HR
F5818
G7

THE LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

The F. W. Howay
and R. L. Reid
Collection of Canadiana

OFFICIAL PAPERS

RELATIVE TO THE

DISPUTE

BETWEEN THE COURTS OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND SPAIN,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

THE SHIPS CAPTURED IN NOOTKA SOUND,

AND THE

NEGOCIATION THAT FOLLOWED THEREON;

TOGETHER WITH

The Proceedings in both Houſes of Parliament

ON THE

KING's MESSAGE:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

THE REPORT OF M. DE MIRABEAU,

AND THE

SUBSEQUENT DECREES

OF THE

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE

ON THE

FAMILY COMPACT.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON HOUSE,

PICCADILLY.

(1790)

INTRODUCTION.

FOR a full ſtatement of the enterprize formed by ſome Britiſh merchants, of opening a trade with the North-Weſt Coaſt of America, for the purpoſe of ſupplying the Chineſe market with furs and ginſeng, we refer the reader to " the Memorial addreſſed to the " Right Hon. William Wyndham Grenville, " one of his Majeſty's Principal Secretaries of " State, by Lieut. John Mears, and preſented " to the Houſe of Commons on the 13th of " May," and to " An Authentic Statement of " all the Facts relative to Nootka Sound, by " Mr. John Cadman Etches," both publiſhed for John Debrett, Piccadilly, and uniformly printed to bind herewith.

The following is a faithful abſtract of theſe pamphlets.

In the month of March, 1786, Lieutenant Mears diſpatched from Bengal the Sea Otter,

and followed himſelf in a veſſel called the Nootka, for Prince William's Sound. The Sea Otter was loſt, but the Nootka wintered there, and opened a trade with the natives.— He proceeded to China with his furs, and in January 1788, Mr. Mears, in conjunction with other Britiſh traders, purchaſed two other veſſels, the Felice and Iphigenia. With theſe two he proceeded from China to the port of Nootka. On his arrival he purchaſed from the Chief of the diſtrict a ſpot of ground, whereon he built a houſe for the more convenient purſuit of his trade, and hoiſted the Britiſh colours. He built a veſſel there, which he called the North-Weſt America, and having traded along the coaſt within the limits of 60° and 40° 30′ North, he made formal treaties with the Chiefs of ſeveral diſtricts, for free and excluſive trade with the natives; and he returned to China with the Felice, leaving the other veſſels to winter at the Sandwich Iſlands. In China he found Mr. John Cadman Etches, who had alſo come from a trading voyage to the North-Weſt Coaſt of America, under licences granted to him and Co. by the Eaſt India and South Sea Companies. They entered into co-partnery, and having fitted out two veſſels, the Princeſs Royal and Argonaut, and equipped

them

them with proper ſtores for a three years expedition, they were diſpatched under the command of Mr. James Colnett, in the month of April and May, 1789. The North-Weſt America and Iphigenia returned from the Sandwich Iſlands to Nootka, in April 1789, where they found two American veſſels, the Colombia and the Waſhington. The North-Weſt immediately ſailed along the Coaſt to the North, for the purpoſe of trade. On the 6th of May, a Spaniſh ſhip of war, called the Princeſſa, commanded by Don Stephen Joſeph Martinez, mounting 26 guns, anchored in Nootka Sound, and was joined on the 13th by a Spaniſh ſnow of 16 guns, called the San Carlos. After mutual civilities had paſſed, Don Martinez informed Capt. Douglas, who commanded the Iphigenia, that he had orders to ſeize all ſhips and veſſels he might find on that coaſt, and accordingly he ſeized on the Iphigenia, and the crew were carried on board the Spaniſh ſhips. He took poſſeſſion of the houſe on ſhore, and hoiſting thereon the ſtandard of Spain, took formal poſſeſſion alſo of the Coaſt, declaring that all the line of Coaſt between Cape Horn and the 60th degree of North latitude belonged to the King of Spain. Capt. Douglas ſigned a paper, which he afterwards found was an obligation to pay on demand

mand the value of the ſhip, cargo, &c. in caſe the Viceroy of Spain ſhould adjudge her to be lawful prize. The Iphigenia was permitted to quit Nootka, which ſhe did, and returned to China, leaving behind her there the two American veſſels which the Spaniards had not moleſted. The Iphigenia and her companion ſailed under Portugueſe colours to avoid the high port duties of China. On the return of the North-Weſt to Nootka, ſhe was ſeized by boats, and towed into the port, her cargo and ſtores taken out, and ſome of the crew put in irons. The Princeſs Royal arrived a few days after, but ſhe was permitted inſtantly to depart. The ſkins collected by the North-Weſt were all, except 12 of the beſt quality, returned to the Princeſs Royal, for the owners. The Argonaut arrived on the 3d of July, which, after expreſſions of kindneſs, and a promiſe of being unmoleſted, was ſeized; her officers and men were made priſoners, and Mr. Colnett, the maſter, was threatened to be hanged at the yard arm in caſe of his contumacy, and the treatment he received deprived him of his ſenſes. The Princeſs Royal appeared again in the Sound on the 13th, and ſhe alſo was ſeized. The Argonaut, Princeſs Royal, and

North

North-Weſt America were ſent as Spaniſh prizes to San Blas, but aſſurances were given that they would be delivered up.

Mr. Mears adds the following ſtatement of loſſes, real and probable.

A STATE-

A STATEMENT of the ACTUAL and PROBABLE LOSSES ſuſtained by the Aſſociated Merchants of London and India, by the Capture of their Ships, as ſtated by Lieut. Mears.

ACTUAL LOSSES.	Sp. doll.
To Caſh paid the Crew of the Iphigenia, on their return to China, being near two years wages, and other incidental expences incurred, for which vouchers have been obtained - -	15,534
To caſh paid the crew of the North-Weſt America, being near two years wages, on their return to China, for which vouchers have been obtained - - - -	3,719
To the equipment of the ſhip Argonaut, for which vouchers have been obtained - - - -	39,816
To the equipment of the Princeſs Royal, for which vouchers are ready to be produced - - - -	
To the cargo of ſea otters ſkins ſeized on board the Princeſs Royal, being 473, at 100 dollars per ſkin - - -	47,300
To 12 ſea otters ſkins detained for the particular uſe of Mr. Martinez, at the ſame valuation - - -	1,200
To the agent's expences in returning to England - -	2,000
To inſurance on the principal ſtock, at 20 per cent. the uſual premium - - - - - -	23,864
To the loſs of the officers' charts, journals, nautical inſtruments, cloathing, private goods, &c. the amount of which cannot now be aſcertained - - - - -	
To the amount of wages due to all the ſervants of the aſſociated merchants now in captivity, from the time of their ſailing to the time of their return - - - - -	
To the value of the North-Weſt America, on the Coaſt of America	20,000
Spaniſh dollars	153,433

PROBABLE LOSSES.	Sp. doll.
To the value of the cargo which probably would have been collected by the Iphigenia, 1000 ſea otters ſkins, at 100 dollars per ſkin	100,000
To the value of the cargo which would probably have been obtained by the North-Weſt America, 1000 ſea otters ſkins, at 100 dollars per ſkin - - - - -	100,000
To the value of the cargo which would probably have been obtained by the Princeſs Royal, 1000 ſea otters ſkins, at 100 dollars per ſkin	100,000
To the value of the cargo which would probably have been obtained by the Argonaut, 2000 ſkins, at 100 dollars per ſkin -	200,000
To the loſs and deſtruction of the commerce of the aſſociated merchants - - - - - -	
To the particular loſs of the veſſel of 30 tons, in frame, on board the Argonaut, and of the furs ſhe would probably have obtained	
Spaniſh dollars	500,000

OFFICIAL PAPERS, &c.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, *5th* MAY, 1790.

MR. CHANCELLOR PITT delivered to the House the following Message from His Majesty—

"GEORGE REX.

"His Majesty has received information that two "vessels belonging to his Majesty's subjects, and "navigated under the British flag, and two others, "of which the description is not sufficiently ascer-"tained, have been captured at Nootka Sound, on "the North-western Coast of America, by an officer "commanding two Spanish ships of war; that the "cargoes of the British vessels have been seized, and "their officers and crews have been sent as prisoners "to a Spanish port.

"The capture of one of these vessels had before
"been notified by the Ambassador of his Catholic
"Majesty by order of his Court, who at the same
"time desired that measures might be taken for pre-
"venting his Majesty's subjects from frequenting
"those coasts, which were alledged to have been
"previously occupied and frequented by the subjects
"of Spain. Complaints were also made of the
"fisheries carried on by his Majesty's subjects, in
"the seas adjoining to the Spanish continent, as being
"contrary to the rights of the crown of Spain. In
"consequence of this line of communication, a de-
"mand was immediately made, by his Majesty's
"order, for adequate satisfaction, and for restitution
"of the vessels previous to any other discussion.

"By the answer from the Court of Spain, it ap-
"pears, that these vessels and their crews had been
"set at liberty by the Viceroy of Mexico, but this is
"represented to have been done by him, on the
"supposition that nothing but the ignorance of the
"rights of Spain had encouraged the individuals of
"other nations to come to those coasts for the pur-
"pose of making establishments for carrying on
"trade, and in conformity to his previous instruc-
"tions requesting him to shew all possible regard to
"the British nation. No satisfaction was made or
"offered, and a direct claim was asserted by the
"Court of Spain to the exclusive rights of sove-
"reignty, navigation, and commerce, in the terri-
"tories and coasts in that part of the world and
"seas.

"His

" His Majesty has now directed his Minister at " Madrid to make a fresh representation on this subject, and to claim such full and adequate satisfaction " as the nature of the case evidently requires; and " under these circumstances, his Majesty having also " received information, that considerable armaments " are carrying on in the ports of Spain, has judged " it indispensably necessary to give orders to make " such preparations as may put it in his Majesty's " power to act with vigour and effect, in support of " the honour of his crown and the interests of his " people: and his Majesty recommends it to his " faithful Commons, on whose zeal and public " spirit he has the most perfect reliance, to enable " him to take such measures, and to make such augmentation of his forces, as may be eventually " necessary for this purpose.

" It is his Majesty's earnest wish, that the justice " of his Majesty's demands may ensure, from the " wisdom and equity of his Catholic Majesty, the " satisfaction which is so unquestionably due; and " that this affair may be terminated in such a manner " as to prevent any grounds of misunderstanding in " future, and to continue and confirm that harmony " and friendship which has so happily subsisted between the two Courts, and which his Majesty will " always endeavour to maintain and improve, by " all such means as are consistent with the dignity " of his Majesty's crown, and the essential interests " of his subjects.

" G. R."

The meſſage was read by the Speaker, the Members ſtanding uncovered.

Ordered (upon the motion of Mr. Pitt) that the meſſage be taken into conſideration upon the morrow.

Mr. *Fox* obſerved that; in conſequence of the motion which had juſt paſſed, he ſhould remain ſilent for the preſent, though very important obſervations had occurred to him, and muſt have ariſen in the minds of many gentlemen on the ſubject, comparing it with circumſtances which had taken place in the courſe of the laſt and the preſent ſeſſion of Parliament. He would, however, for the reaſon already aſſigned, defer the obſervations he meant to offer till the next day; not doubting, in the mean time, that there would be a common feeling in the Houſe to ſupport his Majeſty in maintaining the honour of his crown and the intereſts of his people, he ſhould reſerve the delivery of his ſentiments until their next meeting.

The Houſe adjourned.

THURSDAY, *6th* MAY.

The order of the day being read for taking into conſideration his Majeſty's meſſage,

The Speaker read his Majeſty's meſſage from the chair.

Mr. Chancellor *Pitt* ſaid, that however natural it might be to look with concern upon the circumſtances ſtated in his Majeſty's meſſage,

and

and all the future poſſible occurrences to which it might lead, he conceived that he ſhould not do juſtice to the feelings and public ſpirit of that Houſe, if he entertained, for a moment, an idea that there could ariſe any difference of opinion as to the meaſures which ſuch circumſtances would make it neceſſary to adopt. There was no occaſion for him to enlarge upon the facts ſtated in his Majeſty's meſſage; the bare mention of them, he was perſuaded, would prove ſufficient to induce the Houſe to give their concurrence (and he ſhould hope, their unanimous concurrence) to the motion with which he ſhould have the honour to conclude. Theſe facts were: Firſt, that ſome of his Majeſty's ſubjects had been forcibly interrupted in a trade which they had carried on, for years, without moleſtation, in parts of America where they had an incontrovertible right of trading, and in places to which no country could claim an excluſive right of commerce and navigation. They knew that this interruption had been made by a ſeizure of a ſhip's cargo and company without any previous notice, and in a moment of profound peace. They knew that the officers and crew had been ſent as priſoners of war to a Spaniſh port, without the pretence of any regular juriſdiction, or without even having gone through the forms of condemnation uniformly reſorted to in caſes of prize at a time of general hoſtility. He wiſhed to abſtain from uſing any words of aggravation, but the bare mention of the facts which he had ſtated, muſt be ſufficient to induce a

Britiſh

British House of Commons to demand adequate satisfaction for the injury done to their fellow-subjects, and to resent the indignity offered to the British flag. They knew, likewise, that, on a representation to the Court of Madrid, his Majesty's Ministers had been informed that one vessel had been restored, but that no satisfaction had been made; on the contrary, the restoration was accompanied by a claim on the part of the Court of Spain, the most absurd and exorbitant which could well be imagined; a claim which they had never heard of before, which was indefinite in its extent, and which originated in no treaty, or formal establishment of a colony, nor rested on any one of those grounds on which claims of sovereignty, navigation, and commerce, usually rested. If that claim were given way to, it must deprive this country of the means of extending its navigation and fishery in the Southern Ocean, and would go towards excluding his Majesty's subjects from an infant trade, the future extension of which could not but prove essentially beneficial to the commercial interests of Great Britain. Material, indeed, were the disadvantages which Great Britain would sustain, should the exorbitant claim set up by the Court of Spain be complied with; and thence arose the necessity of the House meeting it as they ought to do, for the purpose of understanding definitely and distinctly what they were to expect from other nations on points so essential to the dignity of his Majesty's crown and the interests of British subjects. It was, therefore, necessary for that House, by

granting

granting his Majesty an additional force, to enable his Majesty to act with vigour, and effectually to secure the honour of his crown, and the safety, happiness, and prosperity of his people. He hoped, however, that it might not be ultimately necessary to use the force hostilely, but that it would enable his Majesty's Ministers to obtain what the people would expect, such an honourable reparation and satisfaction as would prove ample, on the one hand, and, on the other, lead to such an explanation as should be most likely to produce an amicable termination of the dispute, and render the continuance of tranquillity permanent. Heartily must they all rejoice, if, by the moderation and prudence of the Court of Spain a contest should be avoided. No man, he declared, would more regret the day of even a temporary interruption of peace, than he should; but he must ill deserve the situation in which he stood, and must disgrace the character of a Member of Parliament and a subject of Great Britain, if, however anxious he was for a preservation of the blessings of peace, he did not resist the exorbitant claim set up by the Court of Spain, and, at any risque, recommend a vigorous preparation for war, with a view, at all hazards, to assert our rights and to obtain complete satisfaction for the injury sustained, and the insult offered to His Majesty's Crown. If justice was not done them by others, they must endeavour to procure justice for themselves. The King, he was confident, would meet the unanimity of a loyal, a

gene-

generous, and a brave nation, with the moſt vigorous exertions.

In concluſion Mr. Pitt moved,

"That an humble Addreſs be preſented to His "Majeſty, to return His Majeſty the Thanks of this "Houſe, for his moſt gracious meſſage, acquaint- "ing this Houſe of thoſe circumſtances relative to "the capture of Britiſh veſſels on the North-weſtern "Coaſt of America, and to the conduct of the Court "of Spain on this occaſion, which have induced "His Majeſty to give orders for making ſuch prepa- "rations as may put it in His Majeſty's power to act "with vigour and effect in ſupport of the honour of "His Majeſty's Crown, and of the intereſts of his "people; and to aſſure His Majeſty, that we ſhall "readily proceed to enable His Majeſty to take ſuch "meaſures, and to make ſuch augmentation of His "Majeſty's forces, as may eventually be neceſſary "on this occaſion.

"That we truſt that the juſtice of His Majeſty's "demands will enſure, from the wiſdom and equity "of the Catholic King, the ſatisfaction which is "ſo unqueſtionably due to His Majeſty; and that "we ſhall ſincerely rejoice in ſuch a termination of "the diſcuſſions now depending, as may prevent "any grounds of miſunderſtanding in future, and "may continue and confirm that harmony and "friendſhip which has happily ſubſiſted between "Great Britain and Spain; but that we, at the ſame "time, feel it our indiſpenſable duty to aſſure His "Majeſty of the determination of his faithful Com-

"mons,

"Commons, to afford His Majesty the most zealous "and effectual support in such measures as may "become requisite for maintaining the dignity of "His Majesty's Crown, and the essential interests "of His Majesty's dominions."

Mr. Secretary Grenville seconded the motion.

Mr. Fox declared, that no Member within the House could be more sensible than he was of the disadvantage, (at the same time that he could not resist the temptation of declaring that he heartily concurred with the motion) of rising to state some observations on the situation in which we now stood. No man felt more strongly the necessity of arming than he did. No man felt a warmer resentment at the unprovoked aggression of the Court of Spain, as stated to the House in His Majesty's message. He thought that there could not arise a doubt of the necessity of an immediate and a vigorous armament, and he conceived with the right honourable gentleman, that it was probable that this armament might produce its effect without proceeding to the extreme of war, and that the absurd claim of the Court of Spain (which the right honourable gentleman had so forcibly described, that he would not weaken that description, by attempting to add to it) might be put an end to, but he wished that the message had told them more than it did. They ought to have known what the (afterwards captured) ships were doing, or intended to do; whether they were about to make an establishment, or whether Spain knew that we were about to make an establishment. It was a question with him, whether or not the event which

had happened, and the facts ſtated, were not ſuch as might have been foreſeen or prevented. The Houſe had now been given to underſtand, that the veſſels were ſeized without any preliminary notice; had ſuch notice however been given, it would have made no difference in his vote on that day, convinced as he was, that there could not be a ſingle man in that Houſe, or in the country, but muſt ſee the neceſſity for a vigorous armament. This country certainly could have had no reaſon to have expected an act of hoſtility from any quarter, a few days back, when from every appearance, we were led to look for a long and uninterrupted peace; that proſpect, at leaſt for the preſent, was gone; and in its ſtead there was much matter of ſerious concern; for however favourable a war at its commencement might appear, it was impoſſible to foretell its ultimate conſequences. He had not, in the whole courſe of his life, been uſed to ſpeak with deſpondency of the reſources of the country, but he did not think it fair, in a matter of great ſerious concern, to paſs it over and take no notice of it, at a moment when the occaſion ſeemed neceſſarily to require that it ſhould be mentioned. It was now ſcarcely a fortnight ſince the Miniſter of this country pointed out to the Houſe the the proſperity and flouriſhing ſtate of the finances, and in no part of his ſpeech did he ſeem more confident, than in the aſſurances he gave the Houſe of the proſpect of the continuance of peace. On firſt hearing the meſſage, it ſtruck him as an inſtance of the uncertainty of human wiſdom, and the mutability of human affairs, when he obſerved a gentleman at the head of the

Admini-

Adminiſtration of this country, and of great talents, one day pointing out the increaſing reſources and the great probability of a continuance of peace, and in a fortnight afterwards coming down to that Houſe and telling them, they muſt prepare for war. Viewed in another manner, it gave riſe to different ſuggeſtions. When the right honourable gentleman was vaunting of the reſources of this country, he knew that Spain had, without a colour of pretence, ſeized Britiſh ſhips, made priſoners of the crews, and confiſcated the property in the veſſels. The right honourable gentleman knew theſe facts from the Spaniſh Ambaſſador, who had communicated them in a deliberate and premeditated meſſage on the part of his Court. Where was the difference between matters now and matters three weeks ſince? There did exiſt (Mr. Fox ſaid) a diſtinction, and he would ſtate what it was, and wherein it conſiſted. Let them compare the two ſituations. Not three weeks ſince, they were told of the great probability of a continuance of peace, but now they were told, not indeed of the certainty of war, but of the probability of war. They now knew that the ſhips had been ſeized; they knew that before. They now knew, that the officers had been ſent to a Spaniſh port, priſoners of war; they knew that diſtinctly before. He underſtood that the Spaniſh Ambaſſador had not only ſtated the capture, but accompanied it with a a complaint and a requiſition, that His Majeſty would not ſuffer his ſubjects to trade on thoſe coaſts, and fiſh in the Southern ocean. We now know that Spain was carrying on great armaments; we knew

that at the former period also. Every particular that he had stated, His Majesty's Ministers knew when they were exulting on the prospect of peace. That they should be obliged to go to war, he admitted might, and he hoped would, be otherwise. He hoped that when they had armed, Spain would in some measure retract; but what did they now know, which they did not know a fortnight since, in consequence of a premeditated message by authority from the Spanish Ambassador's Court? He hoped that the Court of Spain would retract, from principles of justice and prudence, because they had made their claim without justice, and advanced it without prudence. He was one of those, who at the moment of the Minister's exultation, had for months known the increase of the Spanish armament. The right honourable gentleman had better opportunities of knowing what the extent of the armament was, than he could pretend to; and when Spain was arming, it was not very reasonable to think that we should be long at peace. He owned he did not see the necessity for the Minister to go out of his way in opening the state of the finances, to introduce assurances of continuance of peace; it must take away from that security and happiness into which the public were lulled, when they were informed, from the Throne, that those assurances were groundless. When the Lottery was talked of in a late debate, he recollected that an honourable friend of his complained that the Minister was an auctioneer; he complained, that at the moment in question, the

Minister

Minister was acting the part of an auctioneer, throughout, by puffing and praising the prospect of peace, when there was in reality a great probability of a speedy war. He always thought it injudicious that this country, in making the last peace, had stipulated with one branch of the House of Bourbon (with France) that the two countries should respectively reduce their marine force to a certain point, and not stipulate in like manner with Spain, because it was obvious that all the danger to be dreaded, might still fall upon us, it being competent to the other branch of the House of Bourbon to arm to whatever extent she thought proper; and he would ask his Majesty's Ministers, whether Spain had not continued in an armed state, and been increasing her armament ever since that period? When the peace was in negociation, he had heard that the Empress of Russia solicited to have the same favour shewn to her which had been shewn to France, with regard to letting the French flag give protection to property not belonging to France, so long as we were not at war with France. It was answered to Russia, that it could not be done. When it was asked, "Why "will you not unite with a power you call your "friend, when you unite with your natural enemy?" The answer was, "It was for that very reason. We "think France most likely to take part against us "whenever we are engaged in war, but we con-"sider you as more likely to remain a neutral "power." Mr. Fox reasoned upon this point, and at length came to consider the claim of the Court of

Spain,

Spain, declaring that this Court had often ſet up claims equally unjuſt and unreaſonable. He conceived the whole exploded claim of the Pope's demarkation to be wholly ſet aſide, and that the diſcovery of any place, and making it the poſſeſſion of this or that King by ſetting up a croſs, or any other token of having been there, was equally exploded. In fact, occupancy and poſſeſſion ſhould be conſidered as the only right and title. He remembered, that in the late convention with Spain, there had been much negociation about the Muſquito Shore, the claim to which on the part of the Court of Madrid he conſidered as one of thoſe rights which he had ſtated as exploded, and he declared that he never had underſtood the policy of our giving up that point without ſome compenſation, unleſs it had led to an ultimate adjuſtment of the rights of Spain in all ſimilar reſpects. So far from this being the caſe, it led only to encourage thoſe claims in Spain, which he conſidered as contemptible. Mr. Fox read that part of the meſſage and addreſs, which referred to explaining the grounds of miſunderſtanding, and obſerved that the paſſage gave him particular pleaſure, becauſe there obviouſly might be two pacific ends to the meaſure. There might be an adequate ſatisfaction made without arrangement to prevent ſuch evils in future, whereas he was clearly of opinion that the point was not the mere capture of the ſhips, but the great and important point of the definition of the claims of the Court of Spain in reſpect to America and the Southern Ocean. He therefore

hoped

hoped that we ſhould not reſt contented merely with a ſatisfaction for the injury, but obtain a renunciation of the claim ſet up with ſo little ground of reaſon; and that he conceived to be the intent and meaning of His Majeſty's meſſage; and on that idea, he heartily gave his vote for the addreſs. As to the other topic, the diſappointment of this country as to its ſituation, he hoped that it would prove a leſſon to his Majeſty's Miniſters for the future, not to be too ſanguine in their expectations of the permanency of peace, when they were, in fact, on the eve of a war. The extravagance of the hopes holden out by Miniſters, added to the diſappointment, the alarm, and the fears of the public, when they ſuddenly found thoſe hopes falſified. Had not ſuch fallacious hopes been excited, he truſted that His Majeſty's Meſſage would not have had the effect on the public funds, and the minds of men, which it had produced.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt obſerved, that whatſover might be his ideas concerning ſome of the remarks which had been juſt made by the right honourable gentleman, he ſincerely rejoiced at the right hon. gentleman's full and explicit concurrence in the principles of the addreſs, and at the proſpect of unanimity which it afforded, and he owned that he had heard the right honourable gentleman's ſpeech with much ſatisfaction on the whole, though with ſome of the ſtrictures which the Houſe had juſt heard, he could not help declaring that he was very much ſurprized. The right honourable gentleman had ſaid, that at the time of the Budget, there

had

had been an inconſiſtency in the language. In anſwer to which remark, he muſt take the liberty of aſſerting, that the right honourable gentleman was miſtaken in both points; he was miſtaken both in the language which he had ſuppoſed to have been holden by him, and miſtaken likewiſe in the circumſtances to which the right honourable gentleman had referred. The Chancellor of the Exchequer added, that he could with truth aſſert, that he had not uttered one ſyllable proſpectively on the continuance of peace; he had ſaid, that our preſent proſperous ſituation had ariſen from the natural ſpirit and reſources of the country in the happy interval of peace; and that if, by the bleſſing of Providence, that peace ſhould continue, our reſources would continue to increaſe, and that the moſt likely means to enſure the continuance of thoſe bleſſings was to perſevere in the ſame vigorous exertions, by which alone, when the day ſhould come, they ſhould be enabled to meet the perilous exigencies of war. The right honourable gentleman was miſtaken in his ſtatement of the circumſtances to which he had referred. The right honourable gentleman had ſaid, "We knew every thing when the Budget was opened, that we know now." The caſe was directly the reverſe. They knew nothing of the facts in queſtion, but what they knew from the ſtatement of the Spaniſh Ambaſſador, whoſe communication was extremely vague and general, and related only to the capture of one of the veſſels, and that without the particulars. The right honourable gentleman

had

had ſaid, they knew the whole of the claim of Spain before. They did not know it diſtinctly, till at a period ſubſequent to the Budget day. Neither did they know the extent of the preparations of the Court of Spain in her ſeveral ports, till a very few days ſince. But the right honourable gentleman would give him leave in his turn, to make a ſingle remark on what had fallen from him. The right honourable gentleman had affirmed, that he for months had known of the armament of Spain, and yet, in the courſe of the preſent ſeſſion, the right honourable gentleman had argued on the propriety of the diminution of the forces of the country, and had expreſſly contended, that we had nothing to apprehend from the Court of Spain. That he had given the Houſe the aſſurance, as he was ſuppoſed by the right honourable gentleman to have given, of the proſpect of peace continuing, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ſaid, he did directly deny. He took notice of what Mr. Fox had remarked relative to the armed Neutrality, and the Moſquito ſhore, which latter he declared did not appear him to be connected with that part of the diſcuſſion then under conſideration. With regard to future arrangements, he felt no difficulty in ſtating that he ſhould think any ſatisfaction inadequate which did not tend to prevent future diſputes.

Mr. Fox anſwered, that it was a maxim with him never to diſpute with a gentleman on his own words, but he could prove from ſome accidental private converſation at the time, that the right ho-

nourable gentleman was underſtood to have expreſſed himſelf on the proſpect of peace continuing as he had underſtood him. For his own part, he had moſt undoubtedly recommended a diminution of our forces, becauſe he took it for granted that when the King's Miniſters, without explaining their reaſons, came and aſked for a certain force, they had no particular ground for ſuch a demand; and as to his hearing rumours of the Spaniſh armament, he certainly had long heard of it, but then it was merely by way of rumour, whereas the right honourable gentleman had ſo much better means of coming at the fact, that he concluded that the right honourable gentleman could aſcertain how far ſuch rumours merited belief.

Mr. Pulteney ſaid, that if any inſult was given to this country, it was the duty of the nation to require redreſs. He entertained, however, much doubt, whether, in the facts ſtated in the meſſage from his Majeſty, there was any inſult on the part of Spain. The meſſage ſtated, that Spain had aſſerted rights on the North-weſtern Coaſt of America. That was clearly a queſtion of right, and not of inſult. In urging a claim, he thought Spain totally wrong; but as to inſult, ſhe appeared to him to have offered none. Poſſibly the ſhips might be employed in ſomething improper, and wherever any contraband trade was carried on, it was cuſtomary to ſeize them. Even on our coaſts, when veſſels did any thing contrary to law, we ſeized them, let them belong to what country they would. It was admitted that the

Spa-

Spaniards had reſtored the ſhip, and expreſſed that they wiſhed to be on good terms with this country. That was not like inſult. With regard to the queſtion, whether we ſhould inſiſt on carrying on trade on the North-weſt Coaſt of America, that was an important point. The Fur Trade, he knew, had proved good at firſt, and a great deal of money had been made by it, but he underſtood that it was much decreaſed in point of advantages, late adventurers having found, that they were obliged to buy their furs dearer, and ſell them cheaper. As to the Southern Whale Fiſhery, that certainly was a ſerious conſideration, and what ought by no means to be abandoned. In reſpect to the ſhips, how could we as yet aſcertain, that our veſſels did what we might wiſh them to have done? All theſe facts remained to be explained. In the mean time, he ſaw nothing like inſult in the conduct of the Court of Spain, and he conceived that we had acted prematurely in inſiſting upon the reſtoration of the ſhips prior to a diſcuſſion of any kind, becauſe it was begging the queſtion, ſince if they had the right thus claimed, the ſeizing of the ſhips was nothing but the exerciſe of that right.

Mr. Grey hoped that the Houſe would concur unanimouſly in the queſtion. He felt, with his right honourable friend near him, the difficulties of diſputing with any gentleman on words uſed by himſelf. But he knew that the impreſſion made on him, and he believed the real impreſſion on the majority of that Houſe, was, that poſitive aſſurance had

been given by His Majesty's Ministers, that there was a prospect of the blessings of peace continuing in this country. The right honourable gentleman, Mr. Grey observed, had resorted to an *if*. *If* was said to be the greatest peace-maker, and he believed that no person was ever more indebted to an *if*, than the right honourable gentleman. For his part, he thought the moment awful, and the situation critical. As to Spain, he thought that enemy alone not able to contend with us, but he knew that a spark of war was likely to extend to a flame, and a general conflagration frequently arose from a single spark; he hoped, therefore, that we should not light up that spark.

The address was voted *nemine contradicente*.

Mr. Fox then rose to move for papers; and first he moved for an account of the amount and value of the trade to Nootka Sound.

Mr. Secretary Grenville begged leave to guard the House against the expectation that the motion would bring before them the value of that trade, the exports being few, and the furs all carried to the China market. It was necessary for him to state this, lest any impression should take place that the value of the trade in question was slight or inconsiderable; an idea which, he was persuaded, prevailed in no man's mind but in that of the honourable gentleman who lately intimated as much.

Mr. Burke remarked, that although the moderate, firm, and temperate language of the address, and of the right honourable gentleman's speech,

was

was entitled to much praiſe, yet there was ſomething in both, which left an opening for diſcuſſion now and afterwards, and would give room for anbiguities and difficulties. The word adequate, prefixed to ſatisfaction, had better have been omitted, becauſe that epithet left the matter open to a diverſity of opinion. With regard to the trade on the North-weſtern coaſts of America, we ſhould find it difficult to value it properly. It might, indeed, be with propriety overvalued, for the ſake of negociation, with a view to give up ſomething afterwards; but, as far as he knew of the matter, he ſhould conceive that the Court of Spain had no more excluſive right to the trade on the North-weſtern coaſts of America, than ourſelves. The right appeared to him to lie with the natives. Mr. Burke recommended accommodation, if practicable, conſiſtent with national honour, declaring, that as we never ought to go to war for a profitable wrong, ſo we ought never to go to war for an unprofitable right; and therefore, he hoped that the intended armament would be conſidered not as a meaſure calculated to terminate the war happily, but to enable Miniſters to carry on the negociation vigorouſly. We were to prepare for the worſt event, and even to riſque the battle, if, unfortunately for us, ſuch riſque ſhould be abſolutely neceſſary. He wiſhed, however, if poſſible, that the war might be avoided. He had ſeen three wars, and we were gainers by none of them; for a war muſt not be looked to as likely to pay its own expence: by the firſt war to which he alluded, the nation added

to

to its glory, but it loſt in point of ſtrength, and came out of it more weakened than it went into it. The ſecond war was terminated leſs honourably; but if with leſs reputation, the war put us to leſs expence; and the third war, we loſt both ways. In a great, gallant, and ſpirited nation, he hoped that there would be as much cauſe for moderation, as there was ground for ſatisfaction in our ability and our reſources. That was the moment when a country did itſelf moſt honour, and proved its magnanimity the moſt clearly, by adopting moderation in proportion to its power. He wiſhed all nations to be as much at peace as poſſible, becauſe he thought that the balance of power in Europe required, that not any one State ſhould have an unequal and an inordinate ſuperiority. Beſides, what had we to contend for? Extent of dominion would do us no good; on the contrary, if all the territories of Spain abroad were thrown into the ſcale of England, he did not think it an object for a wiſe man to deſire. The effect would prove to us, what it was at this moment to Spain; we ſhould be the weaker for our accumulation of diſtant domain.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt begged that when the Houſe adverted to the value of the trade to Nootka Sound, they would not loſe ſight of the preſent queſtion. They were conſidering of an injury done, and the neceſſity of obtaining ſatisfaction; and it would depend on the ſpirit of conciliation manifeſted by the Court of Spain, whether we could adhere to a ſpirit of conciliation or not. It muſt be deſi-

rable

rable, if poſſible, to terminate the matter amicably, if it could be ſo terminated, conſiſtently with the dignity of His Majeſty's crown, and the intereſts of his people. Mr. Pitt recommended the withdrawing the preſent motion, and the poſtponing it for the preſent, till it could be put into a ſhape more calculated to produce the information required.

Mr. Fox conſented to withdraw his motion.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

MAY *5th*, 1790.

The Duke of *Leeds* brought down from His Majeſty the ſame Meſſage as was delivered to the Houſe of Commons, and it was ordered to be taken into conſideration the next day.

MAY *6th*.

The order of the day was moved for ſummoning their Lordſhips to take His Majeſty's meſſage into conſideration.

The meſſage having been read by the clerk,

The Duke of *Leeds* obſerved, that he could venture to declare that the whole Houſe was perfectly convinced that, during the courſe of a long reign, His Majeſty had been no leſs attentive to the intereſts of his own people, than to the general tranquillity of Europe. His Majeſty, on every occaſion, had not only abſtained from committing any outrage or depredation on the territories of other powers, but

had

had uniformly endeavoured, by his intervention, to reconcile the animosities of every nation. The contents of the message were highly important; for the consequences, to which they might lead, involved the rights of the people, as connected with their commerce, as well as the dignity and honour of the crown. It had unfortunately happened, that an outrage of a very serious nature had been committed by an officer, acting under the authority of the King of Spain, upon vessels, the property of British subjects, and navigated under the protection of the British flag. The vessels had not only been captured, and their crews made prisoners, but their cargoes had been confiscated, without even the formality of a judicial proceeding; a formality which, in case of prize, had always been observed among civilized nations, even in the time of mutual war. It was true (he admitted) the two vessels had been released, upon an application from the British Minister to the Viceroy of Mexico, on the extraordinary pretence, that the English were ignorant of the sovereignty of Spain in those seas, and its right to an exclusive trade on the coast; but, if such an extraordinary claim were once admitted, he did not know where it might end. Not only their trade, but the valuable fishery which this country had established there, would either be at the disposal of the Court of Spain, or, what was still more humiliating, would depend on the clemency of a Spanish officer! It was impossible that such an idea could be tolerated. But, notwithstanding the enormity of the aggression, His Majesty was

more

more desirous of seeking justice, than gratifying resentment; and he anxiously hoped that he should obtain redress, without the necessity of being obliged to resort to arms. The Duke concluded with moving,

"That an humble address be presented to His "Majesty, thanking him for his gracious message, "acquainting this House of those circumstances re- "lative to the capture of British vessels on the North "western Coast of America, and to the conduct "of the Court of Spain on this occasion, which "have induced His Majesty to give orders for "making such preparations as may put it in His "Majesty's power to act with vigour and effect in "support of the honour of His Majesty's Crown, "and of the interests of his people; and to assure "His Majesty, that we shall readily proceed to en- "able His Majesty to take such measures, and to "make such augmentation of His Majesty's forces, "as may eventually be necessary on this occasion.

"That we trust that the justice of His Majesty's "demands will ensure, from the wisdom and equity "of his Catholic Majesty, the satisfaction which is "so unquestionably due to His Majesty; and that "we shall sincerely rejoice in such a termination of "the discussions now depending, as may prevent "any grounds of misunderstanding in future, and "may continue and confirm that harmony and "friendship which has happily subsisted between "Great Britain and Spain; but that we, at the "same time, feel it our indispensable duty to as-

" ſure His Majeſty of the determination of this
" Houſe to afford His Majeſty the moſt zealous
" and effectual ſupport in ſuch meaſures as may be-
" come requiſite for maintaining the dignity of His
" Majeſty's Crown, and the eſſential intereſts of
" His Majeſty's dominions."

Lord Rawdon ſeconding the motion, remarked that no man lamented more than he did the interruption of that tranquillity which, in every point of view, was ſo deſirable; but, he truſted, that he ſhould never ſee the day when this country, forgetting its honour and dignity, could tamely ſubmit to ſuch a groſs violation of the firſt principles of national juſtice as that communicated to the Houſe by His Majeſty's moſt gracious meſſage. For his own part, he cordially would ſupport the motion for the addreſs; but though he was far from imputing any blame to the noble Duke, he was of opinion that His Majeſty's Miniſters ought to have made a more ample communication of the circumſtances which had given riſe to the important ſubject under their conſideration, than they had done. With that view he had two motions to propoſe to their Lordſhips' conſideration; the firſt was, " That the proper offi-
" cer be directed to lay before the Houſe a ſtatement
" of the trade on the coaſt, and of the whale
" fiſhery carried on in thoſe ſeas." The extent of which he thought it was very neceſſary to know. And the ſecond, " That an humble Addreſs be
" preſented to His Majeſty, that he would be gra-
" ciouſly pleaſed to order ſuch communications as

" had

" had been received respecting the capture of the " vessels to be laid before the House, and also the " information which had from time to time been " given relative to the armaments which were said " to be carrying on in the ports of Spain." The object which he had in view, was to give the House the fullest information which the subject required; and he flattered himself, as it could not affect the issue of any pending negotiation, that it would not be opposed.

Lord Viscount Stormont observed, that the communication contained in the message was to him a matter of painful surprise. He had indulged the pleasing expectation of a long continuance of the public tranquillity; he had hoped that we might have profited by the advantages of our relative situation; he had seen, with much complacency, that we were gradually rising in the general scale of the nations of Europe, and that, from our commendable spirit of industry, we had derived new sources of wealth. All these hopes he had indulged from the information of His Majesty's principal Minister of Finance in another assembly, on the occasion of his bringing forward the statement of the national income and expenditure. The right honourable gentleman, to whom he alluded, had then holden out to the country the expectation of uninterrupted peace; he had painted, in the brightest colours of the most splendid eloquence, the advantages of our situation, when compared with the other nations of Europe; and had asserted, that in no period of our

hiſtory, could we more ſanguinely entertain the pleaſing hope of permanent tranquillity. All this had been confidently aſſerted no longer than a fortnight ago! Perhaps, it might be political wiſdom not prematurely to reveal the danger which threatened the country; but, in his poor opinion, it was a ſingular kind of political refinement (not to call it by a harſher term) which could induce the King's Miniſters to hold out a proſpect of peace to the nation, at the very eve of a war; to give us the hope of halcyon days, at the moment when the ſtorm was not only gathering, but was actually formed! What he had ſtated was the more extraordinary, as it muſt have happened ſubſequent to the converſation with the Spaniſh Miniſter, when the circumſtances were nearly the ſame as at the preſent moment. The conduct of Adminiſtration was, ſurely, cenſurable in ſuffering Spain to keep up ſuch large armaments in time of peace, under pretence of the Court of Madrid not being a party to the negotiation with the Court of Verſailles at the concluſion of the peace. Had it not been for the Revolution of the French Government at this time, we ſhould, from ſuch culpable neglect, have felt the whole force of the Family Compact; of which, however, he truſted we were in no danger at preſent. No man reſpected more than he did all communications from the Crown; and he admitted, that the wild and extravagant pretenſions of Spain could not be juſtified in the eyes of reaſon; yet, perhaps, we might have obtained the object we deſired more eaſily by the

dexterity

dexterity of ſecret negotiation, than the threats of compulſion.—Men were often more tenacious when their pride, than when their intereſts were concerned, and it had been ſaid, that ſuch was the peculiar character of a Spaniard. In his opinion, ſomething ought to have been ſacrificed to national ideas, and ſome reſpect might have been paid to the Pope's Bull, which gave to Spain the ſovereignty of territories and poſſeſſions already diſcovered, as well as thoſe not diſcovered. A right of poſſeſſion, however, of which the Viceroy of Mexico juſtly concluded our Engliſh ſailors were ignorant, exiſted in the idea of the Spaniards, and upon that ground he had releaſed them from captivity.

As to the impolicy of ceding the Moſquito Shore to Spain, he had always been of one opinion. It was highly impolitic. He ſhould, alſo, beg leave to urge the neceſſity of a more ample communication to the Houſe of the circumſtances which had given riſe to the preſent diſpute; but, as an inſult had been offered, it became neceſſary that reparation ſhould be obtained; and he hoped that the vote of that day would convince the world, that, in every caſe where the intereſts of the people and the honour and dignity of the Britiſh Crown were invaded, the nation had but one heart, one ſentiment, one voice. Under theſe ideas, he truſted, nay, he was confident, that the Houſe would meet the motion of the noble Duke with their moſt cordial and unanimous concurrence.

Lord

Lord Hawkesbury said, that with regard to the motions proposed by the noble Lord, he had considerable doubts whether they could, with propriety, be complied with. In the first place, there was no trade carried on between Great Britain and the North-west Coast of America; and with respect to the motion for laying the papers before the House on the subject of the capture of the vessels, and the information received relative to the armaments carrying on in the ports of Spain, he thought it highly improper while a negotiation was pending. As to what the noble Viscount had mentioned of assurances of peace having been given in another place, it was obvious, these points could not fall properly under discussion.

The Earl of Carlisle rose to support the motion of Lord Rawdon; when the Chancellor reminded the House, that there could be no motion before them till the original question was disposed of

He then read the motion for the Address, which was carried unanimously.

A Committee was appointed to prepare it; and the Lords with white staves were ordered to present the same.

Some conversation then took place on the motions of Lord Rawdon, for a statement of the trade and fishery carried on, and on the production of papers relative to the capture of the vessels, with the accounts of the armaments in the ports of Spain.

On the question being put on each, the first motion was carried with a verbal amendment proposed by Lord Hawkesbury.

The

The motion for the production of the accounts and papers was negatived without a division.

17*th* MAY.

Lord Hay (Earl of Kinnoul) moved, that His Majesty's message, relative to the disputes with Spain might be read,

The same having being read by the Clerk at the table,

Lord Hay observed, that he flattered himself that no apology could be necessary for the remarks with which he should beg leave to introduce his intended motion, when it was considered how much it behoved every Member of the British Legislature, at a moment when the country was upon the eve of a war, to call for such information as he might deem necessary to elucidate the conduct of Administration. For his own part, he should not hesitate to declare that he strongly suspected the Minister of having, for purposes best known to himself, kept back, for a considerable time, the information given to the House by His Majesty's message. He suspected Administration also of having neglected a timely preparation proportioned to the armaments of Spain, and thereby induced that country to commit the insult on the British flag which had been complained of. He condemned His Majesty's servants for having deluded the country by holding out a prospect of permanent peace, when they must have known of the probable grounds of an approaching war. He judged

judged it proper, therefore, to move for the date of the first official information received; he wished not to move for any paper that could be objected to on the grounds of state secrecy; but the substance of the information given by the remonstrance of the Spanish Ambassador had been stated in His Majesty's message; he desired to have the date of the receipt of that information, which could in no ways prove injurious to the interests of the country, and which, if refused, would neither be candid to the House, nor honourable to the Minister. In conclusion Lord Hay moved for

"An humble Address to His Majesty, that he "would be graciously pleased to order to be laid "before the House, the date of the receipt of the "remonstrance presented by the Spanish Ambassa-"dor to His Majesty's Ministers, by order of his "Court."

Lord Walsingham rose, and said, that the motion of the noble Lord could not be agreed to, unless the House departed from a rule which they had invariably and wisely observed, that of never suffering papers to be produced relative to a negotiation with a foreign power, pending such a negotiation, they could not possibly agree to the present motion. He declared, that he had not heard a single reason assigned for the production of the information moved for; it could be attended with no good consequence, but might introduce bad consequences, as it would establish a dangerous precedent.

Lord

Lord Porchester wished for the date of the communication for the purpose of obtaining Parliamentary ground for a Parliamentary censure of the Minister, whose conduct he suspected in the strongest manner. He was confirmed in his own mind, that the King's servants knew of the insult offered by Spain prior to the opening of the Budget. He animadverted on the conduct of the Minister in his concealment, which he declared he could not but view in the most criminal and disgraceful light. He was ready to admit that Administration either did, or did not know, prior to the statement of the finances of the country, that Spain had not only been, for a long time, making the most formidable preparations, but had actually attacked and insulted the British flag: if they did not know the fact, their ignorance was a high crime: if they did know it, their deceit was a still greater. He desired any noble Lord, or the most acute man living, to shew the danger of giving the information moved for; by its being made known to France, it could not extricate her from her difficulties, and enable her to support the Family Compact; nor would its being made known to Turkey, to Russia, or to the House of Austria, induce them to alter their military arrangements. He saw no other reason for refusing the date, than the consciousness of detection by its production. He concluded with charging the Administration with a neglect of duty in having no Minister at Spain, and a corrupt abuse of the public

 trust,

truſt, in making a ſinecure of the Spaniſh Embaſſy.

Viſcount Sydney ſaid, that he ſhould not have ariſen, but that the noble Lord, who ſpoke laſt, had alluded to expreſſions uſed in another Houſe of Parliament, which certainly was a very irregular and unparliamentary ground of objection; for his own part, he thought the motion by no means founded, and he juſtified the withholding the paper on the aſſertion of Lord Stormont.

The Earl of Carliſle begged leave to remind the noble Viſcount (Sydney) who had juſt objected againſt alluſions to what might have paſſed in another place, that he had not in the leaſt oppoſed a motion brought forward by the Lord Preſident of the Council during the diſcuſſion of the Regency, which was not founded in words ſpoken by a Miniſter, but by an individual, (Mr. Fox) and which had cauſed a debate of many hours. The Earl of Carliſle ſupported the motion, and declared that he could not avoid obſerving on the ſilence of His Majeſty's Miniſters, which was not a dignified ſilence, but a ſilence like that, of which certain perſons in a certain Court would be glad to avail themſelves, had not the law conſtrued their ſilence into a full confeſſion of guilt. It was, he believed, a ſilence that His Majeſty's Miniſters reſorted to as a cover to their indiſcretion, and a cloak to their criminality. He would venture a prophecy, that the preſent diſpute would be terminated without a war, but that it would be terminated in a manner far ſhort of all that conceſſion demanded in the

latter

latter part of the meſſage, which was wound up with empty boaſtings.

Lord Stormont ſaid, that he conſidered himſelf as free to aſſert, that when the noble Viſcount (Sydney) took the incidental obſervation of a noble Lord, as the main ground of ſupport of the motion, his conduct was neither parliamentary nor warrantable. They were agreed as to the premiſes of the argument, but differed as to the concluſion. Certainly there were political ſituations, reſpecting which he knew that Miniſters might preſerve a perfect ſilence in diſcharge of a painful duty, and rather expoſe themſelves and their meaſures to miſconſtruction and cenſure, than riſque the ſafety of the country; but how could the concluſion now inſiſted on be drawn from ſuch premiſes? The important facts in queſtion were all made known to the Houſe through the medium of His Majeſty's meſſage; where then could be the danger of diſcloſing the date of their communication?

The queſtion was at length put, and their Lordſhips dividing, there appeared for the motion,

Contents	— —	34
Non Contents	—	53
	Majority	19

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MAY 10th.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of Supply, Mr. Gilbert in the chair,

Mr. Chancellor Pitt rose to move a vote of credit for a million, to enable His Majesty to act as the exigency of affairs might require. With the large sums already voted, and the use of the money which His Majesty would then have at his command, a vote of credit for a million would be sufficient.

"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that "a sum not exceeding one million be granted to "His Majesty, to enable His Majesty to take such "measures, and to make such augmentation to his "forces by sea and land, as the exigencies of af-"fairs may require,"

The motion having been read a first and second time, on the question, "That the Chairman do re-"port the same to the House."

Mr. Sheridan remarked, that the right honourable gentleman, (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) when he stated his observations on His Majesty's message to the House, had expressed a hope, that we should still be able to accommodate the matters in question between the Courts of Madrid and Great Britain, without being driven to the necessity of going to war; a hope in which they must all most cordially concur. But although it was right to follow up their address to His Majesty of last week with a

vote

vote of ſupply, and not leave the addreſs as a mere matter of profeſſion, Mr. Sheridan ſaid he wiſhed to know if, on the event of war being commenced, the right honourable gentleman would find it neceſſary to have a Committee of Supply again.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt anſwered, that there were two views in the contemplation of Government. The one, a hope, and that, he believed, not altogether irrational, that the matters in diſpute between us and Spain might be accommodated, without going to the extremity of a war; and the other, that a war might be unavoidable. The vote of credit for a million was calculated to anſwer the leaſt deſireable alternative of the two, ſhould we be diſappointed of our expectations.

Mr. M. A. Taylor truſted, that Government would contrive that the Admiral for the Newfoundland ſtation did not go till rather a later period than the preſent, in order that he might protect the large fleet of ſhips which would ſail for Newfoundland from the port of Pool. Many had already ſailed; and he could have prevented all the miſchief that was poſſible to happen, had he made known the ſituation of affairs a month, or even a fortnight ago.

Mr. Rolle obſerved, that there was a conſiderable deal of property embarked on board veſſels in the different ports in the weſt in a ſimilar predicament, but that he had not thought it right to ſay any thing reſpecting them in that Houſe, as he gave Government the credit of ſuppoſing that they would take the proper means of guarding, as much as poſſible,

againſt the danger incidental to the circumſtances in which we now ſtood.

Mr. Taylor declared that there was no ſecret in what he had mentioned, nor any thing which could afford information to Spain, which ſhe could not, with the utmoſt eaſe, have obtained. For his own part, he was as little deſirous of betraying the neceſſary myſteries of State as the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt, or any other honourable Member whatſoever.

Mr. Fox aſked, whether the papers which the Houſe had ordered, would give the dates of the earlieſt intelligence received by His Majeſty's Miniſters of the capture of the ſhips in Nootka Sound? He added, that ſince he had laſt troubled the Houſe on the ſubject, a report had gone abroad, that a communication of the fact was made to His Majeſty's Miniſters by the Spaniſh Ambaſſador, ſo early as the 10th of February laſt. He wiſhed to have the dates of the communication correctly, in order to ſee whether the ſituation in which the nation unhappily ſtood, was a misfortune not to be avoided, or whether, if a public repreſentation of it to the Houſe, and a preparation for armament had been made at an earlier moment, the calamity might not have been prevented. He had no doubt but this information would be given, when His Majeſty ſhould graciouſly be pleaſed to give directions for it, in compliance with the addreſs of the Houſe; and if it ſhould appear that the communication had been made ſo early as the 10th of February, undoubtedly

the

the ſurpriſe of the Houſe at the conduct of Miniſters would become increaſed.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt anſwered, that he had not conceived that the motion of the right honourable gentleman extended to the communications made by the Spaniſh Ambaſſador; if he had, he ſhould have ſtated his reaſons for objecting againſt it. He underſtood that the motion referred merely to the intelligence received from Madrid, and ſo it would be found by His Majeſty's anſwer, it had been generally underſtood by His Majeſty's Miniſters. If any thing farther was wiſhed for, the beſt way would be for the right honourable gentleman to make a diſtinct motion for it.

Mr. Fox obſerved, that if the report which he had heard were founded, the Ambaſſador's communication being the firſt intelligence, was moſt important, and he wiſhed to have it, in order that they might learn whether they were likely to be plunged into a war by accidents not to be guarded againſt by human foreſight and precaution, or through the careleſſneſs and ſupineneſs of His Majeſty's Council.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt declared, that whatever temporary triumph the right honourable gentleman or his friends might think they had obtained by goading Miniſters with queſtions, ſuch as thoſe now in agitation, he ſhould not, either by perſonal attack or perſonal inſinuation, become provoked to do what he did not think proper or conſiſtent with his duty to the public. Upon any future proper day for unreſerved diſcuſſion, he had no doubt but that

the

the honourable gentlemen would find that they had leſs cauſe for triumph than they at preſent ſeemed to imagine.

Mr. Fox anſwered, that there was nothing like triumph in the matter. He had mentioned a report that a communication had been made to His Majeſty's Miniſters on the 10th of February, but he begged to have it underſtood that he was by no means pledged for the truth of it.

The reſolution paſſed.

MAY 11*th*.

The report of the Committee of Supply was brought up, and the reſolutions being read,

Mr. Fox declared, that he had imagined that the general intent of the vote of credit was to provide for the uncertain expences which muſt, neceſſarily, be incurred, ſhould the hopes of the country experience a diſappointment, and Spain refuſe an amicable accommodation. But he had heard, that orders for an augmentation of the forces by ſea and land were, already, iſſued. If this was true, he ſaw no reaſon why the eſtimates of theſe augmentations might not have been referred to a Committee of Supply; ways and means voted the money neceſſary immediately; and proviſion made for paying the intereſts of it. No maxim in finance could be truer, than that the means of paying any expence ſhould go hand in hand with the expence itſelf. There was no end to the miſchiefs ariſing from ſpending money one year, and providing for the payment

payment the next. The public, alſo, ſhould know at once the extent of the expence, as nearly as poſſible, in order to judge of the expediency of it.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt contended, that to have voted eſtimates in a committee of ſupply would have looked like an inference that the augmentation of the forces was to be kept up for the whole year; and money muſt have been borrowed, and taxes now impoſed to pay the intereſt, before it was known with certainty that either would be wanted. Although it was true that augmentations were already ordered, theſe augmentations might not be completed in one event, or might not be ſufficient in another; and if the hopes of an amicable accommodation ſhould be diſappointed, proviſion might be made for the additional expence, which would then become neceſſary, by as early an application to Parliament as public convenience would admit.

Mr. Fox begged leave to remind the right hononourable gentleman, that he never meant to aſſert that eſtimates voted under the bare apprehenſion of war would be ſufficient, if war ſhould actually enſue, but that the augmentations already ordered might have been voted and provided for in the regular way.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt anſwered, that this would have been to continue, for a whole year, augmentations, which, in the event of an amicable accommodation, might not be wanted for ſo long a time, or might not even be all made.

The reſolution was agreed to.

Mr. Sheridan ſaid, that he had a motion to make; which he knew not whether he had worded properly; but the purport of it was, to obtain information whether the trade to Nootka Sound, and the ſettlement forming, or intended to be formed there, was undertaken under the ſanction and authority of Government, or merely as an enterprize of private perſons.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt wiſhed the motion to be poſtponed till the information promiſed in His Majeſty's anſwer to the Addreſs could be laid before the Houſe. Licences to trade to Nootka Sound had been granted; and he knew of no authority for that, or any other purpoſe, but ſuch as thoſe licences contained.

Mr. Fox obſerved, that it was of much importance, that the ſituation and nature of the trade and ſettlement ſhould be known.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt ſaid, that the memorial of Captain Mears, with the very full appendix which accompanied it, would put the Houſe in poſſeſſion of all that Government knew on the ſubject.

Mr. Sheridan remarked, that what the Houſe had now heard, that the ſettlement was a private enterprize, was very material.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt contended, that whether the ſettlement was or was not a private enterprize, there could be no doubt that it was incumbent on the honour of the country to demand ſatisfaction for any inſult or injury offered to its ſubjects, whether

in

in their private capacity of traders, or acting under the more immediate sanction of Government.

Mr. Sheridan declared, that if the right hon. gentleman meant to insinuate that he did not think the country bound in honour to protect every subject from insult or injury, he had put a construction on the words which they would not bear.

The motion was postponed.

MAY 12*th*.

A debate took place on a motion of Mr. Grey for the production of the communication made to His Majesty by the Ambassador of the Catholic King, and the date of the said communication. Mr. Lambton seconded the motion. It was opposed by Mr. Browne and Colonel Phipps on the ground that a responsible Minister ought not for the sake of momentary popularity disclose the secrets of a negociation. Mr. Rolle was astonished that the motion could come through the vehicle of a Member who had so great a stake in the country. Mr. Wyndham reprobated the idea of Ministers affecting to throw themselves on their character, and preserving an obstinate silence, pluming themselves on possessing the Statesman-like qualities of Lord Burleigh. If papers were refused on such pretext, there was an end to the best functions of the House. Mr. Wilberforce deprecated the production of

papers, and averred that the conduct of Administration did not warrant diſtruſt.

Mr. Fox contended, that the principle upon which the papers were refuſed went to the extinction of the true uſe and benefit of Parliament—the previous inquiry into the grounds upon which great expence was to be incurred.—They aſked for no part of the negociation—They required nothing but the communication of a date, and at the moment when this date was eſſential to prove that they either were or were not entitled to the confidence they demanded.—Mr. Fox ſaid, that unqueſtionably the honour of the nation was to be maintained.—A war for the honour of the nation was the only war that could be political; for no war in the proſpect of mere profit was ever juſtified by the reſult.

The Houſe divided.

Ayes	—	121
Noes	—	213

After which Mr. Fox ſimply moved for the date of the firſt communication.—This alſo Mr. Pitt refuſed, and the Houſe divided.

Ayes	—	119
Noes	—	203

The Memorial of Lieutenant Mears was laid upon the table of the two Houſes, for the ſubſtance of which vide the Preface.

His

JUNE 10th.

His Majesty closed the Session with a most gracious Speech from the Throne, of which the following passages alluded to the dispute with Spain:

" My Lords, and Gentlemen,

" The necessary public business being now concluded, I think it right to put an end to this session of Parliament.

" I have not hitherto received the answer of the Court of Spain to the representation which I have directed to be made at that Court, in support of the dignity of my crown, and of the interests of my people. I continue to entertain the strongest desire for the maintenance of peace on just and honourable grounds; but, under the present circumstances, I feel it indispensably necessary to proceed with expedition and vigour in those preparations, the objects of which have already received your unanimous concurrence.

" The assurances and conduct of my allies, on this interesting occasion, have manifested, in the most satisfactory manner, their determination to fulfil the engagements of the existing treaties; and, I trust, that our mutual good understanding and concert will be productive of the happiest effects in the present conjuncture of affairs in Europe.

" Gen-

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

"I return you my particular thanks for the readi-
"ness with which you granted the supplies for the
"current service, and for your unanimity and dis-
"patch in enabling me to take those measures which
"the present crisis has rendered necessary.

"My Lords, and Gentlemen,

"It is His Majesty's Royal will and pleasure, that
"this Parliament be prorogued to Tuesday, the 3d
"day of August next, to be then here holden; and
"this Parliament is accordingly prorogued to Tues-
"day, the 3d day of August next."

On the 4th day of June the following State Paper was delivered by the Spanish Court to the Ministers from all the Courts of Europe, resident at Madrid.

MEMORIAL
OF THE
CATHOLIC KING.

"THE King being apprized of the particulars laid before his Ministers, on the 16th of May, by Mr. Merry, his Britannic Majesty's Minister, relative to the unexpected dispute between this Court and Great Britain, as to the vessels captured in Port

St.

St. Laurence, or Nootka Sound, on the coaſt of California, in the South Sea, has commanded the underſigned, his Majeſty's Firſt Secretary of State, to anſwer to the ſaid Miniſter of England, That he had the honour to make known perſonally, and in writing, to the ſaid Miniſter, upon the 18th of the ſame month, that his Majeſty at no time pretended to any rights, in any ports, ſeas, or places, other than what belong to his Crown by the moſt ſolemn Treaties, recognized by all nations, and more particularly with Great Britain, by a right founded on particular Treaties, the uniform conſent of both nations, and by an immemorial, regular and eſtabliſhed poſſeſſion. That his Majeſty is ready to enter upon every examination and diſcuſſion moſt likely to terminate the diſpute in an amicable way; and is willing to enter into immediate conference with the new Ambaſſador, and, if juſtice requires it, will certainly diſapprove of the conduct, and puniſh his ſubjects if they have gone beyond their powers. This offer and ſatisfaction will, it is hoped, ſerve as an example to the Court of London to do as much on its part.

" As the two Courts of London and Madrid have not yet received proper and authenticated accounts, and proofs of all that has really paſſed in theſe diſtant latitudes, a contradiction in the developement of facts has by this means been occaſioned. Even at this moment the papers and minutes made up by the Viceroy of New Spain, on this matter, are not arrived.—Poſterior letters indeed ſay, that the Engliſh veſſel, the Argonaut, had not been ſeized and confiſcated

ſcated till legally condemned; and that the ſmall veſſel, called the Princeſs Royal, which had afterwards arrived, was not ſeized nor confiſcated, but that, on the contrary, full reſtitution was made by the Viceroy, and an obligation only taken from the Captain to pay the price of the veſſel, if ſhe was declared a lawful prize; and on the preciſe ſame terms he had liberated a Portugueſe veſſel belonging to Macao, and two American veſſels.—Theſe particulars will be more explicitly proved and elucidated on the arrival of the neceſſary papers.

"The firſt time that our Ambaſſador made a public notification of this matter to the Miniſtry at London, ON THE TENTH OF FEBRUARY LAST, many of the circumſtances that are now certain were then doubtful. The rights and immemorial poſſeſſion of Spain to that coaſt and ports, as well as ſeveral other titles proper to be taken into view in a pacific negociation, were not quite certain. And if the Court of London had made an amicable return to the complaints made by his Majeſty relative to thoſe merchants whom Spain regards as uſurpers, and the violators of treaties, and had ſhewn any deſire to terminate the affair by an amicable accommodation, a great deal of unneceſſary expence might have been ſaved. The high and menacing tone and manner in which the anſwer of the Britiſh Miniſter was couched, at a time when no certain information of the particulars had arrived, made the Spaniſh Cabinet entertain ſome ſuſpicions that it was made not ſo much for the purpoſe of the diſpute in queſtion, but as a pre-

text

text to break entirely with our Court; for which reason it was thought necessary to take some precautions relative to the subject.

"On a late occasion a complaint was made to the Court of Russia, as to some similar points relative to the navigation of the South Sea. A candid answer being returned by that Court, the affair was terminated without the least disagreement. Indeed it may be asserted with truth, that the manner, much more than the substance of the facts, has produced the disputes that have taken place on this head with Great Britain.

"Nevertheless the King does deny what the enemies to peace have industriously circulated, that Spain extends pretensions and rights of sovereignty over the whole of the South Sea, as far as China. When the words are made use of, "In the name of the King, his sovereignty, navigation, and exclusive commerce to the continent and islands of the South Sea," it is the manner in which Spain, in speaking of the Indies, has always used these words that is to say, to the continent, islands, and seas which belong to his Majesty, so far as discoveries have been made and secured to him by treaties and immemorial possession, and uniformly acquiesced in, notwithstanding some infringements by individuals, who have been punished upon a knowledge of their offences. And the King sets up no pretensions to any possessions, the right to which he cannot prove by irrefragable titles.

"Although Spain may not have eſtabliſhments or colonies planted upon the coaſts or in the ports in diſpute, it does not follow that ſuch coaſt or port does not belong to her. If this rule was to be followed, one nation might eſtabliſh colonies on the coaſts of another nation, in America, Aſia, Africa, and Europe, by which means there would be no fixed boundaries—a circumſtance evidently abſurd.

"But whatever may be the iſſue of the queſtion of right, upon a mature conſideration of the claims of both parties, the reſult of the queſtion of fact is, that the capture of the Engliſh veſſels is repaired by the reſtitution that has been made, and the conduct of the Viceroy; for as to the qualification of ſuch reſtitution, and whether the prize was lawful or not, that reſpects the queſtion of right yet to be inveſtigated; that is to ſay, if it has been made agreeably to, or in contradiction of treaties relative to the rights and poſſeſſions of Spain. Laſtly, the King will readily enter into any plan by which future diſputes on this ſubject may be obviated, that no reproach may be upon him as having refuſed any means of reconciliation; and for the eſtabliſhment of a ſolid and permanent peace, not only between Spain and Great Britain, but alſo between all nations; for the accompliſhment of which object, his Majeſty has made the greateſt efforts in all the Courts of Europe; which he certainly would not have done if he had any deſign to involve England and the other

Euro-

European powers in a calamitous and destructive war.

Given at Aranjuez, the
4th day of June, 1790.

(Signed) LE COMTE DE FLORIDA BLANCA.

On the 13th day of June the following Memorial was delivered by the COUNT DE FLORIDA BLANCA, to Mr. FITZHERBERT at Madrid, and by him to the British Court:

MEMORIAL
OF
COUNT DE FLORIDA BLANCA.

Aranjuez, 13th June, 1790.

"BY every treaty upon record betwixt Spain and the other nations of Europe, for upwards of two centuries, an exclusive right of property, navigation, and commerce to the Spanish West Indies, has been uniformly secured to Spain, England having always stood forth in a particular manner in support of such right.

"By article 8th of the treaty of Utrecht (a treaty in which all the European nations may be said to have taken a part) Spain and England 'profess to 'establish it as a fundamental principle of agreement, 'that the navigation and commerce of the West-'Indies, under the dominion of Spain, shall remain 'in the precise situation in which they stood in the 'reign of his Catholic Majesty, Charles II. and that

'that rule shall be inviolably adhered to, and be 'incapable of infringement.'

"After this maxim, the two powers stipulated—That Spain should never grant liberty or permission 'to any nation to trade to or introduce their merchandizes into the Spanish American dominions, nor to 'sell, cede, or give up, to any other nation, its lands, 'dominions, or territories, or any part thereof.' On the contrary, and in order that its territories should be preserved whole and entire, England offers 'to 'aid and assist the Spaniards in re-establishing the 'limits of their American dominions, and placing 'them in the exact situation they stood in at the time 'of his said Catholic Majesty Charles IId. if by accident it shall be discovered that they have undergone any alteration to the prejudice of Spain, in 'whatever manner or pretext such alteration may 'have been brought about.'

"The vast extent of the Spanish territories, navigation, and dominion on the Continent of America, isles and seas contiguous to the South Sea, are clearly laid down, and authenticated by a variety of documents, laws, and formal acts of possession in the reign of King Charles IId. It is also clearly ascertained, that notwithstanding the repeated attempts made by adventurers and pirates on the Spanish coasts of the South Sea and adjacent islands, Spain has still preserved her possessions entire, and opposed, with success, those usurpations, by constantly sending her ships and vessels to take possession of such settlements. By these measures, and reiterated acts of possession, Spain has preserved her dominion,

"which

which ſhe has extended to the borders of the Ruſſian eſtabliſhments in that part of the world.

"The Viceroys of Peru and New Spain, having been informed, that theſe ſeas had been for ſome years paſt more frequented than formerly; that ſmuggling had increaſed; that ſeveral uſurpations prejudicial to Spain and the general tranquillity had been ſuffered to be made; they gave orders that the weſtern coaſts of Spaniſh America, and iſlands and ſeas adjacent, ſhould be more frequently navigated and explored.

"They were alſo informed, that ſeveral Ruſſian veſſels were upon the point of making commercial eſtabliſhments upon that coaſt. At the time that Spain demonſtrated to Ruſſia the inconveniences attendant upon ſuch incroachments, ſhe entered upon the negociation with Ruſſia, upon the ſuppoſition that the Ruſſian navigators of the Pacific Ocean had no orders to make eſtabliſhments within the limits of Spaniſh America, of which the Spaniards were the firſt poſſeſſors, (limits ſituated within Prince William's Streight) purpoſely, to avoid all diſſentions, and in order to maintain the harmony and amity which Spain wiſhed to preſerve.

"The Court of Ruſſia replied, it had already given orders, that its ſubjects ſhould make no ſettlements in places belonging to other Powers, and that if thoſe orders had been violated, and any had been made in Spaniſh America, they deſired the King would put a ſtop to them in a friendly manner. To this pacific language on the part of Ruſſia, Spain obſerved, that ſhe could not be anſwerable for what-

her

her Officers might do at that diſtance, whoſe general orders and inſtructions were not to permit any ſettlements to be made by other nations on the continent of Spaniſh America.

"Though treſpaſſes had been made by the Engliſh on ſome of the iſlands of thoſe coaſts, which had given riſe to ſimilar complaints having been made to the Court of London, Spain did not know that the Engliſh had endeavoured to make any ſettlements on the northern part of the Southern Ocean, till the commanding officer of a Spaniſh ſhip, in the uſual tour of the coaſts of California, found two American veſſels in St. Laurence, or Nootka harbour, where he was going for proviſions and ſtores. Theſe veſſels he permitted to proceed on their voyage, it appearing from their papers, that they were driven there by diſtreſs, and only came in to refit.

"He alſo found there, the Iphigenia from Macao, under Portugueſe colours, which had a paſſport from the Governor; and though he came manifeſtly with a view to trade there, yet the Spaniſh Admiral, when he ſaw his inſtructions, gave him leave to depart, upon his ſigning an engagement to pay the value of the veſſel, ſhould the Government of Mexico declare it a lawful prize.

"With this veſſel there came a ſecond, which the Admiral detained; and a few days after a third, named the Argonaut, from the above-mentioned place. The Captain of this latter was an Engliſhman. He came not only to trade, but brought every thing with him proper to form a ſettlement there, and to fortify it. This, notwithſtanding the remon-

ſtrances

ſtrances of the Spaniſh Admiral, he perſevered in, and was detained, together with his veſſel.

" After him came a fourth Engliſh veſſel, named the Princeſs Royal, and evidently for the ſame purpoſes. She likewiſe was detained, and ſent to Port St. Blas, where the pilot of the Argonaut made away with himſelf.

" The Viceroy, on being informed of theſe particulars, gave orders, that the Captain and the veſſels ſhould be relieved, and that they ſhould have leave to refit, without declaring them a lawful prize; and this he did, on account of the ignorance of the proprietors, and the friendſhip which ſubſiſted between the two Courts of London and Madrid.

" He alſo gave them leave to return to Macao with their cargo, after capitulating with them in the ſame manner as with the Portugueſe Captain, and leaving the affair to be finally determined by the Count de Revillagigedo, his ſucceſſor, who alſo gave them their liberty.

" As ſoon as the Court of Madrid had received an account of the detention of the firſt Engliſh veſſel at Nootka Sound, and before that of the ſecond arrived, it ordered its Ambaſſador at London to make a report thereof to the Engliſh Miniſter, which he did, on the 10th February laſt, and to require that the parties who had planned theſe expeditions ſhould be puniſhed, in order to deter others from making ſettlements on territories occupied and frequented by the Spaniards for a number of years.

" In

"In the Ambassador's memorial, mention was only made of the Spanish Admiral that commanded the present armament, having visited Nootka Sound in 1774, though that harbour had been frequently visited both before and since, with the usual forms of taking possession. These forms were repeated more particularly in the years 1755 and 1779, all along the coasts as far as Prince William's Sound, and it was these acts that gave occasion to the memorial made by the Court of Russia, as has been already noticed.

"The Spanish Ambassador at London did not represent in this memorial at that time, that the right of Spain to these coasts was conformable to ancient boundaries, which had been guaranteed by England at the treaty of Utrecht, in the reign of Charles II. deeming it to be unnecessary: as orders had been given and vessels had actually been seized on those coasts, so far back as 1692.

"The answer that the English Ministry gave, on the 28th of February, was, that they had not as yet been informed of the facts stated by the Ambassador, and that the act of *violence*, mentioned in his memorial, necessarily suspended any discussion of the claims therein, till an adequate atonement had been made for a proceeding so injurious to Great Britain.

"In addition to this haughty language of the British Minister, he farther added, that the ship must in the first place be restored, and that with respect to any future stipulations, it would be necessary

to

to wait for a more full detail of all the circumſtances of this affair.

" The harſh and laconic ſtile in which this anſwer was given, made the Court of Madrid ſuſpect that the King of Great Britain's Miniſters were forming other plans; and they were the more induced to think ſo, as there were reports that they were going to fit out two fleets, one for the Mediterranean, and another for the Baltic. This of courſe obliged Spain to increaſe the ſmall ſquadron ſhe was getting ready to exerciſe her marine.

" The Court of Spain then ordered her Ambaſſador at London to preſent a memorial to the Britiſh Miniſtry, ſetting forth, that though the Crown of Spain had an indubitable right to the continent, iſlands, harbours, and coaſts of that part of the world, founded on treaties and immemorial poſſeſſion, yet, as the Viceroy of Mexico had releaſed the veſſels that were detained, the King looked upon the affair as concluded, without entering into any diſputes or diſcuſſions on the undoubted rights of Spain, and deſiring to give a proof of his friendſhip for Great Britain, he ſhould reſt ſatisfied if ſhe ordered that her ſubjects, in future, reſpected thoſe rights.

" As if Spain, in this anſwer, had laid claim to the Empire of that Ocean, though ſhe only ſpoke of what belonged to her by treaties, and as if it had been ſo grievous an offence to terminate this affair by reſtitution of the only veſſel which was then known to have been taken, it excited ſuch clamour and agitation in the Parliament of England, that the

 moſt

moſt vigorous preparations for war have been commenced; and thoſe powers diſinclined to peace charge Spain with deſigns contrary to her known principles of honour and probity, as well as to the tranquillity of Europe, which the Spaniſh Monarch and his Miniſters have always had in view.

"While England was employed in making the greateſt armaments and preparations, that Court made anſwer to the Spaniſh Ambaſſador (upon the 5th of May) that the acts of violence committed againſt the Britiſh flag "rendered it neceſſary for the "Sovereign to change his Miniſter at Madrid, to re-"new the remonſtrances (being the anſwer of England "already mentioned) and to require that ſatisfaction, "which his Majeſty thought he had an indiſputable "right to demand."

"To this was added a declaration, not to enter formally into the matter until a ſatisfactory anſwer was obtained; "and at the ſame time the memorial "of Spain ſhould not include in it the queſtion of "right;" which formed a moſt eſſential part of the diſcuſſion.

"The Britiſh Adminiſtration offer in the ſame anſwer, to take the moſt effectual and pacific meaſures, that the Engliſh ſubjects ſhall not act "againſt "the juſt and acknowledged rights of Spain, but "that they cannot at preſent accede to the pretenſions "of abſolute ſovereignty, commerce, and naviga-"tion, which appeared to be the principal object of "the memorials of the Ambaſſador, and that the "King of England conſiders it as a duty incumbent

"upon

" upon him, to protect his ſubjects in the enjoy-
" ment of the right of continuing their fiſhery in the
" Pacific Ocean."

" If this pretenſion is found to treſpaſs upon the ancient boundaries laid down in the reign of King Charles II. and guaranteed by England in the treaty of Utrecht, as Spain believes, it appears that that Court will have good reaſons for diſputing and oppoſing this claim, and it is to be hoped that the equity of the Britiſh Adminiſtration will ſuſpend and reſtrict it accordingly.

" In conſequence of the foregoing anſwer, the Charge d'Affaires from the Court of London at Madrid inſiſted, in a memorial of the 16th of May, on reſtitution of the veſſel detained at Nootka, and the property therein contained; of an indemnification for the loſſes ſuſtained, and on a reparation proportioned to the injury done to the Engliſh ſubjects trading under the Britiſh flag, and that they have an indiſputable right to the enjoyment of a free and uninterrupted navigation, commerce, and fiſhery; and to the poſſeſſion of ſuch eſtabliſhments as they ſhould form with the conſent of the natives of the country, not previouſly occupied by any of the European nations.

" An explicit and prompt anſwer was deſired upon this head, in ſuch terms as might tend to calm the anxieties, and to maintain the friendſhip ſubſiſting between the two Courts.

" The Charge d'Affaires having obſerved, that a ſuſpenſion of the Spaniſh armaments would contribute to tranquillity, upon the terms to be communicated by the Britiſh Adminiſtration, an an-

swer was made by the Spanish Administration, that the King was sincerely inclined to disarm upon the principles of reciprocity, and proportioned to the circumstances of the two Courts; adding, that the Court of Spain was actuated by the most pacific intentions, and a desire to give every satisfaction and indemnification, if justice was not on their side, provided England did as much if she was found to be in the wrong.

"This answer must convince all the Courts of Europe that the conduct of the King and his Administration is consonant to the invariable principles of justice, truth, and peace.

Le Comte de Florida Blanca.

ANSWER OF MR. FITZHERBERT

TO A LETTER OF

M. Florida Blanca, *of date 13th of June.*

"Monsieur, Madrid.

"In compliance with your Excellency's desire, I have now the honour to communicate to you, in writing, what I observed to you in the conversation we had the day before yesterday.

"The substance of these observations are briefly these:

"The Court of London is animated with the most sincere desire of terminating the difference that at present subsists between it and the Court of Madrid, relative to the port of Nootka, and the adjacent latitudes, by a friendly negociation; but as it is evident, upon the clearest principles of

justice

justice and reason, that an equal negociation cannot be opened, till matters are put in their original state, and as certain acts have been committed in the latitudes in question by vessels belonging to the Royal Marine of Spain, against several British vessels, without any reprisals having been made, of any sort, on the part of Great-Britain, that power is perfectly in the right to insist, as a preliminary condition, upon a prompt and suitable reparation for these acts of violence; and in consequence of this principle, the practice of nations has limited such right of reparation to three articles, viz. the restitution of the vessels—a full indemnification for the losses sustained by the parties injured—and finally, satisfaction to the Sovereign for the insult offered to his flag. So that it is evident that the actual demands of my Court, far from containing any thing to prejudice the rights or the dignity of His Catholic Majesty, amount to no more in fact than what is constantly done by Great Britain herself, as well as every other maritime power in similar circumstances.—Finally, as to the nature of the satisfaction which the Court of London exacts on this occasion, and on which your Excellency appears to desire some explanation, I am authorised, Sir, to assure you, that if his Catholic Majesty consents to make a declaration in his name, bearing, in substance, that he had determined to offer to His Britannic Majesty a just and suitable satisfaction for the insult offered to the honour of his flag—such offer, joined to a promise of making restitution

tion of the veſſels captured, and to indemnify the proprietors, under the conditions ſpecified in the official letter of Mr. Merry on the 16th of May, will be regarded by His Britannic Majeſty as conſtituting in itſelf the ſatisfaction demanded; and his ſaid Majeſty will accept of it as ſuch by a counter declaration on his part. I have to add, that as it appears uncertain if the veſſels, the North Weſt, an American veſſel, and the Iphigenia, had truly a right to enjoy the protection of the Britiſh flag, the King will with pleaſure conſent that an examination of this queſtion, as well as that relative to the juſt amount of the loſſes ſuſtained by his ſubjects, may be left to the determination of Commiſſioners to be named by the two Courts.

"Having thus recapitulated to your Excellency the heads of what I obſerved to you in converſation, I flatter myſelf you will weigh the whole in your mind, with that ſpirit of equity and moderation which characteriſes you, that I may be in a condition of ſending to my Court, as ſoon as poſſible, a ſatisfactory anſwer as to the point contained in the official paper ſent to Mr. Merry on the 4th of the month, and which, for the reaſons I have mentioned, cannot be regarded by his Britannic Majeſty as fulfilling his juſt expectations.

I have the honour to be,
With ſentiments of truth and reſpect
to your Excellency,
Sir,
Your moſt humble and moſt obedient ſervant,
(Signed) ALLEYNE FITZHERBERT.

REPLY

REPLY OF COUNT FLORIDA BLANCA

TO

MR. FITZHERBERT'S LETTER.

" You will pardon me, Sir, that I cannot give my aſſent to the principles laid down in your laſt letter, as Spain maintains on the moſt ſolid grounds, that the detention of the veſſels was made in a port, upon a coaſt, or in a bay of Spaniſh America, the commerce and navigation of which belonged excluſively to Spain, by treaties with all nations, even England herſelf.

" The principles laid down cannot be adapted to the caſe. The veſſels detained attempted to make an eſtabliſhment at a port where they found a nation actually ſettled, the Spaniſh Commander at Nootka having, previous to their detention, made the moſt amicable repreſentations to the aggreſſors, to deſiſt from their purpoſe.

" Your Excellency will alſo permit me to lay before you, that it is not at all certain that the veſſels detained navigated under the Britiſh flag, although they were Engliſh veſſels; there having been reaſon to believe that they navigated under the protection of Portugueſe paſſports, furniſhed them by the Governor of Macao as commercial veſſels, and not belonging to the Royal Marine. Your Excellency will add to theſe reaſons, that by the reſtitution of theſe veſſels their furniture and cargoes, or their value, in conſequence of the reſolu-

tion

tion adopted by the Viceroy of Mexico, which has been approved of by the King, for the ſake of peace, every thing is placed in its original ſtate, the object your Excellency aims at—nothing remaining unſettled but the indemnification of loſſes, and ſatisfaction for the inſult, which ſhall alſo be regulated when evidence ſhall be given what inſult has been committed, which hitherto has not been ſufficiently explained.

"However, that a quarrel may not ariſe about words, and that two nations friendly to each other may not be expoſed to the calamities of war, I have to inform you, Sir, by order of the King, that His Majeſty conſents to make the declaration which your Excellency propoſes in your letter, and will offer to his Britannic Majeſty a juſt and ſuitable ſatisfaction for the inſult offered to the honour of his flag, provided that to theſe are added either of the following explanations:

"1. That in offering ſuch ſatisfaction, the inſult and the ſatisfaction ſhall be fully ſettled both in form and ſubſtance by a judgment to be pronounced by one of the Kings of Europe, whom the King my maſter leaves wholly to the choice of his Britannic Majeſty: for it is ſufficient to the Spaniſh Monarch that a Crowned Head, from full information of the facts, ſhall decide as he thinks juſt.

"2. That in offering a juſt and ſuitable ſatisfaction, care ſhall be taken that in the progreſs of the negociation to be opened, no facts be admitted as true but ſuch as can be fully eſtabliſhed by

Great

Great-Britain with regard to the insult offered to her flag.

" 3. That the said satisfaction shall be given on condition that no inference be drawn therefrom to affect the rights of Spain, nor of the right of exacting from Great Britain an equivalent satisfaction, if it shall be found, in the course of negotiation, that the King has a right to demand satisfaction for the aggression and usurpation made on the Spanish territory, contrary to subsisting treaties.

" Your Excellency will be pleased to make choice of either of these three explanations to the declaration your Excellency proposes, or all the three together,—and to point out any difficulty that occurs to you, that it may be obviated;—or any other mode that may tend to promote the peace which we desire to establish.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Sir,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

(Signed)

LE COMTE DE FLORIDA BLANCA.

On the 5th of Auguſt about half paſt one o'clock, the following Letter was ſent by the right hon. W. Wyndham Grenville, one of His Majeſty's Principal Secretaries of State, to the Lord Mayor of London, and was immediately by his Lordſhip made known at the Bank, Exchange, and Lloyd's.

Whitehall, Auguſt 5, 1790.

MY LORD,

"I have the honour to inform your Lordſhip, that a Meſſenger is arrived from His Majeſty's Ambaſſador Extraordinary at Madrid, with the account, that, in compliance with His Majeſty's demand of ſatisfaction for the capture of the Britiſh veſſels at Nootka, a Declaration was ſigned on the 24th of July, by Count Florida Blanca, in the name of his Catholic Majeſty; and that the ſame was accepted in His Majeſty's name, by His Majeſty's Ambaſſador, who was thereupon to proceed to the diſcuſſion of the matters depending between the two Courts, with a view to a Definitive Arrangement.

"The Declaration above referred to, will be immediately publiſhed in a Gazette Extraordinary, which will be forwarded to your Lordſhip as ſoon as it is printed.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient
And moſt humble Servant,
W. W. GRENVILLE."

"*The Right Hon. the* LORD MAYOR *of London.*

The

The LONDON GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 1790.

Whitehall, Auguſt 5. This morning one of His Majeſty's Meſſengers arrived from Madrid, at the office of his Grace the Duke of Leeds, His Majeſty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with diſpatches from the right honourable Alleyne Fitzherbert, His Majeſty's Ambaſſador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at that Court, containing an account of the following Declaration and Counter-Declaration having been ſigned and exchanged, on the twenty-fourth of July laſt, by his Excellency on the part of His Majeſty, and by his Excellency Count Florida Blanca, His Catholic Majeſty's Miniſter and Principal Secretary of State, on the part of the Catholic King.

DECLARATION.

[COPIE.]

Sa Majeſté Britannique s'etant plainte de la capture de certains vaiſſeaux appartenants à ſes ſujets, fait dans la Baye de Nootka, ſituée ſur la Côte du Nord-Oueſt de l'Amerique, par un officier au ſervice du Roi; le ſous-ſigné, Çounſeiller,

DECLARATION.

[TRANSLATION.]

His Britannic Majeſty having complained of the capture of certain veſſels belonging to his ſubjects in the Port of Nootka, ſituated on the North-Weſt coaſt of America, by an officer in the ſervice of the King; the under-ſigned Counſellor,

ſer et Premier Secretaire d'Etat de ſa Majeſté, etant à ce duement autoriſé, declare, au nom et par ordre de ſa dite Majeſté qu'elle eſt diſpoſée à donner ſatisfaction à ſa Majeſté Britannique pour l'injure dont elle s'eſt plainte; bien aſſurée que ſa dite Majeſté Britannique en uſeroit de même à l'gard du Roi, dans de pareilles circonſtances: et ſa Majeſté s'engage en outre de faire reſtitution entiere de tous les vaiſſeaux Britannéiques qui furent captures à Nootka, et d'indemniſer les parties intereſſées dans ces vaiſſeaux des pertes qu'elles auront eſſuyées auſſitôt que le montant en aura pû être eſtimé :

Bien entendu que cette Declaration ne pourra point exclure, ni prejudicier

ſellor and Principal Secretary of State to His Majeſty, being thereto duly authoriſed, declares, in the name and by the order of his ſaid Majeſty, that he is willing to give ſatisfaction to His Britannic Majeſty for the injury of which he has complained; fully perſuaded that his ſaid Britannic Majeſty would act in the ſame manner towards the King, under ſimilar circumſtances; and His Majeſty further engages to make full reſtitution of all the Britiſh veſſels which were captured at Nootka, and to indemnify the parties intereſted in thoſe veſſels, for the loſſes which they ſhall have ſuſtained, as ſoon as the amount thereof ſhall have been aſcertained :

It being underſtood that this Declaration is not to preclude or prejudice

dicier à la discussion ulterieure des droits que sa Majesté pourra pretendre à la formation d'un etablissement exclusif au port de Nootka.

En foi de quoi j'ai signé cette Declaration, et y apposé le cachet de mes Armes. A Madrid, ce 24 Juillet, 1790.

(L. S.) Signé

Le Comte de Florida Blanca.

judice the ulterior discussion of any right which His Majesty may claim to form an exclusive establishment at the port of Nootka.

In witness whereof I have signed this Declaration, and sealed it with the Seal of my Arms. At Madrid, the 24th of July, 1790.

(L. S.) Signed

Le Comte de Florida Blanca.

CONTRE-DECLARATION.

[Copie.]

Sa Majesté Catholique ayant declaré qu'elle étoit disposée à donner satisfaction pour l'injure faite au Roi, par la capture des certains vaisseaux appartenants à ses sujets à la Baye de Nootka, et Monsieur le Comte de Florida Blanca ayant signé, au nom et par ordre

COUNTER-DECLARATION.

[Translation.]

His Catholic Majesty having declared that he was willing to give satisfaction for the injury done to the King, by the capture of certain vessels belonging to his subjects, in the bay of Nootka, and the Count de Florida Blanca having signed, in the name and

dre de sa Majesté Catholique, une Declaration à cet effet; et par laquelle sa dite Majesté s'engage pareillement à faire restitution entiere des vaisseaux ainsi capturés, et d'indemniser les parties interessées dans ces vaisseaux des pertes qu'elles auront essuyées, le sous-signé Ambassadeur Extraordinarie et Plenipotentiare de Sa Majesté près le Roi Catholique, étant à ce ducement et expressement autorisé, accepte la dite Declaration au Nom du Roi, et declare que sa Majesté regardera cette Declaration, avec l'accomplissement des engagemens qu'elle renferme, comme une satisfaction pleine et entiere de l'injure dont sa Majesté s'est plainte.

Le

and by the order of his Catholic Majesty, a Declaration to this effect; and by which his said Majesty likewise engages to make full restitution of the vessels so captured, and to indemnify the parties interested in those vessels for the losses they shall have sustained; the undersigned Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of His Majesty to the Catholic King, being thereto duly and expressly authorised, accepts the said Declaration in the name of the King; and declares that His Majesty will consider this Declaration, together with the performance of the engagements contained therein, as a full and entire satisfaction for the injury of which his Majesty has complained.

The

Le ſous-ſigné declare, en même tems, qu'il doit être entendu que ni la dite Declaration ſignée par Monſieur le Comte de Florida Blanca, ni l'acceptation que la ſous-ſigné vient d'en faire au nom du Roi, ne doit exclure ni prejudicier en rien aux droits que ſa Majeſté pourra pretendre à tout etabliſſement que ſes ſujets pourroient avoir formé, ou voudroient former à l'avenir, à la dite Baye de Nootka.

En foi de quoi, j'ai ſigné cette Contre-Declaration, et y ai appoſé le Cachet de mes Armes.— A Madrid, le 24 Juillet, 1790.

(L. S.) Signé
Alleyne Fitzherbert.

The underſigned declares, at the ſame time, that it is to be underſtood, that neither the ſaid Declaration ſigned by Count Florida Blanca, nor the acceptance thereof by the underſigned, in the name of the King, is to preclude or prejudice, in any reſpect, the right which His Majeſty may claim to any eſtabliſhment which his ſubjects may have formed, or ſhould be deſirous of forming in future, at the ſaid Bay of Nootka.

In witneſs whereof I have ſigned this Counter-Declaration, and ſealed it with the Seal of my Arms. At Madrid, the 24th of July, 1790.

(L. S.) Signed
Alleyne Fitzherbert.

LETTER

LETTER

OF

M. De MONTMORIN,

Secretary for the Foreign Department of France,

TO THE

PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

Paris, August 1, 1790.

Mr. PRESIDENT,

THE King ordered me, about the middle of May last, to make known to the National Assembly the motives that had induced him to think an armament of fourteen ships of the line necessary, and the dispositions that were made in the ports for increasing this armament if circumstances should require it. The Assembly applauded the measure at the time, and passed a vote of thanks to His Majesty.

The armament is on the eve of being complete, and His Majesty in ordering me to communicate this to the Assembly, has commanded me also to inform them, that from that time His Britanic Majesty has continued, and continues still to augment his marine with the greatest possible activity.

In

In theſe circumſtances, although the language of the Court of London has been all along equally pacific with our own—although ſhe has announced that her intentions are amicable towards us, and although in a word, the correſpondence between the two nations has been ſuch as we would deſire for the maintenance of good underſtanding, and harmony between them; the King thinks that it is equally becoming the prudence and dignity of the nation to augment our armaments proportionably with thoſe now preparing in the ports of England.

To theſe general conſiderations of prudence and dignity, another muſt be added not leſs important. The King of Spain claims in the moſt poſitive manner an aſſurance of the execution of the conditions ſtipulated by the Treaty of Alliance ſubſiſting between the two nations, in caſe that the negotiation now going on with England ſhould not have the ſucceſs which he expects and deſires.

The King has ordered me to lay before the Aſſembly the Miniſterial Letter of the Ambaſſador of Spain, together with all the pieces which accompany it, and which explain the origin and progreſs of the difficulty that has ariſen between Spain and England. I alſo join a paper, No. 3, which expoſes the laſt ſtate of the negotiation between the two powers, as it has come to our knowledge.

This negotiation appears to have taken the moſt favourable turn ſince the conciliating propoſitions made by the Court of Madrid, and the manner in which they were received at London. In this ſtate

of things, His Majesty thinks he may flatter himself that the two Courts will come to a good understanding. In this hope which he yet entertains, after explaining himself directly to the King, his Cousin, he thought proper in his wisdom to defer provoking a deliberation in the National Assembly on the official demand of the Ambassador of Spain. But as the activity with which the Court of London augments her armaments, may inspire doubts of the success of the negotiation, the King has not thought it proper to delay longer the communication of this official paper.

This Letter has therefore two objects—the first, to inform the Assembly of the propriety of augmenting our marine force—the second, to submit to their wisdom what answer should be made to the demand of the Court of Madrid.

I believe it will be superfluous to say any thing on the importance of these objects. They are so important in the eyes of the King, that he thinks he ought to invite the Assembly to authorise a Committee to confer with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and such other Members of the Council as His Majesty shall think proper to delegate. By this means the National Assembly will receive all the ecclaircissements which may enable them to deliberate with a perfect knowledge of the subject.

(Signed)

De MONTMORIN.

The

The official papers referred to in the Letter of M. Montmorin, were the preceding Letters that passed between M. de Florida Blanca and Mr. Fitzherbert. And the following is the copy of the Ministerial Letter of the Count de Fernan Nunez, the Spanish Ambassador at the Court of Paris, to M. de Montmorin.

LETTER

OF

COUNT DE FERNAN NUNEZ,

TO

M. MONTMORIN.

Paris, June 16, 1790.

" SIR,

" I have the honour to address to you with this, a faithful extract of all the transactions which have hitherto passed between my Court and that of London, on the subject of the detention of two English vessels, which were seized in the Bay of St. Lawrence, or Nootka, situated in the 50th degree to the North of California, and which were afterwards taken to the port of St. Blas.

" You will observe by this relation,

1. " That by the treaties, demarcations, takings of possession, and the most decided acts of Sove-

reig ty exercised by the Spaniards in these stations, from the reign of Charles II. and authorised by that Monarch in 1692, the original vouchers for which shall be brought forward in the course of the negotiation, all the coast to the North of the Western America, on the side of the South Sea, as far as beyond what is called Prince William's Sound, which is in the sixty-first degree, is acknowledged to belong exclusively to Spain.

2. " That the Court of Russia having been informed of this extent of our boundary, assured the King my Master, without the least delay, of the purity of its intentions in this respect, and added, " That it was extremely sorry that the repeated " orders issued to prevent the subjects of Russia " from violating in the smallest degree the territory " belonging to another power, should have been " disobeyed.

3. " That the state of the possessions and exclusive commerce on the sea coast of the Southern Ocean, as it existed in the time of Charles II. had been acknowledged and defined anew by all the nations of Europe, and more particularly by England, in the eighth article of the Treaty of Utrecht.

4. " That notwithstanding the just title he has to a preservation of his ancient rights, the King, my Master, has approved of the conduct of the Viceroy of Mexico; who in consequence of his general orders and instructions for the preservation of peace with every power, took upon himself to release the vessels seized in the port of Nootka, upon a suppo-

sition

ſition that the conduct of their Captains was a conſequence of their total ignorance with reſpect to the legitimacy of the rights of Spain on thoſe coaſts.

" It is in conſequence of the deſire of his Catholic Majeſty to preſerve peace to himſelf, and to eſtabliſh the general tranquillity of Europe, that he has taken the ſteps you will obſerve in the ſaid extract, and that he has commenced an amicable and direct negotiation with England, which he will finiſh with Mr. Fitzherbert, the new Ambaſſador ſent from that Court to the Court of Madrid. We are in hopes that the conſequences of this negotiation will be favourable, but at the ſame time we muſt employ all the neceſſary means to make it ſo.

" An immediate and exact accompliſhment of the Treaty ſigned at Paris the 15th of Auguſt 1761, under the title of the Family Compact, becomes an indiſpenſable preliminary to a ſucceſsful negotiation. It is in conſequence of the abſolute neceſſity which Spain finds of having recourſe to the ſuccour of France, that the King, my Maſter, orders me to demand expreſsly what France can do in the preſent circumſtances to aſſiſt Spain, according to the mutual engagements ſtipulated by the Treaties; his Catholic Majeſty deſires that the armaments, as well as other proper meaſures to fulfil and realize theſe ſacred engagements, be immediately put in execution. He charges me to add farther, that the preſent ſtate of this unforeſeen buſineſs requires a very ſpeedy determination, and that the meaſures which the Court of France ſhall take for his aſſiſtance, ſhall

be

be so active, so clear, and so positive, as to prevent even the smallest ground for suspicion. Otherwise his Most Christian Majesty must not be surprised that Spain should seek other friends and different Allies; among all the Powers of Europe, without excepting any one, upon whose assistance she can rely in case of need. The ties of blood and personal friendship which unite our two Sovereigns, and particularly the reciprocal interest which exists between two nations united by nature, shall be respected in all new arrangements, as far as circumstances will permit.

"This, Sir, is the positive demand which I am obliged to make, and in consequence of which I hope his Most Christian Majesty will immediately take such measures as shall seem most suitable in the present circumstances to satisfy my master, in an object so interesting and important to the preservation of his legal rights, and the honour of his nation.

"I have the honour to be, with the most sincere attachment, &c.

Le Compte De FERNAN NUNEZ."

The whole of these papers were referred by the National Assembly to the Diplomatic Committee, which on the 25th of August made the following report to the Assembly.

REPORT

REPORT

OF THE

DIPLOMATIC COMMITTEE

On the FAMILY COMPACT betwixt the French and Spanish Branches of the House of BOURBON;

ADDRESSED TO THE

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,

BY

M. MIRABEAU.

YOU have commanded your Diplomatic Committee to give their opinion on the answer to be made to the demand of Spain.—The desire and necessity of maintaining peace, the confidence that it will not be interrupted, the principles of our new constitution, were our sole guides in the consideration of this important question. To determine with success, we have thought it our duty to consider the present state of politics, and our connections with the different powers of Europe; we have thought

thought it incumbent upon us to diſtinguiſh the ſyſtem hitherto purſued by the government of France, from the theory analogous to the new ſyſtem of affairs. It is not, however, ſufficient to underſtand our duties and our intereſts; we muſt reconcile them ſo as to act with prudence; we muſt diſcover the means of avoiding without diſhonour the torch of war; we muſt above all things, before determining on the ſuccours we owe to our allies, employ the collected force of the ſtate, and the united wills of all the citizens of the Empire, as the bulwark of our new conſtitution.

If we take a fair ſurvey of the object in diſpute between the Courts of London and Madrid, we can hardly ſuppoſe that the peace will be interrupted. The territory in queſtion between the two powers, in fact, belongs to neither; it is unqueſtionably the property of the independent inhabitants whom nature originally placed there. This line of diſtinction appears a little more conſonant to truth, than that marked out by the Pope; and theſe people, diſtant from us as they are, if they are oppreſſed, are they not our allies? Shall we do ſo much injuſtice to the character of two enlightened nations, as to ſuppoſe they would laviſh their blood and treaſure for the acquiſition of ſo diſtant, ſo barren a ſpot of ground? Theſe ſimple truths, our impartiality has compelled us to lay down; we will confirm them by farther argument if neceſſary, but this firſt view is not deciſive of the queſtion.

If

If on the other hand, we ſhall be determined in our conduct by the urgent preſſure of our circumſtances, not merely to avoid a war, but even the expence of armaments, can we conceal the ſtate of our finances, not yet regenerated, or the ſtate of our army and navy not yet organized? Can we conceal, that amidſt the innumerable misfortunes of war, even a juſt one, the greateſt for us would be, the diſtraction of the attention of our citizens from the conſtitution, the ſole object which ought to engage their moſt ardent hopes and wiſhes. Public opinion would be divided, and additional obſtacles would intervene, which the utmoſt energy of the public would hardly be able to ſurmount; but even the calamities of war, great as they are, and the inconveniences reſulting from our actual ſituation, are not ſufficient to decide the important queſtion of alliance. In fine, if we were to conduct ourſelves this day on the principles by which we mean in future to be regulated—if overleaping the interval of time betwixt the preſent ſtate of Europe, and what it will be at a more diſtant period, we were to give at this moment a proof of univerſal good will, ſuch as may pave the way for a declaration of the rights of nations, we ſhould not have occaſion to deliberate long upon alliances, nor war. Will there be any neceſſity for politics, when deſpots and ſlaves are no more? Shall France want allies when ſhe has no longer enemies? Perhaps the moment is approaching, when liberty triumphant in both hemiſpheres, ſhall accompliſh the wiſh of philoſophy,

by delivering the human ſpecies from the neceſſity of war. Then the happineſs of the people will be the ſole objects of legiſlators, the ſole object of the laws, and the ſupreme glory of nations; then the paſſions of individuals, being changed into public virtues, will no more by ſanguinary quarrels rend aſunder the bonds of friendſhip which ought to unite all governments and all men: then will be accompliſhed a compact of confederation among mankind. But we confeſs with regret, that theſe conſiderations, ſtrong and powerful as they are, are not the only arguments which ought to determine our conduct in the preſent criſis of affairs. The French nation, when changing its laws and manners, ought doubtleſs at the ſame time to change its politics; but from the prejudices that ſtill prevail in Europe, France is compelled in the preſent inſtance to adhere to the ancient ſyſtem, which cannot without danger be at once abandoned. Wiſdom ſuggeſts to us, not to throw down one pillar of the public ſecurity, till another ſhall be reared in its room: alas! who does not know, that in external as in internal politics, intervals are awful and dangerous? That the interregnum of princes is the æra of commotions; that the interregnum of the laws is the reign of anarchy and confuſion; and if I dare freely expreſs myſelf, that the interregnum of treaties may be a truly dangerous criſis to natinoal proſperity and happineſs. The gradual, but irreſiſtible influence of a brave nation, conſiſting of twenty-four millions of men, ſpeaking the ſame language, and governed

by

by the ſame laws, and drawing back the principles of ſociety to the primæval notions of liberty, ſimplicity, and truth, and greatly endued with the irreſiſtible charm of pleaſing the human nature; I ſay, ſuch a nation will find, in all countries of the world, miſſionaries and proſelytes to its doctrines. The influence of ſuch a people will ſurely win the hearts of every European nation to tread the path of truth, moderation, and juſtice; but not at once, not in one day, nor in one year; too many prejudices enſlave the mind, too many paſſions inflame the heart, and too many tyrants rule with deſpotic ſway. Further, Does our geographical ſituation ſuggeſt to us to ſeparate ourſelves from our allies? Are not our remote poſſeſſions, ſcattered as they are on all parts of the globe, expoſed to attacks which we are incapable in all parts ſingly to repel, while at the ſame time we know that knowledge and inſtruction are not ſo generally diffuſed, that every people will be willing to believe that one common political intereſt ought to bind the human race by the cultivation of peace, mutual kindneſs, and reciprocal love; ought we not to oppoſe the affection of one nation, to the reſtleſsneſs of another, and at leaſt reſtrain by an aſſumed appearance thoſe who would be tempted to take advantage of our troubles, with a view to the advancement of their own proſperity?

So long as we ſhall have rivals, prudence enjoins us to place beyond the poſſibility of an attack, the particular property of every individual in the nation; to watch with caution the ambitious enterprizes of

foreign Courts, and to proportion our public force to the armaments of the power which threatens our territories. So long as our neighbours ſhall not implicitly adopt our principles, we ſhall be conſtrained, while purſuing a more liberal ſyſtem of politics, not to forget thoſe precautions which prudence requires. If our Ambaſſadors at foreign Courts ſhall have no more occaſion to plead the cauſe of our paſſions, they will have to defend the cauſe of reaſon, a more excellent function. Is it not true, that a people whoſe wiſh is to preſerve peace over all, undertake an enterprize more difficult and noble than a nation which inflames its ambition, by the eager purſuit of objects to gratify its luſt of dominion, and conqueſts to ſatisfy its thirſt of glory.

Theſe, gentlemen, are the moſt important reflections which have ſtruck your Committee; they lead to two principles which they have adopted, and which it is my duty to ſubmit to you, before I enter upon a longer detail on the particular affair of Spain.

Theſe two principles are,

1ſt, That all treaties heretofore concluded by the King of the French, ought to be ſtrictly obſerved by the French nation, ſubject, however, to ſuch alterations and modifications, as ſhall be made therein by an inveſtigation of this Aſſembly and its Committees, and agreeable to inſtructions which the King ſhall be requeſted to give on that head to his agents at the different Courts of Europe.

2d,

2d, That the King ſhall be immediately addreſſed to intimate to all the foreign powers, with whom we have connection, that the unalterable deſire of peace, and the renunciation of every deſire of conqueſt, being the baſis of our conſtitution, the French nation will not regard as obligatory nor binding any part of ſuch treaties, but the ſtipulations which are purely defenſive.

Theſe two principles appear to us in perfect union with, and congenial to the ſpirit of our conſtitution, and they appear to us of ſo much the more importance, as they will on the one hand ſerve to give ſatisfaction to our allies, and on the other will leave no doubt of our love of peace, our earneſt deſire to ſee extinguiſhed for ever the torch of war, and our decided reſolution never to take arms, unleſs to curb unjuſt oppreſſors. It is not, however, ſufficient to declare, that to ambition, (whoſe only object is aggrandizement) and to politics, (whoſe object it is to confound) we mean in future to be ſtrangers. It becomes us to apprize all nations, that if in order to deſtroy for ever even the ſeeds of future quarrels, it ſhall be found neceſſary to renounce all external force, we will give the firſt example of deſtroying our fortifications, diſbanding our army, and burning our fleets. The two principles which I have laid down, point out the anſwer which the King ought to give to the Court of Spain; but your Committee will deſcend into particulars. We have examined our alliance with Spain, under the following points of view: the æra of the engagement,

its

its utility, its form, the conditions on our part, the actual ſituation of the Spaniards, and the apparent views of the Engliſh.

The reſult of our inquiries are theſe: The Spaniards were long our enemies; after the lapſe of more than a century, in which many ſanguinary battles were fought, the peace of the Pyrenees put an end to the wars of two nations, equally haughty and warlike, who ruined and tore themſelves to pieces to gratify the pride or vanity of particular men, to the misfortune of the two people; the tranquillity of Europe was, however, of ſhort duration; the paſſions of princes take but a ſlight repoſe; Lewis XIV. united in his family the ſceptres of France and Spain; this union was a pretext for the ſurrounding powers to unite againſt us; and had half their projects of vengeance ſucceeded, if we had not fallen under the ſtrokes of ſo many enemies, we could not have eſcaped that languor and internal deſtruction, which are the never-failing conſequences of a long war.

It was ſoon perceived, however, that this ſucceſſion which had coſt ſo much blood, did not yet ſecure the repoſe of the two nations; the Kings were relations; the people were ſtill diſunited; the Miniſters were rivals; and England profiting of their diviſions and weakneſs, ſeized with impunity the empire of the ſea, and the commerce of the world.

After that fatal, that calamitous war, which coſt the French nation its ſhips, its riches, and its fineſt colonies, our misfortunes afforded to the

Spa-

Spaniſh character, a glorious occaſion to diſplay itſelf, and which they have ſince repeated. That generous people whoſe good faith is proverbial, acknowledged us for friends when we were ready to fall; they participated in our misfortunes, they reanimated our hopes, they weakened our rivals, and their Miniſters ſigned in 1761, a treaty of alliance with us when our arms were broken in pieces, our credit loſt, and our navy deſtroyed. What was the conſequence of this union? Sixteen years of peace and tranquillity, which would not have been then interrupted, if England had reverenced in her colonies the ſacred principles of liberty which ſhe herſelf adores; and if the French, the protectors of the liberties of others, before ſhe acquired her own, had not urged their King to make war in defence of the Americans.

This quarrel, abſolutely foreign to the Court of Spain, might diſturb its colonies, and involve its deareſt intereſts; but the Engliſh having been the firſt violators of the peace, the Spaniards faithful to their engagements, run to arms, joined us with their fleets, their treaſures, and their ſoldiers, and with them we acquired the immortal honour, of reſtoring to liberty a conſiderable part of the human race.

Since the memorable peace which crowned our efforts, war was again on the point of being rekindled between France and England; no ſooner had the King of the French notified to his ally that he was arming, than a powerful fleet filled the ports

of

of Spain; ſhe did not even wait for intimation, but flew unaſked to our aſſiſtance; and England agreed with us to diſarm. But let us draw a veil over that ſhameful period, when the unſkilfulneſs of our Miniſters robbed us of an ally, whom we had gained by our favours, and whom we had ſufficiently protected by ſhowing ourſelves at all times ready to defend her; a loſs which will deprive us in future of the means of acting as the arbiters of peace in Europe; in recalling to your remembrance the conduct of Spain, and the ſervices ſhe has rendered to us, we demand if France ought to break a treaty, generouſly entered into, frequently uſeful, and religiouſly obſerved; we demand if it would be honourable to annul ſo ſolemn an engagement, at the inſtant that Spain is threatened with the ſame dangers, which ſhe three different times warded off from us.

We will not argue with thoſe who are afraid that one of the two nations ſhall exceed in generoſity; but does our intereſt in the preſent caſe preſcribe to us other laws than gratitude? Some men there are of bold characters, and proud of their country, who believe France invincible, though ſtanding by herſelf. Some of theſe have the honour to ſit among us; and this opinion is ſo much the more honourable, as it blends the public ſtrength with the energy of liberty. But public liberty is not in itſelf the great ſtrength of empires, which have long been ſtrangers to juſtice: nations, on the contrary, apply themſelves ſolely to the increaſe of their internal wealth, and advancement of their true proſperity.

But

But France may perceive in her annals, triumphs which prompt revenge. She has colonies which excite ambition, a commerce which excites desire of possession; and if she may be able one day to defend herself without allies, and which I believe as strongly as any man, this is no reason why she should expose herself singly to a war with powers whose actual forces are superior to her own; for we are not considering the case in point of necessity, but prudence. We are not deliberating, if we shall make a display of our last resources, but considering the most effectual means to preserve peace.

We consider no nation nor people as our enemy. What is it but an insidious system of politics that has hitherto represented as our rival, a nation whose steps we have followed, whose brilliant example has been a light to direct us in the attainment of our liberties, and with whom so many new motives lead us to be on a good understanding; a new species of rivalship, the emulation of good laws, ought to take place of an emulation fostered by politics and ambition. Let us not then, for a moment, believe that a free and enlightened people will take advantage of our transient commotions to renew unjustly the calamities of war, to attack our rising liberties, to check the happy developement of the principles which she has taught us. In her, the bare attempt would be sacrilege; in us, it would be sacrilege to believe her capable of it. Does not the same political religion now unite France and Great Britain? Is not despotism and its agent the common ene-

 mies

mies of both? Will not the Engliſh be more certain of preſerving their liberties, while a nation of free Frenchmen ſhall be ready to act as their auxiliaries? But while we do homage to the philoſophy of this people, our elder brother in liberty, let us at the ſame time attend to the maxims of prudence.

It is the duty of politicians to reaſon on ſuppoſitions which they do not believe, and in order to preſerve the happineſs of nations, care muſt be taken to watch the conſequences of the moſt fortunate as well as the moſt uncertain events; let us ſuppoſe then, that England anticipates with a jealous eye, the improvements which a free conſtitution muſt one day give to our forces, our commerce and credit; that ſhe reads in her own hiſtory the advancement of our proſperity, and that by a falſe ſyſtem of politics, ſhe ſhall watch circumſtances, and profit by every opportunity to break a formidable alliance, of which ſhe has often felt the full weight. What are the meaſures which ſuch ſuppoſition ought to ſuggeſt to us? We cannot counterbalance the number of Engliſh ſhips, but by a junction with our ally; our natural intereſts dictate to us to confirm our alliance with Spain; and the ſole means of accompliſhing this object is to fulfil our treaties with fidelity. Perhaps it may be ſaid, that this fidelity will bring on more quickly a foreign war, may put a ſtop to our regeneration, may impoveriſh our finances, annihilate our armies; Does ſuch an argument require an anſwer? England either wiſhes to go to war, or ſhe does not; if ſhe does not wiſh it;

if

if ſhe arms, that ſhe may negotiate with greater ſucceſs, the conduct which we propoſe to follow, can never be conſidered by her as a provocation, and you will fulfil your engagements without endangering your tranquillity; if on the contrary, England deſigns to go to war, then you can no longer truſt to juſtice or generoſity; your inactivity will increaſe your danger in place of averting it. If Spain ſinks in the conteſt, ſhall we not then be an object of the ſame ambition and vengeance? Shall not the ſame calamities which are dreaded as the reſult of adhering to our alliance then threaten our finances and our armies, and many other diſaſters not eaſy to foreſee?

The nation who hath made choice of us, as the framers of their laws, have a demand upon us for the ſecurity of their poſſeſſions and their commerce. Reſtleſſneſs will, perhaps, weaken public ſpirit, and will certainly leſſen the reſpect due to your decrees; your foreſight will be called in queſtion; if your loyalty is applauded, your wiſdom will be doubted; it is to be dreaded too, that thoſe citizens whoſe fortunes will be affected by the firſt ſtroke of an unexpected war, will be exaſperated by the diſaſter. That the regret of having loſt an ally, may not be oppoſed by particular loſſes.—That we may not reproach ourſelves—And as we are to decide upon caſes equally dangerous—it is our duty to prefer that determination which will eventually ſupply us with the beſt means of ſurmounting the dangers to which we are in either caſe expoſed.

It will be ſaid, perhaps, that Spain, confiding in our aſſiſtance, will not yield in any point in a negotiation for peace; whereas if we take no concern in the quarrel, the accommodation we deſire will neither be tedious nor difficult.— We have already anſwered this objection; the principles which we propoſe to you to decree, ſhall leave no doubt of our intentions to Great Britain, and will evidently point out to Spain, that our conſtitution only regards as obligatory engagements of a defenſive nature; our conduct ſhall have no hoſtile aſpect, which is not warranted by neceſſity. It cannot appear hoſtile to the Engliſh, unleſs they wiſh to be the aggreſſors; beſides, if it is true that by abandoning our engagements, Spain will be forced to negotiate a peace more readily with England, is it not eaſy to foreſee, (whatever may be the nature of ſuch accommodation) the irreparable injury which our credit and our commerce will ſuſtain by ſuch a negotiation. It is not abſolutely the Family Compact which we propoſe to you to ratify, concluded as it was at a period, when the Kings ſpoke for their people, as if the country which they governed had been their patrimonial inheritance, or as if the will of the monarch ſhould have decided on their fate.

This treaty bears the ſingular name of the *Family Compact*; there does not, however, exiſt one of our decrees which does not announce to all Europe, that we acknowledge none but *National Compacts*. In this treaty (formed by a French Miniſter, whom ambition fired to repair the loſſes of an unfortunate war,)

war) are comprehended ſeveral articles for the purpoſe of binding Spain to the views of that Miniſter. —She is bound down to aſſiſt us even in caſes where we may be the aggreſſors.—But ſince we renounce the obſervance of ſuch engagements in our own caſe, we abſolve others from the ſame ſtipulations.

The articles which ought to be ratified, are thoſe relative to a reciprocal guarantee of poſſeſſions, to the mutual ſuccours which the two nations ought to give to each other, and to the Commercial intercourſe.—The reſt ought to be modified and explained, for it is impoſſible you can adhere to offenſive clauſes, who have been the firſt people in Europe, to abjure and renounce them.

The only meaſure your Committee propoſes on that head, in caſe you ſhall adopt, at the preſent moment, the plan of the Decree to be ſubmitted to you, is, that you ſhall direct a particular examination to be made of the articles of the Family Compact, in order to enable you to ſtrengthen our connections with Spain, by converting this Treaty into a National Compact, by retrenching all the uſeleſs clauſes and ſtipulations of an offenſive nature, and by addreſſing the King to give orders to his Miniſter to negotiate with Spain for a renewal of the Treaty on principles which ſhall receive your approbation. Thus the intereſt of Spain will be reconciled to your own. What is a Compact between one Cabinet and another? One Miniſter frames it, another Miniſter may deſtroy it.—Ambition conceived it, rivalſhip may annihilate it.—The monarch is often the ſole dictator, while the

the nation, who is the guarantee, takes no part in the tranſaction. It will not be thus with a National Compact which will confederate, in ſome meaſure, two countries, one to the other, and who will, on all great occaſions, unite their intereſts, and moſt powerful efforts.—Such a Compact can alone bind every individual to act by general conſent, and produce an indiſſoluble alliance, ſupported by the unſhaken baſes of public faith.

Theſe obſervations are the reſult of the inveſtigation of your Committee. — They comprehend three points diſtinct from each other, although indiviſible, as you may obſerve. The developement of two principles, which ought to be the baſis of your political ſyſtem, a deciſion which preſerves a uſeful alliance, by declaring to the King of Spain, that we will fulfill our engagements; the demand of the Decree to direct your Committee to make ſuch modifications in the renewal of this alliance as circumſtances may require. But this determination, if adopted by you, neceſſarily points to other meaſures. The maintenance of our alliance with Spain would be illuſory and vain, if, at the ſame time that we gave all the ſtrength of our influence to negotiations for the repoſe of a part of Europe, we neglected to augment our armaments, in a ſimilar proportion to thoſe of our neighbouring ſtates. It is not merely for the ſake of our diſtant poſſeſſions, and the wealth they may contain, that obliges us to arm before the moment of aggreſſion—our commerce ſhould be guaranteed, not only from real dangers, but the

apprehen-

apprehenſion of dangers; and nothing can be of more importance, than to convince our Colonies that they will be protected. Behold the conſequences of this dangerous confidence, in the caſe of a neighbouring people, who overlooked and diſregarded their enemies. Why is it neceſſary that nations, in order to preſerve peace, ſhould ruin themſelves in preparations of defence? Let this dreadful policy be reprobated by every country!

It is for the purpoſe of embracing the various objects announced in their Report, that your Committee propoſes a Decree, as the moſt proper to fulfil your engagements without imprudence, to change the ancient ſyſtem without danger, and to avoid a war without exhibiting any ſymptoms of weakneſs.

The Decree propoſed by M. Mirabeau, underwent conſiderable diſcuſſion and change. It was finally decreed on Thurſday the 26th of Auguſt, and is as follows;

DECREE

DECREE

OF THE

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE,

ON THE

FAMILY COMPACT.

"The National Aſſembly deliberating on the formal propoſition of the King, contained in the letter of the Miniſter, dated the 1ſt of Auguſt,

"Decree, That the King be ſupplicated to make known to his Catholic Majeſty, that the French nation, in taking all proper meaſures to maintain peace, will obſerve the defenſive and commercial engagements which the French Government have previouſly contracted with Spain.

"They further decree, That His Majeſty ſhall be requeſted immediately to charge his Ambaſſador in Spain to negotiate with the Miniſter of His Catholic Majeſty to the effect of perpetuating and renewing, by a National Treaty, the ties ſo uſeful to the two nations, and to fix with preciſion and clearneſs every ſtipulation which ſhall be ſtrictly conformable to the views of general peace, and to the principles of juſtice, which will be for ever the policy of the French.

"The National Aſſembly farther taking into conſideration the armaments of the different nations of

Europe

Europe—their progreſſive increaſe, and the ſafety of the French colonies, and commerce, decree, That the King ſhall be prayed to give orders, that the French marine force in commiſſion ſhall be increaſed to forty-five ſhips of the line, with a proportionate number of frigates, and other veſſels."

On the 1ſt of September M. Montmorin addreſſed the following Letter to the Preſident of the National Aſſembly:

"Mr. President,

"The King, in commanding me to make known to the National Aſſembly, that he had ſanctioned the Decree of the 26th ult. concerning the confirmation of our defenſive and commercial engagements with Spain, directed me at the ſame time to inform them that he had charged me to employ the neceſſary means to fulfil the views of the Aſſembly, relative to the explanations of which the Treaty that has bound us to Spain ſince 1761, is ſuſceptible.

"I have ſent to His Majeſty's Ambaſſador at the Court of London the requiſite inſtructions, that in apprizing the Engliſh Miniſter of our armaments, he might renew, at the ſame time, the moſt poſitive aſſurances of our pacific intentions.

"The Marine Miniſter has already informed the Aſſembly of the orders he has received from His Majeſty, in regard to the armaments they have de-

creed, and he has preſented the table of the expence they will require. I ſhould add to you, that to fulfil gradually the views of the Aſſembly, His Majeſty has determined to begin by equipping ſixteen ſhips, which, added to thoſe already armed, will increaſe the number to thirty. His Majeſty has given orders at the ſame time, that the neceſſary meaſures be taken to enable him to complete the number of forty-five ſhips voted by the Aſſembly, with all the diſpatch which any poſſible turn of affairs may require.

" This diſpoſition, ſubject to events, will not make any change in the table of expence preſented by M. de la Luzerne for the current year. His Majeſty will take care only to give orders for the iſſuing of the ſums voted by the Aſſembly for the marine department, in proportion as the armaments ſhall require.

" The King believes, by theſe diſpoſitions of wiſdom, prudence, and, at the ſame time, of œconomy, that he has entered fully into the views of the Aſſembly, and thus reconciled their pacific intentions with the precautions that circumſtances render neceſſary.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) MONTMORIN."

The Marine Miniſter laid before the Aſſembly the eſtimates of the additional ſums required for the marine ſervice on account of this reſolution. The eſtimates were ſubmitted to the Committee of Finances

Finances and Marine, and on their Report, the National Aſſembly paſſed the following Decree for the naval ſervice of the year 1790.

1ſt. That from the 1ſt. Sept. inſt. the Miniſter of the Marine ſhall be bound to give an account, monthly, of the expences diſburſed in the ports and arſenals.—That he ſhall alſo give in ſummary ſtates of every ſpecies of payments, certified by the adminiſtrators, that the ſame may be ſubmitted to the examination of the Committee, and reported to the National Aſſembly.

2d. That from the 1ſt. Jan. 1791, the expences of marine affairs in the colonies ſhall be preſented to the Aſſembly by the Miniſter, in the ſame manner as thoſe relative to the ports and arſenals.—Extraordinaries to be accounted for at the ſame time.

3d. With regard to the arrears due on the marine and colonial eſtabliſhments, the Miniſter ſhall be bound without delay, to give an exact ſtate of the receipts and diſburſements, ordinary and extraordinary, from the ſettlement of the laſt account, to the 1ſt Jan. 1790, alſo a ſtate of the ſums recovered or recoverable from the debtors on the marine and colonial departments, that the whole may be laid before the Committee on Marine Affairs as ſoon as poſſible.

4th. And the National Aſſembly being deſirous of ſecuring the marine ſervice for the year 1790, DECREE, that without prejudging the diſtribution of the funds provided in the month of December laſt, the 30,000,000 livres, aſſigned for the ordinary

of

of the marine; the 10,500,000 for the ordinary of the colonies; and 7,162,850 livres, appropriated to the extraordinary expences, amounting in all to 47,662,850 livres, shall continue to be issued at the disposition of the Marine Minister, at the rate of a twelfth part of the whole for each month to the end of the year 1790, he being always responsible for the same.

Oct. 10*th*.

M. *Fretean*, stated that 30 ships of the 45 voted by the Assembly on the 25th of August, were equipped; and that the Committee were of opinion, from the continued armaments of England, that the remaining 15 should be equipped with all possible expedition: in this opinion the Assembly coincided.

M. *Malouet* reported from the Marine Committee, that they had received a letter from the Marine Minister, desiring the farther sum of 4,958,218 livres, on account of the armament. The Assembly decreed,

1st. That the sum of 4,958,218 livres be placed under the controul of the Marine Department, to the account of the expence of fitting out forty-five sail of the line, decreed by the Assembly.

2d. That the account of payments for provisions for the supply of the fleet shall be presented to the Assembly monthly.

3d. That on the 1st of January next, an account shall be given in of the sums received and expended on account of provisions for the fleet, and from the 1st of January 1791, a contract shall be entered into for such supply.

HR
F5818
G7

317