IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, May 27.

MEDIATION OF RUSSIA.

Mr. Fox said he considered the question he was about to bring forward as important as any that had ever come before the house. With respect to the general question of war or peace, he should have no objection to discuss it now, if he had not already done it; his opinion on that subject was well known; with that opinion the majority of the house differed; the country was at war, and every measure which was calculated to render the war successful, should have his support. Every one, however, must agree in the propriety and expediency of any measure which was calculated to bring that war to a termination as soon as possible. The object of his motion was, to terminate it by a measure perfectly practicable in itself, and likely to be attended with the most beneficial consequences. It was to advise his majesty to avail himself of the disposition which it was understood the emperor of Russia had shewn to mediate between the two countries; the advantages of such a mediation it was not necessary to point out. The mediation of a great power was always of use, even when it did little more than lend its name, as a name thus given to a treaty, might give it a sanction in the eyes of Europe, which it would not otherwise possess. The mediation proposed, in this case, was of a very different nature. If a mediation had been offered by the emperor of Russia, and if, as it was understood, it had been accepted by the enemy he could not avoid considering the advantages which would accrue from the acceptance of it on the part of this country; and who so proper to mediate upon this occasion as Russia, who had been applied to to become one of the guarantees of the island of Malta, which was the principal subject in dispute? He thought, however, that the mediation of Russia, would go a great way further; he thought that from his power, his general character, and from a variety of other circumstances, the emperor of Russia was the fittest sovereign to undertake a mediation of this nature, not only with a view to the general points to which that mediation might be applied, but also to those particular points which formed the subject of dispute between this country & France. With respect to the general character of that sovereign, from all they were able to collect, the court of Petersburgh had given proofs of an eminent desire to preserve the tranquility of Europe, and that France and England, and all the lesser powers, might be at peace. Every circumstance tended to prove the great and strong desire of the government of Russia for peace, and it was also stated to have expressed a strong disapprobation of the conduct of France in various instances. Now if they were to look for a mediation, there were two qualities extremely essential, which in this case existed in all their force. In the first place he found on the part of Russia an eminent desire of peace; and, in the second, a great disapprobation of the conduct of France, which was in a great measure connected with the circumstances out of which the dispute with this country had arisen. If such a mediation should be successful, and he confessed he was extremely sanguine in his expectation as to the result, it might lead to a much larger system, and might have an extremely favorable influence upon the general state of Europe. If it was put to him, was he sure that this would produce peace, he should say, that he certainly could not be sure, but he never looked forward to any result with a more sanguine expectation than to the result of the mediation, of which he proposed that we should avail ourselves. He thought he should not differ from any one member when he said, that of all the circumstances in the state of Europe, that which gave most cause for lamentation, was, that we had not the power of protecting others, and that we must continue the contest, with the certainty that France would use the power which she possessed for the purposes of ulterior aggrandizement, and of oppressing those states which were unable to resist her. He hoped then, that the mediation of Russia would have the effect of preventing those lamentable consequences. What power possessed so fair a right, as it were, to prescribe peace to Europe? Besides; the emperor of Russia, from particular circumstances, might be enabled to use strong language to Bonaparte. The late emperor had a dispute with this country, which had been since amicably settled, and there was not the least reason to suppose that the present emperor would wish to renew that dispute; but as it was said with respect to the treaty of Amiens, that there were many points in it unsatisfactory to this country, so in the arrangement with the emperor of Russia, there were some points perhaps unsatisfactory to that court. The emperor might therefore say to this country, if you will be bound by your treaty, I will be bound by mine. When, however, he came to talk to the enemy, the emperor had still stronger grounds. He understood that a part of his majesty's declaration alluded to a proposal made by France to Russia, for the dismemberment of the Turkish empire. Russia, it was well known was always the enemy of the Ottoman empire, its princes had almost an hereditary design upon Turkey, and if any dismemberment of that empire was to take place, Russia must necessarily gain the largest share; but the emperor of Russia might say to the first consul, if I abstain from all designs of that sort, do you also abstain, and a system might then be formed and carried into effect, by which no power in Europe could be enabled to injure the Ottoman empire. The emperor of Russia would also join this country in any proposition for the better protection of the secondary powers of Europe from the oppression of France. It might be said that France would accede to such a proposition only to gain time; it might be so, but that would answer his (Mr. Fox's) purpose, as the effect would be the postponement of the contest. If Russia proposed any measure tending to the security of the Turkish empire, it must be acceded to by France. It might be said that France might accede and afterwards break the treaty; it might be so, but if this was the case, there was an end of all treaties whatever. This advantage would however result, that if France broke a treaty thus made, it would not be Great-Britain only that would be engaged in the contest, but Great Britain and Russia conjointly. Much had been formerly said upon the subject of continental alliances, they might be prudent or not, according to circumstances; but if alliances were necessary, there was no power so competent as Russia to reduce the power of France. He asked whether we had not a better chance of obtaining the cordial co-operation of Russia, after such a mediation had been tried and failed, than at the present moment? He considered the present as a happy opportunity, which if not seized, it might be afterwards much to be lamented. He asked any man, whatever might be the power of France, if, when it saw Russia and Great-Britain united, the boldest government of that country would not shrink from the contest? The only possible case of opposition to such an union, was that of Austria and Prussia joining France; but this was so extremely improbable, that it was not worth considering. The general policy of the court of Berlin was pacific: in Austria the same opinion pretty generally prevailed, which resulted in a great measure from the change of councils and the prevalence of the archduke Charles, who although not ultimately successful in the late contest, had obtained by his conduct the greatest glory, and who appeared to consider that glory as an additional motive to peace. Thus with a pacific court of Berlin, of Vienna, and of Petersburg, there was every advantage to be gained by the proposed mediation, from whence, in the event of its failure, a subsequent co-operation of the court of Petersburg might be insured. They would, at least, if such a mediation failed, enlist the good opinion of mankind in the prosecution of the war, whilst the house and the country would be better satisfied, and a strong and unanswerable case would be made out on the part of G. Britain.—By not refusing that mediation, we might be enabled to prevent the aggrandizement of France. If it was supposed the mediation of Russia was only offered to conceal a friendship for France, then his majesty's ministers had a solid and unquestionable right to refuse it; but he did not believe that such was the case, nor did he believe that there was any such suspicion. The mediation came at a late period but he trusted his majesty's ministers would not hesitate to put an end to the contest as soon as they could, consistent with the honor of the country. If peace was the effect of the mediation, a more solid and firm league might be made; it would not merely be a guarantee of Malta, but a guarantee for Europe. The tranquility of the continent might be preserved, and all those exchanges and cessions prevented, which might be contrary to the interests of other nations, and a system might be established, by which those nations which had sustained losses might be prevented from receiving further injuries, and those who had gained might be induced to be satisfied with their gains, and thus all further encroachments might be prevented, and a fair prospect of a long and uninterrupted peace might ensue. He concl[illegible]d by moving "That an humble address be presented to his majesty, praying that his majesty would be graciously pleased to avail himself of the disposition manifested by the emperor of Russia to mediate between his majesty and the government of France, for the purpose of terminating the war, if it could be effected consistent with the honor of his majesty's crown, and the interest of the country." He also moved, "That his majesty's declaration should be read," which was accordingly entered as read.

Lord Hawkesbury said, he was glad the honorable gentleman, had moved that his majesty's declaration should be read, as by that it appeared that his majesty was disposed to enter into any arrangement which was consistent with the honor of his majesty's crown, and the interests of his people. He should have hoped that that very passage in the declaration would have convinced the honorable gentleman that his motion was unnecessary and ill timed. To the motion itself he had two objections; first, that no constitutional or parliamentary ground had been laid down in support of the motion; and secondly, that it appeared that there existed no such ground whatever for the motion. All the arguments, on the contrary, bore on the other side; and he was sure if no parliament ground existed for the motion, it could produce no good, and might produce harm. He trusted that he respected enough the valuable privileges of that house to be convinced that they had no right to interfere and give their opinion with respect to the conduct of his majesty's government, and more especially upon that most important question of peace or war. But whilst he admitted this, he contended that the constitution, having wisely invested his majesty, with the prerogative of negociating, and of declaring peace or war, some sufficient grounds ought to be made out for interfering with the conduct of his majesty's government in that respect. One was, that his majesty's government had been guilty of neglect, and that it ought or ought not to have done some particular act, because such and such consequences might or might not have resulted from it, in which case it was certainly open to the house to say that it ought to be done. The other was, where without any such neglect, the system laid down by his majesty's ministers was such, that it did not include some particular point, or various points, in which case, it was perfectly competent for the house to say, that such points ought to have been included in that system. But in every case of this kind, a fair and strong ground ought to be made out.—In this case no fair ground had been brought forward in support of the motion. The measure in which the house were called upon to accede to, had not been neglected by his majesty's ministers, neither did the system they had laid down preclude that measure. If any case should happen in which such a measure should be rendered necessary or expedient, it was already provided for. Upon this it would indeed be necessary for him to add no more than to refer to the last paragraph but one of his majesty's declaration, in which, having stated all the grievances of which he had complained, and the necessity of recalling his ambassador from Paris, and of having recourse to arms, his majesty says to all all Europe, "That he will be ready to concur even now, in an arrangement, by which satisfaction will be given to him for the indignities which had been offered to his crown and to his people, and sufficient security offered against further encroachments on the part of France." What was this but to shew his majesty's sincere disposition for peace, and he would ask whether, after that, any administration could advise his majesty to refuse to listen to any reasonable, fair, practicable proposition for peace, if peace could be obtained consistently with the honor of this nation? Now as to the latter part of the honorable gentleman's speech on the policy of Europe, and of continental connexions he should not take up the time of the house, more especially since there was scarcely a principle laid down by the honorable gentleman in which he did not completely agree, and he concurred with him, that the only mode of lessening the progress of that system, the fatal effects of which had been felt for the last 10 years war, and felt as much since the conclusion of peace, was, by the union of the independent states of Europe, on broad, liberal and fair motives, and not on the interested or selfish principles; on a general and a liberal understanding of what truly composes the public policy of Europe. He agreed also that the power to which the honorable gentleman referred, namely Russia, was the power, of all others, which it was the interest of this country, the most to conciliate; as being the best capable of forming the basis of a proper general arrangement to give us peace, and upon a system which the honorable gentleman had stated, and on which the honorable gentleman felt as he did.—Now, without going into subjects not necessarily connected with that, and on which there might be some division of opinion growing out of a debate, he would say, that the circumstance which weighed most upon his mind with respect to the last peace was, that it had not afforded us any ability to arrest the progress of France; but the peace was made with a view of enabling us hereafter to oppose a barrier to the encroachments of France; but he could say most sincerely, from the hour of the conclusion of that peace to the present day, no efforts had been wanting on the part of his majesty's government, to form such a concert (not with a view of renewing the war, but with a pure defensive view) to oppose a barrier against further encroachment; and whatever disposition there might be in some part of that house not to do justice to his majesty's government, yet he could state most confidently, no efforts had been wanting on their part, which, if successful, most probably, and perhaps he could say, almost certainly, the circumstances of which were not now to be debated, would have answered the purpose for which they were intended, so that the house would not be now debating on the subject before them: but he saw not, either in the commencement of hostilities, or the course which had been taken, any thing which could render that mediation inefficient now, if there was that disposition on the part of the other powers of Europe to render it effectual; and this brought him to that part of the speech of the right honorable gentleman, which related to the offer of the mediation of Russia, at a period of the negociation which was stated to be, with a view to the settlement of the differences between his majesty and France. With respect to any offer that had been made of such mediation, unquestionably if his majesty's government had been disposed to exclude all considerations, or were not disposed to explain fully to the Russian government; and even at the present crisis, he should have thought that the powers of Europe would be acting unwisely in offering a mediation after a critical negociation for several weeks.

After the situation in which this country was placed, after the most full, frank and explicit declaration on the part of his majesty, and after the evasions and delays on the part of France, which nobody could dispute, the only purpose for which they could negociate was, that if the two countries had any difficulty, they might, for their separate advantage, refer to the emperor of Russia, for his good offices to terminate their differences. Now he would ask the house, whether his majesty's government would have been justified on fair grounds, to do—What? to say "we are not ready to enter into the discussion with you, we know our own views, but your's are to delay the issue." It was the interest of this country that the question should be no longer left undecided, he therefore said that the intervention came under circumstances in which it did not appear to his majesty's government to be wise to alter the instructions which they gave to my lord Whitworth, to bring the negociation to a crisis; for it appeared under all the circumstances to be only calculated for delay on the part of France. The honorable gentleman had stated what great advantages there would be, both with reference to carrying on the war, or the settlement of peace, in consequence of our accepting the mediation of Russia. He agreed with the honorable gentleman in this particular, and he stated the circumstances which were concluded in the year 1781, relative to the right of navigation; and he said that the emperor of Russia might say that although such conclusion of the point might be satisfactory to us, it might not be so satisfactory to Russia—and that Russia on some future occasion, might form an expectation to recur to their ancient system on the subject of neutral navigation. Now, he would say, there certainly were individuals in Russia attached to that system of navigation at that time; he would not say that there were none of them now; but this he would observe, that the great majority of the most intelligent persons in Russia, and even of the Russian government, were formerly convinced, that upon this subject the interests of Russia were correspondent with the interest of Great-Britain: they were clearly convinced that the contrary opinion, which was taken up by the late empress, who, though most certainly a great princess, had been influenced by the vanity of being at the head of a confederacy in support of that opinion, but now, the most intelligent persons in Russia were well convinced of the weakness of that opinion, and upon the best foundation, because it was manifest that Russia had little or no mercantile marine whatever, nor could have any as all her commerce is carried on in the vessels of other countries, so that the interests of Russia corresponded with those of Great-Britain; if the question decided in favor of Great-Britain, on the subject of neutral navigation, in 1781, not to be acted on, Russia would lose its trade in the Baltic; and this was the conviction of all the intelligent persons now in Russia, but he would not put the question on this narrow ground, it was most unquestionably true that by a connection between Russia and Great-Britain we could best set a barrier to France, without this, or some such concert no hope could be entertained of peace, upon a solid foundation, to this country and to Europe, which must be had on just and honorable terms, but it must not be done by crippling our exertions in the mean time, limiting our powers, or paralysing our strength. Any measure that could have such a tendency was inexpedient; his objection, therefore, to the motion, of the honorable gentleman was, that he laid no adequate ground for it. Had he not shewn to the house that his majesty's ministers had manifested a disposition to peace, but, on the contrary, it appeared from the declaration, an extract from which he had read, that they even now were in their sentiments and wishes conformable to those which had been expressed by the honorable gentleman himself, which were for peace, consistently with the security and the repose of Europe. He could not assent to this motion, because it would imply a belief that government were not actuated by that which had actuated them. He thought also, that the motion might have the effect of unhinging the minds of the people, of checking their exertions, and disappointing their expectations, which, he hoped, were well founded; these were the reasons which occurred to him to object to the motion of the honorable gentleman. It was not to the general sentiments of the honorable gentleman he objected, but he saw no necessity for the motion under the present circumstances, he therefore begged leave to move the previous question.

Mr. Fox said a few words in explanation.

[*To be continued.*]

BOSTON, July 17.

Arrived, ship Three Friends, Otis, 46 days from Lisbon. Sailed in company with the Gosport of Virginia, for France, and Calliope, of do. for do. Left ship President of and for N. York, in 10 days; Osiris, Cottle, of and for do. in do.; Cleopatra, for Philadelphia, in 6. Spoke, in lat. 40, 31, long. 18, 30, ship Union, of Baltimore, for Lisbon. June 27, lat. 43, 9, long. 52, 40, ship Warrington, Turner, 7 days from Boston for Liverpool. July 12, lat. 41, 40, long. 61, 50, sch'r Union, Virginia, 46 days from Bilboa, for Plymouth. Captain V. to the eastward of the Grand Banks, fell in with a wreck, a brig belonging to Pittston, loaded with lumber, full of water, nothing standing but her bowsprit, and no person on board.

Cleared, ship Nancies, Howland, Liverpool; brigs New Century, Harding, Straits Bellisle and Lisbon; Nautilus, French, St. Croix; sch'rs Columbia, Appleton, Vigo, and a market; Margery, Rider, Newfoundland; Betsy, Kempton, Tobago.

NEW-YORK, July 22.

FROM HAVANNA.

We learn by captain Frost, from Havanna, that the government of that place had given orders to put an immediate stop to the practice of smuggling; and had seized American property to the amount of 12,000 dollars, belonging to dealers in leather in the United States.

In consequence of information having been received of the intendant's being concerned in covering American property under Spanish colors he had been ordered home, and was to sail in ten days after captain Frost's departure, in a brig for Spain.

The celebrated Bowles was at Havanna in irons; but it was expected he would be given up in exchange for two Spanish officers in captivity with the Indians.

Four or five Spanish ships of war lying in port, were getting ready for sea; as also, with all possible expedition, eight or ten English Guineamen, who had had an intimation of war, but no certain account of it.

Fourteen nuns, from New-Orleans, had arrived *safe* at Havanna.

A mercantile friend informs us of the arrival at Nantucket, of the brig Apollo, Bunker, from the coast of Patagonia, with 5000 hair and 1000 fur seal skins—She left the sloop Prudence, Worth, the 1st of April, with 800 skins; sloop Eliza, Bunker, with 11,000 seal skins and 135 bbls. elephant oil. The ship Manilla, and brig Eliza, had arrived on the coast; the crews of both vessels went to the islands in said brig sealing, leaving the ship in port, waiting the arrival of their tender, the sloop Prudent, of Nantucket; which vessel afterwards arrived, and was waiting the return of the brig—she had obtained about 2000 skins in the month of January last.

The ship Abigail, Hildreth, arrived at Sag Harbor on the 10th instant, from a whaling voyage, with 1200 barrels of oil, to colonel B Hunting. Captain H. left, on the coast of Brazil, March 1, ships Criterion, Joy, Nantucket, 600 bbls. John Jay, Clark, do. 600 bbls.; Mary Ann, Folger, do. 400 bbls; ——, Blivens, Rhode-Island, 300 bbls; Bedford, Gardiner, Nantucket, 70 bbls. April 7, ships Hope, Joy, do. 800 bbls; Boston Packet, Joy, France, 1000 bbls; Brutus, Bunker, do. 700 bbls. April 8, ships Industry, Russell, Nantucket, 170 bbls; Ranger, Joy, do. 600 bbls. April 11, ships Savage, Pollard, France, 800 bbls; Harpooneer, Inot, do. 400 bbls. The above is from the best information I could obtain. Spoke, June 30, in lat. 33, 30, long. 68, 45, sloop Nancy, Strong, from New-York for Jamaica, after having thrown over the deck load, out 11 days. July 5, in lat. 38, 50, long. 71, 34, brig Thomas Pinckney, Reynegam, 2 days from New-York for St. Domingo.

Arrived yesterday, the brig Eliza Ann, Hull, in 5 days from Norfolk.

Same day, the schr. Nancy, Frost, in 13 days from Havanna. Left, the schooner Mercury, Olcott, of and from New-York; ship ——, Gorham, with lumber, from Boston; ship Lucy, Atkinson, of Boston; and several other vessels, all under seizure; the captains of some of which were in jail. The brig Mariner, Strong, of Portland was taking in molasses. The Spanish ship Jupiter, Gernon, had arrived there in 30 days from New-York. The brig ——, Robinson, from New-York; schr. ——, Oliver, from Bristol, R. I. brig ——, Babbidge, from Salem; a ship for Philadelphia, and another for Baltimore, were loading; besides several other vessels.

Same day, the brig Happy-Couple, Starks, in 5 days from Savannah. [The Happy-Couple has been gone from New-York only 17 days.] The brigs Dean, Akerly; and Eliza and Mary, Starr, were to sail about the 20th instant, for New-York. The brig Ceres, Higgins; Washington; and Ann-Maria, Hand, were to sail soon.

Cleared, ships Chatham, Chew, Liverpool; Fortitude, Pinckham, Cork; Saint Cuthbert, Brown, Calcutta; sch'r Linnet, Woodward, Halifax.

BY THIS DAY's MAILS.

PORTLAND, (Maine) July 18.

"*The Dispatches!!*"

On Saturday night arrived barque John, captain Sawyer, 43 days from Liverpool. Captain S. was bound to Philadelphia, but having sprung a topmast put in here. We regret that he brought no papers. As the public have been agitated with a report of this vessel's bringing *Dispatches* for government, we assure them on the authority of the captain, that he brought no public dispatches whatever.

NEW-YORK, July 23.

By captain Hanifen, who arrived yesterday morning from Leghorn, we learn that three or four days before he sailed, the frigate Adams arrived there in company with two other ships from Philadelphia and Salem—the Adams was quarantined. All the British ships, about 30 sail, hauled out in the Roads under cover of the Active frigate. The French troops took possession of the city two weeks before captain H. came away, and a French frigate had arrived at the island of Elba, with ammunition and provisions.

PRICES CURRENT.

Liverpool, June 1, 1803.

Sugar, Musco. brown 34 a 42s cwt, Clayed 40 a 44—Havanna brown 43 a 48—White 59 a 67—There was a brisk demand for sugar and coffee, at advanced price, immediately after hostilities had commenced, but as shippers are apprehensive that our trade to the continent of Europe will be circumscribed, through the influence of France, the demand for articles of export has again subsided, and is at present inconsiderable. Of sugar and coffee the stocks are moderate, and the prospect is very favorable for the continuance of high prices, if our export trade should not be interrupted.

Cotton, New-Orleans, 11d. to 16d. per lb. Georgia upland, 1s. a 1/3d. Sea Island, 2/10d. a 3/1d. Previous to the commencement of hostilities, speculators had begun to purchase upland cottons: and