

We shall ever consider it as the greatest misfortune to the country, if this speech should not yet be given to the public through the medium of the press.

"Mr. Grey spoke next, and most judiciously began his speech, by stating the great disadvantages under which he rose, after the strength of argument and the burst of eloquence which the House had just heard.

"The Speakers were Lord Hawkebury, who moved the address, Mr. Erskine, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Grey, who moved an amendment recommending the seizing the first opportunity of again making peace, Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. C. Yorke. Mr. W. Smith then moved to adjourn. After this a conversation took place respecting the exclusion of the reporters, who, it was understood, were to be admitted this day into the gallery in the usual manner. This conversation was introduced by Mr. Sheridan. The Speaker stated the request made to him, upon which he had founded his order for the gallery door not being opened till after prayers, but expressed his readiness to adopt any measure that should seem to meet the concurrence of the House. The debate was adjourned at 12 o'clock, to this evening."

IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF LORDS—MONDAY, MAY 23.

HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

The Order of the day was then read for taking His Majesty's Message into consideration, on which

Lord PELHAM rose, and addressed their Lordships on the occasion. He adverted primarily to the great importance of the subject they were about to discuss, and expressed his hope that all their Lordships had perused and duly considered the important documents referred to in the Royal Message, and which he had the honor of laying before the House by command of His Majesty. The body of information which was before their Lordships relative to the subject of that night's discussion, would he was confident, render it clear to every candid and unprejudiced person, that ample grounds were furnished by our adversaries for the line of conduct adopted by His Majesty's Government, and that the system pursued by the former, rendered necessary the strong measures which were lately adopted. Under these circumstances, he doubted not their Lordships would agree with him in thinking, that it was the duty of that House to set an example to their country at so important a crisis, in stepping forward in the joint support of the honor of His Majesty's Crown—the undoubted rights and interests of his subjects, and of the defence and security of his dominions. He admitted that these considerations formed distinct grounds of discussion from the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers, abstractedly taken; and he was pleased that it seemed the general sentiment of the House so to consider it, which, on that ground, seemed inclined to postpone the discussion of the latter subject. He would detain their Lordships on that head no farther than to say, that His Majesty's Ministers felt satisfied they had discharged their duty conscientiously, and to the best of their abilities, and had always advised that, which under all the circumstances of the case, they deemed most conducive to the honor of His Majesty's Crown, and the best interests of their fellow subjects.

The Noble Secretary then proceeded to a detailed exposition of the most material parts of the papers which had been laid before the House, and observed, that the real question then at issue was, whether those papers furnished proofs, that there existed in the late transactions with the French Government a just cause of war. On the delivery of His Majesty's first Message, the question was one of confidence, and in that view materially differed from the present discussion, in which every document that could properly be made public was open to the perusal of their Lordships. He argued, that the documents before the House furnished proofs of a case sufficiently strong to justify the measures that had been adopted; indeed a stronger or clearer case, he would venture to assert, had never, in any former instance, been made out; from the tenor of those documents, he asserted, it would unequivocally appear that His Majesty was actuated by the most sincere and anxious desire to avert the calamities of war. Their Lordships would see, that not only the honor of His Majesty's Crown, was affected by the conduct of our adversaries, but that even the dearest rights and interests of the country, its commerce and its liberties, were menaced by the Government of France. It would be seen that in the course of the negotiation, a prominent and leading consideration was the provision of the 10th article of the Treaty of Amiens, and which respected the Island of Malta; their Lordships would perceive by the papers, the steps adopted by His Majesty's Government with respect to that important point. The appointment of Sir Alexander Ball, in the first instance, as Minister for carrying the arrangements with respect to Malta, into effect, manifested, in the outset, His Majesty's strong desire to fulfil the stipulations entered into on that head. The readiness of His Majesty to acknowledge, in quality of Grand Master, the person selected by the Pope for filling that office, was another irrefragable proof of His Majesty's wish to do every thing in his power, consistently with good faith, for the further execution of the arrangement—and, indeed, throughout the whole course of the correspondence it would be seen, that His Majesty had omitted no steps whatever, to conciliate the growing difference, and to induce our adversaries to come to a speedy, reasonable, and amicable conclusion upon the several points which, from the intervention of circumstances, were necessarily under discussion: in some time after, as by Lord Whitworth's dispatch of the 27th January, it would appear the French grew pressing for the evacuation of the Island, and by subsequent parts of the correspondence, the strong reasons were set forth, which, upon every point of view, with reference to the intervening circumstances, rendered it almost impossible that such a requisition could be complied with. In this state of the discussion, a circumstance of the most important nature came to the knowledge of His Majesty's Government, and which not only, in a certain degree, effected the honor of, but implicate the character of the British nation, and connected itself with con-

siderations of the utmost importance, to certain most valuable parts of His Majesty's dominions. He alluded to the report of the Officer dispatched to Egypt and Syria, on a mission of the most questionable nature, and which of course immediately became matter of serious discussion with the French Government. What transpired on this important point would be seen from the documents before the House, and the little satisfaction which was accorded to the just representations on the part of His Majesty's Government.—He then alluded to the circumstances of the publication which appeared in a Foreign Gazette, and adverted to the tendency of its contents, which were of that nature as sufficiently spoke for themselves. His Lordship then adverted to the unjustifiable conduct of France with respect to the Ottoman Porte, which, he contended, was in direct violation of the Treaty of Amiens; he adverted to the different communications which took place on those points and noticed with due effect, the declaration of the First Consul, respecting the value of Egypt as a ground for war. He expatiated on the peculiar and relative importance of Malta, under the present circumstances of France and England, and pointed out the strong necessity there existed for ample security on the point in question: this part of his argument arose from the incontrovertible principle, that the possession of Malta was on our part one of defence and security, but for purposes of offence and aggrandizement on the part of France; and he contended that the determination to retain that post at present, was founded not only in justice, but in true political wisdom. Pursuing this topic of discussion still farther, he expressed his confidence that all who read and duly considered the papers must feel convinced that His Majesty's Government were perfectly justified with respect to the detention of Malta, as the best security against the obvious designs of France in the East, and also on the ground of its being totally impracticable to execute the proposed arrangements, on the principle upon which they were incontestably formed, on account of the intervention of circumstances, beyond the power of this country to controul. With respect to the other points of the negotiation, the Noble Lord contended rather generally, that no endeavours had been wanting on the part of His Majesty's Government, to continue the blessings of peace, consistently with the honor of His Majesty's Crown, and the real interests of his people; while Ministers had hopes of preserving that blessing, they scrupled no sacrifices which did not militate against these paramount considerations. Drawing to a conclusion, he recapitulated his several arguments, and placed them in a condensed point of view: he laid particular stress on the attempts made by the Government of France, with respect to the internal concerns of this country, their complaints made with respect to the freedom of publication and debate, which went to affect that essential part of its freedom the liberty of the press. He hoped the discussion would be conducted with that temper and moderation which befit so serious and momentous a subject: Party distinctions, in a crisis like the present, should be laid aside, as should the heat and fervor of debate: their deliberations should rather assume a judicial character, and the decision of the House be formed solely from the consideration of the official papers and documents laid before them. His Lordship then moved an Address to His Majesty, to the following general effect:—

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, thanking him for his gracious Message, and for the information His Majesty had been pleased to order to be laid before the House of Lords; to express to His Majesty the just sense the House of Lords entertains of His Majesty's anxious and uniform endeavours to preserve the blessings of peace, and of His Majesty's inclination to determinate the calamities of war, whenever that object can be attained consistently with the honor of His Majesty's Crown, and the rights and interests of his people: That the House of Lords saw with great satisfaction His Majesty's laudable endeavours to repel that spirit of ambition and encroachment, which the Government of France had so frequently manifested, as well as having advanced the most injurious pretensions, inconsistent with good faith, and militating against the most essential interests of the British Empire, and on which occasion His Majesty had in vain demanded satisfaction and redress.

"Impressed with these important considerations, the House of Lords felt itself called upon readily to concur in the measures best calculated to call forth the spirit and resources of the British nation, in support of the honor and dignity of His Majesty's Crown—The rights and liberties of the people as well as every other consideration which can be dear to them, as a free and independent nation."

The Duke of CUMBERLAND rose to second the motion, which he did in a very elegant and impressive speech.

Earl STANHOPE thanked the Noble Secretary of State for the candor displayed in his speech, prefatory to the proposed address. He hoped their Lordships would follow the patriotic line of conduct suggested by his Royal Highness; that they would bury all party distinctions, and would see, that if the country was to be saved by their deliberations, it must be saved by moderation and temper. He was determined to proceed in this way, as much as if he were giving a judicial sentence in Westminster-hall. Upon going through the papers, he found the principal article to regard to the Island of Malta. He was sorry to view this as the principal ground of quarrel. It was stated, that the French Government had presumed to interfere in our internal management, and in the liberty of our press. If this were true, that would be with him a strong, and invincible ground of quarrel. This would be an infringement upon our constitution; an encroachment upon our just rights, to which we could not, with honor submit. He should not contend, that Malta should have been given up, in virtue of the Treaty of Amiens. That must be the subject of examination. We had offered to give up the possession of Malta in ten years. The aggrandizement of France, since the Treaty of Amiens, had been stated as a ground for retaining Malta. This, however, could upon no just principle serve as the foundation for such retention. Supposing that, since the conclusion of that Treaty, Spain had ceded to us Cuba, or that we had acquired Sicily; would the Noble Lords have esteemed these sufficient grounds for France

refusing, on their part, to implement the Treaty? Allowing the principle, however, to be just, he denied that France had been aggrandized. St. Domingo had, since that period, been lost to France, by the unwise policy, he contended, of the First Consul; but still it was a loss of influence upon their part, equal to the whole of the West-Indies. Had the views of a set of men, who some time ago existed in France, been gone into, who under the name of philanthropists wished to alleviate the distresses, and to connect themselves on a friendly footing with the native chiefs, it had been proved in evidence before that House, that Jamaica and our other West-India Islands must have fallen into the hands of such association. By the unwise policy of the First Consul, France, so far from being aggrandized, had sustained a loss since the Treaty of peace. Upon the idea, however, of Malta ceasing to be in the possession of Britain at the expiration of ten years, in what greater security would Egypt then be, than at present? Malta, however, had been in a manner proffered to us in perpetuity. Why was not some proposition made upon this subject? The conduct of some emigrant Bishops, and others of a similar description, had been complained of by the French Government, and hints as to the Islands of Jersey and Guernsey had been thrown out. He knew that conciliating language, although he himself had little confidence in words, had often a good effect, and he thought that less hasty measures than those adopted by our Ministry, might with success have been adopted on the present occasion. Suppose two Noblemen possessed, the one of a large estate, though in a distant part, and less contiguous to his other property; the other, of two small parks, contiguous to the grounds of the former, and therefore more valuable to him, than the more valuable though farther distant property: What impropriety would there be in supposing that these persons might enter into an exchange of their respective properties? Malta is from its connection with the East-Indies of consequence to us.—Jersey and Guernsey, from their contiguity to France, are of consequence to the French Government. Bonaparte, however, is said to have evidenced intentions with respect to Egypt, of which Ministers were not aware. Were such views or intentions, however, novel or unexpected? Were they such as France had never formerly evidenced? He apprehended they were not, and that the character of the man, and the nature of his enterprises warranted them in supposing him capable of forming any enterprise.—While he objected to the conduct of Ministers, in thus hurrying over the compromise which he thought might have taken place, he could not help adding his testimony to the public opinion of the honesty and candour of Mr. Addington, our present worthy Prime Minister. He hoped that by his endeavours and those of his brethren in office, war might still be avoided.

The Duke of CLARENCE supported the motion.

Lords Mulgrave and Melville followed.

The Duke of RICHMOND observed, that it seemed to him to be a war undertaken for the sake of the Island of Lampedosa.

The Marquis of LANSDOWNE said, that the present subject involved a variety of considerations which pressed upon their Lordships attention. He should confine himself in the present instance, to the Declaration of War, and he confessed that he did not see very clearly, the ground for war. It had been said, that the report of Sebastiani, was a principal object of complaint, but it was well known that it was the custom of every country to collect information with respect to colonization, however remote it might be from any present purpose; it was well known it was peculiarly the habit of France at every period; this therefore was no sufficient cause for war.—With respect to Bonaparte he was far from approving of his character or his conduct, the influence of which was felt so strongly in Europe, and by means of which scarcely any man could call his own secure, but at the same time it was a matter of grave and serious consideration how far this was a ground for war to this country.—As to Malta, he did not think that Island of so much importance as some noble Lords had supposed; it was but four or five years since that Malta, was offered to this country by the Grand Master, and declined. He did not mean to say at the same time that Malta was of no importance, for unquestionably it was: But when it was considered we were in possession of it, why should we make war upon account of that Island, when we might retain it by means of negotiation? He thought that some means might be found to keep open a door for negotiation; if war must take place the issue would no doubt be as it ought to be, successful to this country, and favourable to general Liberty: But there was still a hope that all grievances might be redressed, and it should be remembered that in the case of the American contest, much was lost in consequence of not making use of that time which might have been employed in amicable negotiation. It was therefore of importance that an opening might be left for negotiation, and that we should not too precipitately plunge into war.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LONDON, MAY 10.

In the British House of Lords on the 16th of May, Earl STANHOPE with real seriousness observed, "He had understood, from a source of information which he could not doubt, that a plan had been communicated to the French Government by an American Gentleman, some months since, by which the whole navy of England might be destroyed, and the channel of the Thames completely stopped up; and he also understood, that the Admiralty were not aware, nor had they sought to know of any means by which the execution of this plan could be prevented. Believing as firmly as that he then addressed their Lordships, that this reported project was a fact, he confessed that he could not reconcile it to his mind to support any proposition for war, without the fullest information from Gentlemen upon this specific subject. This was a case of such importance as deserved the most careful investigation. It had, he knew, come to the knowledge of Government above six months ago, and yet no attempt had been made to enter into and ascertain the nature of the plan and to danger. Without at all entering into the question,