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A
HISTORY
OF THE
POLITICAL LIFE
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM PITT.

VOL. IV.

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A
HISTORY
OF THE
POLITICAL LIFE
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM PITT;
INCLUDING SOME ACCOUNT OF
THE TIMES IN WHICH HE LIVED.

By JOHN GIFFORD, Esq.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

NEC SIBI, SED TOTI GENITUM SE CREDERE MUNDO.

LUCAN.

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 Mr. Burke, respecting the object of the war---Confutes
 Mr. Fox's charge of insincerity, in the attempt to open a
 negotiation for peace---Resolutions negatived by 216
 votes against 42---Parliament dissolved---Military opera-
 tions on the Continent---Renewal of hostilities on the
 Rhine---Amount of the respective forces of the Austrians
 and French, at the opening of the campaign---Object of
 the French, on the invasion of Germany---Battle on the
 Sieg---Battle of Altenkirchen---Retreat of the Austrians
 ---The Archduke Charles joins the army, defeats the
 French, and drives them back behind the Lahn---General
 Kray, with 11,000 men, beats 25,000 French, under
 Kleber---The French retreat to Dusseldorf---Operations on
 the Upper Rhine---Wurmser detached to Italy with
 30,000 men---Superiority of the French---Moreau takes
 the fort of Kehl---Cowardice of the Suabian troops---
 Moreau crosses the Rhine, and enters Germany, with
 80,000 men---Defeats the Austrians under Latour, on the

Murg--The Archduke takes the command of the troops on the Upper Rhine---Battle of Ettlingen---Retreat of the Imperialists---Battle of Mettingen---The French advance into Bavaria---Masterly plan of the Archduke---He marches against Jourdan's army---Jourdan retreats---The Archduke prevents his junction with Moreau---Defeats him at Kornach---Jourdan's army is dispersed, and driven beyond the Rhine---Operations on the Danube---Moreau defeated---Peace between France and Bavaria---Moreau retreats---Displays great skill and ability---Imprudent conduct of the Austrian Generals---The French re-cross the Rhine---Siege and recapture of Fort Kehl by the Austrians---Campaign in Italy---Relative forces of the Belligerent powers---Battles of Montenotte and Montelezino, Dego, and Vico---Retreat of the Allies---Peace between France and Sardinia---Retreat of the Austrians---The French cross the Po---Battle of Lodi---The French pass the Mincio---Enter Leghorn---Besiege Mantua---Wurmser arrives in Italy---Siege of Mantua raised---Austrians defeated in various actions---Wurmser retreats into the Tyrol---Battle of Rovaredo---Action at Bassano---Wurmser arrives at Mantua---Peace between Naples and France---A fresh army of Austrians, under Generals Alvinzy and Davidovich, enter Italy---Battle of Fonteviva---Battle of Arcole, and retreat of Alvinzy---Battle near Verona---Defeat of the Austrians at Rivoli and Corona---They retreat into the Tyrol---Mantua surrendered to the French---Peace between France and the Pope---Termination of the campaign---Examination into the causes of the defeat of the Austrians, and the success of the French---Treachery of the Austrian officers---Falsehood of Buonaparte's reports to the Directory---Loss of either army during the campaign---Impolitic restrictions imposed on the Austrian Commanders, by the Aulic Council of War---Evil effects of such a system.

APPENDIX A.

“ That an address be presented to his Majesty, most humbly to offer to his royal consideration, that judgment which his faithful Commons have formed, and now deem it their duty to declare, concerning the conduct of his ministers in the commencement and during the progress, of the present unfortunate war. As long as it was possible for us to doubt from what source the national distresses had arisen, we have, in times of difficulty and peril, thought ourselves bound to strengthen his Majesty's government for the protection of his subjects, by our confidence and support. But our duties, as his Majesty's councillors, and as the representatives of his people, will no longer permit us to dissemble our deliberate and determined opinion, that the distress, difficulty, and peril, to which this country is now subjected, have arisen from the misconduct of the King's ministers, and are likely to subsist and increase, as long as the same principles which have hitherto guided these ministers, shall continue to prevail in the councils of Great Britain.

“ It is painful for us to remind his Majesty of the situation of his dominions at the beginning of the war, and of the high degree of prosperity to which the skill and industry of his subjects had, under the safeguard of a free constitution, raised the British empire, since it can only fill his mind with the melancholy recollection of prosperity abused, and of opportunities of securing permanent advantages wantonly rejected. Nor shall we presume to wound his Majesty's benevolence by dwelling on the fortunate circumstances which might have arisen from the mediation of Great Britain between the powers then at war, which might have ensured the permanence of our prosperity, while it preserved all Europe from the calamities which it has since endured. A mediation which this kingdom was so well fitted to carry on with vigour and dignity, by its power, its character, and the nature of its government, happily removed at an equal distance from the contending extremes of licentiousness and tyranny.

“ From this neutral and impartial system of policy his Majesty's ministers were induced to depart by certain measures of the French government, of which they complained as injurious and hostile to this country. With what justice those complaints were made, we are not now called upon to determine, since it cannot be pretended, that the measures of France were of such a nature as to preclude the possibility of adjustment by negotiation; and is impossible to deny, that the power which shuts up the channel of accommodation, must be the real aggressor in war. To reject negotiation is to determine on hostilities.

and, whatever may have been the nature of the points in question, between us and France, we cannot but pronounce the refusal of such an authorised communication with that country as might have amicably terminated the dispute, to be the true and immediate cause of the rupture which followed.

“ Nor can we forbear to remark, that the pretences under which his Majesty’s ministers then haughtily refused such authorised communication, have been sufficiently exposed by their own conduct, in since submitting to a similar intercourse with the same government.

“ The misguided policy which thus rendered the war inevitable, appears to have actuated ministers in their determination to continue it at all hazards. At the same time, we cannot but observe, that the obstinacy with which they have adhered to their desperate system is not more remarkable than their versatility in the pretext upon which they have justified it. At one period the strength, at another the weakness, of the enemy, have been urged as motives for continuing the war; the successes, as well as the defeats of the allies have contributed only to prolong the contest; and hope and despair have equally served to involve us still deeper in the horrors of war, and to entail upon us an endless train of calamities. After the original professed objects had been obtained by the expulsion of the French armies from the territories of Holland, and the Austrian Netherlands, we find his Majesty’s ministers, influenced either by arrogance, or infatuated by ambition, and vain hope of conquests, which, if realized, could never compensate to the nation for the blood and treasure by which they must be obtained, rejecting, unheard, the overtures made by the executive council of France, at a period when the circumstances were so eminently favourable to his Majesty, and his allies, that there is every reason to suppose, that a negotiation, commenced at such a juncture, must have terminated in an honourable and advantageous peace: to the prospects arising from such an opportunity they preferred a blind, and obstinate, perseverance in a war, which could scarce have any remaining object but the unjustifiable purpose of imposing upon France a government disapproved of by the inhabitants of that country. And such was the infatuation of these ministers, that, far from being able to frame a wise and comprehensive system of policy, they even rejected the few advantages that belonged to their own unfortunate scheme. The general existence of a design to interfere in the internal government of France was too manifest not to rouse into active hostility the national zeal of that people: but their particular projects were too equivocal to attract the confidence, or procure the co-operation, of those Frenchmen who were disaffected to the government of their country. The nature of these plans was too clear not to provoke formidable

enemies, but their extent was too ambiguous to conciliate useful friends.

“ We beg leave farther to represent to your Majesty, that, at subsequent periods, your ministers have suffered the most favourable opportunities to escape, of obtaining an honourable and advantageous pacification. They did not avail themselves, as it was their duty to have done, of the united strength of the general confederacy which had been formed against France, for the purpose of giving effect to overtures for negotiation. They saw the secession of several powerful states from that confederacy, they suffered it to dissolve without an effort for the attainment of general pacification. They loaded their country with the odium of having engaged it in a combination charged with the most questionable and unjustifiable views, without availing themselves of that combination for procuring favourable conditions of peace. That, from this fatal neglect, the progress of hostilities has only served to establish the evils which might certainly have been avoided by negotiation, but which are now confirmed by the event of the war. We have felt that the unjustifiable and impracticable efforts to establish royalty in France, by force, have only proved fatal to its unfortunate supporters. We have seen, with regret, the subjugation of Holland, and the aggrandizement of the French republic; and we have to lament the alteration in the state of Europe, not only from the successes of the French, but from the formidable acquisitions of some of the allied powers on the side of Poland, acquisitions alarming from their magnitude, but still more so from the manner in which they have been made, thus fatally learning, that the war has tended alone to establish the very evils for the prevention of which it was avowedly undertaken.

“ That we now therefore approach his Majesty to assure him, that his faithful Commons heard, with the sincerest satisfaction, his Majesty's most gracious Message, of the 8th of December, wherein his majesty acquaints them, that the crisis which was depending, at the commencement of the present session, had led to such an order of things, as would induce his Majesty to meet any disposition to negotiation on the part of the enemy, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect, and to conclude a general treaty of peace, whenever it could be effected on just and equitable terms, for himself and his allies.

“ That from this gracious communication, they were led to hope for a speedy determination to this most disastrous contest, but that, with surprise and sorrow, they have now reason to apprehend, that three months were suffered to elapse before any steps were taken towards a negotiation, or any overtures made by his Majesty's servants.

“ With equal surprise and concern they have observed, when a fair and open conduct was so peculiarly incumbent on his Majesty's ministers, considering the prejudices and suspicions which their previous conduct must have excited in the

minds of the French; that, instead of adopting the open and manly manner which became the wisdom, the character, and the dignity of the British nation, they adopted a mode calculated rather to excite suspicion, than to inspire confidence in the enemy. Every expression which might be construed into an acknowledgment of the French republic, or even an allusion to its forms, were studiously avoided; and the minister, through whom this overture was made, was, in a most unprecedented manner, instructed to declare, that he had no authority to enter into any negotiation or discussion, relative to the objects of the proposed treaty.

That it is with pain we reflect that the alacrity of his Majesty's ministers, in apparently breaking off this incipient negotiation, as well as the strange and unusual manner in which it was announced to the ministers of the various powers of Europe, affords a very unfavourable comment on their reluctance in entering upon it, and is calculated to make the most injurious impression respecting their sincerity on the people of France. On a review of many instances of gross and flagrant misconduct, proceeding from the same pernicious principles, and directed with incorrigible obstinacy to the same mischievous ends, we deem ourselves bound in duty to his Majesty, and to our constituents, to declare, that we see no rational hope of redeeming the affairs of the kingdom, but by the adoption of a system radically and fundamentally different from that which has produced our present calamities. Until his Majesty's ministers shall, from a real conviction of past errors, appear inclined to regulate their conduct upon such a system, we can neither give any credit to the sincerity of their professions of a wish for peace, nor repose any confidence in their capacity for conducting a negotiation to a prosperous issue. Odious as they are to an enemy, who must still believe them strictly to cherish those unprincipled and chimerical projects which they have been compelled in public to disavow, contemptible in the eyes of all Europe from the display of insincerity and incapacity which has marked their conduct, our only hopes rest on his Majesty's royal wisdom, and unquestioned affection for his people, that he will be graciously pleased to adopt maxims of policy more suited to the circumstances of the times than those by which his ministers appeared to have been governed, and to direct his servants to take measures, which, by differing essentially, as well in their tendency as in the principle upon which they are founded, from those which have hitherto marked their conduct, may give this country some reasonable hope, at no very distant period, of the establishment of peace suitable to the interests of Great Britain, and likely to preserve the tranquillity of Europe."

ERRATA TO VOL. IV.

- Page 55, *note*, for 1791, read 1794.
— 56, line 1, dele "to."
— — 19, for "*supplied*," read *applied*.
— 63, — 4, for "Shelbame," read Shelburne.
— 95, — 5, for "Maubeuge," read Maubeuge.
— 104, — 22, for "such declaration," read much declamation.
— 108, — 10, for "rejected," read rejected.
— 110, — 18, *note*, for "severity," read security.
— 111, — 11, for "Eulgish," read English.
— 155, — 27, for "Commons," read Lords.
— 157, — 22, insert "of Commons," after House.
— 201, — 5, for "daring," read damming.
— 202, — 21, for "council," read counsel.
— 207 — 1, for "were," read was.
— 213, — 4 and 7, for "who," read which.
— 242, — 4, for "state," read states.
— 244, — 18, for "begun," read began.
— 246, — 19, for "mistuned," read mistimed.
— 255 — 4, for "of," read for.
— — *note*, for 1785, read 1795.
— 290, line 7, after "France," insert had been given:
— 292, — 25, for "on," read in.
— 300, last line but one, for "on," read in.
— 301, *note*, line 3, from the bottom, for "as the people
increase," read as the burdens of the people increase.
— 303, — 11, for "entrusted," read contracted.
— 349, — 1, dele "mere."
— 362, — 10, for "succesfully," read successively.
— 466, — 14, for "more," read mere.
— 479, — 1, for Braston," read Bratton.
— 492, *note*, for "loosing," read losing.
— 495, line 13, before "which," insert *to*.
— — 15, after "opposition," insert *had given rise*.
— 518, — 19, after "alluded," dele *to*.
— 573, — 19, for "him," read *her*.
— — 21, for "him," read *her*.
— 594, — 1, for "succeeding," read succeeded.
— 601, — 21, for "Malta," read Mantua.