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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, December 19.

When the House returned from the Lords, and the speech was read.

The honorable Mr. *Lambe Rose*, after moving an address to his majesty, which was seconded by Mr. John Smith.

Mr. *Canning* declared that he never felt more anxiety in rising in that House than at the present moment, from the deep conviction he felt of the unparalleled importance of the crisis. At the outset he should beg leave to say, what he was intimately persuaded of, that there were resources amply sufficient in this country to meet and to brave all difficulties, and to avert all dangers. But he should intreat the House to consider whether all had been done that ought to be done. If ever there was a period of importance to the country, it was the present, which called upon us to stand, first, for our own defence, and in the second place, to afford our help to other states. The administration had entered into office not twelve months ago. According to them, all that had preceded them was wrong. We were all ill clubbed battalions, dilapidated resources, no protection for ourselves or for the world. What did we hear now? Not that these resources were re-established, but that they remained unimpaired. It was a satisfaction indeed to hear such a tribute paid to those whose reputation had been so often attacked. Nothing, it was exclaimed, was so bad as our foreign affairs—confederacies ill put together, and falling to pieces by their own weakness. He should examine what better had been done by those who negociated alone, and then called it joint negociation. What might further appear, he could not precisely tell. It might seem that the negociation was not sufficiently dexterous; that there was too long delay, and too much shifting allowed; and that the termination might have been foreseen by any man. He must, however, think that the conduct of ministers towards Prussia was rash and hasty. He must, however, in stating his sentiment, call upon gentlemen to go back to the last confederacy, and consider, after its failure, what was the obvious policy of France and England? No man could hesitate to agree that, unfortunate as the confederacy was, when disjointed and broken, its scattered limbs yet retained life and vigour. It was then the interest of England to keep them together, or at least to keep up an open, constant, and harmonious intercourse. Of France it was clearly the policy to complete their dismemberment, or to effect their apparent separation. That there was guilt on the part of Prussia he would not attempt to deny; but was the House apprized, when they were told Prussia had taken Hanover, that we were negociating for it with France? It was our interest to preserve Prussia, but our great object was to limit the power and dominion of France, to overlook slighter offences, to put up with some things, even though a just cause of war, when there was a more politic mode of getting reparation elsewhere. See the labyrinth of errors into which ministers had drawn themselves. They stand with a minister at Paris, negociating for Hanover, and at the same time demanding it of Prussia, when a war arises between Prussia and France—a war in a great measure occasioned by this very subject. Undoubtedly, Hanover was not the sole cause of war between France and Prussia, but it is one main injury complained of. Ministers ought to have foreseen, that their own demands might cause hostilities between Prussia and France, in which they ought to have had the alliance of Prussia. To this policy they at last became converts, when they sent a minister to Prussia, not knowing but that the war might be actually begun before the negociator arrived. When they heard, however, that the whole Prussian army was gone, they sent a military commission; and when they should hear that the monarchy is destroyed, they would probably send part of an army. Of all the weak measures of their predecessors, nothing was to be more improved than our diplomacy; nothing was so shabby as our diplomacy. We were to have a clear simple diplomacy, free from all the tricks and cajoleries of former ministers. Now see the defect.—Our ministers at Paris for peace, and our ministers at Berlin for war, are both employed to get Hanover back again. Far from congratulating his majesty that he had no share in the councils of Prussia respecting this war, his opinion was quite contrary. Had ministers shewn that they endeavored to keep back Prussia, it might have been so far well; but to say that they had nothing to do with it, is an inconceivable perversion of policy. They should have taken care not so suddenly to kindle the flame, lest it should be too soon extinguished. It was at the instigation of France that Prussia took Hanover, and her contrivance was evident in thus planting the seeds of disunion with Great Britain. He did not wish to descend too much to particulars, but he considered our declaration as stating three things of which he was not convinced. First, that the overture came from France. There might be something behind to be published for aught he knew.—But he did not find fault merely with making the overture. If it was fit to make peace, it was fit to make an overture; but the assertion in the declaration was made out. The next point he objected to was, the statement respecting the *uti possidetis*; it might, perhaps, be almost as well called *in propria quae maribus*, or by any other words. He objected in the third place, to our statement concerning our insisting on negociating jointly with our allies. Now, as the speech made mention of Sweden, and made her equal with Russia, how happened it that there was nothing about Sweden in the negociation? As to the dissolution of parliament, there was no question about his majesty's prerogative, but how far it might be right and fair, and wise to do so under all circumstances. The measure was needless, and useless, and only tended to divert men's minds from external transactions to internal disputes. If this should be connected with unprecedented and inexcusable interference in elections, will it be contended that such conduct does not tend to prevent union, to impair unanimity.—With respect to the war in which we are engaged, no man who heard our debates would know that we are at war. There was not an act of war mentioned in the king's speech. As to our internal defence, great part of last session was employed on a most laboured and complicated plan, which was pressed most eagerly on the House at a late period; and when it was asked, whether it was so hurried from its being intended for immediate operation, it was always answered that it was so intended. One part of the kingdom was exempted from its operation, because the machinery could not be got ready there in time. But in what part of the kingdom had it been executed? Every thing was to be done, and nothing whatever had been done. There had been a good deal heard about fitting out expeditions, which had ended only in orders, counter orders, revocations of counter-orders, and counter-order of revocations. After failing about the channel, they took Plymouth, as they might any other place abroad, as ill prepared to expect them as Plymouth. They made excellent voyages. They fail from the Downs, and go to Plymouth to ſurprize the dockers. But this was not the worst. Had they not done more to diſguſt the army, by one improper and irregular appointment, than all they can effect by arranging ſhoulder-knots and cockades? Let him hear in that houſe the ſenſe of the public on that ſubject; and let him tell what had been the reſult of that meaſure for giving animation and enthuſiaſm to the army, to raiſe an officer, certainly of ſkill, to a ſituation for which his rank did not qualify him? On the grounds he had now ſtated, he profeſſed his want of concurrence in the addreſs.

Lord Howick roſe, and ſpoke to the following purport:—"The right hon. gentleman has had the ingenuity and addreſs ſo to interweave and mix his arguments with ſuch a variety of matter that he has called on me to defend and vindicate the conduct not only of the preſent government, but alſo that of a fifteen years oppoſition. Sir, with reſpect to that oppoſition, I will only ſay, ſpeaking for myſelf as a mere ſingle individual forming one of that oppoſition, during the whole period alluded to, that it was on my part an oppoſition founded on the ſtricteſt principle and the moſt lively anxiety for the welfare and proſperity of the country, againſt thoſe meaſures which have been (without meaning to attribute the fault to the Rt. Hon. gentleman and the Hon. gentleman near him) followed by the deſolate and deſtructive ſtate in which we ſee the continent at the preſent moment. I can, alſo Sir, with great truth and ſafety anſwer for my Rt. Hon. friend, now, alas! no more, and all thoſe who acted with us during that eventful period, that they were all guided by the ſame conſtitutional motives, and that none of us were ever actuated by the baſe and miſchievous deſign of forming an oppoſition for the ungenerous and unworthy purpoſe of embarraſſment, and of haraſſing diſtreſſing, and impeding the efforts and exertions of his majeſty's miniſters. I own, Sir, I am ſtill farther ſurpriſed that the Rt. Hon. gentleman ſhould have entered into ſo broad and extenſive an oppoſition to the addreſs, from the very cautious manner in which it has been brought forward. It is not my intention, ſir, to detain the houſe at ſo much length, as to enter into all the various points of the Rt. Hon. gentleman's ſpeech. The firſt part to which I ſhall beg leave to advert, is that reſpecting the negociation; on this, he has ſtated three points. 1ſt. Who made the firſt overture? 2d. The *uti poſſidetis*; and 3d. Treating jointly with our allies. The Rt. Hon. gentleman has allowed, that he cannot depend on the accuracy of the grounds on which he blames his majeſty's miniſters on the authority of the papers publiſhed by the French government ——and yet he has argued on them with almoſt as much confidence as if they had been laid on the table of this houſe. He has quoted the declaration, as having differed from thoſe papers on the material fact——of who made the firſt overture? There, ſir, the Rt. Hon. gentlemen has ſhown how liable thoſe are to be miſled or miſtaken who venture to found opinions on uncertain or unfounded documents; and I contend ſir, that a firſt overture might come from the French government, and be ſubſequent to the letter reſpecting the aſſaſſin. The fact is, as will appear by the papers when laid on the table, that there was another letter to Mr. Fox, which came at the ſame time, and by the ſame incloſure, in which M. Talleyrand ſays, "Perhaps it may not be diſagreeable to hear news from hence. We are peaceably inclined in Paris. To ſhew which, I refer you to the emperor's ſpeech to the Senate." and the reference was to that paſſage where Bonaparte ſaid, "I wiſh for peace with England, and they may have it as ſoon as they pleaſe on the baſis of the treaty of Amiens." This was certainly, from a perſon ſtanding as Mons. Talleyrand did, what might be fairly called an opening to thoſe who were really deſirous of peace. The Rt. Hon gentleman has allowed that there is no diſgrace in making an overture for peace. I am of the ſame opinion, and I heſitate not to declare that if I did at any time ſee a fair opportunity of obtaining a peace which was likely to be honorable and permanent, and to ſecure the intereſts of this country, I would be one of the firſt to propoſe an overture. Every one who knew the candid generous heart and enlightened mind of my late Rt. Hon. friend, knew how much he was inclined to peace, and I really believe that had not death pulled him down, and placed him by the ſide of his great rival (rival I mean, in polical meaſures, not perſonally rivals) we ſhould not now have to lament the difficulties and diſtreſſes of a ſtate of warfare. I come now to the ſecond point, the *uti poſſidetis*; this was one of the baſes firſt propoſed by France in the communications of Lord Yarmouth, and by him tranſmitted to his majeſty's miniſters.

The third point is, that of treating jointly with our allies, and that we certainly never did depart from, till M. D'Oubril had signed a separate treaty of peace between Russia and France. Finding he had done so, what other course remained to his majesty's ministers to pursue, than that which they have taken. The right hon. gentleman has attempted to found an argument on that part of the negociation which related to Hanover. He says we were attempting to gain Hanover by negociation from the French, while we were at war with Prussia on the very same account; but the Rt. Hon. gentleman is mistaken. It will be remembered, that Hanover had some time before been taken possession of by Prussia, and was, by a subsequent article given to that power by France. Before the Rt. Hon. gentleman made this charge of being at war with Prussia on account of Hanover, he should have refreshed his memory by looking at the address of this house on the war with Prussia, in which he would have found, that the house thanked his majesty for having passed over unnoticed the unjust acquisition of his hereditary dominions by Prussia; and that the real cause of the war was an actual and violent act of hostility, committed on her part, by refusing admittance to our ships and commerce into her several ports in the Baltic, and elsewhere, and not for the acquisition which she had so honestly taken from a power that had no right whatever to bestow it. And with respect to the negociating for it, he is equally mistaken: it was unequivocally offered by the French government as one of the conditions. The Rt. Hon. gentleman has been equally free in his criticism on his majesty's ministers, for their not having been sufficiently prompt and speedy in their assistance of Prussia. Here again he shews himself to be equally unreasonable and incorrect. The first information ministers received of the war between Prussia and France, was on the 13th of Sept. in a letter from Mr. Thornton, at Hamburgh, inclosing a dispatch to him from Mons Jacobi, in which he says, that he coming to England *sous un charactere qu'elconque*, in some particular character. He did not reach England till the 10th of October, and it was the 11th before I saw him. Lord Morpeth had in the mean time been dispatched on an embassy to Prussia, but did not arrive till the delivery of his credentials was rendered impossible by the unfortunate calamities which had so rapidly taken place. When the proposals of M. Jacobi came to be considered, they were found very vague, and it was thought necessary to send a second mission to Prussia, for it was impossible to conceive that the loss of one battle could have been so tremendously fatal as it has since been found to be. The same attention also unfortunately took place with respect to Russia, who was kept in the dark with regard to the intention and the time of the Prussians going to war, by which means her favorable intentions for the service of Prussia have been, in a great measure, frustrated by not having set out on their march before the time, that, to have acted jointly and effectually with the Prussians, they ought to have been in the neighborhood of Berlin. The Rt. Hon. gentleman in the extensive range of criticism and censure, which he has indulged himself against his majesty's government, has not failed to notice particularly our military measures, in which, he certainly has not treated us with much candor. When we came into administration, it was allowed that the circumstances of the country were truly alarming. We took upon us, however, to do the best we could to retrieve them, and we ought to be allowed a reasonable time before it is expected we are to do all that can be atchieved. He says our expeditions have been fruitless and unavailing, without knowing where they are designed to act, or what may be the nature of their operations. There has been no delay in those expeditions which ministers do not feel themselves perfectly able to satisfy. As to the discontent that the honorable gentleman states to have been produced by general Craufurd's appointment, I must only observe that he certainly knew nothing of the nature or the object of that expedition which has been confided to general Craufurd. But why are we to suppose that this selection of general Craufurd has given great offence? Sir Home Popham has at least as many superiors in the navy, as general Craufurd has in the army, and his selection should be quite as offensive to the navy, yet he was appointed by the late ministry. With respect to the recall of Sir Home Popham and Sir David Baird, I freely confess that I was one of those who advised it, and upon the ground that they did without orders, and upon their own judgment and responsibility, undertake the expedition of South America. In prosecution of their scheme, they did not leave a single ship of the line to protect the Cape of Good Hope. They even obliged a frigate that was sent out to India with money for the payment of troops there, to desert the destination that it was intended for and go upon the South American expedition. Such conduct as this I consider highly reprehensible, and a subversion of all discipline and government. This is not all: Sir Home Popham has wrote circular letters to manufacturing towns, on the principle, and from the fatal influence of that patriotic society at Lloyd's, which is held out to the navy as giving greater encouragements than the government of the country. I do consider the conduct of Sir Home Popham as highly reprehensible in a British officer, and, therefore, although I should be sorry to pronounce strongly on the conduct of any man until he had an opportunity of justifying himself, yet I will say, that there is nothing in the first appearance of this transaction which a British parliament could approve of.—As to the dissolution of parliament, it is by no means surprising, that after the negociation had completely failed, his majesty's ministers should advise his majesty to recur to the sense of his people, as the means most likely to obtain that unanimity which is so desirable under the present circumstances. I believe that no administration ever interfered less in the elections; but of this I am perfectly sure that not one shilling of the public money has been spent at any one election in the kingdom. The right honorable gentleman has acted prudently in not pressing his amendment to a division, for had he done so, he would have found himself in such a minority as could give him little reason to be proud of."

The original address was then carried.

Orphans Court of Prince George's County, October Term, 1806.

On application of Iſabella Wood and Oſborn Belt, junior, adminiſtrators of Elijah Wood, late of Prince George's county, in the ſtate of Maryland, deceaſed, to this court, to make diſtribution of the aſſets in their hands, among the heirs and legal repreſentatives of the ſaid Elijah Wood, and it appearing to this court that ſome of the repreſentatives of the ſaid deceaſed, to wit: Lathly Wood, Eleanor Swaine and Robert Wood, reſide out of the ſtate of Maryland. It is thereupon ordered that this court will proceed on the ſecond Tueſday in April next, to make diſtribution of the aſſets in the hands of the ſaid Iſabella Wood and Oſborn Belt, junior, provided a copy of this order be inſerted in the National Intelligencer once a week, until the firſt day of April next.

Teſt, TRUEMAN TYLER,
Regiſter of Wills for Prince George's county

December 8—w[illegible]

ADDRESS OF MR. BURWELL, OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.

Washington, March 2, 1807.

Sir,

I have determined, from a sense of duty to those I have represented during the present session of Congress, to offer for your consideration a summary of the most important measures, which have been before us, and such information about the foreign relations of this country as has been communicated.

In noticing the occurrences of the present session, none more deserve attention, than the expedition of Burr. It has been rendered interesting by the celebrity of the man, the mischief he contemplated to the community and the manner in which his designs have been defeated. His schemes were a long time enveloped in mystery, and were secretly accomplishing under pretences which scarcely excited suspicion. It was generally believed he was preparing the means of an enterprize against the Spanish provinces, and as such it was announced to Congress by the President of the U. S. in his message of December 3d, "that a great number of private individuals were combining together, arming and organizing themselves contrary to law, to carry on a military expedition against the territories of Spain;" some time elapsed before any thing more definite was known; until it was ascertained that efforts had been made to corrupt the commander in chief and army of the U. S. with the design of seizing New Orleans, revolutionising the country, and effecting a separation of the union. This intelligence was received from gen. Wilkinson, and was contained in a letter from Burr to him, which states, "the enterprize was begun, funds provided, and detachments of men were to meet on the Ohio, the first of November, under different pretences, that every thing favored his views, both internal and external—protection from England was secured—Truxtun had gone to Jamaica, to arrange with the admiral on that station, and to meet at the mouth of the Mississippi." In another part of the letter, he says, "the project is brought to the point so long desired, and guarantees the result with his life and honor, the lives, honor, and fortunes of hundreds, the best blood of our country." It would indeed be a melancholy circumstance if this assertion were true. I feel certain, there are but few men in this country so depraved, so lost to every sentiment of virtue and patriotism, as to join in a plan which, if successful, would draw ruin on the nation, and imprint an indelible stain on its character; I therefore believe it a base aspersion; many who followed him, and participated in the expedition, were deluded by the artifices of himself and emissaries. Events have demonstrated that the means by which these plans were to be executed, were (for obvious reasons) magnified and over-rated—his expectations of aid from the western people, were unfounded—and the moment they were undeceived by the proclamation of the President, and opposed by the state authorities, they dispersed and abandoned a man, to whose banners they had repaired, under the supposed countenance of the government of the U. S. succours from England have equally failed him, and there is reason to believe that Truxtun, so far from co-operating, had given the earliest intelligence of his treachery. If the commander of the army (upon which he appears to have relied) had listened to his overture, and the army had yielded to seduction, in all human probability his objects would have been effected, and he would have remained in possession of Orleans for a short time; but happily for our country they were rejected, and steps were immediately taken, which terminated in an arrangement with the Spaniards, in that quarter, which enabled the American forces to withdraw from the Sabine river, to New-Orleans, and there resist any attempt against the place; the latest accounts state that Burr and his party had surrendered themselves prisoners, and had been delivered in custody to the civil power of the Mississippi territory. Thus has ended this conspiracy, surpassed by nothing in the annals of our history, for baseness; crippled in its progress, by the vigilance of the general and state governments, and finally suppressed without bloodshed, by the patriotism of the people.

During the agitation and alarms of the public mind, produced by the conspiracy, and while its extent was unknown, the Senate proposed a bill suspending the writ of Habeas Corpus for three months; this bill was rejected by a very large majority in the House of Representatives, as unnecessary to secure the tranquility of the country, and extremely dangerous as an example. I shall mention a few laws which have passed:—An act extending the time for locating Virginia military land warrants. The holders of these warrants are allowed a further time of three years to locate them in the [illegible]