



FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 1823.

EUROPEAN DIPLOMATICS.

Abstract of the Documents recently laid before the Parliament of Great-Britain.

The Documents consist of two classes, the first is marked "Class A.—Verona and Paris." The second "Class B.—Paris and Madrid."

No. 1. of the first class, is a letter from the Duke of Wellington to Mr. Secretary Canning, dated Paris, September 21, 1822, giving the result of a long discussion with Monsieur de Villele, on the relations between France and Spain. At that time the Duke of Wellington did not think the Cordon Sanitaire larger than could fairly be deemed necessary for the purpose of observation of a country which was the seat of civil-war, and for the protection of the French frontiers from insult, by the different parties on the borders. M. de Villele spoke of the Congress, and of the situation of affairs in Spain. If the Congress were to separate, without coming to a decision on those affairs, the existing evils would be greatly aggravated, and might force the two countries into a war. He wished the Congress to take into consideration the actual position of the French government in relation to Spain, and in case of a war, declare the line of conduct which the four powers, (England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia,) would pursue. The Duke of Wellington refused to make any declaration in behalf of his government, upon a hypothetical case, and writes for instructions.

No. 2, is from Mr. Canning to the Duke of Wellington, dated September 27, in which he says—"If there be a determined project to interfere by force or by menace in the present struggle with Spain, so convinced are his Majesty's government of the uselessness and danger of any such interference—so objectionable does it appear to them in principle, as well as utterly impracticable in execution, that when the necessity arises, or (I would rather say) when the opportunity offers, I am to instruct your Grace at once frankly and peremptorily to declare, that to any such interference, come what may, his Majesty will not be a party."

No. 3. The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Secretary Canning, dated Verona, October 22. This letter is merely an enclosure of the three following queries, addressed by the French Plenipotentiary to the Plenipotentiaries of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Great Britain.

1. In case France should find herself under the necessity of recalling her minister from Madrid, and of breaking off all diplomatic relations with Spain, will the High Courts be disposed to adopt the like measure, and to recal their respective missions?

2. Should war break out between France and Spain, under what form and by what acts would the High Powers afford to France that moral support, which would give to her measures the weight and authority of the Alliance, and inspire a salutary dread into the revolutionists of all countries?

3. What, in short, is the intention of the High Powers as to the extent and the form of the effective assistance (secours materiel) which they would be disposed to give to France, in case active interference should, on her demand, become necessary?

No. 4. The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Canning, Verona, November 5.—informing Mr. C. that Prince Meternich had convened a council of the five cabinet ministers, at which answers were made to the above mentioned questions. This note encloses the answer to those queries by the Duke of Wellington. This answer is a paper of considerable length. But we can take only the principal points. The Duke commences by saying, that "since the month of April, 1820, the British Government have availed themselves on every opportunity of recommending to his Majesty's allies to abstain from all interference in the internal affairs of Spain." They considered that an interference, with a view to assist the monarch on the throne, or to overturn that which had been settled, and which he had guaranteed, or to promote the establishment of any other form of government or constitution, particularly by force, would only place that monarch in a false position, and prevent him from looking to the internal means of amelioration which might be within his reach. "Such an interference always appeared to the British Government an unnecessary assumption of responsibility, which, considering all the circumstances, must expose the King of Spain to danger, and the power or powers which should interfere, to obloquy, certain risks, and possible disasters; to enormous expenses and final disappointment in producing any result."

After adverting to the existing relations between France and Spain, the Duke, in relation to the three questions, says—"The British Government cannot but feel, that to make any declaration on any of the three points referred to by his Excellency, without a previous accurate knowledge of all the circumstances which have occurred between the two countries, would be not only premature and unjust, but would probably be unavailing; and would in fact deprive his Majesty of the

power of discussing and deciding upon the measures of his own government in this affair hereafter, when he should be better informed. His Majesty must either place himself in this painful position, or he must do, what would be equally painful to his feelings, require from his august ally, the King of France, that he should submit his conduct to the advice and control of his Majesty. His Majesty's government cannot think either alternative to be necessary, but are of opinion that a review of the obvious circumstances of the situation of France, as well as Spain, will shew, that whatever may be the tone assumed towards France by the ruling powers in Spain, they are not in a state to carry into execution any plan of real hostility. Considering that a civil war exists on the whole extent of the frontier which separates the two kingdoms; that the hostile armies are in movement and in operation in every part of it; and that there is not a town or village on the French frontier which is not liable to insult and injury—there is no person who must not approve of the precaution which his most Christian Majesty has taken in forming a corps of observation for the protection of his frontier, and for the preservation of the tranquillity of his people. His Britannic Majesty sincerely wish that this measure may be effectual in attaining the objects for which it is calculated; and that the wisdom of the French government will have reduced them to explain it at Madrid, in such terms as will satisfy the government of his Catholic Majesty of its necessity. Such an explanation will, it is hoped, tend to allay, in some degree, the irritation against France; and on the other hand, it may be hoped, that some allowance will be made in France for the state of effervescence of men's minds in Spain, in the very crisis of a revolution and civil war." The remainder of this note is intended to show, that, under the existing circumstances, Spain could not, in the nature of things, meditate any hostile measures towards France.

No. 5.—The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Secretary Canning, dated Verona, Nov. 12, enclosing a memorandum of what had been passing there since the date of the last despatch. To the three questions proposed by France, the three continental allies answered on the 30th of October, that they would act as France should, in respect to their Ministers in Spain, and would give to France every countenance and assistance she should require; the cause for such assistance, and the period and mode of giving it, being reserved to be specified in a treaty. The minister of Great Britain answered, that having no knowledge of the cause of dispute, and not being able to form a judgment upon an hypothetical case, he could give no answer to any of the questions. The mode of communicating with Spain was considered on the 31st, with a view to prevent a rupture between France and Spain. It was agreed, that instead of official notes to be presented by the several Ministers at Madrid to the Spanish government, it is now intended that despatches shall be written to those ministers respectively, in which the several courts will express their wishes and intentions; this mode of proceeding is adopted, as affording greater latitude for discussion and explanation than that by official notes.

No. 6.—The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Canning, Verona, Nov. 22. This note encloses the answer of the Duke of Wellington to the three questions several times before mentioned. From this paper we make the following extracts. The ministers of the Allied Courts have thought proper to make known to Spain the sentiments of their respective Sovereigns, by despatches addressed to the ministers of the several Courts residing at Madrid, instead of by official notes—as a mode of communication less formal, and affording greater facility of discussion.

The despatches, it appears, are to be communicated *in extenso* to the Spanish government. The origin, circumstances, and consequences of the Spanish revolution—the existing state of affairs in Spain—and the conduct of those who have been at the head of the Spanish government, may have endangered the safety of other countries, and may have excited the uneasiness of the governments, whose ministers I am now addressing; and those governments may think it necessary to address the Spanish government upon the topics referred to in these despatches.

These sentiments and opinions have certainly been entertained by the three Cabinets of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, for a considerable portion of time; and the British government duly appreciates the forbearance and deference for the opinions of other Cabinets, which have dictated the delay to the present moment. But having been delayed till now I would request those ministers to consider, whether this is the moment at which such remonstrances ought to be made; whether they are calculated to allay the irritation against France, and to prevent a possible rupture; and whether they might not with advantage be delayed to a later period. They are certainly calculated to irritate the government of Spain; to afford

ground for a belief that advantages had been taken of the irritation existing between that government and France, to call down upon Spain the power of the alliance and thus to embarrass still more the difficult position of the French Government.

But his Majesty's government are of opinion, that to animadvert upon the internal transactions of an independent state, unless such transactions affect the essential interests of his Majesty's subjects, is inconsistent with those principles on which his Majesty has invariably acted on questions relating to the internal concerns of other countries; that such animadversions, if made, must involve his Majesty in serious responsibility if they should produce any effect; and must irritate if they should not; and if addressed, as proposed, to the Spanish government are likely to be injurious to the best interests of Spain, and to produce the worst consequences upon the probable discussions between that country and France.

The King's Government must, therefore decline to advise his Majesty to hold a common language with his Allies, upon this occasion; & it is so necessary for his Majesty not to be supposed to participate in a measure of this description, and calculated to produce such consequences, that his government must equally refrain from advising his Majesty to direct that any communication should be made to the Spanish government on the subject of its relations with France.

His Majesty, therefore, must limit his exertions and good offices to the endeavors of his Minister at Madrid to allay the ferment which these communications must occasion, and to do all the good in his power.

No. 7. Mr. Canning to the Duke of Wellington.—In this note, Mr. C. says—"M. de Villele has taken several opportunities of expressing to Sir Charles Stuart his own earnest desire for the preservation of peace; and his wish to receive, not only the support but the advice of the British government, in his endeavors to preserve it." Mr. C. urges the Duke of Wellington to have an interview with M. Villele, on his return from Verona and tender the mediation of the British King, between the French and Spanish governments. The following note is also enclosed, and is such a feeling appeal to the British government on the part of Spain, that we cannot forbear taking it entire. Extract of a Despatch addressed by M. San Miguel, Minister or Foreign Affairs at Madrid, to M. de Colomb, dated Nov. 15, 1822.

The Government of his Majesty has received with gratitude, without surprize, the verbal communication, purporting that the Cabinet of his Britannic Majesty, respecting the independence and political institutions adopted by the (Spanish) nation, is determined not to interfere in our domestic affairs.

Nothing else could be expected from the Government of a nation which, like the British, knows its rights and the primordial principles of public law; and it is only to be wondered at, that it should not think it expedient to give to a declaration of such obvious justice the solemnity which it deserves.

The ties of intimate regard, the principles of mutual convenience, and the analogy of the respective institutions which exist in Spain and in England—do they not positively entitle the former, overwhelmed with difficulties, to expect from the latter, whose political influence is of the greatest weight, something more than simple & abstract justice—something more than a passive respect for universal laws, than a cold and insensible neutrality?—And if some tender interest, such as befits two nations in similar circumstances, exists in the Court of London, how is it that it does not manifest itself in visible acts of friendly interposition, to save its ally from evils, in which humanity, wisdom, and even cautious and provident State policy will sympathise? Or how is it that (if these benevolent acts exist) they are not communicated to the Cabinet of his Catholic Majesty.

The acts to which I allude would, in no wise, compromise the most strictly conceived system of neutrality. Good offices, counsel, the reflections of one friend in favor of another, do not place a nation in concert of attack or defence with another—do not expose it to the enmity of the opposite party, even if they do not deserve its gratitude; they are not in a word, effective aid, troops, arms, subsidies, which augment the force of one of the contending parties. It is of reason only that we are speaking; & it is with the pen of conciliation that a Power, situated like Great Britain, might support Spain, without exposing herself to take part in a war, which she may, perhaps, prevent with general utility.

England might act in this manner; being able, ought she so to act? And if she ought, has she acted so? In the wise, just, and generous views of the government of St. James, no other answer can exist than the affirmative. Why then does she not notify to Spain, what has been done, and what it is proposed to do in that mediatory sense *en aquel sentido medtador*? Are there weight, inconveniences which enjoin discretion, which shew the necessity

of secrecy? They do not appear to an ordinary penetration.

Nevertheless, in such uncertainty of what she has to thank the British Ministry for, the government of his Catholic Majesty think itself bound to manifest, in the face of the world, in order that it may regard it as its profession of faith, that whilst it respects the rights of others, it will never admit the least intervention in its internal concerns, nor execute an act, which may compromise, in the least, the free exercise of national sovereignty.

When once you shall have communicated these frank declarations to the Right Hon. George Canning, his excellency cannot do less than find them worthy of his flattering concurrence, as well in substance as in form, and must correspond cordially with the spirit which has dictated them; & it will be sufficient that you should terminate your discourse, by reminding his excellency that Spain has been almost always, in her political relations, the victim of her probity and good faith, that her friendship has been, and is, useful to other nations, and sincere under every trial, that the government of his Majesty is desirous to preserve the friendly ties which exist between Spain and England; but without the diminution, without the degradation of its dignity; and that if it has to struggle with the embarrassments that result from its immense progressive losses, the Spanish people always possess sublimity of sentiment to conduct itself with honor—strength of character to support its calamities, and constancy of resolution to maintain itself, in spite of the vast sacrifices, in the post which belongs to her in Europe.

No. 8. The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Canning, dated Paris, Dec. 9.—announcing the Duke's arrival in that city. The Duke says: "I have since had an interview with M. de Villele; and I have the pleasure to inform you, that he has sent a messenger to Verona, with orders to the French Ministers at that place to express the desire of the French government, that the transmission of the despatches to Madrid should be suspended."

No. 9. A despatch from Mr. Canning to the Duke of Wellington, acknowledging the receipt of the above, and directing him, in consequence, to suspend the mediatorial offer, until further advice should be received from Verona. Mr. Canning, however, says, "that it is highly material, for the clear and perfect discharge of the duty of the British government, in a question so deeply affecting the interests not only of the powers immediately concerned, but of the world, that your Grace should not leave Paris without having placed in the hands of the French government the eventual offer of his Majesty's mediation."

No. 10. The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Canning, dated December 17, transmitting a copy of the note of the former to M. de Montmorency, which concluded as follows: "It is the sincere hope of his Majesty, that this salutary reconsideration may prevent recourse to arms. But, as the issue of the reference at Verona may still be doubtful, the undersigned is instructed to declare that, if the answer to that reference should not be such as to preclude all danger of hostilities, his Majesty will be ready to accept the office of mediator between the French and Spanish governments; and to employ his most strenuous endeavors for the adjustment of their differences, and for the preservation of the peace of the world."

No. 11. Reply to the foregoing, by M. de Montmorency, dated Dec. 26, declining the proffered mediation. We make the following extract:

"His Majesty has appreciated the sentiments which have induced the King of England to offer his mediation to his Majesty, in order to prevent a rupture between him and the Spanish government. But his Majesty could not but feel that the situation of France with regard to Spain was not of a nature to call for a mediation between the two Courts. In fact, there exists no difference between them, no specific point of discussion, by the arrangement of which their relations might be placed on the footing on which they ought to stand. Spain, by the nature of her revolution, and by the circumstances with which it has been attended, has excited the apprehension of several great powers, England participated in these apprehensions: for even in the year 1820 she foresaw cases, in which it would be impossible to preserve with Spain relations of peace and good understanding.

"France is more interested than any other power in the events which may result from the actual situation of that monarchy. But it is not her own interests alone which are compromised, & which she must keep in view in the present circumstances:—the repose of Europe, and the maintenance of those principles by which it is guaranteed, are involved.

"The Duke of Wellington knows that these are the sentiments which dictated the conduct of France at Verona; and that the Courts which agreed in them regarded the consequences of the revolution, and of the actual state of Spain, as being common to them all; that they never entertained the idea that it was between France and Spain that the existing difficulties needed to be arranged; and that they considered the question to be 'whol-

ly European;" and that it is in consequence of this opinion, that the measures which had for their object the bringing about, if possible, an amelioration in the state of a country so highly interesting to Europe—measures, the success of which would have been completely secured, if England had thought she could concur in them.

"His Most Christian Majesty, who was bound to weigh these considerations maturely, has therefore tho't that he could not accept the mediation that his Britannic Majesty has been pleased to propose to him."

No. 12. Mr. Secretary Canning to the Vicomte de Marcellie, the French Charge d'Affaires in London, in reply to the before mentioned note from M. de Montmorency. Although the French King had declined the mediation of England, yet Mr. Canning says, "the King [of England] will not the less anxiously employ, in every way that is yet open to him, those 'conciliatory dispositions' for which his most Christian Majesty gives him credit, to bring about a state of things less menacing to the peace of Europe, than that which is exhibited in the present position of those two governments towards each other. The British Cabinet (the Secretary continues) had not to learn how fearfully the tranquility of all Europe must be affected by the hostile collision of France and Spain. Accordingly, in the Duke of Wellington's Official Note, the 'adjustment' of the supposed 'differences between the French and the Spanish Governments,' was stated as auxiliary to 'the preservation of the peace of the world.' But the British Cabinet certainly did not understand the questions brought forward at Verona, by the Plenipotentiary of his Most Christian Majesty, with respect to the actual situation and possible conduct of Spain, to be questions in which the concern of France was so little distinguishable from that of other Powers, as the Duke de Montmorency's Note represents it." The three questions are here quoted by Mr. C. who, in commenting, proceeds to show that the case stated is purely hypothetical, and that the question of peace or war with Spain, was a question peculiarly French. We find it necessary to quote pretty largely from this letter, not only to preserve the chain of argument, but to show the apprehensions of the British Cabinet, as to the consequences involved in this unhappy and ill-judged war.

"No objection was stated by the Duke of Wellington, on the part of the King his master, to the precautionary measures of France; within their own frontier; measures which the right of self-defence plainly authorized. But it appeared to his Majesty's Plenipotentiary at Verona to be necessary and just, that, before he was called upon to promise eventually the support of his government to measures on the part of France which were likely to lead to war with Spain, opportunity should have been allowed to his government to examine the grounds of those measures; that the cause of offence given by Spain to France should have been specifically defined.

"It was, therefore, impossible for his Majesty's Plenipotentiary to 'concur' in the decisions of Verona."

It remains to advert to that part of the French official Note, which appears to insinuate a reproach against this country, as if she had abandoned at Verona, opinions which she had formerly declared with respect to the affairs of Spain.

"England," it is said, "partook, in 1820, of the inquietude which the revolution in Spain occasioned to many great powers; she foresaw cases in which it might be impossible to preserve with Spain the relations of good intelligence and peace."

The writer must be permitted to say, that, though questions were indeed propounded to England in the year 1821, as to possible future contingencies in the affairs of Spain; so far from "foreseeing cases," and deciding upon the conduct which would be applicable to them, in the manner here described, the British government positively declined to bind itself, by a contingent opinion, to any conditional course of action.

But there was no indisposition or hesitation to avow the principles upon which the opinion of England would be formed, and her course of action regulated. It was not only declared that the British government disclaimed any general right of interference in the internal concerns of independent nations; but it was specifically stated, that there was perhaps no country of equal magnitude with Spain, whose internal disturbances would be so little likely to menace other States with that direct and imminent danger, which could alone, in exception to the general rule, justify foreign interference.

The application of these principles to the cases brought forward by France at Verona, was as direct, as it was consistent with the former professions of the British Cabinet.—That application was further enforced by other considerations, which, though they had not perhaps been distinctly anticipated in a prospective and hypothetical argument, bore nevertheless, with undeniable force upon the question to be decided at Verona.

Dangers not necessarily arising from the existence of the internal agitations of Spain, might, nevertheless, be created by a called-for and injudicious interposition. The spirit of rev-