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Papers laid before the British Parliament respecting the NEGOCIATION WITH FRANCE.

(Continued.)

With respect to several of the positions stated in the note, and grounded on the idea of the 10th article being executed in its literal sense, they call for some observations. By the 10th article of the treaty of Amiens, the island of Malta was to be restored by his majesty to the Order of St. John, upon certain conditions. The evacuation of the island, at a special period formed a part of these conditions; and if the other stipulations had been in a due course of execution, his majesty would have been bound, by the terms of the treaty, to have ordered his forces to evacuate the island: but these conditions must be considered as being all of equal effect; and if any material parts of them should have been retarded, his majesty would be warranted in deferring the evacuation of the island until such time as the other conditions of the article could be effected, or until some new arrangement could be concluded which should be judged satisfactory by the contracting parties. The refusal of Russia to accede to the arrangement, except on condition that the Maltese Langue should be abolished; the silence of the court of Berlin, with respect to the invitation that has been made to it, in consequence of the treaty, to become a guaranteeing power; the abolition of the Spanish priories, in defiance of the treaty to which the king of Spain was a party; the declaration of the Portuguese priory, as forming a part of the Spanish Langue, unless the property of the Spanish priories was restored to them: these circumstances would have been sufficient, without any other special grounds, to have warranted his majesty in suspending the evacuation of the island. The evacuation of Tarentum and Brundusium is in no respect connected with that of Malta. The French government were bound to evacuate the kingdom of Naples, by their treaty of peace with the king of Naples, at a period antecedent to that at which this stipulation was carried into effect.

The French government were bound likewise, by engagements with the emperor of Russia to respect the independence of the kingdom of Naples; but even admitting that the departure of the French troops, Terentum depended solely on the article of the treaty of Amiens, their departure is, by the term of the treaty, to take place at the same period as the other evacuations in Europe; namely, one month after the ratification of the definitive treaty; at such period both Porto Ferrajo and Minorca were evacuated by his majesty's forces; whereas the troops of his majesty were in no case bound to evacuate the island of Malta antecedent to the period of three months after the ratification of the definitive treaty; even in that event, it must be considered as depending upon the other parts of the arrangements being in a course of execution. With respect to the assertion in the note, that the Neapolitan troops were to form the garrison of Malta, until the period when the arrangements relative to the order could be carried into effect, it will appear by a reference to the articles, that by the preliminary paragraph, the island was to be restored to the Order upon the condition of the succeeding stipulations, and that it was only from the period when the restitution to the order had actually taken place, that by the 12th paragraph the Neapolitan troops were to form a part of the garrison.

The undersigned has thus stated, with all the frankness which the importance of the subject appears to require, the sentiments of his majesty on the note delivered to him by general Andreossi, and on the points in discussion between the two countries.

His majesty is willing to indulge hope, that the conduct of the French government on this occasion may be influenced by principles similar to those which have invariably influenced his own! That as far as possible all causes of distrust, and every impediment to a good understanding between the two countries, may be completely and effectually removed, and that the peace may be consolidated on a secure and lasting foundation.

The undersigned requests that general Andreossi accept the assurances of his high consideration.

(Signed) HAWKESBURY.

Downing-street, March 15, 1803.

His excellency gen. Andreossi, &c.

No. XLVI.

Paris, March 17, 1803.

My Lord,

I called yesterday on M. de Talleyrand to converse with him on the subject of what had passed on Sunday last at the Thuilleries. He had been since that day so fully occupied with his expeditions to different foreign courts, that I had no opportunity of seeing him sooner. I told him, that I had been placed by the first consul in a situation which could neither suit my public nor my private feelings. That I went to the Thuilleries to pay my respects to the first consul, and to present my countrymen, but not to treat of political subjects; and that unless I had the assurance from him, that I should not be exposed to a repetition of the same disagreeable circumstance, I should be under the necessity of discontinuing my visits to the Thuilleries. M. de Talleyrand assured me, that it was very far from the first consul's intention to distress me, but he had felt himself personally insulted by the charges which were brought against him by the English government; *and that it was incumbent upon him to take the first opportunity of exculpating himself in the presence of the ministers of the different powers of Europe.* He assured me that nothing similar would occur.

(Signed) WHITWORTH.

The Right. hon. lord Hawkesbury, &c.

No. XLVII.—Is an extract of a letter from lord Whitworth to lord Hawkesbury, dated Paris, March 18, 1803. The only material point in this dispatch is a remark of the English ambassador to Talleyrand, viz. That by our possession of Malta, France was not threatened, but the reverse was the case, should the access to Egypt be opened by its evacuation.

No. XLVIII.—Letter from lord Hawkesbury to lord Whitworth, dated Downing-street, March 22, 1803. His lordship says; "I have in command to signify to you his majesty's pleasure, that you take the earliest opportunity to present to Monsieur de Talleyrand, the surprise with which his majesty has learnt the conduct which the first consul has observed towards your excellency in the instance to which that dispatch refers; and you will add, that as his majesty has a right to expect that his ambassador should be treated with the respect and attention due to the dignity of the sovereign whom he represents, it will be impossible for you to present yourself on any days of ceremony to the first consul, unless you receive an assurance that you will never be exposed to a repetition of the treatment which you experienced on the occasion."

(Inclosure referred to in No. 49.)

The undersigned general of division, ambassador and minister plenipotentiary from the French republic, has laid before his government the note addressed to him by his excellency lord Hawkesbury. He has received orders to make the following answer to the observations therein contained:

The object of this note appears to be to explain his Britannic majesty's message; and to give some elucidations which had been demanded respecting the execution of the treaty of Amiens.

The first consul will not make any complaint relative to the extraordinary and unexpected assertions of this act issued by his Britannic majesty. Not one of them is founded.

His Britannic majesty believes that his kingdom is menaced by preparations made in the ports of Holland & France. He has been deceived. The first consul has made no preparation.

There were at the time of the message but two frigates in the roads of Holland, and but three corvettes in the road of Dunkirk.

How can his Britannic majesty's ministers have been deceived on facts so evident? His Britannic majesty's ambassadors at Paris and at the Hague have seriously to reproach themselves, if they have credited information so evidently false, and if they did not foresee that they thereby exposed their government to err in the most important deliberations.

Was it not conformable to the usage practised among nations, first to demand explanations, and thus to take means for being convinced of the falsehood of the intelligence which the ministers might have received? Must not the least effects of the omission of this practice be, to bring on the ruin of families, and carry confusion, uncertainty, and disorder into all the commercial affairs of both nations? The first consul knows, both from his own sentiments, and judging of other people by the French, that a great nation can never be terrified. He believes that good policy and the feelings of true dignity ever inspire the sentiment of esteem for a rival nation, and never the design of menacing her— A great nation may be destroyed, but not intimidated.

The second part of his majesty's message consists of another assertion, no better founded. His Britannic majesty makes mention of discussions, the success of which is doubtful. What are these discussions? What official notes, what protocol prove the opening, the progress, the vicissitudes of a debate? Can a state of difficulties, which leads to an alternative of peace or war, spring up unawares without commencement, without progression, and lead without distinction, to an appeal to arms before all the means of conciliation have been exhausted?

In this case the appeal has been publicly made before it could be known that there was room for misunderstanding. The termination of the discussions was announced before they had begun. The issue of a difficult discussion has been declared before it arose. What would Europe, what would both nations think, if they knew that these discussions, announced by his Britannic majesty as so difficult to terminate, were unknown to the French government; and that the first consul on reading the message, could not comprehend the meaning of either of the declarations therein contained.

He has also abstained from any ostensible step; and whatever may have been the clamour, the activity, the provocations of war, which have taken place in England since that message, he has given no orders, he has made no dispositions, no preparations. He places his glory in an affair of this nature, wholly in being taken in an unprovided state.— He will continue in this system of honest frankness, until his Britannic majesty has reflected fully on the part he proposes to take.

In lord Hawkesbury's note, an opinion is expressed, that the French republic has increased in power since the peace of Amiens. This is a decided error.— Since that epoch, France has evacuated a considerable territory. The French power has received no degree of augmentation. If his Britannic majesty is determined to make war, he may alledge all the pretexts he pleases. He will find few less founded.

As to the complaints made respecting the publications which may have appeared in France, they are of an order too secondary to be capable of influencing such a decision. Are we then returned to the age of tournaments? Motives of this nature might have authorized, for centuries ago, the combat of thirties; but they cannot, in this age, be a reason for war between the two countries.

It might suffice in this respect to reply to his excellency, that no representation has been made by him on the subject to the government of the republic; and that, if it was but justice to grant satisfaction, the first consul had a right to expect that which was required by M. Otto in his note of the 22d Thermidor last, upon grounds more serious and more just.

Is it possible that the English ministry can have been ignorant, that ever since the conclusion of the treaty of Amiens the English press has not ceased to spread through Europe the rage of war, the discredit of peace, and shameless and boundless outrages against every thing which is the object of the love and veneration of the French people?

A few days after the ratification of peace, one of his Britannic majesty's ministers declared that the peace establishment must be considerable; and the distrust excited by this declaration made in parliament with as much bitterness as impropriety, furnished a commentary for the exaggeration and alarms which were circulated in despicable pamphlets, and in newspapers as contemptible as those libels. Since that time, these writers have found themselves invariably supported in their insolent observations by particular phrases taken from the speeches of some leading members of parliament. These speeches, scarcely to be exceeded by the news writers themselves, have for these 13 months tended to encourage insult against other governments to that degree, that every European must be offended, and every reasonable Englishman must be humiliated, by such unheard-of licentiousness.

What if we connect with these sallies, proceedings more offensive and serious; the indulgence granted to French criminals, publishing daily outrages in the French language; the still more inexcusable toleration extended to villains covered with crimes, and plotting assassinations incessantly, such as Georges, who still continues to reside at London protected, and having a considerable establishment; in a word, the little justice which has been shewn to all our representations.—How are we to account for the publicity of the complaint which his Britannic majesty has thought proper to make respecting some indefinite wrongs which he has hitherto thought unnecessary to bring before the first consul?

The first consul has had cause to be convinced that all his representations on all these points were useless, and that his Britannic majesty, regardless of the neighbouring powers, was resolved to authorize every thing within his dominions; but he did not on that account entertain a doubt of the continuance of peace, nor alarm Europe with the notification of war. He confined himself to this principle of conduct, to permit or prevent in France with respect to England whatever should be permitted or prevented in England with regard to France.

He has, however, expressed, and he again expresses his wish, that means should be adopted to prevent in future any mention being made of what is passing in England, either in the official discussions or in the polemical writings in France, as in like manner in the French official discussions and polemical writings no mention whatever should be made of what is passing in England.

Lord Hawkesbury mentions an article in a newspaper, containing the report of a French colonel. In serious discussions an answer on this point might be dispensed with; but it is neither a long nor difficult matter.

A colonel in the English army has published a work in England, filled with the most atrocious and disgusting calumnies against the French army and its general. The lies it contains have been contradicted by the reception which col. Sebastiani experienced. The publicity of his report was at once a refutation and a reparation which the French army had a right to expect. On his arrival in Egypt, this officer, to his great astonishment, found the English army there, although they should have evacuated it, and the Turks prodigiously alarmed at the continuance of the English army and at its relations with the natives in rebellion and open revolt against the sublime Porte.

He must have conceived that the treaties which connect us with the Porte, and by which we have guaranteed to it the integrity of its possessions, compelled us to unite ourselves with that power— It was natural to think that England meant to declare war from the instant she refused to execute the articles of the treaty. For after all, France is not reduced to such a state of debasement as to suffer treaties made with her to be executed or not at pleasure.

Hence the researches made by this officer, as to the forces which were in Egypt, and as to the position occupied by the English army.

But Egypt has since been restored to the dominion of its lawful sovereign, and the idea of a rupture between the two nations, on account of the engagement contracted with the Porte no longer exists.

There remains, therefore, but one object worthy of fixing the attention of the two nations. The execution of the treaty of Amiens, as far as concerns Malta. His Majesty has engaged to restore it to the Order, and entrust it to the Neapolitan army until the Order should be in a condition to guard it.— His Majesty will reject all sophistry, every distinction, every mental reservation which might be offered to him, to put in doubt the force and the validity of his engagement. His Britannic Majesty's equity, his conscience in this respect, are guarantees for the French Republic. Were it otherwise, what means in future would the two nations have for coming to an understanding? Would not all be chaos? This would indeed be adding another calamity to those which have menaced social order.

The undersigned is directed to declare, in short, that the First Consul will not take up the defiance of war given by England to France; that as to Malta, he sees no subject for discussion, the treaty having provided for every thing, and settled every thing.

The undersigned has the honor &c.

(Signed) F. ANDREOSSI.

Portland Place, 8 Germinal, year 11.

(29 March, 1803.)

(Inclosure referred to in No. 49.)

The undersigned, his Majesty's principal Secretary of State for foreign affairs, has laid before the king the note of his Excellency General Andreossi, of the 29th of last month.

His Majesty has been induced, by that spirit of moderation and forbearance which have invariably governed his conduct in every part of his communications with the French Government, to abstain from making many observations, which the perusal of this note may naturally have suggested to his mind.

His Majesty has perceived with great regret, that the French Government continue to withhold all satisfaction and explanation on the points on which he has complained; and that at the time when they evade all discussion on the subject of his representations, they persist in their requisition that the island of Malta should be forthwith evacuated by his forces.

His Majesty can never so far forget what is due to himself and to his people, as to acquiesce in such a course of proceeding; he has therefore judged it expedient to give instructions to his Ambassador at Paris, to ascertain distinctly from the French government, whether they are determined to persevere in withholding all satisfaction and explanation on the points on which his majesty has complained,—or whether they are disposed, without delay, to give such satisfaction and explanation upon the present state of affairs as may lead to an arrangement which may be calculated to adjust the differences at present subsisting between the two Governments. It is his Majesty's anxious desire, that by this mode of proceeding an end may be put to that state of suspense and irritation which must be so injurious to the interests of both countries; and that the two governments, actuated by the same principles of justice and moderation, may be led to concur in such measures as are most likely to conduce to their permanent tranquility.

The undersigned requests General Andreossy to accept the assurances of his high consideration.

HAWKESBURY.

Downing-street, April 3, 1803.

His Excellency Gen. Andreossi, &c. &c.

No. L.

Downing-street, April 4, 1803.

My Lord,

It is become essential, that the discussions which have been for some time subsisting between his majesty and the French government should be brought to an issue within as short a time as is consistent with the deliberation which must be given to objects of so much importance.

The last note presented by gen. Andreossi, in the name of his government, in answer to my note of the 15th of last month evades all explanation, and even all discussion, of the points on which complaint has been made by his majesty.

If the French government should seriously intend to persist in this course of proceeding, there can be no hopes of a successfull termination to the negociation. It is important, therefore, that you should ascertain distinctly, in the first instance, whether they are disposed to enter into explanation on the points on which his majesty has complained, and to come to such an arrangment as may be calculated to adjust the differences at present between the two countries; and for this purpose you will present a note to the effect of that which is herewith enclosed. It is possible that the French government may continue to evade all discussion on the points in question, and confine themselves to a categorical demand, that Malta should be immediately evacuated. In that case, it is his majesty's pleasure, that you should declare the impossibility of the relations of amity continuing to subsist between the two countries, and the necessity that you will be under of leaving Paris within a certain time. But if, on the other hand, they should shew a readiness to enter into discussion, and to give reasonable satisfaction and explanation, it is important that you should be informed, without loss of time, of the sentiments of his majesty's government, as to what might be considered as an equitable adjustment of the differences between the two governments at this moment.

I have therefore, by his majesty's command, inclosed the project of an arrangement, which, under the present circumstance, would meet the ideas of his majesty's government; which would afford security for those objects which are considered as endangered by the unequivocal disclosure of the views of the First Consul, and which, at the same time, might entirely save the honor of the French government.

I am &c.

HAWKESBURY.

His excellency lord Whitworth, &c.

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(First inclosure referred to in No. 50.)

His majesty has perceived, with great regret that the French government continue to withhold all satisfaction and explanation on the points on which he has

(Continued on last page.)