STATE OF FRANCE.

Extracted from a late Work on the Subject.

(Continued.)

All these were the fruits of the revolution—the dear-bought fruits of the dangers and sufferings, the crimes and anxieties that had occurred in its progress—and now endeared them the more to those by whom they had been purchased at so vast a price.—But the return of the Bourbons had always been considered as the triumph of a counter revolution;—and it was obvious that the brother of Lewis XVI. ascending the throne by the exclusive aid of a foreign army, could not be supposed to look with indulgence on any of these changes or institutions which had originated in the massacre and expulsion of his family, or upon any of those individuals which he found in possession of the properties or offices which had formerly belonged to the faithful companions of his exile. A thousand amiable and a thousand excuseable feelings stood in the way of any such indulgence:—and whatever forbearance the necessity of his situation, or the dictates of obvious policy might impose upon him, no man in France could doubt that he must wish to restore their estates and dignities to the emigrants, their privileges to the nobility, and *all* its original powers to the crown. To the body of the nation, however, a sovereign with such disposition, could not possibly be acceptable—nor could his accession be contemplated without feelings of general distrust and alarm. Speaking with a very moderate latitude, we might say that all the considerable men in France in March 1814—all who by station or talent or reputation could guide its opinions, determine its conduct, had interests opposed to such an event, and felt that they would be placed by it either in the condition of offenders to be punished, or delinquents to be forgiven.

This then was the situation in which the present sovereign of France stood at his first accession in April 1814. There was not only no attachment or liking to him or his family in the bulk of the nation—but there were strong and very general interests and habits which rendered their return undesireable, and laid the foundation of a very wide spread feeling of alarm and jealousy in the body of the people. In these, and in many other respects, there was no resemblance whatever between our restoration in 1661 and that of the Bourbons in 1814. Property had not changed hands at all in England, during the time of the usurpation; and, with a few exceptions, the same individuals who held the chief permanent influence in the county at the breaking out of the war, continued to possess it through the whole period that elapsed till the Restoration.—In France, every thing was radically altered, and twenty years had

These distressing, but very obvious truths, were felt too by the Princes themselves and their adherents; and, conscious that nothing but the total discomfiture of the national force, and the actual invasion, and conquest of the country, could have opened their way to the throne, they felt that it was not by the assertion of their hereditary rights that it could now be maintained:—Aware that they had been placed there by nothing but the success of the Allied arms; and that these arms could not *always* be held out to support them, they were convinced of the necessity of creating a French interest in their behalf, and at all events of disarming the hostilities and suspicions to which they could not be ignorant they were liable. The only three points they had in their favour were, 1st, the support of their victorious Allies—2d, the ordinary patronage which belongs to all actual governments—and, 3dly, the advantage of being the descendants of a former sovereign, by whose elevation the idea of an open competition, or of setting up the Crown as a prize to be fought for, was excluded. Except these three considerations, every thing, as we have seen, was against them; and these were by no means of such decisive weight as might at first sight be imagined.—The first, and by far the strongest, was evidently of a temporary nature; for though an unprecedented alliance of the great powers of Europe might seat a king on the throne of France, it was evidently absurd to suppose, that they should continue to hold him on it for an indefinite period of time, if he was not able to keep his seat by his own exertions.—The second was the mere necessary result of actual possession, and sure, of course, to be transferred to any one by whom the possessor might be supplanted.---The third did not necessarily point to the individuals actually called to the succession; and, we suspect, has always had much less weight in France than the inhabitants of happier countries can easily believe. The evils of internal dissension and civil broils, which appear so terrible to those who contemplate them at a distance, seem to have little influence on those to whom they have been long familiar. The strong passions which they excite and gratify, have a sort of attraction like the habit of intoxication or deep play; and we are persuaded, not only that both parties in France would at this moment risk all the horrors of another popular Revolution, if they thought that by means of it they could completely demolish their antagonists,---but that nothing else has contributed so much to pervert our judgement as to the affairs of that country, as our exaggerated estimates of the reluctance which those who have once suffered by civil commotions must feel for their renewal. Be this, however, as it may, the King felt in 1814, that the offer of the Crown which was then made him, originated mainly in a desire to get rid of the existing war with Europe; and that it would never have been made, had the fortune of that contest been different. Accordingly, he did not claim it as his absolute and rightful inheritance, but accepted the offer that was made and assented in substance to all the conditions with which it was qualified.

By this act, he became at once a constitutional king. He recognized in the body which made the offer, the most conspicuous of all the revolutionary institutions, and gave a wise and unequivocal pledge of his willingness to recognize all that was still recognized by his subjects of the revolution itself, and the principles to which it had given birth. His professions, however, were naturally viewed with some degree of distrust; and coming back surrounded with those emigrants who had always treated the whole revolution as a mere rebellion and successful revolt, and openly declared their wishes for a complete restoration of ancient monarchy with all its accompaniments, it was of the utmost necessity that his conduct should be in conformity with his professions, and that no single act should betray those dispositions or designs, the existence of which he could not fail to know was so generally and reasonably suspected. Let us see whether his acts were always thus guarded and unexceptionable.

He began by calling himself Louis XVIII.---though no sovereign after Louis XVI. had ever been acknowledged by the nation; and the first hour of his accession he said was the twenty-first year of his reign. There were obvious motives and temptations to the use of this style; but it could not fail to startle and alarm the nation, who certainly never meant to acknowledge that they had owed him allegiance for twenty years before his arrival among them, or that he had a right to be king at all, independent of their invitation and consent. He then, without taking any notice of that invitation, which he had however accepted, declared that he owed his throne, after God, to the Prince Regent of England. He ordered a monuments to be erected to the memory of the emigrants who had fallen at Quiberon fighting against their countrymen, in an attempt to re-establish the whole ancient privileges of the crown and the nobles--- and immediately after ennobled, by a special grant, the family of Georges Cadoudal, who had come into the country with the avowed purpose of assasinating its former sovereign. In presenting the constitutional charter to the House of Representatives, his chancellor described it in his official speech, as 'the voluntary limitation of a power in itself unlimited.' The liberty of the press which had been solemnly promised on his arrival was afterwards retracted; and, what was of far more consequence, under the censorate to which it was then subjected all sorts of invectives against the revolution and every thing to which it had given birth, as well as the most direct reclamations of the privileges and properties of the emigrants, were allowed to be printed without challenge, while an unrelenting interdict was put upon all that bore an opposite character. The most indiscreet language upon those subjects was openly held by many persons who were known to be high in the Royal favour; and Monsieur, the King's brother, went so far as to say in a public address to the emigrants of the South, that though little had been done for them as yet, 'we hope, in time, to obtain for you a 'more complete justice.' The consequence of all this was, that many individuals spoke confidently of the properties which formerly belonged to their families as being still theirs; and that in the consequence of the fears suggested by those proceedings, very many of the holders of these properties offered them for a third part of their value to these new claimants, who in several instances, rejected the compromise with disdain. About the same time, a royal edict was promulgated for the formation of schools, and the revival of the regulations in 1750, for the education of the young nobility; and subscriptions were opened for their support, in which no name but that of antient family could be admitted; while it was observed, that the nomination to foreign embassies, and other situations of dignity, was confined almost exclusively to persons of the same description.

The people began to regard their new princes with distrust, anger, and disdain. Many who had at first supported them, became sullen and alienated. Those who had been neutral, turned into decided enemies; and such as had always been hostile, become clamorous and forward in their opposition.

In this state of the public mind, Bonaparte landed from Elba: And it is in vain to disguise that it was this state of the public mind, and this alone, that made it possible for him to advance triumphantly to Paris. Some concert and preparation there probably was,---but no detailed plan for his march; and the success of the enterprize was evidently trusted in the main, to the zeal and discontent of the soldiery, and to the general indifference, despondency and alienation which the conduct of the Government had inspired. France had no occasion certainly, to love or to trust this mighty conqueror; and yet, with all the hazard of an unprovided war which his return brought with it, it is certain that she submitted more entirely and implicity to him than she did to Louis XVIII. in the first days of his apparent popularity. The interests of freedom and of the rights acquired by the revolution, seemed once more identified with his; and, miserable as that delusion was, the eagerness with which many persons rushed into it, shewed sufficiently how very popular these interests still were in the country, and the mighty influence which might be gained or lost by consulting them. The danger to the restored emperor therefore was wholly from without, while that to Louis XVIII. had been wholly from within. He made head with his usual alacrity against that danger; dashed himself desperately against the iron lines of the English at Waterloo---and was broken to to pieces and totally destroyed in the shock. The victory of foreigners, and the defeat of the French armies, again opened the way for Louis to the French throne.

After the impressive lesson which this expulsion of the family must have taught, it is interesting to consider what measures they adopted to correct the errors, or supply the omissions which had contributed to the catastrophe.

In the first place, instead of waiting beyond the frontier till the first shock of rage and humiliation attending the defeat was over, and the odium of the severe measures to which it necessarily led had subsided, and then coming in to share and mitigate the national affliction, his Majesty was advised to come back to Paris in the very midst of the Allied forces, and thus directly to connect himself with all their obnoxious proceedings, and to exhibit himself, not only as profiting by the national discomfiture, which he unquestionably did, but as exulting and rejoicing in their calamities.

In the second place, before any treaty of peace was concluded with the nation, and while the national army had retired by convention, he sat himself down in his capital, surrounded by two or three hundred thousand foreign soldiers, and there agreed to terms more humiliating and disadvantageous for France, than ever had been imposed on her in the course of three hundred years of war and negotiation: Almost all her border garrisons and places of strength were to be given up to a foreign soldiery, and large payments were to be made to defray their expenses in this triumphant war. It was in this way that the country was to pay for the expense to which Europe had been put in bringing them back their King!---and his popularity must have been great indeed, if his return did not appear dearly bought with the blood of an hundred thousand Frenchmen---the unprecedented mortification of the national vanity---the loss of twenty frontier towns---and the stipulation of forty or fifty millions sterling of tribute to those Allies of their Sovereign.

From the London pilot.

WATERLOO.

The Officer, his Wife and the Baggage Ass,—The following interesting anecdote is taken from "*A Visit to Flanders.*" and will give some idea of the kind of scenes that were pasing during the memorable battle of Waterloo:

"I had the good fortune," says the intelligent writer, "to travel from Brussels to Paris with a young Irish officer, and his wife, an Antwerp lady of only sixteen, of great beauty and matchless innocence and *naivete*. The husband was in the battle of Quarter Bras as well as of Waterloo and to him I owe much of my minutest and most interesting information.

"He was living in the cantonment at Nivelles, his wife with him. The unexpected advance of the French called him off at a moment's notice to Quartre Bras; but he left with his wife, his servant, one horse, and the family baggage, which was packed upon a large ass. Retreat at the time was not anticipated, but being suddenly ordered on the Saturday morning he contrived to get a message to his wife to make the best of her way, attended by the servant, and baggage to Brazils, the servant, a foreigner, had availed himself of the opportunity to take leave of both master and mistress, and make off with the horse, leaving the helpless young lady alone with the baggage ass. With a firmness becoming the wife of a British officer she boldly commenced on foot her retreat of twenty five miles leading the ass by the bridle, and carefully preserving the baggage no violence was offered by any one to so innocent a pilgrim but no one would venture to assist her. She was soon in the midst of the columns of the retreating British army, and much retarded and endangered by the artillery; her fatigue was great; it rained in water spouts, and the thunder and lightening were dreadful in the extreme. She continued to advance, and got upon the great road from Charleroi, to Brussels and Waterloo when the army on the Saturday evening were taking up their line for the awful conflict. In so extensive a field and among 80,000 men, it was in vain to seek her husband; she knew that the sight of her *there* would only embarrass and distress him; she kept slowly advancing to Brussels all the Saturday night, the road choaked with all sorts of conveyances, waggons and horses; multitudes of native fugitives on the road and flying into the great wood, and many of the wounded walking their painful way, dropping every step, and breathing their last; every few steps lay a corps or a limb; particularly, she said, *several hands*. Many persons were actually killed by others, if by chance they stood in the way of their endeavours to save themselves. Add to the horrors, the rain continued unabated, and the thunder and lightning still raged as if the heavens were torn to pieces.

Full twelve miles further in the night this young woman marched up to her knees in mud, her boots worn entirely off, so that she was barefooted; but still unhurt she led her ass; and although thousands lost their baggage, and many their lives, she calmly entered Brussels