HE NEGOCIATION.

s presented by his majesty's command, to both houses of parliament, 18th May, 1803.

[CONTINUED.]

(No. 39)

Downing-street, February 18, 1803.

My Lord,

Your excellency's dispatch, of February 21, has been received, and laid before the king.

I have great satisfaction in communicating to you his majesty's entire approbation of the able and judicious manner in which you appear to have executed the instructions which I gave to you in my dispatch of the 9th instant.

The account you have given of your interview with the first consul is in every respect important.

It is unnecessary for me to remark on the tone and temper in which the sentiments of the first consul appear to have been expressed, or to offer any observations in addition to those so properly made by your excellency at the time, upon several topics which were brought forward by the first consul in the course of your conversation; I shall therefore content myself with referring your excellency to my dispatch to Mr. Merry of August 28, 1802, in which the subjects of the complaints of the French government, respecting the freedom of the press, the emigrants. &c. are particularly discussed. I cannot, however, avoid noticing, that nothing approaching to explanation or satisfaction is stated to have been thrown out by the first consul, in answer to the just representations and complaints of his majesty, in consequence of the unwarrantable insinuations and charges contained in colonel Sebastiani's report against his majesty's government, the officer commanding his forces in Egypt, and his army in that quarter: but that on the other hand, the language of the first consul has tended to strengthen and confirm the suspicions which that publication was peculiarly calculated to excite.

I shall now proceed to give you some farther instructions on the language which it may be proper for you to hold respecting the charge which has been advanced against his majesty's government, of their unwillingness to fulfil the treaty of Amiens. The treaty of Amiens has been in a course of execution on the part of his majesty, in every article in which, according to the spirit of that treaty, it has been found capable of execution. There can be no doubt, that Egypt is at this time completely evacuated. The delay which had arisen in the evacuation of Alexandria, was owing to accidental circumstances, the particulars of which were explained to you in my dispatch of the 30th November last; and I had every reason to believe, from the communication which I had with general Andreossi on the subject, that the French government were perfectly satisfied with the explanation which he was authorised at the time to give them respecting it.

With regard to that article of the treaty which relates to Malta, the stipulations contained in it (owing to the circumstances which it was not in the power of his majesty to control) have not been found capable of execution. The refusal of Russia to accede to the arrangement, except on condition that the Maltese language should be abolished; the silence of the court of Berlin with respect to the invitation that has been made to it, in consequence of the treaty, to become a guaranteeing power; the abolition of the Spanish priories, in defiance of the treaty to which the king of Spain was a party: the declaration of the Portuguese government of their intention to sequestrate the property of the Portuguese priory, as forming a part of the Spanish langue, unless the property of the Spanish priories is restored to them; the non-election of a grand master: These circumstances would have been sufficient, without any other special grounds, to have warranted his majesty in suspending the evacuation of the island, until some new arrangement could be adjusted for its security & independence. But when it is considered how great the dominion, power and influence of France have of late been extended, his majesty must feel, that he has an incontestible right, conformably to the principles on which the treaty of peace was negociated and concluded, to demand additional securities in any new arrangement which it might be necessary to make with a view of effecting the real objects of that treaty. And these considerations sufficient as they might be in themselves to justify the line of conduct which his majesty had determined to adopt, have received additional force from the views which have been recently and unreservedly manifested by the French government, respecting the Turkish dominions, and the Islands in the Adriatic (*and which have been in a great degree admitted by the first consul, in his interview with your excellency*)—views, which are directly repugnant, not only to the spirit, but to the letter of the treaty of Amiens.

From the postscript in your excellency's letter, it appears, that a project was in contemplation, by which, according to the declaration of M. Talleyrand, the integrity of the Turkish territory would be secured, so as to do away every cause of doubt or uneasiness, either with regard to Egypt, or to any other part of the Turkish dominions.—His majesty will consider the communication of such a project as indicating a disposition on the part of the French government, to afford him explanation and satisfaction respecting some of the points which have been the subject of his representations. But after all that has passed, his majesty cannot consent that his troops should evacuate the island of Malta, until substantial security has been provided for those objects, which, under the present circumstances, might be materially endangered by their removal I am, &c.

HAWKESBURY.

His excellency lord Whitworth, &c.

No. 40. Is immaterial.

(No. 41)

Note from general Andreossi to lord Hawkesbury, dated 10th March, 1803.

The undersigned ambassador and minister plenipotentiary of the French republic, to his Britannic majesty, had received from the first consul, express orders to require from the British government some explanations respecting the protracted occupation of the island of Malta by the English troops. He had hoped that verbal communications would have been sufficient to have produced satisfactory explanations, by preparing the way for the mutual conciliation of minds and interests, a conduct which has been prescribed to him by his ardent zeal for the maintenance of harmony between the two countries, and of the peace of Europe, objects of the solicitude of the French government: But the undersigned thinks he can no longer delay complying with the instructions he had received, and he has therefore the honor of addressing the following observations to his excellency lord Hawkesbury, which recal to recollection the spirit and the leading features of the verbal communications which he has previously made to him.

By the conditions of the 4th paragraph of the tenth article of the treaty of Amiens, the English troops were to evacuate the island of Malta and its dependencies, three months after the exchange of the ratifications.

Ten months have elapsed since the ratifications have been exchanged, and the English troops are still at Malta.

The French troops, on the contrary, who were to evacuate the Neapolitan and Papal States, have not waited the expiration of the three months which were granted to them to withdraw, and have quitted Tarentum, the fortifications of which they had re-established, and where they had collected 100 pieces of cannon.

What can be alledged in justificati[on] lay in evacuating Malta? has not the 10th article of the treaty of Amiens provided for every thing? and the Neapolitan troops being arrived, under what pretext do those of England still remain there?

Is it because all the powers enumerated in the 6th paragraph have not yet accepted the guaranty which is devolved upon them? but this is not a condition that relates to the evacuation of the Island; and besides, Austria has already sent its act of guaranty: Russia itself has made only a single difficulty which is done away by the accession of the first consul to the modifications proposed; unless indeed England itself throws obstacles in the way, by refusing to accede to the proposals of Russia, which after all could not effect the engagements of his Britannic majesty, who, according to the express conditions of the treaty, is to evacuate the Island of Malta within three months, placing it under the guard of the Neapolitans, who are to garrison it, until the definitive arrangements of the order are settled.

It should therefore seem impossible, and it would be without example in the history of nations, were his Britannic majesty to refuse to execute a fundamental article of the pacification, of the very one, which, in the drawing up of the preliminaries, was considered as the first, and as requiring to be settled previously to every other point.

Indeed, the first consul, who cordially relies on the intentions of his Britannic majesty and cannot suppose them to be less open and generous than those with which he is animated, has hitherto been unwilling to attribute the delay of the evacuation of Malta, to any other than to maritime circumstances.

The undersigned is, therefore, charged to require explanations on this point, and he is persuaded that the British ministry will be the more anxious to furnish such as will be satisfactory, as they must be sensible how necessary they are for the maintenance of harmony, and how important they are for the honor of the two nations.

The undersigned avails himself of this opportunity to renew to lord Hawkesbury the assurances of his high consideration.

(Signed) F. ANDREOSSY.

Portland Place, 10th March, 1803.

(No. 42.)

Letter from lord Whitworth to lord Hawkesbury, dated Paris, March 12. Lord Whitworth had just been apprised of the king's message; his lordship says,

"I found, however, on going to M. de Talleyrand, at two o'clock, that he was already informed of it. He was just setting out to communicate it to the first consul, and appeared under considerable agitation. He returned with me to his cabinet, and though he told me he was pressed for time, he suffered me to relate the circumstances without interruption. I endeavored to make him sensible that this measure was merely precautionary, and not in the least degree intended as a menace. I concluded my observations by repeating that it was merely a measure of self-security, founded on the armaments which were carrying on in the ports of France and Holland; remarking, at the same time, that had not even these armaments been as notorious as they were, the very circumstance of the first consul's determination to augment so considerably his army in time of peace, would have been a full and sufficient motive for such a measure of precaution

"M. de Talleyrand now informed me he was already acquainted with the business, that a messenger had that morning arrived, who had bro't him a copy of the message, which he communicated to me. I could draw from him no reply whatever to my observations. He confined himself strictly to the assurance which he has so repeatedly made, that there was no foundation whatever for the alarm which was felt by his majesty's minister's; that the first consul was pacific; that he had no thoughts whatever of attacking his majesty's dominions, unless forced to do so by a commencement of hostilities on our part; that he should always consider the *refusal to evacuate Malta as such a commencement of hostilities*, and that, as we had hitherto hesitated to do so, he was justified in adopting the measures which might eventually be necessary. He disclaimed every idea of the armaments fitting out in the Dutch ports having any other destination than to the colonies, and concluded, that for his part he could not comprehend the motives which had necessitated a resort to such a measure on the part of his majesty's government.

"He then desired leave to go to the first consul, promising to let me know the result when we met at dinner at the Prussian minister's. He did not come there till near 7 o'clock, and when we rose from dinner, he took me aside, and informed me, that although the first consul had been highly irritated at the unjust suspicion which his majesty's government entertained, yet he would not allow himself to be so far mastered by his feelings, as to lose sight of the calamities which the present discussion might entail upon humanity. He dwelt much on this topic, and explained the measures to which he should be obliged to resort: he said that if England wished to discuss fairly, he wished the same; that if England prepared for war, he would do the same; and that if England should finally determine on hostilities, he trusted to the support of the French nation in the cause of honor and of justice. It was in vain that I repeated that England did not wish for war; that peace was as necessary to us as it could be to France; that all we desired, and all that we were contending for, was security; that every thing proved to us that that security was threatened by the first consul's views on Egypt; and that consequently our refusal to evacuate Malta, was become as much a necessary measure of precaution, as the defence of any part of his majesty's dominions."

Note verbale referred to in No. 42.

1. If his Britannic majesty in his message means to speak of the expedition of Helvoetsluys, all the world knows that it was destined for America, and that it was on the point of sailing for its destination, but in consequence of his majesty's message, the embarkation and putting to sea are about to be countermanded.

2. If we do not receive satisfactory explanation respecting those armaments in England, and if they actually take place, *it is natural* that the first consul should march 20,000 men into Holland, since Holland is mentioned in the message.

3. These troops being once in the country, *it is natural* that an encampment should be formed on the frontiers of Hanover; and moreover that additional bodies should join those troops which were already embarked for America, in order to form new embarkations, and to maintain an offensive and defensive position.

4. *Is it natural* that the first consul should order several camps to be formed at Calais, and on different points of the coasts.

5 It is likewise *in the nature of things*, that the first consul who was on the point of evacuating Switzerland, should be under the necessity of continuing a French army in that country

6. It is also the natural consequence of all this, that the first consul should send a fresh force into Italy, in order to occupy, in case of necessity, the position of Tarentum.

7. England arming, and arming with so much publicity, will compel France to put her armies on the war establishment; a step so important, as cannot fail to agitate all Europe.

The result of all these movements will be to irritate the two countries still more. France will have been compelled to take all these precautions, in consequence of the English armaments, and nevertheless, every means will be taken to excite the English nation by the assertion, that France meditates an invasion. The whole British population will be obliged to put themselves under arms for their defence, and their export trade will, even before the war, be in a state of stagnation throughout the whole extent of the countries occupied by the French arms.

The experience of nations, and the course of events prove, that the distance between such a state of things and actual hostility, is unfortunately not remote.

As to the differences, of which mention is made in his Britannic majesty's message, we know not of any that we have with England; for it cannot be imagined, that a serious intention can have existed in England of evading the execution of the treaty of Amiens, under the protection of a military armament. Europe well knows that it is possible to attempt the dismemberment of France, but not to intimidate her.

(No 43)

Paris, March 14, 1803.

My Lord,

The messenger Mason went on Saturday with my dispatches of that date, and until yesterday, Sunday, I saw no one likely to give me any further information such as I could depend upon, as to the effect which his majesty's message had produced on the first consul. At the court which was held at the Thuilleries up on that day, he accosted me evidently under very considerable agitation. He began by asking me if I had any news from England. I told him that I had received letters from your lordship two days ago. He immediately said, and so you are determined to go to war? No! I replied, we are too sensible of the advantages of peace. Nous avons, said he, deja fait la guerre pendant quinze ans. As he appeared to wait for an answer, I observed only, C'en est deja trop. Mais, said he, vous voulez la faire encore quinze annees, et vous m'y forcez. I told him, that was very far from his majesty's intentions. He then proceeded to count Marcow and the chevalier Azara, who were standing together at a little distance from me, and said to them, Les Anglois veulent la guerre. mais s'ils tont les premiers a tirer l'epee, je serai le dernier a la remettre. Ils ne respectent pas les Traites. Il faut dorenavant les couvrir de crepe noir. He then went his round.

In a few minutes he came back to me, and resumed the conversation, if such it can be called, by something personally civil to me. He began again—Pourquoi des armemens? Contre qui des mesures de precaution? Je n'ai pas un seul vaisseau de ligne dans les ports de France; mais si vous voulez armer, j'armerai aussi; si vous voulez vous battre, je me battrai aussi. Vous pourrez peut-ertre tuer la France, mais jamais l'intimider. On ne voudroit, said I, ni l'un ni l'autre. On voudroit vivre en bonne intelligence avec elle. Il faut donc respecter les Traites, replied he; Malheur a ceux qui ne respectent pas les Traites; ils en seront responsable a toute l'Europe. He was too much agitated to make it adviseable for me to prolong the conversation; I therefore made no answer, and he retired to his apartment, repeating the last phrase.*

It is to be remarked that all this passed loud enough to be overhead by two hundred people who were present, and I am persuaded that there was not a single person who did not feel the extreme impropriety of his conduct, and the total want of dignity as well as of decency on the occasion.

I propose taking the first opportunity of speaking to M. Talleyrand on this subject.

I have the honor to be, &c.

WHITWORTH.

Right hon. lord Hawkesbury, &c. &c.

No. 44. Is immaterial.

(No. 45)—NOTE.

The undersigned, his majesty's principal secretary of state for foreign affairs, has laid before the king the note of his excellency the French ambassador of the 10th instant.

In obeying the commands of his majesty, by returning an official answer to this note, the undersigned feels it necessary for him to do little more than repeat explanations which have been already given on more than one occasion by himself verbally to general Andreossy, and by lord Whitworth to M. Talleyrand, on the subject of the note, and of the points which appear to be connected with it. He can have no difficulty in assuring the French ambassador, that his majesty has entertained a most sincere desire that the treaty of Amiens might be executed in a full and complete manner; but it has not been possible for him to consider this treaty as having been founded on principles different from those which have been invariably applied to every other antecedent treaty or convention, namely, that they were negociated with reference to the actual *state of possession* of the different parties, and to the treaties or *public engagements* by which they were bound at the time of its conclusion; and that if that state of possession, and of engagements was so materially altered by the act of either of the parties as to affect the nature of the compact itself, the other party has a right, according to the law of nations, to interfere for the purpose of obtaining satisfaction or compensation for any essential difference which such acts may have subsequently made in their relative situation; that if there ever was a case to which this principle might be applied with peculiar propriety, it was that of the late peace; for the negociation was conducted on a basis not merely proposed by his majesty, but specially agreed to, in an official note, by the French government, viz. That his majesty should keep a compensation out of his conquests for the important acquisition of territory made by France upon the continent. This is a sufficient proof that the compact was understood to have been concluded in relation to the then existing state of things; for the meafure of his majesty's compensation was to be calculated with reference to the acquisitions of France at that time; and if the interference of the French government in the general affairs of Europe since that period; if their interposition with respect to Switzerland and Holland, whose independence was guaranteed by them at the time of the conclusion of the treaty of peace; if the acquisitions which have been made by France in various quarters, but particularly those in Italy, have extended the territory and increased the power of France, his majesty would be warranted consistently with the spirit of the treaty of peace, in claiming equivalents for these acquisitions, as a counterpoise to the augmentation of the power of France. His majesty, however, anxious to prevent all ground of misunderstanding, and desirous of consolidating the general peace of Europe, as far as might be in his power, was willing to have waved the pretensions he might have a right to advance of this nature; and as the other articles of the definitive treaty have been in a course of execution on his part, so he would have been ready to have carried into effect an arrangement conformable to the true intent and spirit of the tenth article; the execution of that arrangement, according to its terms, having been rendered impracticable by circumstances which it was not in his majesty's power to control. Whilst his majesty was actuated by these sentiments of moderation & forbearance, and prepared to regulate his conduct in conformity to them, his attention was particularly attracted by the very extraordinary publication of the report of col. Sebastiani to the first consul. This report contains the most unjustifiable insinuations and charges against his majesty's government; against the officer commanding his majesty's forces in Egypt, and against the British army in that quarter; insinations and charges wholly destitute of foundation, and such as would have warranted his majesty in demanding that satisfactation which on occasions of this nature, independent powers, in a state of amity, have a right to expect from each other. It discloses, moreover, views, in the highest degree injurious to the interests of his majesty's dominions, & directly repugnant to, and utterly inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the treaty of peace concluded between his majesty & the French government. His majesty's ambassador at Paris was accordingly directed to make such a representation to the French government as his majesty felt to be called for by imputations of the nature above described, by the disclosure of the purposes inconsistent with good faith, and highly injurious to the interests of his people; and as a claim had recently been made by the French government on the subject of the evacuation of Malta, lord Whitworth was instructed to accompany this representation by a declaration on the part of his majesty, that before he could enter into any further discussions relative to that island, it was expected that satisfactory explanations should be given upon the various points respecting which his majesty had complained. This representation and this claim, founded on principles incontestibly just, and couched in terms the most temperate, appear to have been wholly disregarded by the French government; no satisfaction has been afforded, no explanation whatever has been given; but on the contrary, his majesty's suspicions of the views of the French government with respect to the Turkish empire have been confirmed and strengthened by subsequent events. Under these circumstances his majesty feels that he has no alternative, and that a just regard to his own honor and to the interests of his people, makes it necessary for him to declare, that he cannot consent that his troops should evacuate the island of Malta until substantial security has been provided for those objects which, under the present circumstances might be materially endangered by their removal.

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

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

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

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

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

Downing-street, March 15, 1803.

(Signed) HAWKESBURY.

His excellency general Andreossy, &c.

Translation of the conversation between the first consul and lord Whitworth, in No. 43.

* "We have already," said he, "carried on a war for fifteen years." As he seemed to wait for an answer, I observed only, "There has been too much of it already." "But, said he, "You wish to make it fifteen years more, and you compel me to it." I told him that was very far from his majesty's intentions. He then proceeded to count Marcow and the chevalier Azara, who were standing together at a little distance from me, and said to them, "The English wish for war; but if they are the first to draw the sword, I will be the last to sheath it again—They pay no regard to treaties—They [treaties] must hereafter be covered with black crape." He then went his round. In a few minutes he came back to me and resumed the conversation, if such it can be called, by something personally civil to me. He began again: "What is the object of those armaments? Against whom are those measures of precaution? I have not a single ship of the line in the ports of France; but if you will arm I will arm also; if you will fight I will fight too. You may, perhaps, destroy France, but can never intimidate her."—"We desire," said I, "neither the one nor the other; we wish to live upon terms of good understanding with her."—You ought then to respect your treaties," said he. "Wo be to those who disregard treaties; they will be responsible for it to all Europe." He was too much agitated to make it adviseable for me to prolong the conversation; I therefore made no answer, and he retired to his apartment, repeating the last phrase.

(No 46)

Paris, March 17, 1803.

My Lord,

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

(Signed) WHITWORTH.

The right honorable lord Hawkesbury, &c.

(No. 47)

Is an extract of a letter from lord Whitworth to lord Hawkesbury, dated Paris, March 18, 1803; The only material point in this dispatch is a remark of the English ambassador to Talleyrand, viz That by our possession of Malta, France was not threatened, but the reverse was the case, should the access to Egypt be opened by its evacuation.

(No. 48)

Letter from lord Hawkesbury to lord Whitworth, dated Downing-street, March 22, 1803. His lordship says, "I have it in command to signify to you his majesty's pleasure, that you take the earliest opportunity to represent to monsieur de Talleyrand, the surprise with which his majesty has learnt the conduct which the first consul had observed towards your excellency in the instance to which that dispatch refers; and you will add, that as his majesty has a right to expect that his ambassador should be treated with the respect and attention due to the dignity of the sovereign whom he represents, it will be impossible for you to present yourself on any days of ceremony to the first consul, unless you receive an assurance that you will never be exposed to a repetition of the treatment which you experienced on the occasion."

(No. 49)

Contains the following note:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It might suffice in his respect, to reply to his excellency, that no representation has been made by him on the subject to the government of the French republic; and that, if it was, justice to grant satisfaction, the first consul has to expect that which was required [illegible] in his note of the 2d Thermidor [illegible] grounds more serious and more just.

Is it possible that the English minister [illegible]