from Otto to Hawkesbury and from Hawkesbury to Otto, 27 March, 1801, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 622.

[173] At this period governments tampered systematically with diplomatic correspondence forwarded by the ordinary mails. See *e.g.*, Bonaparte's directions to his aide-de-camp, Duroc, *Corr. Nap.*, VII, 5545, 24 April, 1801: "Vous écrirez par tous les courriers, soit de Berlin, soit de Pétersbourg, comme si vos lettres devaient être lues par l'Empereur et tous ses ministres, et par le roi de Prusse et tous ses ministres."

[174] Note from Otto to Hawkesbury, 2 April, 1800, Appendix C *infra*.

[175] Sybel, *Geschichte der Revolutionszeit*, V, 684. The secret was in fact already known, *e.g.*, to the Prussian Minister at Paris, Lucchesini, who however was an adept at discovering what other people did not wish him to know; see Bericht Lucchesinis, 2 April, 1801, Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, 36. In London Lord Malmesbury had heard of the negotiation, prior however to Hawkesbury's pledge; see Malmesbury, *Diaries, &c.*, IV, 50, (23 March, 1801).

known to the Northern powers, would be sufficient to break up the Armed Neutrality, since the latter looked to France for support. Bonaparte may have suspected that Great Britain had timed her overture with a view to this end; at least his reply, though formally courteous, is supercilious throughout, and at points it is even sarcastic. He desired to know, in view of the British expedition to the Baltic and of the attack meditated by the continental powers on Hanover and Portugal, what advantage could be derived from an *ostentatious* negotiation begun in the face of fresh causes of exasperation, with no understanding as to the principles on which the negotiation should be based. He disapproved of opening a negotiation without a maritime truce, or, if the obstacles to the latter were greater than those opposed to peace itself, without at least some general basis of the proposed peace. In short without bluntly rejecting conciliation he does not welcome it, and the tenour of the note is an ill-concealed determination not to thwart the struggle in the Baltic and upon the continent by a premature negotiation.

§ 5. The death of the Tsar and the dissolution of the Armed Neutrality. The significance of Paul's death in the career of Bonaparte.

But meanwhile the Neutrality, on which Bonaparte built such large hopes, had run its course. On the 2nd of April Nelson destroyed the Danish fleet at Copenhagen, and even this battle was fought by Denmark for a cause already lost. On the night of the 23rd-24th March the Tsar Paul had been murdered at St. Petersburg, and with him disappeared the League of which he had been the essential support. The report of Paul's death reached Paris on the 12th of April.[176] Talleyrand carried it to Bonaparte. The latter, it is said, when he heard it, for the first and only time in his life so far lost his self-possession that he gave utterance to a sharp and involuntary cry of despair.[177] The occasion was worthy of it, for this moment marks the close of the most brilliant

[176] Bericht Lucchesinis, 17 April, 1801, Bailleu, *Preussen und Frankreich*, II, 38.

[177] Bignon, *Histoire de France*, p. 114.

and hopeful stage of his career. In his contest with Great Britain Bonaparte needed the support of Europe, in particular that of Russia; and at no time did he have it so thoroughly as in the days of the Armed Neutrality. In this period Holland, Spain, and Italy were in effect vassal states of France; Austria was crushed into absolute submission; Prussia, caught between Russia and France, could not resist their united will; Paul himself had voluntarily sought an alliance with Bonaparte and carried the Northern powers with him in an effort to challenge Great Britain's position at sea. This situation, which Bonaparte had built up by skilful manipulation of the whims of the Tsar, ceased with Paul's death, never to recur in its entirety. Bonaparte was forced to enter into a temporary naval peace, and when this was broken by Great Britain in 1803, France, with the support of her immediate neighbours, resumed the contest only to learn at Trafalgar that these efforts at sea were hopeless. With the death of Paul the possibility—it was little more—of crushing Great Britain by a direct attack had passed away.

§ 6. Conclusion: the Peace of Amiens.

It may appear strange that this sketch of the circumstances leading to the Peace of Amiens should end at the point where the stage of successful negotiation first begins. There is some justification for it. At this moment Great Britain and France were nearer conciliation than they were at the signature of the Preliminaries of London (October, 1801) or at the definitive Peace of Amiens (March, 1802). This peace contained the seeds of its own rupture; in the negotiation of it, Bonaparte had taken advantage of Addington's weakness to press him into terms of which the nation in the end did not approve.

The conduct of the negotiation by Addington and Hawkesbury may be termed, without injustice to them, a record of incapacity. Point after point they yielded to France without exacting equivalent concessions from her. Only in September, when Pitt took a continuous interest in the negotiation, did this process cease, and Otto, recognizing at once a firmer

tone in his opponents, hastily came to terms. The Preliminaries thus concluded converted a drawn fight into a British defeat. Of her numerous, almost numberless, conquests in the Mediterranean, in the Indies, and in America, Great Britain retained only Trinidad and Ceylon. The remainder, including the strategic positions of the Cape, Minorca, and Malta she surrendered, although in the case of Malta it was necessary first to *create* an owner to whose keeping it might be committed. Pitt was not satisfied with these Preliminaries, but he supported them, and he also supported the subsequent peace, although in the interval between them Bonaparte's aggressive policy in the newly-created Italian republics had taught Pitt that his experiment at conciliation was a failure, and that the peace, in spite of the sacrifices made by Great Britain to obtain it, could not be lasting.

The nation first reached this conviction later. The peace of Amiens, in spite of its defects, was received in Great Britain with a blind enthusiasm. So great was the rejoicing in London that, on the arrival of Bonaparte's aide-de-camp, Lauriston, with the ratification of the treaty, the populace removed the horses from his carriage and drew him in triumph through the streets of the metropolis. In connection with these rejoicings Lord Minto has recorded an incident at once amusing and significant.[178] Among the illuminations and mottoes with which Otto decorated his residence in honour of the restoration of peace, there occurred the word "concorde," which the mob in its ignorance mistook for "conquered." They made Otto alter it. "It was too near the truth," Minto adds, in relating the incident, "to be told by him." And looking only to the previous stage of the contest with France, as Minto of necessity did, his comment, though bitter, is just; but the incident, if viewed in the light of subsequent events, gains a higher significance. *The mob carried its point.* Even so the

[178] In a letter to his wife, 23 April, 1802, Minto, *Life and Letters &c.*, III, 247.

nation, of which they were but sorry representatives, when once conscious of its real position shrank from no sacrifice in order to better it. When Bonaparte's aggressive policy and commercial exclusiveness convinced Great Britain that the Peace of Amiens was but the stepping-stone to a wider conflict, she refused even to fulfil her pledges in that treaty, and preferring to choose her own time rather than to abide his, she at once re-opened a burdensome contest, for which she was still, and he not yet, prepared. The wisdom of the choice was vindicated at Trafalgar, at Leipsic, and at Waterloo.

APPENDIX A.—*Great Britain and the French Royalists.*

Extracts from the Reports in the records of the Foreign Office, London, on the strength of the Royalist Insurgents in France in January and February, 1800, and on the assistance rendered them by the British Government from August, 1799, to February, 1800.—London P. R. O., *France*, vol. 612.

I.—Report of M. de la Chaussée, Commissioner of the King (Louis XVIII.) on the Royalist forces in the west of France on the 20th of January, 1800. Received at London, 2 Feb., 1800.

Forces available:

		Infantry.	Cavalry.
Divisions of	d' Autichamp	....	....
	Chatillon	8,000	150
	Georges	16,000	200
	La Prevalaye	3,000	100
	Bourmont	8,000	300
	Frotté	4,000	....
	Mercier	2,500	....
		41,500	750

II.—Woodford to John Frere, Vauxhall, 7 Feb., 1800.

The Royalist forces (Woodford is reporting only from recollection of his conversation with d' Autichamp on the 1st of February) are distributed as follows:

	Infantry.	Cavalry.
d' Autichamp	18,000	600
Georges	24,000	150
Chatillon	12,000	....
Bourmont	9,000	450
Frotté	3,000	....
La Prevalaye	3,000	....
Mercier	1,800	....
	70,800	1,200

To help equip these forces Great Britain has sent 48,000 stand of arms, of which however 20,000 are not yet landed.

Of the money appropriated for the Royalists by Great Britain there is:

£10,000 at St. Marcou.
10,000 at Jersey.
26,000 at Portsmouth.
70,000 (*circa*) at Plymouth and Falmouth.

£116,000

£60,000 had been sent to Georges, £6,000 to Frotté, and about £4,000, or at most £5,000 to others.

III.—Report of M. de la Chaussée to the King (Louis XVIII.) on the Royalist forces in the west of France, 15 February, 1800. Received at Foreign Office, London, 18 Feb., 1800.

Forces available: 56,500 infantry, 1,450 cavalry, and 110 artillery.

Received from England between August, 1799, and February, 1800:

Money	£75,000
Muskets	21,000 (*circa*)
Powder	60,000 (? lbs.) in barrels and cartridges.
Carbines	1,800
Pistols	500 pair.

Appendix B.—*Correspondence relating to Bonaparte's secret overture to Britain in December, 1800.*

I.—Letter from Grenville to Auckland, 26 Dec., 1800, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 612 (Draft.)

Private. Cleveland Row, Dec. 26th, 1800.

My Dear Lord,—I am much obliged to you for your communication. We agree in regretting that the real views of this government are so little understood at Paris, where they do not seem to be aware that the publication of the late papers (of which I understand they principally complain) was unavoidable under our constitution unless there had been a nearer prospect of peace.

It was a great error, if it was really believed there, that the effect of our intervention in the Austrian negotiation would have been to retard its conclusion, on any reasonable terms. We judged on the other hand that the object they had in view was to separate England entirely from the continent: and it cannot be wondered at that our opposition to this should be steady and determined.

It often happens that war is thus prolonged by mutual distrust, long after the parties are both sincerely desirous of peace. The best way to avoid this in the present instance would be by direct and confidential communication. If through some channel sufficiently authentic to be relied on (but not such as to commit the two governments by official steps, which, if unsuccessful, we are always obliged to make public) we could be apprized of the ideas entertained at Paris, as to the terms of peace, it would enable us to judge whether negotiation can at this moment be successfully pursued. And if those ideas, so stated to us, were not inconsistent with our good faith to our allies, nor with our naval interests, to which the continental aggrandizement of France obliges us to look with increased attention, we should be ready (could sufficient confidence be placed in us for the purpose) to discuss these ideas at Vienna, and to endeavour to bring the whole to such a point that the nomination of ministers to a congress, whether it afterward took place or not, would be a mere formality.

I think we are not unreasonable in desiring to receive this confidential overture, instead of our beginning to make it; because we could not take such a step without committing ourselves, both with the country here and with our allies—while no such difficulty exists at Paris. And I am very certain that, although this may not be the only road to peace, it is the surest and the most expeditious.

G.

Right Hon. Lord Auckland.

II.—Letter from Auckland to Grenville, 5th January, 1801, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 614. (Original.)

Private. Palace Yard, January 5th, 1801.

My dear Lord,—. . . Second—Mr. Nettement (a friend of Perregaux's) came to me on Saturday. He did not appear to have any suspicion of

the contents of Perregaux's letter to me; but he told me that Perregaux had frequent and friendly access to Bonaparte, and is one of the Senators, and in that capacity is sure to receive his letters unopened. I did not hesitate therefore to write fully . . . In answer to the paragraph from Perregaux, after a very few words of general introduction, I transcribed, but without allusion to your name, the whole of your letter. Upon the whole, if his intimation had any meaning, I am sure that we have taken the best mode to bring that meaning forward; and at all events no possible inconvenience can ensue . . .

AD.

III.—Letter from Auckland to Grenville, 3rd February, 1801, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 614. (Original.)

Private. PALACE YARD, February 3rd, 1801.

MY DEAR LORD,—I have received from Mr. Perregaux a letter of the 16th January in reply to mine of the 2nd. Mr. Perregaux writes as follows: (*here follow extracts from No. IV. infra.—H. M. B.*)

You will recolleet that the Austrian catastrophe was not known here till three or four days after my letter to Perregaux and that in my private communication I had dwelt strongly on its being the decided and evident line of the King's Ministers to maintain the strictest and most scrupulous honour toward Austria, and to have her entire concurrence so long as the alliance might last.

It is likely enough that the overwhelming of Austria may have induced Bonaparte to suspend all attempts towards a separate pacification with us. But I infer from Mr. Perregaux's reply, that his first letter certainly was an overture the result of which he was expected to report and has reported to Bonaparte. It further appears that he considers the subject as open to farther communication though in that case he would decline being the bearer in person.

To this I should add that Mr. Nettement (the friend of Mr. Perregaux) on Sunday left a note at my house to say, "Qu'il a l'honneur de prévenir Lord Auckland que son départ pour Paris aura lieu au commencement de la semaine prochaine, et qu'il prendra ses ordres."

Under these circumstances your Lordship, in your better judgment, and with the knowledge of collateral points unknown to me, will decide whether any further notice should be taken . . .

AUCKLAND.

On reading the above I think it best to annex the original notes from Perregaux and Nettement.

IV.—Letter from Perregaux to Auckland, 16th January, 1801 (enclosed in letter from Auckland to Grenville, 3rd February) London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 614. (Original.)

The 16th January, 1801.

My Lord,—Your kind letter of the 2nd of this month reached me the 10th

. . .

I took an opportunity to mention your letter and lay its contents where it could be appreciated; I have had no tidings of my communication since.

My occupation and situation bind me here, though my health and head call for diversion, and howsoever useful and agreeable a trip would be to *me*, *I* (*a*) must renounce to it.

J. F. Perregaux.

(*a*) The italicised words 'me' and 'I' are underlined in the originals, but it appears likely that the underlining was done by Auckland, not by Perregaux.

APPENDIX C.—*The reply of the French Government to Hawkesbury's overture in March, 1801.*

Note from Otto, delivered at the Foreign Office, 2nd April, 1801, London, P. R. O., *France*, vol. 622. (Original.)

Le soussigné a communiqué à son Gouvernement la note de Son Excellence Mylord Hawkesbury du 21 Mars.

Le Premier Consul persiste dans son amour constant pour la paix et le soussigné est spécialement chargé de faire connoître la vive satisfaction, que le Premier Consul a éprouvée en voyant que le Cabinet Britannique se montroit disposé à mettre un terme au fléau qui désole l'Europe depuis huit années entières.

La campagne commence; les flottes de Sa Majesté Britannique paroissent prêtes à porter la guerre au sein de la Baltique. Les puissances continentales sont en disposition d'attaquer le Portugal et le Hanovre.

Comment au milieu de tous ces apprêts de guerre et de ces nouveaux motifs d' exaspération espérer quelque heureux résultat d' une négociation d' apparat, commencée sans être d' accord sur les premières bases?

Ne seroit-il plus naturel de faire précéder toute négociation par une suspension d' hostilités en convenant des articles d' une trêve générale, ou si les obstacles à une suspension d' armes maritime paroissent plus faciles à lever que ceux qui s' opposent au rétablissement même de la paix, ne seroit-il pas au moins convenable de s' entendre préalablement sur les bases de celle-ci?

Le soussigné a les Pleinpouvoirs et les instructions nécessaires pour donner à Mylord Hawkesbury les explications ultérieures que Son Excellence pourra désirer.

Le Premier Consul regardera comme le plus beau jour celui, où le commerce de l' Europe pourra jouir sans inquiétude de la prospérité, résultat infaillible de la paix des mers.

Hereford Street, 12 germinal an 9,
2 avril 1801.

OTTO.