

the important question, whether the Government shall be restored to its Constitutional energy, or whether you are to deplore the prospect of lasting misfortune, by a continuance in the present state of things; important as that question is, there can be no difficulty in the decision. When the blessings of the British Constitution were granted to this Province, you received with it the recorded experience of centuries of practice; there is no question of doubt or difficulty that may not find its precedent in the records of the Imperial Parliament, and I cannot think that any wiser guide need be desired.

After which, the Provincial Parliament was prorogued by direction of his Excellency, to Thursday 26th April next.

CIRCULAR DESPATCH TO HIS MAJESTY'S MISSIONS AT FOREIGN COURTS,
LAID BEFORE THE HOUSE OF LORDS, IN PURSUANCE OF AN ADDRESS TO HIS MAJESTY, FEBRUARY 1ST, 1821.

Foreign Office, Jan. 19, 1821.

SIR.—I should not have felt it necessary to have made any communication to you, in the present state of the discussions begun at Troppau and transferred to Laybach, had it not been for a circular communication which has been addressed by the courts of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, to their several missions, and which his Majesty's government conceive, if not adverted to, might, (however unintentionally,) convey, upon the subject therein alluded to, very erroneous impressions of the past, as well as of the present, sentiments of the British government.

It has become, therefore, necessary to inform you, that the King has felt himself obliged to decline becoming a party to the measures in question.

These measures embrace two distinct objects:—1st. The establishment of certain general principles, for the regulation of the future political conduct of the allies, in the cases therein described:—2dly. The proposed mode of dealing, under these principles, with the existing affairs of Naples.

The system of measures, proposed under the former head, if to be reciprocally acted upon, would be in direct repugnance to the fundamental laws of this country. But even if this decisive objection did not exist, the British Government would nevertheless regard the principles on which these measures rest, to be such as could not be safely admitted as a system of international law. They are of opinion that their adoption would inevitably sanction, and in the hand of less beneficent monarchs, might, hereafter, lead to a much more frequent and extensive interference in the internal transactions of States, than they are persuaded is intended by the august parties from whom they proceed, or can be reconcilable either with the general interest, or with the efficient authority and dignity of independent Sovereigns. They do not regard the alliance as entitled, under existing treaties, to assume, in their character as Allies, any such general powers, nor do they conceive that such extraordinary powers could be assumed, in virtue of any fresh diplomatic transaction among the Allied courts, without their either attributing to themselves a supremacy incompatible with the rights of other States, or, if to be acquired through the special accession of such States, without introducing a federative system in Europe, not only unwieldy and ineffectual to its object, but leading to many most serious inconveniences.

With respect to the particular case of Naples, the British government, at the very earliest moment did not hesitate to express their strong disapprobation of the mode and circumstances under which that revolution was understood to have been effected; but they, at the same time, expressly declared to the several Allied courts, that they should not consider themselves as either called upon, or justified, to advise an interference on the part of this country: they fully admitted, however, that other European States, and especially Austria and the Italian Powers, might feel themselves differently circumstanced: and they professed that it was not their purpose to prejudice the question as it might affect them, or to interfere with the course which such States might think fit to adopt, with a view to their own security, provided only that they were ready to give every reasonable assurance that their views were not directed to purposes of aggrandizement, subversive of the territorial system of Europe, as established by the late treaties.

Upon these principles, the conduct of his Majesty's government with regard to the Neapolitan question has been, from the first moment, uniformly regulated, and copies of the successive instructions sent to the British authorities at Naples for their guidance, have been from time to time transmitted for the information of the Allied Governments.

With regard to the expectation which is expressed in the circular above alluded to, of the assent of the courts of London and Paris to the more general measures proposed for their adoption, founded, as it is alleged, upon existing treaties: in justification of its own consistency and good faith, the British government, in withholding such assent, must protest against any such interpretation being put upon the treaties in question, as is therein assumed.

They have never understood these treaties to impose any such obligations; and they have, on various occasions, both in Parliament and in their intercourse with the Allied governments, distinctly maintained the negative of such a proposition. That they have acted with all possible explicitness upon this subject, would at once appear from reference to the deliberations at Paris, in 1815, previous to the conclusion of the Treaty of Alliance, at Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1818, and subsequently, in certain discussions which took place in the course of the last year.

After having removed the misconception to which the passage of the circular in question, if passed over in silence, might give countenance; and having stated, in general terms, without however entering into the argument, the dissent of his Majesty's government from the general principle upon which the circular in question is founded, it should be clearly understood that no government can be more prepared than the British government is to uphold the right of any State or States to interfere where their own immediate security or essential interests are seriously endangered by the internal transactions of another State. But as they regard the assumption of such right as only to be justified by the strongest necessity, and to be limited and regulated thereby, they cannot admit that this right can receive a general and indiscriminate application to all revolutionary movements without reference to their immediate bearing upon some particular State or States, or be made prospectively the basis of an alliance. They regard its exercise as an exception to general principles, of the greatest value and importance, and as one that only properly grows out of the circumstances of the special case; but they, at the same time, consider, that exceptions of this description never can, without the utmost danger, be so far reduced to rule, as to be incorporated into the ordinary diplomacy of States, or into the institutions of the law of nations.

As it appears that certain of the ministers of the three courts have already communicated this circular despatch to the Courts to which they are accredited, I leave it to your discretion to make a corresponding communication on the part of your government, regulating your language in conformity to the principles laid down in the present despatch. You will take care, however, in making such communication, to do justice, in the name of your government, to the purity of intention, which has no doubt actuated these august courts in the adoption of the course of measures which they are pursuing. The difference of sentiment which prevails between them and the court of London, on this matter, you may declare, can make no alteration whatever in the cordiality and harmony of the alliance on any other subject, or abate their common zeal in giving the most complete effect to all their existing engagements.

I am, &c.

(Signed) CASTLEREAGH.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 10.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, FEBRUARY 9.

COLONIAL TIMBER TRADE.

Mr. MARRYAT then rose and said,—"Mr. SPEAKER, I hold in my hand a Petition from the Merchants, Ship-Owners, and Magistrates of Miramichi, in the Province of New-Brunswick, setting forth the vital importance of the Timber Trade to the inhabitants of the British Provinces in North America, and praying that this House will not suffer it to be placed on a footing less favourable to them than it is at present. It may be proper to premise, that such is the importance of Miramichi,

that of 1500 British Vessels employed in the Timber Trade with our North American Colonies, in the year 1819, no less than 297 loaded in that port alone.—Statements from the Inhabitants of the Colonies themselves, how far their prosperity is likely to be affected by any Legislative measures of the Mother Country, bearing upon their productions and commerce, are highly important, as they serve to correct misapprehensions and errors, into which at this distance, we are apt to fall, for want of authentic information respecting interests so remote. The truth of this remark was never more strongly exemplified than in the present instance, for never was there a greater discordance than between the facts stated in this Petition, and the Report of a Committee of the House of Lords made in the last Session of Parliament. The variance between them is so great, that justice to these Petitioners, and to the other Inhabitants of the British Provinces in North America, calls upon me to point out, as I go along, the misstatements with which that Report abounds; and this I am at full liberty to do, it having been communicated to us by message from the Lords, and reprinted by order of this House. The Petitioners state, that the Timber Trade gives the greatest possible encouragement to the Agriculture of the British Colonies in North America. The Report on the contrary, states, that "it cannot be considered as directly affecting the interests of the Canadian Landholder, as the value of the Timber sold at Quebec does not exceed, by much, the expense and labour of procuring it for shipment; and the Landholder himself gets little or nothing for the Timber." This passage is not consistent with the evidence given before the Committee, by Mr. Henry Osborne, Mr. John Hamilton, or Mr. John Bainbridge, all of whom state, that though the Timber is of little value as it stands in the Forest, it becomes valuable from the labour bestowed on it; and both the latter add, that persons connected with agriculture employ themselves in cutting Timber, and getting it down to the shipping place, during the winter, when all operations in agriculture, from the nature of the climate, are suspended.—the evidence of Mr. H. Osborne, and Mr. John Hamilton applies particularly to Canada, that of Mr. John Bainbridge to Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick. The Petitioners not only confirm their testimony, from which it results that the Farmer has the benefit of preparing the Timber, and removing it to the shipping place, as well as its value while standing, which is altogether kept out of sight in the Report, but assert in further proof of the encouragement given to agriculture by the Timber Trade, "That Farmers, who a few years ago, raised only enough from their lands for the support of themselves and their families, and had no incitement to raise more, (because there were then no purchasers for what they could spare,) have, since the commencement of the Timber Trade, increased their exertions in clearing and improving their lands, entirely on account of the brisk demand for all sorts of farming produce required for the use of the timbercutters, and others connected with the trade, and many industrious and deserving emigrants have been enabled to settle in the wilderness lands of this country, solely by means of the merchants advancing to them the supplies necessary for their support, until their lands were brought to a state of cultivation to yield them a subsistence. The supplies so advanced were, payable in timber, which is generally prepared for market during our long winter, when neither farming nor fishing can be carried on."—All these statements are in direct contradiction to the assertion in the Report of the Lords' Committee, "that the Timber Trade cannot be considered as directly affecting the interest of the Canadian Landholder."—The truth is, that all the landholders in the British Provinces in North America, with very few exceptions, instead of living on their rents, as in this country, live by their personal labour employed on their own lands, and exchange that part of the produce of their lands which they do not require for their own consumption, for articles of British growth or manufacture; and the extent of this exchange is fixed by the amount of their exportations.

The landholders in these Provinces has a direct interest in every stick of timber, barrel of ashes, bushel of grain, or piece of poultry shipped to Great Britain or her dependencies. Either the article is his own, on its way to a Market, or he has raised the food, or furnished some portion of his labour, for the woodcutter, the hunter, the raftsmen, the merchant, and the whole class of persons who are employed in conveying the produce of the Colony to the shipping place, and bringing back or distributing the returns. All these persons are the home consumers of the Colonial Landholder; and the value of his land, the value of the labour of his forefathers, and of his own labour, depends upon the number of these Consumers, without whom all the produce of his land which he could not himself consume, would be of no value.—The Petitioners further state, that large sums have been expended in forming Establishments for carrying on the Timber Trade, though the Report of the Lords' Committee is silent as to any such Establishments having been formed in any of the British Provinces, excepting Canada. They observe that individuals have so invested their capital, naturally conceiving that the interests of the British Colonies would never be sacrificed to advance those of foreign nations: that in the event of such a stop to the trade as the imposition of the proposed duty would occasion, those costly Establishments must go to decay, and all importation of British Goods must cease, for the Merchant here dependent exclusively upon the exportation of Timber to Great Britain to make his remittances.—They add, "that White or Yellow Pine, (of which description the great bulk of the wood of this country consists,) was shipped, and is now shipping at 14s. to 18 shillings per ton; which latter is the very lowest rate at which it can be prepared for market. Even at these low rates, the importation into the Mother Country this season yielded perhaps in no instance any profit, beyond the employment of shipping, and in several cases with-in the knowledge of your Petitioners, was attended with loss to the Importer. It is therefore obvious, that no duty, however small can be borne, and that the high duty proposed would amount to a complete prohibition of Colonial Timber."—In the latter part of this statement, the Petitioners are borne out by the Lords' Committee, who have printed in their Appendix an account which they say they are assured may be relied upon, of the prices of Timber from each port, distinguishing the duty, freight, charges, nett proceeds, and cost; according to which, the nett proceeds of a load of Canada Yellow Pine, without any duty, are only 5s. 4d. so that it is obvious that

the smallest duty must absorb this miserable quantity, and consequently operate as a total abolition of the trade.—The Petitioners assert, "that the costly Establishments for carrying on the Timber Trade were made, in the persuasion that the interests of the British Colonies would never be sacrificed to advance those of foreign nations." The Report of the Lords' Committee states, "that encouragement to the importation of Wood from the British Colonies by the imposition of heavy duties on Timber from Foreign States, is comparatively of recent date, and does not appear to have formed part of the Commercial or Colonial policy of the Country previous to the late war." It is the business of a Legislative Committee to inquire after truth, and this Committee, had they made diligent inquiry, would have discovered in various British Statutes, that the uniform policy of Great Britain in regard to the trade of her Colonies has been to make restriction and protection go hand in hand; and that encouragement to this very trade was given by bounties, more than a century ago. In proof of these assertions, I have only to refer to the acts of the 3d and 4th of Anne, Chap. 10, and the 8th of Geo. I. Chap. 12. The principle laid down in the Preambles of these Acts is the same as is now acted upon. The only change is in the mode of carrying it into effect; and the professed objects of the Legislature is declared in these Preambles to be, the making Great Britain independent of Foreign nations for her supply of Timber, and enabling her Colonies to extend their importation of British Manufactures, which could only be accomplished by a system of permanent, not temporary encouragement.—The same want of due investigation appears in the following passage of the Report: "The demand for Wood from the Countries in the North of Europe has been progressively diminishing, so as to occasion great interruption to the trade of these Countries, particularly with Norway, whose Inhabitants, notwithstanding the predilection they have uniformly shown for British Manufactures, are not only left without the means of consuming them, but of paying for those which they have received, and for which nearly half a million is stated to be owing; so that the export of manufactures has been reduced to an extent which cannot be estimated, merely by a reference to the direct exports to those Countries; as it appears that a considerable portion of the manufactures consumed in them are introduced through the channel of the German fairs." The Appendix to this Report contains an account of the value of the goods exported from Great Britain to all the Northern Powers of Europe for the last 20 years. A comparison of the Trade with them for the three first of these years before the present Timber Trade to the British Colonies had commenced, and the three last years, when it was in the greatest activity, gives the following results. In the Official Returns the Exports of Norway are blended with those of Denmark, while it was united to that Power, so that I have no means of showing them separately:—

	1799,	1800,	1801.	1817,	1818,	1819.
£	s.	d.	Denmark &c.	£	s.	d.
525,734	0	8	Norway	216,791	4	2
132,146	16	6	Sweden	335,493	7	10
1,580,702	4	4	Russia	6,193,729	10	1
854,413	1	3	Prussia	1,518,475	6	10

3,094,995 2 9 2,318,491 8 9

So that instead of the great interruption to the trade of these Countries and the reduced export of our manufactures to them, as alleged in the Lords' Report, the export of our manufactures has been nearly trebled. Such is the difference between the Report and the Appendix; between the statements of the Committee and their official Documents.—With respect to British Goods finding a way from Great Britain to Norway, the country more particularly mentioned in the Report, by way of the German fairs, no such fact is stated in the evidence given to the Committee. That a few articles of great value and little bulk may occasionally be smuggled, in the manner described by Mr. Solley, is very probable. He says, that goods are carried by way of Hamburg to Lappo Fair, where they are purchased by Russian and Polish Merchants, taken to the confines of Hungary, and even to the Southern Provinces of Russia; but not a word about Norway. Mr. Tooke, says, that he should consider a great number of British Manufactures must have been introduced into Russia indirectly through Germany; at the same time it is possible the Germans may transport articles of their own produce. He produces bills drawn upon his house, which have been negotiated through Königsberg, Berlin, and Leipzig, and were ultimately remitted to British Manufacturers; but this only proves that the inhabitants of these places have commercial transactions with each other, leaving the particular nature of them open to conjecture. The idea that any considerable portion of the British Manufactures consumed in the Northern countries of Europe, is introduced through the channel of the German fairs, is extravagant in the highest degree. It might as reasonably be imagined, that a considerable part of the productions of those countries find their way here in the same circuitous mode. A merchant who should set out from London to purchase Russian sheeting or linen at Leipzig or Frankfort Fair, might expect to have a statute of leniency taken out against him, as being incapable of managing his own affairs; and this part of the Report betrays so much want of commercial knowledge, that it reminds me of an observation made upon another set of Lords (the Lords of Trade,) in a former reign, "that they were Lords among Merchants, and Merchants among Lords." The increase of the Exports to our own Provinces in North America is not less gratifying than the proof that our exports to the Northern Powers of Europe have been augmented instead of diminishing. In the years 1799, 1800, and 1801, the export of British Manufactures to these Colonies was £3,017,572 6s. 2d. In the years 1817, 1818, and 1819, it was £5,107,906 8s. 12d. If we extend the view farther, and include our export of foreign and colonial merchandise, the amount in the three former years was £3,614,441 2s. 10d. in the three latter years £6,391,095 5s. 8d. making an increase in our annual exports to the British Colonies in North America of more than £900,000. Another very important fact stated in this Petition is, "that the ruin of those immense quantities of timber which are annually cut in the British Provinces would be materially injured; for the Salt used in these Fisheries is almost without a single exception brought to the vessels chartered to carry timber home; and the return freight enables them to bring the salt out