IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

April 21.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

War with Prussia.

Lord Grenville rose and said, that he had it in command from his majesty to deliver the following message to the house, respecting the present state of the relations of this country with Prussia :

GEORGE R.

His majesty thinks it proper to accquaint the house that, he fouud himself under the necessity of withdrawing his minister from the court of Berlin, and of adopting provisionally measures of just retaliation against the commerce and navigation of Prussia. His majesty deeply regrets the extension and aggravation of calamities already so severely felt by the nations of the continent, whose independence & prosperity he has never ceased to consider as intimately connected with his own people. But measures of direct hostility, deliberately adopted aganist him, have left him no alternative.

In a moment of confidential intercourse, without even the pretence of any cause of complaint, forcible possession has been taken by Prussia of his majesty's electoral dominions. Deeply as this event affected the interest of this kingdom, his majesty chose nevertheless to forbear on this painful occasion all recourse to the tried & affectionate attachment of his British subjects. He remonstrated by amicable negociation against the injury he had sustained, and rested his claim for reparation on the moderation of his conduct, on the justice of his representations, & on the common interest which Prussia herself must ultimately feel to resist a system destructive of all security, of all legitimate possession. But when, instead of receiving assurances conformable to this just expectation, his majesty was informed, that the determination had been taken of excluding by force the vessels and commodities of this kingdom, from ports and countries under the lawful dominion or forcible controul of Prussia, his majesty could no longer delay to act without neglecting the first duty he owes to his people. The dignity of his crown, and the interests of his subjects equally forbid his acquiescing in this open and unporvoked aggressions ; he has no doubt of the full support of his parliament in vindicating the honor of the British flag, and the freedom of the British navigation ; and he will look with anxious expectation to thta moment when a more dignified and enlightened policy on the part of Prussia shall remove every impediment to the renewal of peace and friendship with a power with whom his majesty has no other cause of difference, than that now created by these hostile acts. G. R.

April 23.

On the motion of lord Holland, the bill for regulating the intercourse between the United States and the British colonies, was ordered to be read a second time to-morrow se'nnight.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

April 23.

Lord Henry Petty gave notice that he would propose to the house, in a committee of supply, that a sum of money be granted to the family of lord Nelson.

Message from his majesty.

On motion of Mr. Secretary Fox, the order of the day was read for taking into consideration his majesty's most gracious message. The message was then read.

Mr. Secretary Fox rose, and spoke to the following effect: "I am sure it is impossible that the message we have now heard read, can fail to excite the strongest sensation in every temper and disposition of mind which can exist in this house. In the first place, when we hear it stated that his majesty had abstained from appealing to his British subjects, on account of the violence and injustice which had been done to him in the seizure of his electoral dominions, it is impossible not to feel grateful for that kindness and mildness which his majesty has always shewn to the subjects of his realm. It was with the most extreme reluctance that he could consent to involve them in war upon any ground, that was not immediately and directly connected with British interests. After the sentiment of gratitude to his majesty for this tender consideration of his subjects of this kingdom, the next feeling which must be strongly excited by the message, is a feeling of just indignation at the court of Prussia. I hope that every member, while he feels this just indignation will, at the same time perceive the propriety of uniting the most vigorous measures, with a language temperate & moderate, and which does not violate that respect which had always been considered due to crowned heads, and ought not, in the present times to be departed from. Indeed, to describe justly the measures which have been adopted by the court of Prussia against this country, they cannot be called the measures of the king of Prussia, for that sovereign is known to be of a mild and pacific disposition ; nor could they be called the measures of his ministers, for no ministers could freely advise a proceeding so violent and injurious to the interests of that monarch. The measures must be considered such as his Prussian majesty had been induced to adopt from the pernicious counsels of the enemies of this country. Had it been my object to condemn, in the strongest terms, the decision of the Prussian cabinet, I might have thought it necessary to lay some additional papers on the table, but that not being my object, I have moved but for few. More would have been unnecessary, as it was not my wish to give the strongest possible coloring to the accusation that the message contains. If we are to understand those proceedings which have terminated in an outrage, unprecedented in the history of the worst proceedings of the worst times of Europe, it will be necessary to view the transaction a little earlier. The origin of this proceeding is to be traced to the convention concluded at Vienna, on the 15th of December, between count Haugwitz and the French emperor ; but when it is considered what was the situation of Prussia at the time that its sovereign concluded that treaty with France, it must be recollected, that its means of negociation were still greater than what it derived from its own resources or its own armies. The armies of Prussia were undoubtedly numerous & respectable ; but was it on them alene that the king of Prussia relied, when he was negociating with France ? Certainly it was not. He had a strong additional support, which gave weight to his negociations. The emperor of Russia, after he had left Austerlitz, gave the whole direction of the Russian troops that remained in Germany, to the command of the king of Prussia. This country too had promised him a powerful assistance by pecuniary supplies, if he should be driven to a war with France. These were the means he possessed of giving weight to his negociations ; and how did he apply those means ? Why, to seize a part of the territories of one of those powers which had been supporting him in that rank and situation, which enabled him to conclude his treaty. *(Loud cries of hear, hear !)* After this treaty was signed, a considerable difficulty remained in the execution of it. This difficulty proceeded in a great measure, from the just scruples of the king of Prussia, who perceived that it would be very hard to prevail upon his Britannic majesty to ratify such a treaty, and who, therefore, felt that his title would be so bad as to make the acquisition of Hanover, under these circumstances, a poor equivalent for those provinces that he was obliged to give up to France. He felt, besides, that upon no principle of justice could he pretend to take it on other terms from those which France herself had held it on, and therefore, at first, he did not pretend to take Hanover absolutely, but with the power of restoring it. France, in the meantime, pressed for the cession of Anspach and Bareith. What then did the king of Prussia do ? Certainly he could not expect that the French government would be able to negociate between him and his Britannic majesty, that he should be allowed to retain Hanover, and therefore he finally resolved to seize it without the consent of his majesty, and under the pretext of an equivalent for Anspach, Bareith, and those provinces which were ceded to France. It cannot then be said, that this treaty, and the proceedings which followed it, were altogether the effect of fear, for what was the necessity under which his Prussian majesty was placed ? Was it merely the necessity of ceding Anspach and Bareith ? This might have been a considerable misfortune, yet it was one which might be justified by necessity. But the sort of necessity claimed by the king of Prussia is different—he says, "Because I have lost Anspach and Bareith, I therefore feel myself under the necessity of seizing the dominions of some third power, but of one that, from all times, and by every circumstance, I was bound to respect." This is the sort of necessity claimed by the Prussian court, and it is this which makes the case of Prussia much worse than of any other nation in Europe. As for Spain, (I do not wish to revive the differences of opinion with respect to the Spanish war) but Spain, I say, would comply no further with the wishes of our enemies, than by giving a sum of money. Holland and other powers have been, from terror, obliged to make cessions of territory to France, but no other power has been compelled, by terror, to commit robberies or spoliations on its neighbors. *(A cry of hear ! hear !)* It is in this that the case of Russia stands distinguished from that of all other nations. We cannot help looking with some degree of pity and contempt, on a power that can alledge that it is reduced to such a necessity. It would be, in itself, a considerable humiliation or degradation to Prussia, to be obliged to give up those provices to which it was so much attached, and which had been called, "The Cradle of the House of Bradenburg." The degradation of this cession was still more increased by the conduct of the people of Anspach, who entreated their sovereign not to abandon them. Instead of lessening the ignominy of the cession, it was a great increase of dishonor, to sell a brave and loyal people for what was called an equivalent : it was an union of every thing that was contemptible in servility with every thing that was odious in rapacity. *(Cries of hear ! hear !)* On the 27th of Jan. an official letter was written from baron Hardenberg, to Mr. Jackson, expressly stating it to be the intention of his Prussian majesty to take possession of Hanover only until the conclusion of peace between England and France. In the answer to that letter, his majetty expresses his firm reliance on the declaration of his Prussian majesty, but wishes the terms to be more explicit. The language that Prussia held at that time to our court, was the same she then held to Russia and every other court with which she was connected by the relations of friendship. Soon after this, the convention with France appeared, and then the court of Prussia wished to represent the measures taken with regard to Hanover, as in a manner dictated by France. They would have it supposed, that it was rather an object of French than of Prussian ambition, that they should be possessed of Hanover. At first, they endeavored to present to the government of this country, that it was more for our interest that Hanover should be occupied by Prussian than by French troops, and their argument was this : If we have it, the ports may be still open to your commerce, or at least your manufactures may have a passage through our territory." This hope was, however, now entirely cut off, and M. de Schulenberg, in his manifesto, professes to take the country as a present from France, which she had won, and held by the right of conquest. No example would be found in all the histories of war, and no mention had ever been made by the writers on the law of nations, of any power having a right to receive as a present, a country occupied during a war, by one of the belligerent powers, but not ceded by the other. The house must therefore see to what extremity we are now reduced. It would be idle to say that a war with Prussia would not be a calamity. It is impossible but that it must be a calamity to this country to have the number of its enemies increased. It is also a painful consideration to think that there is no mode of returning this calamity on the aggressors, which will not in some degree fall also on the neutral and friendly nations, and even ourselves. The house will, however, feel that there are occasions in which a manifestation of our principles and of our resentment becomes necessary, altho' attended with the calamities inseparable from war. If such an outrage as this were passed over, might not every other nation in Europe, and particularly those who have less power to resist than Prussia, say to us, "we wish as much as you, that the power of France could be restrained, but you see our situation, and the great power of France, to which we are exposed. What are we to do ?" If this question were put to me, I should answer, that powers in that situation must save themselves as well as they can, and even make cessions, if they are insisted upon. If Prussia should alledge that she was in that state of comparative weakness that she was obliged to cede Anspach and Bareith ; however his majesty might lament the necessity or the accession of stength his enemies derived from the acquisition, still he would not have attempted to oppose it, or make the slightest remonstrance on the occasion. But when that power shall say, "I am not only obliged to make cessions, but I am also obliged to make war with you," then the question becomes very different, and his majesty is under the necessity of considering it in a very different light. Altho' I, for one, am not inclined to look very favorably on the present situation of this country, nor to feel so sanguinely as some other gentlemen, yet I think, that upon the present occasion we should make a signal example of the court of Prussia ; and whatever principles theorists may lay down about restoring the balance of Europe, I think we shall do more to restore the sound and true principles that ought to prevail in Europe, by shewing the world, in this instance, that this country will not abandon them herself, nor consent that they shall be departed from by other nations in their transactions with her. I consider that the power of the country consists in a great measure in the known justice of its principles, in its moderation and forbearance ; but if the court of Berlin choose to depart from the principles of justice, and to act hostilely to this country, it must take the consequence. I believe it has as yet gained nothing by its injustice. Hanover, desolated as it was first by French armies, and afterwards in a still greater degree by Prussian armies, can add little or nothing to the revenues of Prussia, neither can it in its present situation increase her military strength. The king of Prussia has been given a mere nominal possession of that country ; but so far from being strengthened by this present from France, he is only the more completely vanquished and subdued. Austria was forced by the fortune of war, to cede many of her provinces : other nations have also been obliged to make similar concessions ; but none of them had, like Prussia, been reduced to that lowest state of degradation, to consent to become the ministers of the injustice and rapacity of a master. By the command of France, Prussia was obliged to shut the ports of Hanover against our ships ; and what was the possession which France allowed her to keep of Hanover ? She has sent general Barbout to reside in that country as a military superintendant, to see that every thing be done there according to the pleasure of France. There are many other instances of the manner in which Prussia is now treated by France. In several transactions, respecting the possession of Essen and Werden, and several little villages almost too inconsiderable to name, Prussia is treated with as little respect as she deserves. [*Cries of hear ! hear !*] The French appear constantly to treat Prussia as a country that it is impossible to make a treaty or agreement with ; and in this respect, it is very likely that they are in the right. [*Hear ! hear !*] In our conduct upon this occasion, we shall have avoided a great evil, and done some good. We shall avoid the giving the sanction of this country to the spoliations which have been committed on the continent : we shall avoid the imputation of being indifferent to the fate of his majesty's foreign possessions, which would be a heavy imputation, even if it were supposed that their security was not immediately connected with the interests of this country : but, above all, we shall avoid the giving our sanction to that principle which has been lately adopted, of transferring the subjects of one prince to another, in the way of equivalents, and under the pretext of convenience and mutual accommodation. The wildest schemes that ever were before broached would not go so far to shake the foundations of all established governments as this new practice. If we are to make exchanges, let us exchange those things which are the proper objects of exchange ; let us give a field for a field, or let us exchange its stock, its oxen, and its sheep ; but let us not consider the people of a country, or the subjects of a state, as matter for exchange or barter. There must be in every nation a certain attachment of the people to its form of government, without which no nation can subsist. This principle, then, of transferring the subjects of one prince to another, strikes at the foundation of every government and the existence of every nation. I had therefore great pleasure in presenting the note delivered by me to Mr. Jacobi, which expressed that no consideration of convenience or mutual accommodation, much less an equivalent, should ever induce his majesty to forget the exemplary fidelity and attachment of his Hanoverian subjects, or consent to the alienation of the electorate. I do not know that it is necessary to make any further observations ; but before I sit down, I must state, that there can be no doubt but that the shutting the ports of Prussia to British vessels alone, is most clearly and unquestionably an act of hostility towards this country.—Mr. Fox then concluded by moving an address of thanks to his majesty, which (as usual) was an echo of the message.

FRENCH EXPOSE.

From the Moniteur.

PARIS, April 18.

"England has declared war against Prussia. All the king's ships have received orders to attack the Prussian vessels, and letters of marque have been issued to privateers. Is this a just proceeding on the part of the English government ? Is it a politic one ? These are questions which it is not our intention to examine. It is sufficient for us to discover, that this measure is advantageous to France, that one of its first consequences will be to shut the north against the English trade ; and there is little wisdom on the part of England, in acting so towards a considerable power, whom she forces into a nearer connexion with France ; and who she determins to remove from her councils the agents and the influence of England. France and Prussia united can, if they please, shut the sound. If England had learned how to accomodate her policy to circumstances, she would have maintained her party and her creatures in credit in Berlin. She would have rendered the blockade of the ports of the north less severe, she would have, in fact, preserved the advantage which she derives from the Prussian flag ; for commerce has occasion for intermediate agents between the merchant and the consumer. But, however it may be, we cannot consider this now political event but as tending to accelerate peace, for assuredly, Prussia is neither a weak enemy for England, nor a weak ally for France — We know that there are persons who accustom themselves with difficulty to the idea of these connexions between France and Prussia, but they do not see that the hesitation which was first manifested by the latter cabinet, depended upon temporary circumstances, which have neither altered the principles of the king, nor those of his most faithful and intelligent servants If there was any thing which gave offence to France, it could only be imputed to a frantic minister, who was sold to England, who was formerly in her service, and who quitted it for reasons which the dignity of this paper will not allow us to mention. It may perhaps be supposed, that England in the new circumstances in which she finds herself with regard to Prussia, had no medium left her, and could not avoid declaring war. But the occupation of Hanover, by Prussia, was the only means of preventing the French from returning to that country ; and if they had returned, the freedom of the, English trade would not have been the greater. It may be said, that Prussia has not only shut the ports of the Elbe and Weser, as they were by the French, but that the occupation was made in the name of the king, and in the same form as if he was determined to annex this fine province to his vast monarchy. However, *there is nothing to prove that this was the intention of Prussia* ; and it is very possible, that the cession of Cleves, Anspach and Neufchatel, may relate to some other principles of arrangement, since the population of all the three does not equal a 5th of the population of Hanover. Some discussion, therefore, might have taken place between Prussia and England ; and *the wisest course would have been, not to have begun by declaring war.* Supposing occupation to be equal to final incorporation, England, instead of adding that consequence, makes it more certain, for whatever losses the Prussian trade may experience during two or three years war, she will be indemnified by the more considerable loss which the trade of the enemy will sustain ; and England submits to these losses for an interest which the Englishmation has always disowned---It has always considered Hanover as a foreign property, solely belonging to the house of Brunswick How hapens it that it has so suddenly changed its principles in this respect ?

It appears that M. Schimmelpennick, the grand pensionary of Holland, has entirely lost his sight. Who is to be his successor ? What effect will be produced by this change in the magistracy ? These questions excite the attention and anxiety of all the Dutch who are sincerely attached to the country. It is well known, that the emperor never gave any positive sanction to the late changes in the constitution of that country, and he said, on that occasion, that the prosperity and liberty of nations could only be assured by two modes of government—either a tempered and constitutional monarchy, or a republic constituted according to the theory of liberty, and which should be the true organ of the public will. All nations cannot with safety leave to the people the choice of their representatives ; and when a nation has to apprehend the effects of assembling the people ; when the advantages which it expects are less than the inconvenience which it foresees ; such a nation, which cannot find a protection under a republican form of government, has recourse to the principles of a good and prudent monarch. Under the present constitution of Holland, the grand pensionary has more power than the king has in England—he has even more than the emperor has in France, or any other sovereign has in any country ; and, what is without example in a republic, their high mightinesses, or the representative and legislative bodies, have been nominated by the grand pensionary. The defect of this constitution cannot escape the observation of the sagacious. That cannot be called a republic, where the representative and legislative bodies are not nominated by the electors : and if there be any fear of the electors, it will be best to renounce at once the republican form of government. A government, which neither having the advantages of a republic, nor of a monarchy, combines all the inconveniences of both, should not be absolutely prescribed. Such being the situation of Holland, she must be a gainer by any changes she may make in her constitution. If the landholders, the merchants, the enlightened men, are of opinion that they can have a representation made by the choice of the people without distinction of classes or religion, they will create a system much more proper than the present one. If that be not their opinion, and that they think it necessary to have recourse to a constitutional monarchy, they will do that which will be more advantageous to their country than the preservation of their existing constitution can be. It is their duty to examine their situation, to judge of the circumstances in which they are placed, & to choose between the two systems that which is best suited to them, and the most likely to establish on a sound foundation, the public prosperity and liberty.

"Bavaria has taken possession of the margriavate of Anspach, & has ceded to France the duchy of Berg, which, united with that of Cleves, is settled upon prince Joachim, the grand admiral of the empire. Wesel is a strong fortress on our frontiers. The duchy of Cleves gives us an advantageous point of contact with Holland ; and France, for the future, will only find on the right bank of the Rhine, princes who are allied by blood to the imperial family.

General Oudinot has taken possession of the countries Neufchatel and Valengin. He found those counties loaded with English merchandise, heaped there by merchants of Switzerland, and principally by those of Basle. Of these the French army has taken to the amount of many millions : all the banks of the lakes of Neufchatel were covered with French manufactures. This circumstance justifies all the prohibitory measures which may be taken with regard to Switzerland. That country is little more, at this moment, than a warehouse for English goods. When it shall be cleared of these manufactures, we shall perhaps have the means of giving a new check to our enemy.—Is it possible that the Landamman was not struck with the danger to which he exposed the country ? Who will protect Basle from a visit from the French army ? Does this magistrate, who sees smuggling carried on by wholesale under his eyes, suppose that he is not responsible ? If the French consider these depots of prohibited goods so publicly made, and to such great extent, a real act of hostility, if the French government multiplies prohibitory laws between Switzerland, France and Italy, will not the Landamman be the cause of it ? and will not all the complaints the Swiss may make be unjustly and ill-founded ?

"Dalmatia is occupied by the French army. It is separated from the mouth of the Cattaro by the republic of Ragusa ; the country is mountainous, and the roads are bad. The French troops have arrived at Ragusa, when the fort of Castel-Nuovo was delivered to 800 Russians, by gen. Brady, who commanded 2000 Austrians. This general, whose ancestors were English, has been wanting in respect to France, and has betrayed his master. Upon receiving this information, marshal Berthier *gave orders that Braunau, which defends the frontier of the Inn, and which was to have been given up on the 1st of April, should not be restored, and that it should be again garrisoned. The division of the grand army, which was on its way to France, has halted. The prisoners of war that were to have been sent back to Germany, have been detained, until further orders, in the places at which they were.*

This outrage offered by Russia to the Austrian flag and arms, is the more inconceivable, because the Russians are at Corfu, draw their provisions from the ports of Trieste and Fiume, a free communication with which has not been prohibited. *The court of Vienna has ordered, that general Brady should be arrested and tried !!* It has expressed its dissatisfaction to Russia. It will cause Castel-Nuovo, and the mouths of the Cattaro, to be delivered up to France, without having occasion to reply, by arms, to this act of hostility.

"The Russians have evacuated Hanover, and returned home. The army which the emperor Alexanner commanded has also returned to Russia. After all the losses which it sustained it is very natural that it should repair them by recruiting. A part of the troops which were at Corfu, have returned to the Bosphorus with general Lacy. A considerable part of those that were in Poladd, are marching towards Choczim and the Crimea. The illusion with respect to the Russian armies, is no more. The French army which, in two months, dissipated the third coalition, was then only on the peace establishment ; at the end of three months, which have since elapsed, it finds itself on the war establishment. It had nothing to fear from all the force of Europe, but no person will be able to form a fourth coalition. England knows full well that it would be money thrown away. She reflects with terror, that the first coalition, which lasted 5 years, made France mistress of Holland, Belgium, the Rhine, and all the Cisalpine country ; that the 2d coalition, which lasted 2 years, gave to France Piedmont and Switzerland ; that the 3d, which only lasted 3 months, gave her Venice, Naples & Genoa ; that the least she could expect from a fourth coalition would be Trieste and Fiume, and the eternal exclusion of the English from all the ports of Europe. Russia, recovered from the vain illusion by which she was deceived, well knows what 30,000,000 of people scattered over an immense territory, and under the necessity of opposing the Persians, Turks and Tartars, can do against 40,000,000 of Frenchmen united on the same platform, brave, active and intelligent, and more capable of conquering Russia than the Russians are of conquering France.

"English, Russian and Sardinian envoys, and a knot of malcontents from all the countries in the world, had fixed on Rome as the centre of their machinations. The emperor required that they should be driven from thence ; and that a sovereign placed in his empire, should do nothing contrary to the safety of the armies of Naples and Italy.—The first care of an army should always be, not to allow itself to be surrounded either by spies or those who encourage desertion. This demand gave rise to many consistories, when the persons who were the objects of it did justice to themselves, and all evacuated Rome.

"The kingdom of Naples is entirely conquered. The French troops are at Reggio, at Otranto and at Tarento. Only a small body of the Neapolitan troops could embark and reach Sicily. That Island is defended by 4500 English. The presence of such enemies is an additional inducement for the French to go there. Gaeta, an *insignificant fortress*, with a garrison of 1600 men is besieged.

"The victory at Austerlitz has produced as much sensation at Constantinople as at Paris. The exultation there was sincere and universal. The government of the Porte is neither ignorant nor sold. There may at Constantinople, be some traitors, but they are not numerous ; whilst, on the contrary, the multiplied measures of Russia for sapping the foundation of this vast empire has not escaped the notice of the real Ottomans. They are not ignorant that the protection of France can alone be sufficient for the Porte, and that France is the only power interested in protecting her. The vicinity of the French in Dalmatia has inspired them with the liveliest joy. The emperor Napoleon has been acknowledged emperor. The Porte knows very well that its treaty with Russsia was extorted ; and that it is rather a treaty between a despotic prince and his vassal, than between sovereign and sovereign ; that it is not the French who have excited the Greeks and Servians to insurrection ; whose ships of war are anchored before Constantinople ; and who are continually creating commotions in the Morea. This new attitude of the Porte has produced much uneasiness at St. Petersburg ; and if the Porte shall be roused to acts of energy against Russia, there will not be found between those two powers the great difference that may be supposed. The Mussulman is brave, and were he but directed and assisted, he would triumph over the Muscovite militia. It is not probable that the Porte will wish to go to war ; but she has a right to preserve her independence, and to wish for protection against the insults of M. Italinsky, every proceeding of whom, when he communicates with the divan, is calculated to excite hatred and indignation.

"We intend to collect in this way every month, information of what is passing ; and to throw some light into the labyrinth of false reports, by which the lawful speculations of fair and honest merchants may be injured."

VIENNA, April 2.

France has not failed to complain of the occupation of Cattaro by the Russians, and circumstances have furnished her with some very specious reasons for this complaint, as 80 Austrians were still in the fortress when the Russians took possession. Great complaints have in consequence been made to the cabinet of Vienna, which, it is said, has given grounds for suspicion of bad faith, secret intrigues, a culpable understanding with the court of St. Petersburgh, &c. The Austrian ministry endeavored to prove the contrary ; but being forced to enter into explanations with the count Razumowsky, and to demand the evacuation of Cattaro, they are said to have received in substance the following answer :