

**SKETCHES ON THE INTRINSIC STRENGTH,
MILITARY AND NAVAL FORCE OF
FRANCE AND RUSSIA; WITH REMARKS
ON THEIR PRESENT CONNEXION,
POLITICAL INFLUENCE AND FUTURE
PROJECTS. IN TWO PARTS. PART I**

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Sketches on the Intrinsic Strength, Military and Naval Force of France and Russia; With Remarks on Their Present Connexion, Political Influence and Future Projects. In Two Parts. Part I by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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Henry D
1807

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OF
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Mihi Galba, Otho, Vitellius, nec
beneficio nec injuriâ cogniti.

TACIT.

IN TWO PARTS.
PART I.

HAGUE, 1803. ✓
LONDON:
SOLD BY J. BUDD, CROWN AND MITRE, FLEET MALL.

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P R E F A C E.

When individuals venture to communicate their private opinions, or to expose any thing which they may consider as useful information to the world, it seems to be a standing *etiquette*, to apologize to the public for intrusion. The following sketches are published from the same motives which induced us to write them, viz an attachment to our country, and an anxious desire for its prosperity and preservation: these render apology unbecoming. Travelling on the continent, our remarks were printed at different periods, some parts of the subject are therefore, not so methodically connected, nor could the whole be revised so accurately, as might have been wished. The statements and facts however, may be relied on, and the opinions we have advanced will very soon be tried. As to the

Sketches of James 1841

approbation, or censure of garret critics, the consequential hum of place-men, or the sneer of official politicians, they are to us perfectly indifferent: the errors of the press we must leave to the intelligent reader to correct.

The powers of the several states of Europe being relative, and the national existence of each in particular, now immediately depending upon its own strength only, as a preliminary to a general investigation, we have, in the following sheets, given a statement of the national sources and military force of our most formidable neighbours.

For some of the facts stated, particularly those relating to the defence of Great Britain; by the construction of safe naval stations on the eastern coast of the island, the statements of the naval force of the several powers of Europe, particularly of the northern states, and the remarks on the armed neutrality, we are indebted to a gentleman with whom we casually met on the continent, whose name, were we at liberty to mention it, would add weight to what we have advanced on these subjects. We take this opportunity

to return him thanks for the idées and information, which, we probably could not have obtained through any other channel; and we trust, he will excuse the use we here apply them to, as we know it to be his desire as well as our own, to contribute to the welfare and prosperity of our common country.

With respect to France, — The formalities of law, the shackles of property, the embarrassments of ancient usage, common prejudice and partial rights, have all disappeared before the potent *sabre* of a military chief. If Bonaparte, or any other man possessing talents and character, be able to maintain an unlimited authority at the head of the French nation, and keep alive, upon interior improvement, that energy and vigour which the revolution has brought forth amongst that people, the intrinsic sources of the European dominions of France are such, that their produce may soon enable the chief consul to carry into effect the most gigantic projects of his revolutionary predecessors.

In the following pages, we have stated, that the produce of agriculture on the present territories of

the republic, will, in all probability, exceed that of old France, by one third part in the space of ten years from this time. We are daily more and more convinced that to this statement, a considerable allowance may still be added. A community agitated by rebellion, civil or foreign war, becomes capable of efforts, which, to whatever pursuit they are directed, rapidly surpass the ordinary routine of nations in quiet security. To whatever part of the civilized world we turn our researches, we find that all great national works owe their origin and extent, more to that vigour of thought and action, which political broils and military warfare never fail to infuse into civil society, than to all the arts of drowsy opulence in peace. The present government of France seems fully sensible of this fact. Since the time of Czar Peter I, there has no man appeared at the head of public affairs, in any state in Europe, who has dared to attempt useful works of national improvement, that bear any sort of resemblance to those already carrying into execution by the first consul. (It is perhaps a pity Bonaparte had not been leading minister under a legitimate government!)

From the best authorities, as well as from our own knowledge of facts, we have said that 15 per cent raised as a medium assessment on the national income of the republic, would produce an annual revenue of L. 30,000,000 sterling. We are strengthened in this statement, the consulate having announced its intention to diminish the imposts on the soil and agriculture, which, at this time, amount to about 20 per cent on the income. Besides the resources of ordinary taxation, the French government has yet in reserve an immense fund in case of emergency; we mean, the so called national property, which, during the rage of the revolution was bought with *assignats*. There is no doubt that a call will be made upon the possessors of this property. The assertions of British writers, setting forth the misery and oppression which they pretend pervade the interior of France, are written either with a profound ignorance of facts, or with a design to lull their abused country into a fatal security. We speak from ocular evidence, having within these last twenty months visited every department of that vast republic.

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Upon the manufactures of France, we have said but little. The multiplicity of negative laws and restrictions with which ignorance and venality load all sorts of competition in universal industry, prevent a reciprocity of trade, and renders it impossible to form a calculation upon the progress, or benefits of any branch of manufacture, trade or commerce. The natural advantages and political superiority of the French nation, might soon render that country the work-shop and emporium of the world. But to act upon advantages that nature has pointed out, seems beneath the dignity of modern governments: perhaps, beyond the economical knowledge of Bonaparte! Modern legislators have *calico-printers*, *sugar-planters* and *corn-factors* for their oracles on national economy. For the privilege of enhancing the price of the conveniences and necessities of life to the community, these give *douceurs*; pay custom and excise; and the treasury is the key-stone of all cabinets. The common interest of society is not the concern of *common* ministers. In most countries, the duration of the state seems to be but a secondary consideration with its rulers.