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Change of
the Re-
gency.

been garrisoned at the request of the Spanish government itself; expressed his surprize that the existing government, knowing these facts, should yet have allowed such calumnies to pass uncontradicted, and requested that his letter might be published. The Regency was, indeed, at this time the mere instrument of the Cortes, which had displaced the late regents by a summary vote, for demurring to enforce an impolitic decree that the clergy scrupled to obey. Cardinal Bourbon, Don Pedro Agar, and Don Gabriel Ciscar were appointed in their stead to a station which oppossed only a nominal authority, the Cortes, under the dictation of a party more ardent than wise, having now arrogated to itself the whole actual power.

A whimsical proof had recently occurred of the readiness with which certain Spaniards accredited any imputation, however absurd, upon the intentions of the British government. A foolish paragraph had appeared in some Irish newspaper, saying, that Lord Wellington deserved to be made King of Spain; and that some of the grandees had offered to raise him to the throne! This found its way to Spain; and the Duques of Ossuna and Frias, the Visconde de Gante, and the Marques de Villena, published forthwith a letter to inform the world, that they neither did, nor would, acknowledge any other King than Ferdinand VII.;..that they detested and abhorred the very idea of any usurper ruling over the Spaniards;..and that they were persuaded that the other grandees, as soon as this statement should come to their knowledge, would hasten, in like manner, to give a public testimony of their principles and their fidelity!

Proceed-
ings in Par-
liament.

Parliament met early in November, under more auspicious circumstances than at any time since the baneful commencement of the French revolution. England, which had stood alone in the contest against the most formidable military

power that had ever existed in the civilized world, was now in alliance, not with the Spaniards and Portugueze alone, but with Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sweden, Bavaria, and Holland. Buonaparte had been driven back over the Rhine; and a British army, after beating the French from the lines of Torres Vedras to the Pyrenees, had passed that boundary and entered France. Upon this occasion, some of those statesmen who had been most decided in their opposition to government, acknowledged the wisdom, and rejoiced in the success, of that policy which they had formerly condemned. “Upon this grand question,” said Lord Grenville, “all party conflicts must be swallowed up and lost; it is the cause of no party, of no set of individuals, but of the whole nation joined in sentiment and in action to effect a great and glorious purpose. Internal tranquillity,” he said, “might be considered as the first, and external peace as the second, blessing that any power under Heaven could confer upon a people; but what we desired and expected was the real blessing of peace, not the empty name; not the shadow but the substance. Too long did deluded Europe, by temporary and partial truces, by concession following concession, purchase from the insatiable enemy a precarious quiet, a troubled sleep; furnishing to her foe the very means of his aggression, and of her own subjugation. The time, my lords, is now arrived (and I rejoice that I have lived to see the hour) when the walls of a British parliament may again re-echo a sound formerly held sacred in this country, and upon the observance of which, I will venture to assert, depends the hope of the restoration of peace to Europe;.. I allude to the old-fashioned tenet, now almost forgotten, of a balance of power in Europe; and I offer up my thanks, with humble gratitude, to the Supreme Disposer of Events, that after so long a period he has permitted me to behold my native land

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in such a commanding situation, as to be able again to pursue that which ought to be the only legitimate object of foreign policy, I mean the establishment and preservation of a balance of power in Europe. Now, then, let Great Britain resume her ancient policy; let her once more perceive that the only mode by which the independence of the great commonwealth of Europe can be secured, is not by perpetual peace (for that is the visionary dream of visionary men), but by the maintenance of this balance, by which, even in war itself, the weak will find refuge from oppression. Whatever plans may be suggested, having this in view, I shall meet with the most earnest wish to find that they are compatible with the interests of the country. I cannot be ignorant of the difficulties that may be opposed: I do, however, fervently hope, nay, I believe, that they may be surmounted. Do me not the injustice of believing that these opinions are the result merely of the exultation felt in consequence of recent and unexpected events. Undoubtedly such events are calculated to warm the heart of every individual who feels not only for the natural rights of man, but for the independence of nations; but those with whom I have been in the habit of confidential communication know my deliberate opinion, that the existence of such a confederation as has now been formed, of itself irresistibly calls upon Great Britain to employ all her energies, and devote all her exertions to the success of a common and a glorious cause. I was prepared to add an exhortation, that as the chances of war must necessarily be precarious, you would prepare yourselves to meet with firmness those disasters which human foresight could not predict, and which human wisdom could not prevent. Even now, under circumstances that might seem almost to justify the confidence of certainty, I offer that exhortation. If in the course of human events (although I see little cause to fear) any unforeseen

calamity should unfortunately occur, remember the glorious cause in which you are engaged ; it may for an instant damp your hopes, but let it not damp your ardour, or shake your resolution. Be assured, my lords, of this, . . . (I hope you are already assured of it), that there is for this country no separate safety, no separate peace ! There is neither safety nor peace for England, but with the safety and peace of Europe ; . . . as for continental Europe, it is equally true, that an indissoluble union, a firm confederation with this country can alone secure for all liberty, tranquillity, and happiness, . . . can alone obtain peace, now almost beyond the memory of living man. The plain duty of this country, placing its trust in Providence, is to improve by every possible exertion the bright prospect that lies before us. With the energies of Great Britain duly applied, ultimate success may be confidently anticipated ; we may now look forward to the speedy accomplishment of that great purpose for which we have already sacrificed, performed, and endured so much, . . . and for which we are still ready to sacrifice, perform, and endure."

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In the same spirit, Marquis Wellesley declared, that the satisfaction he felt in the events which had now changed the destinies of Europe was with him a principle and not a sentiment. "It was not so much," he said, "because those events had raised the military reputation of this country and of our allies, that they had the highest value in his eyes, but because they were the natural result of wise and cautious measures, executed with the greatest degree of vigour ; and displaying a wisdom of combination and prudence of plan which could not fail ultimately to be rewarded with the success by which they were attended. He would not dwell on former errors ; but he would not hesitate to say that the glorious successes which had lately crowned our arms in Spain, and the arms of our allies in the

*Marquis
Wellesley.*

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 XLV. severing councils persisted in by the government of this country.

1813. Though those councils had not always immediately produced the
 November. results that were expected, they were not the less the cause of what
 had ultimately taken place. While we were exerting ourselves
 in a struggle apparently hopeless, at that moment the public
 councils of this country were of the utmost importance to
 European liberty; for opportunity was thus given to the rest
 of Europe to re-consider their former errors, and to learn that
 great lesson which the example of Britain afforded them.
 Nothing could be more true than the last words which that
 great statesman, Mr. Pitt, ever delivered in public, that Eng-
 land had saved herself by her firmness, and other nations by
 her example. What a satisfactory and consoling reflection was
 it for us, that from this fountain the sacred waters of gladness
 and glory had flowed; . . . that to the persevering spirit of this
 country it was owing that other nations were at last animated to
 deeds worthy of the cause in which they were engaged, and of
 the example which was set them!"

*Lord Liver-
 pool.*

Lord Liverpool rejoiced that on this great occasion a spirit of
 unanimity prevailed in the British parliament. "We had seen,"
 he said, "during the preceding twenty years, coalitions whose
 size promised strength, crushed by the power of the enemy: what
 was it then which had given this irresistible impulse to the
 present? The feeling of national independence, that feeling
 which first arose in the Peninsula, gave the war a new character,
 and afforded grounds to hope not only for the deliverance of
 that country, but of the rest of Europe. There had before been
 wars of governments, but none like this between nations; and all
 our principles of policy and prudence must have been belied, if
 the issue of the present confederacy had not been very different
 from that of any of the former ones. They had before them

examples of perseverance unexampled in any other cause than that of liberty; they had seen the least military nations of Europe become formidable, and successfully resist the best disciplined troops of France. Small as Portugal was, the establishment of the Portugueze army had been of the greatest consequence, as the foundation of the success of the allied armies in the Peninsula; and as it gave, in addition to the general national feeling, a military tone, under the influence of which the Portugueze troops have been raised to an equality with the British. He was advancing no paradox, but a truth which was felt and admitted on the continent, when he said that the success of the peninsular cause gave new life to the suffering nations of Europe.”

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This theme was pursued in the House of Commons with great eloquence by Mr. Charles Grant. “If,” said he, “we had shown a dastardly spirit at the commencement of these troubles, where now would have been the deliverance of Europe? There will be no prouder page in history than that which tells of this struggle and its victorious result, . . . which tells that at a time when the foundations of the world seemed to be shaken, when all former constitutions were swept away, rather as if by a sudden whirlwind than by any of the ordinary means of destruction, . . . there was yet one nation, which, reposing under the shade of a happy constitution, proud of its ancient liberties and worthy to defend them, dared to measure its strength at one time against the unnatural energies of a frantic democracy, at another time against the gigantic resources of the most tremendous despotism that ever scourged the world. If, after this narration, history were obliged to add that in this struggle at last we fell, but that we fell gloriously, with our arms in our hands and our faces to the foe, even this would have been no mean praise: but, thank God, history will be called, not to

*Mr. C.
Grant.*

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XLV. exploits and its living triumphs. . . It is to the theatre of these
1813. triumphs, it is to that soil which but lately seemed incapable of
November. producing a single effort, that the moralist of after-ages will
resort for examples when he denounces the fall of unhallowed
greatness. There too will the patriot look for lessons of en-
thusiasm and disinterested virtue ; and this is the glorious feature
of the present war. I have heard it observed of America, that
her conduct has dispelled those classical associations which we
have been accustomed to indulge of republican virtue and
republican excellence. The remark was not more eloquently
than justly made. But if we are obliged to give up that class
of associations, I perceive with exultation that there is another
which we may now cherish with additional fondness ; I mean
those associations which enforce the belief of instinctive pa-
triotism, of unbidden enthusiasm in the cause of virtue, of the
grandeur of self-devotion, of the magnanimity of great sacrifices
for great objects, for honour, for independence. We must all
recollect with what delight we imbibed these sentiments at the
fountains of classical learning, and followed them out into action
in the history of great men and illustrious states. But of late
there seems to have crept into this nation a sort of spurious
and barren philosophy, of which it was the object to decry
these associations, to represent them as the illusions of igno-
rance, or frenzy, or falsehood, to curb the original play of
nature, to inculcate coldness and selfishness upon system, and
to substitute in the place of all that formed the delight of a
higher philosophy, a spirit of lazy deliberation, conducted by
apathy, and ending therefore in meanness and dishonour. It
was this philosophy which taught that it is not only more
prudent, but more conformable to the laws of our being, for
every man in time of danger to reason before he followed the

promptings of true courage ; to make it a matter of calculation whether his country be worth saving before he draws the sword in her defence ; to reduce it to a question of algebra, or a problem in geometry, whether he should resist the efforts of tyranny, or bow before the yoke ! The sleep which seemed to have spread over Europe gave too much countenance to these pernicious maxims ; but the hour has at length come which has exposed their fallacy, and rescued human nature from such calumnies. The experience of the few last years has confuted that heartless and bloodless system, the miserable abortion of a cold head and depraved imagination, which never wakened one noble thought, nor inspired one generous action. The experience of the few last years has proved that those high sentiments which we were taught to respect are not false and visionary ; but that they are founded upon whatever is deepest and purest in the human character. It has proved that true reason is never at war with just feeling ; that man is now what he was in those distant ages, . . . a creature born indeed to act upon principle, but born also to act upon strong passions ; and that he never acts more nobly, more wisely, more worthily of himself, than when he acts upon the prompt persuasion of grand passions, sublimed and directed by lofty principles."

Even Mr. Whitbread felt it necessary to say, that the proud exultation which then was manifested throughout the nation was hailed by no one, in the House or in the country, with more enthusiastic feelings than by himself ; and that he gave credit to the ministry, and to him who was at the head of it, till cut off by the dreadful deed which every one deplored, " for the great and steady confidence which they had placed in the talents and genius of our great commander," . . . that confidence for which Mr. Whitbread and the party with whom he acted had so often, so confidently, and so contemptuously reproached them ! He insisted

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however, that the deliverance of Europe had not been brought about by following Mr. Pitt's policy; and that if the counsels of Mr. Fox had been listened to, the carnage of the present campaign would not have been necessary. "And," said he, "I am particularly glad to observe the explicit terms of the Prince Regent's speech, in which it is distinctly avowed that no disposition is entertained to require from France sacrifices of any description inconsistent with her honour or just pretensions as a nation. I sincerely hope this feeling pervades the whole alliance; an alliance with which I am not inclined to quarrel, as I have been with former ones, for it is promoted and cemented by a feeling of common danger and necessity, and not purchased and raised up to oppress France. It has arisen from the keen and indignant sentiment which the grinding oppression of France herself has excited; and it holds out a memorable lesson to the governments of Europe. France, in the course of her career since the revolution, disturbed and overthrew the ancient monarchies, upon the pretext of their tyranny and despotism; but when those states passed under the power of France, who was to liberate them, they found themselves subjected to a despotism still more odious, to a thralldom still more insupportable. The Emperor of that country is now in a condition to which, I firmly believe, nothing but his own restless and gigantic ambition could have reduced him: I hope the alliance will profit from this. I do not pretend to know what were the terms proposed to France before the termination of the armistice; but I sincerely hope that now, in the moment of success, the same terms will still be offered." . . . At this there was a general murmur through the House. . . . "I am not surprized," he continued, "at hearing this murmur: perhaps I am misunderstood. What I mean to say is, and that I will maintain, that whatever terms may have been proposed to