

SICILY AND ENGLAND

A SKETCH

OF

EVENTS IN SICILY IN 1812 & 1848

ILLUSTRATED BY

VOUCHERS AND STATE PAPERS

LONDON

JAMES RIDGWAY, N. 169, PICCADILLY.

1849

SICILY AND ENGLAND

THE Anglo-French mediation in Sicily is terminated; the war has recommenced. The Sicilians have fought with heroic courage at Catania, and Filangieri may be proud that the flag of Ferdinand floats, not over the city but over its ashes and its ruins, as it floated over the ruins of Messina in September. It was evident from the beginning that this mediation could not assure the sacred rights of Sicily to her constitution and to her independence, but it might have been hoped that the two powers would at least have required of Ferdinand that the war should not have recommenced by the same horrors which had been perpetrated at the taking of Messina; yet those powers, which in September had intervened in the name of humanity to put a stop to a war disgraceful to a civilized people, have permitted this war to be recommenced in April by the same horrors and the same atrocities. The English officers and agents who were forced to remain passive spectators of these scenes, worthy only of barbarians, have borne witness that the march of the Neapolitan troops from Messina to Catania could be traced by the flames of burning villages and country houses, and that in that magnificent city neither age, nor sex, nor condition was spared from massacre, nor any single house from conflagration.

If Ferdinand once more reigns in Sicily, he does so as an usurper; as since 1815 his grandfather, his father, and himself have reigned over that island; and the Sicilians, who have already sufficiently shown their detestation for this usurping and tyrannical dynasty, will ever make use of every effort in their power to expel it.

The fate of this noble and unfortunate people has, from the commencement of their revolution, interested a considerable portion of the English nation, which has rejoiced in their triumphs, lamented over their reverses, and which has never forgotten the bonds of amity which in 1812 united the English and the Sicilian people in the struggle for liberty, and in the field of victory, nor the guarantee which England gave to Sicily at that period. The English nation will feel still more interested in the Parliamentary discussion which must ere long arise on the subject of this Anglo-French mediation of February, 1849, and of that which preceded it in March, 1848. The question of the reciprocal relations between England and Sicily will be debated on almost the same grounds on which a nearly similar question was debated in the House of Commons on the 21st June, 1821.

Is Great Britain bound in honour and in good faith by the engagements entered into with Sicily in 1812, and in 1848, to intervene to maintain the Sicilian Constitution of 1812? or can she abandon this people to a king and to a dynasty which for a third of a century have sought by fraud, by violence, and latterly by fire, by sword, and by massacres, without a parallel, to destroy this constitution which they had sworn to uphold? or has the English Government done sufficient by these two mediations of 1848 and 1849 to fulfil her engagements?

In order to present these questions for the examination of the English Parliament, we must go back to the past, and briefly narrate the principal facts of the English intervention in Sicily in 1812, and consider the discussion which took place in the English Parliament in 1821.

Sicily was erected into a representative kingdom by the Norman conquerors at the same period as England, in the 11th century. She preserved her constitution, destroying the tyranny of the House of Anjou by the revolution of the Sicilian Vespers, and offering the Crown to a branch of the House of Arragon, which inherited from the Normans. She maintained under this new dynasty, in order to preserve her institutions and her independence, a war of twenty years against the House of Anjou, and at that period she developed her Constitution to the highest pitch of liberty. By the Constitution of 1296, the Parliament shared with the King the power of legislation, it exercised the right of taxation, as well as the right of making peace and declaring war. It was convoked and dissolved every year, and it could only be convoked and dissolved by itself. The King was forbidden to quit the kingdom without the consent of Parliament, and municipal independence, civil liberty, and the rights of private property were guaranteed.

The extinction of the Arragonese dynasty at the commencement of the fifteenth century gave rise to the claim of the Arragonese Kings of Spain to the succession of the throne of Sicily. Sicily at first opposed these pretensions, and was on the point of electing a king in the Parliament of Taormina, but she afterwards permitted this family, to which she was attached, to unite the two crowns, on condition that her independence and her constitution should be preserved. The new pact of union was only a tacit one, and even the capitulary of Frederick II. which ordered that the King should reside in the island was not revoked, all the Kings who did not reside in Sicily recognizing that capitulary and swearing to observe it. Thus Sicily remained for some centuries united with Spain, with which country, and with the other states, such as Naples, Belgium and Milan, which constituted the Spanish empire, she had nothing in common but the King.

The war of succession and the treaty of Utrecht separated Sicily from Spain at the commencement of the eighteenth century. Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, having been

recognized as one of the heirs of Charles II. and as King of Sicily, having promised by one of the articles of that treaty *to preserve all the liberties of Sicily*, was crowned at Palermo. England, which exercised a great influence in the negotiations by which the treaty of Utrecht was brought about, favoured this separation, and recognized the new political state of Sicily, concluding with her a treaty of commerce. ⁽¹⁾

The rupture of the treaty of Utrecht caused a new war, the temporary occupation of Sicily by the Austrians and the expedition of Prince Charles, the son of Philip V., who had obtained from his father the cession of his hereditary rights to the crowns of Sicily and of Naples. His army having, in 1734, taken possession of this kingdom, the Sicilians reposed confidence in a Prince descended from the Royal House of Spain, which represented their ancient kings, and assisted him in expelling the Austrians.

Thus Charles III., in 1735, became King of these two Kingdoms of Sicily and of Naples, which up to 1282, had constituted a single monarchy, the capital of which was Palermo, but which had since been separated for four centuries and a half. The continental state, which after the Sicilian vespers had remained under the yoke of the House of Anjou, then took the title of kingdom, but had received no political rights from these usurpers, whilst the island under the Arragonese still enjoyed her former constitutional institutions.

The Sicilians, who at a later period reaped the bitter fruits of the support which they had given to this new dynasty, did not experience in its founder that bad faith which they experienced from his descendants. He was crowned at Palermo, on the 5th July, 1735, took the oath before the national representatives, assumed the title of King of the Two Sicilies, and reigned constitutionally.

(1) See Vouchers, Letter A, page 1

The Sicilian Constitution during the long period of the union of Sicily with Spain had undergone but slight alteration. The nation had preserved its most important privileges as regarded finance and legislation, and the Parliament, although ordinarily assembling only every four years, was permanently represented from session to session by a Committee of twelve members appointed by the three Chambers. This Committee administered the finances, and was the guardian of the public liberties during the intervals between the sessions of Parliament. The Viceroy exercised all the power of the Executive according to the Constitution of the Kingdom. The disgraceful celebrity of destroying this Constitution which thirty-four successive kings had respected, was reserved for the son of Charles III., Ferdinand the third of Sicily, and the fourth of Naples.

This Prince, brought up in the despotic manners of the Court of Naples, and influenced by his wife Caroline of Austria, had at the close of the eighteenth century commenced his attacks against the liberty of Sicily; they had, however, been vigorously repulsed by the Parliament. Twice driven into Sicily by the arms of France, in 1798 and in 1806, it was during his second residence in the island that he formed the plan which, in consequence of the influence of Great Britain and of the united efforts of the Sicilian patriots, he could not then carry into execution of destroying the ancient Sicilian Constitution.

England, who by virtue of the European coalitions against France, had been the ally of Sicily from the commencement of the French revolution, after the whole of Italy had been occupied by Napoleon, felt the necessity of strengthening this alliance with King Ferdinand, for the purpose of protecting her retreat in Sicily, and of occupying the island. This occupation was at first merely military. England, in consideration of the advantage of this position, paid subsidies to the Sicilian Government. The amount of these subsidies was regulated by treaties in 1808 and in 1809, according to which the sums she paid from 1805 to the 13th May, 1809,

were £ 300,000. per annum, and from the 14th March, 1809, to the end of the war, £ 400,000. per annum; she also promised to protect the Island by an army of at least 10,000 men; whilst the King assured to her, freedom from custom's duties for all the provisions necessary for her army in Sicily and at Malta, and promised to close the ports of Sicily against her enemies. Finally the two high contracting powers promised: "That they should afford each other, during the present war with France, every succour and assistance in proportion to their respective forces." (1) Great Britain at the price of the greatest sacrifices, fulfilled the treaties in the whole of their integrity, whilst the Court of Sicily invariably violated the most important conditions of them, never having lent any assistance to this power. Queen Caroline, whose pride and perfidy are well known, being displeased because the English Government did not use all the efforts which she desired to reconquer for her dynasty, the Kingdom of Naples, had already opened communications with Napoleon, who having become her kinsman by his marriage with Maria Louisa of Austria, had given her the hope of regaining this kingdom; and consequently she made every exertion to deliver Sicily to the French, who were to become her new allies. Such was the conduct pursued during the years 1809-10, and 11, by this Court. Hence arose the indifference which she exhibited when a French camp of 40,000 men was formed at the extremity of Calabria, and when 3,500 men, under General Cavaignac, effected a debarkation to the South of Messina, who were defeated by the people of Sicily and some English regiments alone, the Government having refused all co-operation against this invasion. Hence may be explained the frequent conspiracies discovered at Messina, in which the intervention of the Queen was evident. (2)

(1) See Vouchers, Treaties of 1808 and 1809, Letter H, page 12 and 16

(2) This treason, which Queen Caroline plotted against the English, is related by many contemporary historians. We quote the testimony of an English historian: "The Queen, who headed a party in opposition to this change (of the ancient Constitution), and who had wickedly proposed to Buonaparte to make a second Sicilian Vespers of the English, was sent into retirement."—*John Wade's British History, Chronologically Arranged, year 1812, page*

Such was the state of the relations subsisting at that time between Sicily and Great Britain.

It was at this period that the Court meditated its *coup d'Etat* of 1811 to destroy the Constitution. In 1810, the Hereditary Prince, delegated by the King, opened the Parliament by a speech, ⁽¹⁾ professing the utmost respect for Constitutional rights, which, as he said, “were existing no where, save in the two most famous islands in the world, Great Britain and Sicily.” He concluded by demanding an extraordinary supply of 360,000 ounces ⁽²⁾ per annum. The nation was not in a state to make these efforts, and was moreover not disposed to make them, having no confidence in the Government, which was composed exclusively of Neapolitans, who conjointly with the Queen wasted all the resources of the country in an endeavour to realise their impossible dream of the conquest of the Kingdom of Naples. The Parliament only voted 150,000 ounces per annum, but it was re-convoked, and the Crown repeated its demand. The Parliament refused to alter its previous vote. It was then that the Crown promulgated the ordinances of the 14th February, one of which ordered a tax of one per cent, to be levied upon the value of every contract, and the others the sale of several communal and national estates.

The Prince of Belmonte, the representative of one of the most illustrious and wealthy houses of the Island, a man of great eloquence and talent, having placed himself at the head of the opposition, proposed to the Chamber of Peers to make a protest, which was drawn up and signed by the majority of the members of that Chamber, and which set forth that: “During an uninterrupted period of several centuries, and under the different dynasties of its kings, the Sicilian people had never recognised any other means of supplying the treasury of the royal throne, except by such contributions as were approved

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(1) Vouchers, Letter B, page 3.

(2) An ounce is 10s. English money. See Vouchers, Treaties of 1808 and 1809, Letter II, page 12 and 16

of by their representatives during the sitting of Parliament. His present Majesty, Ferdinand himself, enforced the observance of this system.” (1) This protest, presented by the Princes of Castelnuovo and of Villafranca, and by the Duke of Angio to the permanent Committee of Parliament, having been submitted to the King he ordered the deportation from the island of these three Peers, and of the Princes of Belmonte and of Aei. They were arrested by a military force during the night of the 19th July, and transported to different islets off the coast of Sicily. When these occurrences became known in England, the cabinet of London deliberated as to the propriety of an intervention in Sicily. If the affairs of that island had been suffered to continue in their then state, the Sicilian Government must have been dissolved, and Great Britain would have been again menaced. On the one side they perceived a Court hostile to England, on the other a nation which sympathized with her from the possession of constitutional institutions similar to her own, and from the love of liberty. It was recollected that the French expedition, which had been regarded with indifference by the Court, had been repulsed by the efforts of the Sicilians alone. It was determined to profit by these circumstances, and the task of doing so was confided to Lord William Bentinck, who was invested with the double mission of Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in the Mediterranean, and of Minister

Plenipotentiary to the Court of Palermo. Lord William Bentinck arrived in Palermo the day after the deportation of the Peers, and he immediately proffered advice to the Court, which was insolently rejected. (2) Lord William Bentinck immediately departed for England, where he had several conferences with the Marquis of Wellesley, who was then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and with the Cabinet. After an absence of six weeks he returned to Palermo,

(1) Vouchers, Letter C, page 4.

(2) The expressions made use of by the Court in speaking of the advice giving by Lord William Bentinck, are well known. “This vile sergent,” said they, “was sent here by the Prince Regent to make bows and not to dictate laws.”

furnished with full powers for intervening in favour of the Sicilian nation in the contest which had arisen between that nation and the Crown. Then the English minister, having entered into relations with the chiefs of the patriotic party, ⁽¹⁾ *by the decided measures* which he adopted, suspending the payment of the subsidies, and establishing his head-quarters at Palermo, which had theretofore been at Messina, obtained from the King first the revocation of the unconstitutional edicts of February, 1811, and the recall of the Peers who had been deported; secondly, the removal from all concern with the Government of the King, of the Queen, and of the Neapolitan councillors; thirdly, the appointment of a Vicar-General of the Kingdom in the person of the Hereditary Prince; fourthly, the consent of the King to a reform of the Constitution.

These political and personal changes were considered the only measures which could efficiently guarantee on the one hand the ancient liberties of Sicily, and on the other the success of the military and political plans of Great Britain in the Mediterranean. Great Britain could not be efficiently seconded save by a National Government, strengthened by all the guarantees of modern liberty, and the Sicilian patriots, who had directed their first efforts to the maintenance of their Constitution, willingly gave their utmost support to Great Britain, who aided them in their noble enterprize.

The King having retired, had left the Government in the hands of the Prince Royal, Vicar-General of the Kingdom, with the powers of the *alter ego*. ⁽²⁾ The unconstitutional ordinances had been revoked, the five Peers had been set at liberty, and three of them had been appointed Ministers, and Lord William Bentinck had been named General of the Sicilian army, and authorized to intervene in the Council of State.

(1) See Speech of Lord William Bentinck, in the English House of Commons, on the 21st June, 1821. Vouchers, Letter X, page 65.

(2) Vouchers, Letter D, page 6.

The Prince Royal soon convoked the Parliament to assemble in the ancient manner, and to proceed to the consideration of the question of reform. In the edict of convocation we read: ⁽¹⁾ “It is our will that this Parliament should not only turn its attention to the wants of the State, but likewise to the correcting of abuses and the amelioration of laws, and to every thing in short that can contribute to the real happiness of this most faithful kingdom.” On the 15th June the Parliament was opened; in the speech from the throne the Prince said: “Of this you are thoroughly convinced, and *your faithful ally, Great Britain*, is a striking example of the truth of what I advance, for it is by the nicely poised equilibrium of a wise Constitution that she has raised herself to the state of splendour she now enjoys, and that she has such ample means at her disposal, for carrying on the struggle she has undertaken against our common enemy.” ⁽²⁾

In the constitutional reform which the Parliament undertook, it was guided by two principles—first, to preserve the present and restore the ancient liberties of Sicily: secondly, to borrow from the English Constitution some guarantees which were wanting, and adapt them to that form of Constitution which, looked upon as the most perfect and the most fitted to a Constitutional Monarchy. Thus the Sicilian Constitution of 1812, although it appears to be modelled according to the form of the English Constitution, contains but very few national or popular rights which were not possessed before the reform of 1812, or at a more remote period, by the Sicilian nation. ⁽³⁾

It is important to set forth some articles of the Constitution which contain the compact which was renewed between the nation and the reigning dynasty, and some most important limitations imposed on the executive power; and in the first placet hose which relate to the independence of Sicily.

(1) Vouchers, Letter E, page 7.

(2) Vouchers, Letter F, page 8.

(3) Vouchers, Letter G, page 10.

Law on the Succession to the Throne of the Kingdom of Sicily.

Sec. 17. VIII. If the King of Sicily should regain the kingdom of Naples, or should acquire any other kingdom, he shall send his eldest son to reign there, or have his said son in Sicily, and cede to him the kingdom; the said kingdom of Sicily, being declared from this day forward, to be independent of that of Naples, and of any other kingdom or province. *Placet*; as regards the independence, but everything further shall be established by the King and by his eldest son at the general peace, as to which of the family shall reign there.

Sec. 19. VIII. He (the King) shall, however, in the course of, at the latest, two months, be recognized by the Parliament. *Placet*.

Sec. 15. VI. The King of Sicily, shall not on any account whatever, withdraw from the kingdom without the consent of Parliament; and any King who may quit the kingdom without such consent, or prolong his stay from the island beyond the period granted him by Parliament, shall no longer have any right to reign in Sicily, and from that moment, either his successor, if there should be one, shall ascend the throne, or the nation shall elects new King. *Veto*; as regards the power of withdrawal, it being expedient in that case only to determine, with the consent of the Parliament, by whom, and under what condition, during his absence, the powers given him by the constitution, shall be exercised.

Title II. On the Executive Power

Chap. 1. Sec. 2. Also (it shall be the prerogative of the King) to make war and peace, and to propose or conclude treaties of every description whatever with other powers, upon condition however, that they be not repugnant directly or indirectly, to the Constitution of the kingdom. *Placet*.

Chap. 2. Sec. 1. Notwithstanding the important dignity enjoyed by the King as Generalissimo, he shall not have the power to introduce into, or to keep in Sicily, any other troops and forces whatever, either land or sea, than those for which he has obtained the consent of Parliament. *Placet*; saving the foreign troops, which have been stipulated for in treaties. ⁽¹⁾

Although the Prince Royal in his capacity of Vicar of the kingdom had the power of sanctioning this Constitutional reform, he demanded new powers from the King, who, at the foot of the dispatch of the Prince, wrote these words, which were registered in the archives of the Kingdom. "The above is conformable to my intentions, and I authorize you to carry it into effect."

The reform was concluded by the Parliament on the 4th November, 1812, and the sanction of the Prince only appeared on the 18th February, 1813. It is necessary, also, to observe that the propositions of the Parliament were not entirely sanctioned, several articles having been rejected. This refusal, and the delay of the Prince in his decision sufficiently prove the independence and deliberation with which he gave his sanction.

Nine months only had elapsed since the retirement of the King from public affairs and the commencement of constitutional reform, when Lord William Bentinck received from the new Sicilian Government that assistance which his predecessors had not obtained during six years.

By the treaty of September, 1812, ⁽²⁾ a division of 7314 men was put at the disposal of the English minister, which division afterwards fought under his orders in Spain and Italy. If the war had continued he would have been able to have obtained still more. These are the words of Lord William Bentinck himself. ⁽³⁾

(1) See translation of the Sicilian Constitution in the Appendix to the Correspondence. Parliamentary Blue Book, 1849, in the end.

(2) Vouchers, Letter J, page 19.

Tills fortunate result of the intervention in Sicily was received with enthusiasm in England; a letter written by Lord Castlereagh, after the conclusion of the treaty of September, 1812, to the Prince of Belmonte, Minister of Foreign Affairs at Palermo, is a proof of it. It is dated January, 1813. In it we read: "I fulfil with the highest satisfaction the commands of the Prince Regent, by transmitting to your Excellency the sentiments which animate His Royal Highness on this occasion. Both the British public and government equally understand the truly wise and patriotic part that your Excellency has taken in the negotiations which have taken place between the Minister and Commander of the Forces of His Britannic Majesty and the Sicilian Government, and there is no doubt here that, by persevering in the same conduct, the alliance between the two countries will be for ever fixed upon such a basis that neither intrigues nor force will be able to shake it." (1)

Lord William Bentinck remained a year in Sicily after the reform of the Constitution, and on several occasions he acted as if his government was the guarantee and protector of it.

He was twice almost upon the point of sustaining it by arms. In March, 1813, the King having endeavoured to resume power for the purpose of overthrowing it, he resigned his rank of Commander of the Sicilian army, and made use of his forces in the endeavour to prevent the reaction. After that he obtained from the King the promise of the continuation of the Vicariat of the Prince Royal, and the departure of the Queen from the kingdom.

On the 31st October of the same year, after fresh endeavours of re-action on the part of the King, he published a proclamation in which we read: "Until the glorious work of the Constitution so happily commenced in the Parliament of 1812 shall be fully consolidated, Lord William Bentinck

(3) Speech of Lord William Bentinck, in the House of Commons, June 21st, 1821.

(1) Palmieri's Constitutional History of Sicily, page 160. Lausanna Edition, 1847.

renders himself responsible for the maintenance of public tranquillity by the force which is under his command.” (1)

After the escape of Napoleon from the Island of Elba, the British Cabinet wishing to intervene vigourously in the war carrying on in the Italian peninsula, Lord William Bentinck was appointed to conduct this enterprize, and he was recalled from Sicily, which he left definitively in July, 1814; his army followed him shortly afterwards, and thus terminated the armed intervention of England in the interior affairs of Sicily, which lasted for three years, and which will ever be memorable in the annals of that island.

This intervention had been forced upon England by the necessity of providing for her safety and her defence against the common enemy, but this intervention compelled her to assume obligations towards the Sicilian people, which remained in subsistence after the evacuation of the island, and which still subsist. She had found in Sicily a Constitution which had existed for seven centuries, she had found it her interest to sustain and ameliorate it. If after the evacuation of the island she was no longer bound by interest to the maintenance of that constitution, she was still so bound by honour.

Shortly after the departure of Lord William Bentinck, and the evacuation by his army of the island, an explicit declaration from the English Government recognised those engagements which resulted from the acts and declarations of her representative in Sicily. This was the famous memorandum of Lord Castlereagh, (2) presented by Sir W. A'Court, on the 20th October, 1814, and published by him throughout Sicily. In this memorandum the English Government, by calling itself the *friend and ally* of the Sicilian nation, avowed all the share which it had taken in the reform of the Constitution, and the obligations that it had assumed *to*

(1) Palmieri op: citat: p. 215.

(2) Vouchers, Letter L, page 29, and Correspondence relating to Sicilian affairs, 1814, 1816. Presented to the House of Commons by command of Her Majesty, May 4, 1849.

sustain and protect it. In it we read: “To the wise and excellent institutions of that country it is supposed, and very justly supposed, that its splendour and prosperity were to be attributed; and a hope was entertained that by the adoption of a similar form of government the same advantages might be secured to Sicily, whose insular position and early institutions offered a certain degree of resemblance to those of its more powerful ally.

“England could not be insensible to the appeal which was made to her; and whilst she charged herself with the protection of Sicily from any foreign invader, she at the same time lent herself to the invitation she had received, *and became the protectoress and supporter of alterations founded upon principle so just in themselves, and so creditable to those from whom they had originally emanated.*”

“Under such auspices the work of the Constitution was begun.”

“*As the friend and ally of the Sicilian nation* she (England) wished to favour the adoption of such parts only of her Constitution, as, after grave and deliberate examination, should be found in consonance with the wishes of the people, and calculated to ensure their prosperity and happiness.”

“In any temperate and prudent modification of the Government England would willingly lend that aid and support which it may be in her power to afford; she exacts only as a condition to this assistance that it be done by the Parliament itself; that it be accomplished in a legal and constitutional manner, as far removed from any direct intervention of overbearing authority on the one hand, as from any undue exertion of popular feeling on the other.”

The King having resumed the Government after the departure of Lord William Bentinck, the ministry of the Prince of Villafranca, and Ruggiero Settimo, and the Princes of Belmonte and of Castelunovo, who were Councillors of State,

resigned, and the Parliament which had been convoked by this Ministry was opened by the King. We read in his speech: (1) "Sicily has now a written Constitution; that Constitution having for its object the laying the foundations of the prosperity and welfare of the Sicilians, has been regarded by me with feelings of the tenderest affection, and has taken for its model the form of the Government of a great and enlightened nation, which commands the admiration of the world, and which has given, and is still giving astonishing proofs of riches, power, and magnanimity.

"Let your first and most especial care be, to support the dignity of the nation. The balance of power, and the free use of those relations which are the right of every nation being restored, Sicily will have her own proper existence, and will enjoy her political independence. Be justly proud of this sacred privilege; but be careful to support it with all your powers so long as it wants strength, and so long as our political horizon is not entirely cleared of those clouds which might at any hour produce the storm and the tempest."

It cannot be said that the King was forced by the bayonets of Lord William Bentinck to acknowledge the constitutional reform and the independence of Sicily: it was the consciousness of a compact which had been too recently sworn to be denied.

Another year elapsed before the King determined to commence re-action, and two years before he could execute his *coup d'etat* of 1816, which overthrew that constitution which he had regarded with feelings of the tenderest affection in 1814. The victories of the Austrians, the defeat of Murat, restored the throne of Naples to him, and the conquest of this kingdom was the signal for his attack on the liberties of Sicily.

The departure of the King for Naples without the consent of the Parliament was the first violation of the Constitution, and afterwards an edict appointing a Royal Commission to

(1) Vouchers, Letter K, page 24.

propose a new constitution upon the basis of 30 Articles indicated by the King. This edict was not carried into execution, but that and many other unconstitutional acts are sufficient to prove those intentions which the King openly declared by the decrees of 1816. By these decrees the two kingdoms of Naples and Sicily were united, and the King assumed the new title of Ferdinand I, King of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, declaring that *he would take the whole of the Government into his hands*, and annulled both the ancient and the new Constitution of Sicily. ⁽¹⁾ From that time forward the dynasty of the Bourbons no longer reigned legitimately in Sicily.

By other edicts all the other Laws of the Parliament of 1812, and those ancient Laws which the Parliament had left in force, concerning the independence of municipalities, concerning personal liberty, and even the Codes of Penal and Civil Laws were altered, and in every branch of the public administration, instead of liberal Laws which had existed for seven centuries, and were adapted to the character of the nation, were substituted strange Laws, for the most part French, and full of that almost military despotism called centralization, which during the ten years of the French domination in Naples the two Kings Joseph and Joachim had there introduced.

Thus did Sicily find herself despoiled of her Constitution, and of all her Codes, and governed by foreign Laws, and by an absolute power residing at Naples. In one of his acts of usurpation, viz., that which established the union of the Two Kingdoms, the King declared that this union was an Act of the Congress of Vienna, but it is impossible to find this Act in the Treaty of Vienna. Article 104, which is the only one that speaks of the Two Sicilies, merely enacts the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of Naples. ⁽²⁾ Sicily, which during the

(1) Vouchers, Letters O. P. Q. page 44, and the following pages.

(2) These are the words of this Article of the Treaty of Vienna:

“His Majesty, King Ferdinand IV, for himself and for his heirs and successors is re-established upon the throne of Naples, and recognized by the

wars of Napoleon, had never changed her dynasty, could not be the subject of any negotiation at Vienna. That which in truth encouraged the King to destroy liberty in Sicily was perhaps a secret Treaty concluded at Vienna with Austria on the 12th of June 1815, although in this Treaty nothing is apparent but a promise of the King to admit no constitutional form in the kingdom of Naples, and there is nothing said concerning the constitution existing in Sicily, nevertheless there is sufficient to show that it was the intention of Austria to protect absolutism everywhere in Italy to the utmost of her power. ⁽¹⁾

In 1817 a protest of the Sicilian patriots was circulated in Sicily and in England. ⁽²⁾ They invoked the guarantee of this country, and they did not hesitate to declare that in a case of extremity, rather than tolerate the destruction of their ancient liberties, they would try the remedy of revolution. Sicily was then ignorant of Lord Castlereagh's abandonment of the engagements of his Government. The communications which had taken place between Naples and England during the year 1816 having been preserved a profound secret. ⁽³⁾ The public knew not of these communications either in Sicily or in England until after the Sicilian revolution of 1820, when Lord William Bentinck, in 1821, demanded of Lord Castlereagh an explanation of his transactions in 1816.

The Sicilian revolution of 1820, although it was not fully developed, possessed sufficient importance to indicate the

Powers as King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies."

(1) These are the words of this Secret Treaty of 12th June, 1815:

"His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies in *resuming* the Government of his Kingdom, will not admit of any innovation which is not in accordance either with the ancient monarchical institutions, or with the principles adopted by his Imperial and Royal Majesty in the internal Government of his Italian provinces."

See Speech of Sir J. Mackintosh of March 20, 1821. Vouchers, Letter X, page 63.

(2) Vouchers, Letter R, page 51.

(3) Vouchers, Letter M, page 34, and the following pages, published in 1821. Also see what Lord W. Bentinck and Sir J. Mackintosh say in March 1821. Vouchers, Letter X, page 63.

desire of Sicily to re-conquer her Constitution and her independence, and to cause England to remember her engagements.

The revolution of July 1820, broke out at Naples at a moment when every element was prepared for a revolution in Sicily. In appearance the Sicilian revolution was its *contre coup*, but it would have broken out even if the first had not done so. The Constitution that the King had granted to Naples only admitted, in accordance with the edicts of 1816, a single Parliament at Naples for the two kingdoms. Sicily reclaimed her independence and her Constitution; the Neapolitan Government endeavoured to suppress at Palermo, by force, the wishes of the nation; from thence arose the battle which took place on the 17th July, 1820, in the streets of Palermo, between the garrison and the people, the victory of the people and the establishment of a Provisional Government which was recognized in the whole of Sicily, excepting in a few towns which were kept in check by the Neapolitan forces.

Francis, the Prince Royal, the same who had sanctioned the Sicilian Constitution of 1812, appointed by the King Vicar General of Naples, had the audacity to address a proclamation to the Sicilians, calling them rebels: ⁽¹⁾ this caused a noble protestation on their part, ⁽²⁾ It enumerated the wrongs that had been inflicted on Sicily during a quarter of a century by this dynasty, and it concluded by predicting the consequences of this system of violence— predictions which have been verified in 1848. “Let your Royal Highness remember that such measures might prove fatal to the mutual welfare of two nations of brethren, whom nature intended to love each other, and not to fight or tyrannize the one over the other, and perhaps more fatal still to the interest of the throne and of the reigning dynasty.”

An expedition, however, of 12,000 men was sent to Palermo, under the command of General Florestan Pepe.

(1) Vouchers, Letter S, page 53.

(2) Vouchers, Letter T, page 54.

Palermo repulsed his attacks for ten days, and Pepe, and the Prince of Paterno on the part of Sicily, at last signed a capitulation, which remitted to the two national representations of Naples and of Sicily the decision of the questions between the two countries.

This capitulation was shamefully annulled by the Parliament of Naples, who, however, retained possession of the fortresses they had occupied by virtue of it. ⁽¹⁾

The Austrian occupation of Naples and Sicily in 1821 re-established in this island the despotism of 1816. The unhappy fate of this country, which, during the six years that had elapsed since the English troops had evacuated it, had suffered every misfortune; had been despoiled of its constitution; had made a revolution to recover it; had been betrayed by the Parliament of Naples; and, lastly, had been oppressed by the united forces of the King and of Austria, interested some generous men in England to demand from their Government the accomplishment of those engagements which it had entered into with the Sicilians from 1812 to 1814.

In the first instance, Lord Holland, in the House of Lords, reproached the Cabinet with the mystery in which it had kept the memorandum of 1814, which contained its promise to sustain the Constitution in Sicily, ⁽²⁾ Lord Ellenborough afterwards, in the same House, energetically claimed the fulfilment of the guarantee that England had promised, and concluded by these noble words, in which he required them “to support that declaration by arms, if necessary, that no constitution should be established in Sicily to which the Sicilians had not consented in their ancient Parliaments; that constitution had been violated by the present Government, ⁽³⁾ he said, as well as by the King, and therefore we ought not to

(1) See a noble Letter from General Florestan Pepe to King Ferdinand I. Vouchers, Letter V, page 60.

(2) | Hansard's Pari. Deb. Sitting of the House of Lords, February 19, 1821, pages 776-77.

(3) { The Austrians had not entered Naples at the time the noble Lord made his speech.

decline advocating the cause of injured Sicily. He knew, from his own personal observation, the attachment of the Sicilians to England—it had originated in the hour of common danger, and had been cemented in the field of victory.” (1)

The complaints raised in the House of Commons were of still greater importance. Lord William Bentinck, who, by the abandonment of the engagements entered into with Sicily, believed both his own honour and that of his country compromised, in the sitting of March 1821 reproached Lord Castlereagh with having permitted the suppression of the Constitution in Sicily, and with having done it in the name of the Congress of Vienna. (2) Lord Castlereagh having denied these two facts, which were but too true, Lord William Bentinck, in June 1821, made the following motion:—“That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, humbly to represent to His Majesty that the House has the mortification to learn that attempts have been made by the Government of the Two Sicilies to reduce the privileges of the Sicilian nation in such a degree, as may expose the British Government to the reproach of having contributed to a change of system in Sicily, which has impaired the freedom and happiness formerly enjoyed by its inhabitants; and humbly to pray that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to interfere, for the prevention of these evils, in such a manner as the honour and good faith of this nation absolutely require.”

Lord Castlereagh laid on the table of the House as few documents as possible, in order to restrain the discussion within the narrowest possible limits, and to give to it the direction which he desired. He only presented the three treaties of 1808-9, and 12, relating solely to the military occupation, and neither of which are at all connected with the guarantee of the Constitution, the correspondence between himself and Sir William A’Court in 1816, (3) and the edicts of

(1) Vouchers, Letter V, page 62.

(2) Vouchers, Letter X, page 63.

(3) In contradiction to the assertions of Sir William A’Court in this correspondence, that the Parliament of Sicily demanded of the King a reform of

the King of Naples of the same year. He did not present the memorandum published by Sir Wm. A'Court, and the debate proceeded without the House having legal knowledge of this important document.

the Constitution of 1812, we could cite the contrary authority of some eminent contemporary Sicilian historians, as Aceto, Palmeri, but we prefer transcribing a passage from General Colletta, a celebrated historian, who, being a Neapolitan, cannot be suspected when he renders justice to Sicily. He says, (in the book 8, ch. 27, of the History of the Kingdom of Naples), "These ministers, these councillors, these confidants of the King, (who went from Naples to Sicily with the King in 1806), having formerly been persecutors, were in 1812 pursued and driven away, but were restored in greater power in 1815, and then, through the desire of vengeance against Sicily, through ambition of absolute power, and through ministerial pride, they urged the King, to absolutism, he being already sufficiently inclined to it, and to the destruction of the Constitution of the year 1812. The guarantee of England being an obstacle to it, they made use of fraud. They represented to the English Government that Sicily, discontented with her political situation, demanded other laws Sir William A'Court, Minister of England, confidant of the King, friend of the Chevalier Medici, crafty and malevolent, gave weight to these frauds, and Great Britain, deceiving and deceived, abandoned Sicily. The intrigues were for several months carried on in secrecy....."

At last, the Government, having obtained the consent of the English Minister, backed by the Austrian and Neapolitan army, ceased to dissemble, and publishing the laws that I have mentioned (of 1816), abused its power, and gratified its passions without any restraint." From this correspondence of the Minister A'Court, it can be easily seen in what manner he conducted these negotiations, which suspended the effect of the English guarantee in favour of the Sicilian Constitution. In the first place, he asserted as a fact that which did not exist,—that the Parliament had demanded of the King to reform the Constitution; secondly, he deduced from it, that, instead of reforming the constitution, they were at liberty to destroy it; he only required, that in the royal edicts that were to consummate the sacrifice, the word *Parliament* should be left, whilst the King and the Neapolitan ministers wished to substitute for this name the still more vague one of Nation. He also required that the King should never increase the public tax above 1,847,000 ounces, without the consent of the Parliament. Whilst promising this, the King was certain never to be obliged to convoke the Parliament, because this sum of 1,847,000 ounces, which had been voted by the Parliament of 1813, at a time of the greatest wealth in Sicily, was the maximum that it was in the power of the Parliament at any period to vote. Besides, the Budget of 1813 was composed of two sums, one

Besides, the indefinite manner in which the motion of Lord William Bentinck is worded, proves that he intended it merely as a first experiment by which to ascertain the feeling of the House, which suffered itself to be influenced by Lord Castlereagh, the originator of the acts denounced by Lord William Bentinck. (1)

The speech of Lord William Bentinck is of the greatest importance for those who wish to examine this serious question. It possesses all the authority by which a witness of the most honourable character can substantiate a fact. He begins, by saying that in the promise to sustain liberty in Sicily, he considers the English honour as engaged, a promise of which the Sicilian nation energetically demands the fulfilment. He then speaks of the rights of the Sicilians to their ancient Constitution reformed in 1812, and of their right to its being guaranteed by England. To maintain these two principles he, in the first place, traces the history of the ancient Constitution which *was founded upon authority as legitimately sacred as that which bound the Governments of these sovereigns (of the Holy Alliance) themselves*. He speaks of the sacrifices made by the Sicilians to preserve and to ameliorate it, and of those facts which took place under his own eyes, when the five members of the Chamber of Peers were arbitrarily deported, and when the aristocracy in 1812 gave up many of its rights in favour of the people; he said that

of 1,287,000 ounces, a tax really paid by Sicily, the other of 560,000 ounces, was the amount of the then Sicilian currency of the £ 400,000 of subsidies that England paid to the Sicilian Treasury, and which ceased in 1814. Thus, by promising not to increase this tax of 1,847,000 ounces, the King could still levy an additional sum of 560,000 ounces per annum without the consent of the Parliament. The following fact proves what a mockery was this condition; Ferdinand I. and his successors at first levied more than 1,287,000 ounces, and subsequently have levied much more than 1,847,000 ounces per annum without once convoking the Parliament. In this manner were the promises in the Memorandum of Lord Castlereagh maintained, as far as the guarantee of the Constitution was concerned. With regard to the promises made to guarantee those persons who took a share in the establishment of the Constitution, they were indeed in appearance maintained, although many of these persons were persecuted under other pretexts.

(1) See Vouchers, Letter Y, page 65.

the intervention of England in the interior affairs of the island was entered upon in accordance with the instructions of the Marquis of Wellesley; that such intervention was necessary for England, she not being able otherwise to maintain the military occupation of the island; that Great Britain from this intervention derived advantages, and that consequently she contracted obligations to Sicily. He said that these obligations were to sustain its Constitution; that these obligations, which resulted from the principles of justice, had been recognized and expressly declared to the Sicilians by the memorandum of 1814, of which he, Lord William Bentinck, was aware of the publication in Sicily, from private information; that the English Minister had not made any effort, not the least endeavour to put into execution this memorandum, which was an honourable memorial of the English policy of 1814; but on the contrary that he had permitted the overthrow of the Constitution of 1812, and of the former one and the constrained union of Sicily to Naples, which had been the cause of an infinite series of misfortunes to that unhappy island, and which had forced into revolution in 1820, a people *which was attached to England more strongly than any other*.

Lord Castlereagh attempted to maintain that the ancient Constitution of Sicily, the antiquity and importance of which Lord William Bentinck had so well described, was merely an illusion; he said that all English intervention in Sicily had been solely military, and that the reform of the Constitution had been commenced in Sicily before this military occupation, (1) He admits, however, that the English Government felt the necessity of sustaining the Constitution, without which the Government of Sicily could not have been carried on, and the country could not have been held as a military station, nevertheless he believes that this intervention did not bind his Government to any *obligation of a special nature*. He admits that in 1814, Sir W. A'Court was authorized to make known to

(1) We have proved that the English military occupation preceded the political intervention, (which did not Commence till 1812), by more than six years.

the Sicilians the relations that were to exist from that time between England and themselves, but he only sets forth a portion of the obligations contained in this document. It being clear however, according to that document, that some obligations of guarantee existed, he avoids the question, by saying that the Constitution of 1812 was not adapted to the character of the Sicilian people, that the Houses of Parliament made an address to the King, demanding him to renew the Constitution of 1812, and after this demand the King had granted his edicts of 1816, which Lord Castlereagh called a new Constitution, although they are the destruction of all liberty.

This important assertion, which is not true, ⁽¹⁾ and which Lord Castlereagh perhaps believed merely on the faith of Sir W. A'Court, but of which he asked no proof, having been made by an English minister in one of the Houses of Parliament, confused the question in dispute, and rendered it incapable of being truly decided. He added, perhaps, upon the same authority of Sir W. A'Court, that this same *Constitution oi* 1816 was about to be changed for a more liberal one, which should assure to Sicily much of the independence of Naples. He described the Government of Ferdinand as paternal, and he said it was too late to protest against a fact which perhaps no longer existed, that is to say, against those edicts of 1816, which have however continued to exist up to 1847.

Sir James Mackintosh, in reply to Lord Castlereagh, said that the complaint against the first overthrow of the Constitution in Sicily could not be called tardy, the proceedings of the English Government in this affair not having been known before the papers on the table had been printed. Then after having asked "If the English Government had performed their contract with the Sicilians as to the proceedings which had taken place in that country?" he proceeded to argue in his eloquent speech that there was no evidence before the House, or before Europe, of the pretended

(1) See Note, page 22.

impracticability of the political Government established in Sicily under the auspices of the English Government; then, in order to attack the impropriety of the conduct of Lord Castlereagh in every way, he argued that if this impracticability of the Constitution had been proved to be true, “the English Government were bound to restore to the Sicilians the ancient Constitution so far as that was essential to liberty, and to preserve all the improvements which had quietly been introduced.” In this second part of his speech, he also invoked by another argument, the guarantee of England, because it was well known that this Constitution of 1812 only consisted “in some improvements quietly introduced in the ancient Constitution.” It is not at present necessary to enter into the details of this speech which combated those arguments of Lord Castlereagh, which time and the Sicilian revolution of 1848 have falsified, we will therefore only give some passages from it, to show the importance that Sir James Mackintosh attached to the memorandum of 1814, which was one of the papers withheld by Lord Castlereagh from the House, and to the non existence of the fact that the Sicilian Parliament had implored its own extinction. “Where was the note of Sir W. A’Court written in 1814? In 1814 this Government had not adopted a dread of everything like popular rights, a terror of public liberty.”—“The Marquis of Circello, (the Neapolitan minister) was naturally disposed to judge unfavourably of the Sicilian Constitution, but neither the Marquis nor Sir W. A’Court, asserted any such thing as that the Parliament implored their own extinction.” Lastly, Sir James Mackintosh expresses his conviction with regard to this question in the following words: “The noble Lord (Bentinck) had guaranteed the Constitution by good faith and national honour. This country could not depart from that engagement without perfidy and dishonour.”

A majority of 65 votes against 35 ⁽¹⁾ were of the same opinion with Lord Castlereagh, but the question remained to be decided, at a time when the non-existence of some of the facts asserted, and the existence of others have been demonstrated, the tyranny of the Bourbons of Naples better known, and the patriotism of the Sicilians and their love of their Constitution, then calumniated, proved by them by the greatest sacrifices.

We can in a few words pass over the 27 years which afterwards elapsed from 1820 to 1847. The double despotism of the King and of the Neapolitans, again broke out beyond all bounds. Liberty was extinct in Sicily from 1816, or from 1820, and there remained merely a shade of nationality in this species of separate administration, in this power resident in the island, by the edicts of 1816, confided to a Lieutenant.

The organization of this power, underwent five or six modifications of enlargement or of diminution from 1821 to 1838, but the utmost extent of independent action accorded to him never exceeded that granted by the decrees of 1816. No reason could be found for these modifications, except the caprices of the King or of the Neapolitan ministers, or the necessity of always devising means of governing a people difficult to be governed after having despoiled them of all their Laws.

But ancient customs and political traditions could not however be stifled in a people who had during so many ages been in the enjoyment of a free Constitution, who from 1806 to 1815, had been in the enjoyment of absolute independence, and from 1812 to 1815 had so largely reformed their

(1) *List of the Minority*: Josh. Birch; Hon H. Cavendish; W. J. Clifford; Hon. F. G. Calthrope; Sir W. De Crespigny; W. Dickinson; T. Dundas; Col. Davies; J. W. Griffiths; J. Grattan; P. Grenfell; J. Hume; Lord A. Hamilton; Hon. Ed. Harbord; R. Hurst; Hon. H. Hutchinson; Sir J. Mackintosh; J. Maberly, jun.; J. Maxwell; J. B. Monk; J. Martin; Lord Milton; T. Newman; Sir J. Newport; F. Palmer; Col. Robarts; D. Ricardo; J. Rumbold; J. Scarlett; Sykes; R. Smith; Right Hon. G. Tierney; S. C. Whitbread; Colonel Webb, and Aideman Wood. *Tellers*: Lord W. Bentinck and Hon. J. Abercromby. "Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, June 1821."

Constitution, and had established this independence by solemn compact. This love of liberty which for such a long period *I* had been the element of the life of the Sicilians, still acted through the clandestine press, by means of that noiseless but efficacious apostleship, that literary men, nobles, land owners, priests, and the influential portion of all classes exercised over the people.

From time to time conspiracies on an large scale, either discovered, or which broke out, terrified the Government, and, as in 1821, and in 1831 gave dozens of victims to the scaffold, and sometimes, as in 1837, gave to it a hundred.

Ferdinand having thought that the love of political institutions in Sicily was kept alive by that species of nationality which remained in the island up to 1837, he crushed it by his edicts of 1838. From that time the authority of the Lieutenant was nominal, the Sicilians were excluded from the higher public offices in Sicily, and the country, worse governed than a colony, was abandoned to the oppressions, the insults, the cruelties, and to the pillage of some Neapolitan Prefects, chosen from among the most infamous of mankind, who acted under the orders of a Santangelo and a Delcarretto. The national taxes had up to this period been apparently confined within the limits of the decree of 1816. The grandfather and the father of Ferdinand had, however, levied additional imposts under the name of Provincial taxes. Ferdinand raised the National taxation from 1,847,000 ounces, the amount fixed in 1816, to 2,318,000 ounces. ⁽¹⁾ Private property was not more respected by him than was public property. The sulphur monopoly, which violating the property of the mines, was injurious to the interests of English commerce, was contrary to the international law, and excited the remonstrances and the hostility of Great Britain, is a proof of it. ⁽²⁾

(1) See *La Sicile et les Bourbons*, par M. Amari, p. 58.

(2) Mr. Macgregor, late of the Board of Trade, and now M.P. for Glasgow, has given a lively picture of the desolation occasioned in Sicily by the sulphur monopoly. See his Report on the commercial statistics of the kingdom of the

It cannot be believed that such a Government can have observed any justice towards the persons of the Sicilians. For their written code of laws was substituted the will and the caprice of a military Governor at Palermo, and of Prefects in the Island, whose lawless cruelty, commencing under Del Carretto in 1837, by the devastation and massacres of Catania and Syracuse, was subsequently carried to the extreme of inflicting torture on prisoners confined in the barracks of the gens d'armes, and the bastinado in the public places of the Island. ⁽¹⁾

This unexampled tyranny had become perfectly insupportable to all. The revolution which broke out on the 12th of January, 1848, had become a necessity for all classes of society. Both the time at which it broke out, and also its character, have shown that it was not the consequence of any of those movements which, in the same year 1848, convulsed a large portion of Europe. It broke out forty- two days before the French Revolution, and *before* all those political changes that have taken place in Italy.

From September 1847 the first signs of this crisis had manifested themselves at Messina. Sixty most resolute men had defied and attacked the garrison, but after a combat of some hours they were obliged to retire. A price was put upon the heads of ten of the chiefs of this insurrection, men of considerable consequence in Messina. At Palermo, which was supposed to have been the centre and the originator of the movement at Messina, several influential men were persecuted, so that before the 12th of January about twenty Sicilians had been forced to emigrate from the two cities, and fifteen had been imprisoned and most cruelly used at Palermo.

Two Sicilies, presented to both Houses of Parliament, by command of Her Majesty, August 1840, pages 3 and 4.

(1) A sketch of the tyranny of which Sicily was the victim during the last years of the Government of Ferdinand will be found in the proclamation of the Parliament of Sicily, declaring the forfeiture of the Sicilian throne by the Bourbons. Vouchers Letter B. B., pp. 111 to 113.

Before commencing the work of restoring liberty in Sicily, Palermo still hesitated for a moment between peaceful protestations and the revolution, but at last, persuaded that with Ferdinand no other means could be made use of than that of revolution, it accepted this necessity.

The proclamations that were seen posted in open day some time before the insurrection, in the different quarters of the town,—proclamations which declared that a revolution would take place on the 12th of January, if the King, before that day, did not grant some reforms, is a proof that the Sicilians would still have preferred pacific means for the amelioration of their fate, if the King had yet been capable of moderation.

On the morning of the 12th of January, 1848, the population of Palermo was at war against a garrison of from 7 to 8000 men, and also, after four days, against another body of 5000 men and eight war steamers, commanded by the Count d'Aquila, brother of the King, who came to the support of the garrison, and undertook the bombardment of the city. All these forces were in a few days defeated, and the castles surrendered to the people after a resistance of twenty-five days; at the same time the revolution broke out in the whole of the Island, and the people were victorious over the garrisons of Termini, of Trapani, of Licata, and of Milazzo, and had obliged those of Syracuse and Messina to retire to their fortresses. One of these was in a short time evacuated, and in the month of April the King of Naples was possessed of no stronghold in Sicily, except the citadel of Messina. This war was signalized by extreme moderation on the part of the people; the prisoners were well treated, and from time to time restored to the King, whilst the royal troops had sullied themselves with the most horrible cruelties, and had bombarded Palermo and Messina in a manner so contrary to the usages of civilized nations, as to call forth the protestations of the two consular bodies residing in the two cities.

A Provisional Government, appointed by the people, presided over by the most respected man in Sicily, Admiral Ruggiero Settimo, the same who had twice been minister from 1812 to 1814, had from the beginning assumed the direction of the revolution, and, shortly afterwards, recognized throughout the Island, had been the organ of the negotiations that the King of Naples, during the war and after the defeat of his army, had opened with Sicily.

Sicily reclaimed her Constitution of 1812. This Constitution, by the 17th Article of the law relating to the succession to the throne, did not permit the union of the Two Kingdoms; the dynasty of the Bourbons having violated that article, only reigned in Sicily by usurpation. Ferdinand, however, by his decrees of January, which he called concessions, rejected all the pretensions of the Sicilians, not only to the Constitution of 1812, but also to any free Constitution; he only offered to revoke the edicts of 1838, and to restore those of 1816, or, in other words, a despotic Government, less connected with that of Naples than it had been during the time immediately preceding, and the restoration of all public offices of Sicily to the Sicilians, in the same manner as they had enjoyed them before 1838. The excitement, however, that prevailed at Naples after the first fortunate success of the Sicilian revolution, menacing a revolution in the other kingdom, determined the King to grant (octroyer) a constitution to the Neapolitans on the 29th of January, and he offered the same statute to the Sicilians.

Without entering into the details of this statute, modelled upon that which then existed in France, he only permitted one single Parliament at Naples for the two countries; he left Sicily as a province of Naples, but with a representation lost among the representation of another country three times as numerous as her own.

At the same time that the Provisional Government rejected these two propositions of the King, it convoked the Parliament. ⁽¹⁾

The Act of Convocation of the 24th of February, as well as the communications which until that time had taken place with the King, indicated the determination of the Sicilians to re-establish the Constitution of 1812. Some modifications being necessary to adapt this Constitution, which had not been in force for thirty-three years, to the then state of the country, the Provisional Government introduced these adaptations by the Act of Convocation. During so long a time, private fortunes had diminished; some families of peers were extinct; many spiritual peerages were vacant; it was principally for these necessities that the Provisional Government provided. It lowered the property qualification of those who were eligible for the Chamber of Commons, and admitted to it many capacities which were excluded from it in 1812; it ordered the re-establishment of vacant peerages by the same Chamber of Peers upon the nomination of the Chamber of Commons. In case of any difference of opinion between the two Chambers, the decision was given to a committee of forty-one members of the two Chambers themselves.

The King then took two important steps. In the first place, he entreated the English Government to interpose its good offices between himself and Sicily. Secondly, he partly recognized the constitution of 1812, by adopting the Act of Convocation of the Parliament by the Provisional Government, giving to it the form of a royal decree, adding to the first article these words; "The entirety of the monarchy still remaining vested in the single person of the King and on the same day, the 6th of March, he signed five other decrees, by which he nominated a lieutenant and three ministers in Sicily, one minister for the affairs of Sicily residing at Naples, and prescribed the oath to be taken to the Constitution. ⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ Vouchers, Letter Z, p, 88.

⁽²⁾ Vouchers, Letter Z (Note), p. 89.

Great Britain, after she was assured of the adhesion of the Sicilian committee, undertook the mediation.

By undertaking this mediation, this Power put herself into a very serious position. From 1812 to 1814 she had contributed to the establishment of, and had promised to maintain, that Constitution demanded by the Sicilians in 1848. It is true that her Government had tacitly tolerated its suppression, but it had never explicitly acknowledged the decrees of 1816, neither had it recognized the treaty of Vienna in the sense that the King of Naples had given to it with regard to the union of the two kingdoms. This very tolerance, in fact, of the suppression of the Constitution of 1812 on the part of the English Government, had been attacked in the two Houses of Parliament, and in 1848 Great Britain had the power of choosing between the policy of Lord Castlereagh, and that propounded in 1821 by a Lord Ellenborough, a Lord William Bentinck, and a Sir J. Mackintosh. She hesitated not to declare in favour of that which was just and honourable.

Great Britain acted in this mediation as mediatrix, and as bound by her engagements of 1812-14.

This honourable task was worthily confided to the Earl of Minto, who, at that time, was accomplishing another not less important mission in Italy.

The bases of the mediation on the part of the King were the six decrees that had been given to the noble Lord. In truth, the only recognition of the Constitution of 1812 on the part of the King, and of the right of the Sicilian Parliament to reform it, are to be found in his adhesion to the Act of Convocation; whilst other decrees, which did not admit the separation of the two kingdoms, destroyed the most important parts of this Constitution. These decrees could not by possibility have given any satisfaction to the Sicilians, but they would have produced a less unfortunate effect in the island, if they had been really brought there by Lord Minto.

Whilst the noble Lord was on his way to Palermo with the squadron of Sir William Parker, a Neapolitan war steamer brought to that city the six decrees, publishing them as an *ultimatum* of the King. When the English Minister arrived at Palermo, public opinion had already rejected the propositions.

It must be believed that the King, with his habitual bad faith, and after the declarations of the noble Lord, which prove that he (Lord Minto) would have conducted the negotiations in a manner to conciliate the union of the two Crowns, with the full enjoyment by the Sicilians of the Constitution of 1812, had repented of having asked for the English mediation, and made use of this scheme to annul it from the commencement. This unworthy conduct did not prevent the noble Lord from using all his influence and that of his Government with indefatigable zeal and the greatest skill, and he obtained from the Government of Palermo the continuation of the negotiations and fresh propositions.

By these propositions, Sicily gave up absolute independence; but in every thing else she endeavoured to assure to herself, upon solid foundations, the fulfilment of the Constitution of 1812.

These are the articles:— (1)

“That the King should keep the title of King of the Two Sicilies.

“That his representative in Sicily, who would always be called a Viceroy, should be either a member of the Royal Family or a Sicilian.

“That a complete and irrevocable *alter ego* should be attached to the dignity of Viceroy, with all the attributes conferred on the Executive Power by the Constitution of 1812.

“That all persons appointed to different offices by the General Committee should retain them, and that all acts

(1) Vouchers, Letters A A, page 101-2.

emanating from the Committee should be maintained; in like manner, that all offices already conferred, or that might be conferred by the other Committees of the island, as long as their power lasted, should be maintained.

“That the act of convoking the Parliament, published by the General Committee, should form an integral portion of the Constitution.

“That all kinds of offices, whether diplomatic, civil, or military, as well as ecclesiastical dignities, should be conferred exclusively on Sicilians, by the Executive Power resident in the island.

“That the institution of the National Guard should be preserved, together with any reforms decreed by Parliament.

“That, within a week, the royal troops should evacuate the two fortresses they still occupied, and that such works within the fortresses as might appear likely to threaten the safety of the town be demolished; the designation of these works to be entrusted to the Committees, or, in default of the latter, to the municipal magistrates.

“That Sicily should coin its own money, according to a system resolved upon by Parliament.

“That it should preserve its cockade and tri-coloured flag.

“That a quarter of the fleet, arms, and ammunition now belonging to the Government should be made over to the Sicilians; or that an equivalent be given them in money.

“That neither side should claim from the other the amount of war expences; hut all the damage done to the free port of Messina and to the goods it contained, to be repaired at the charge of the Neapolitan treasury; that the Minister of War, of the Navy, of the Foreign and Home Department, should reside in the Island, near the Viceroy, and be responsible according to the Articles of the Constitution.

“That Sicily should recognize no Minister of Sicilian Affairs in Naples.

“That the free port of Messina should be restored to the state it was in previous to the law of 1826.

“That all affairs interesting to both countries should be settled by mutual agreement by their respective Parliaments.

“That in the event of a commercial and political league being formed between the Italian States, which all Sicilians so ardently wish for, Sicily should take part in it as an independent nation, being represented by such deputies as the executive power residing in Italy should appoint.

“That steam boats employed in the service of the port and the custom-houses, that were purchased by Sicilian money, should be returned to the nation.”

From the manner in which the King acted with regard to this mediation from its commencement, the end might easily have been foreseen.

Lord Minto having transmitted to Naples the proposals of the Sicilian Committee, the King refused them, at the same time protesting against any act which might take place from that time in Sicily. From that period all communication between the two kingdoms was interrupted. The Parliament having assembled at Palermo ⁽¹⁾ on the 25th of March, confided to Ruggiero Settimo, the President of the Government of the kingdom, the executive power as enacted by the Constitution of 1812, under the following restrictions:—

“The President of the Government has not the power of sanctioning the decrees of Parliament, such decrees having force of law, as may be agreed upon by the Two Chambers, or the decisions of the Mixed Committees instituted in pursuance of the 23rd and 24th paragraphs of the Act of

(1) Vouchers, Letters A A, page 96.

Convocation of the General Parliament. It will be his duty only to promulgate them, and to see that they are executed.”

“He has not the power either to dissolve, to adjourn, or to prorogue Parliament, which will make provision for this contingency by such decrees as it may think fit.”

“He can neither declare war, nor make peace; but he may contract any treaty, subject to the ratification of Parliament.”

After the breaking off of the mediation was known in England, Lord Palmerston expressed his regret, to the Neapolitan Minister at London, at the refusal of the King to accept the proposals obtained by Lord Minto from the Sicilian Provisional Government, and from that time thinking that the absolute separation of the two kingdoms was inevitable, he said, “If there be any moral obligation resting upon England in this matter, it would rather be in favour of the Constitution of 1812, which was established in Sicily under British influence.”⁽¹⁾ Lord Minto having been aware during his residence in Sicily, that the revolution tended to the absolute separation of the two kingdoms, on his return to Naples, advised the King to yield the Crown of Sicily to one of his children. If the King had accepted this last proposal, the 17th Article of the law of the succession to the throne, in the Constitution of 1812 would have been accomplished, and a branch of the Bourbons would have been able to reign legitimately in Sicily; but the King refused, still preferring to persist in usurpation and violence.

Lord Minto, on the 6th of April, before departing from Naples, communicated the result of this last negotiation to M.

(1) Dispatch to the Prince of Castelcicala, 10th April, 1848. Correspondence respecting the affairs of Naples and Sicily, 1848-49. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, May 4th, 1849. Lord Palmerston, even after his policy had taken another direction with regard to Sicily, uttered in the House of Commons, 3rd February, 1849, expressions bearing a similar meaning as regarded the obligation of England to maintain the Constitution of 1812.

Stabile, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Palermo, and shortly afterwards to his own Government. ⁽¹⁾

On the 13th of April the Sicilian Parliament unanimously decreed the forfeiture by the Bourbons of the Throne of Sicily. ⁽²⁾

The blind obstinacy of Ferdinand, in determining to continue the system of usurpation maintained by himself and his family during thirty-three years, became apparent to the Parliament of Sicily after his rejection of all the propositions of Lord Minto. The Parliament made use of its strict right, and principally founded upon the following reasons the legality of the Act of the 13th of April. "For more than seven centuries, since the foundation of its monarchy, Sicily was a free and independent kingdom; her national representation was secured by the assembling of the several orders of the State as a General Parliament, by which means she contributed to found her own laws, and provide for her treasury.

"In 1812, after the violent encroachments attempted by Ferdinand 3rd de Bourbon, when, on being driven from the Neapolitan throne, he twice took refuge in Sicily, she consolidated the pacts and securities of her political Constitution, which both the nation and the King swore to maintain.

"But scarcely had he re-ascended the throne of Naples, when Ferdinand broke the national pact, and by this means sapped the foundations of his *dynastic rights* (if indeed there can exist any rights but such as are based on justice and the happiness of nations) which the Sicilian Constitution ensured to his descendants.

"This Constitution forbade his leaving the country until he had settled, conjointly with the Parliament, by whom, and on what conditions he should exercise the power it conferred

(1) See Correspondence, page 293, 294.

(2) Vouchers, Letters BB, page 108.

upon him, while he, unmindful of any such agreement, went and took up his abode elsewhere.

“Ever since the foundation of the monarchy Sicily has been an independent kingdom, and, according to the Constitution of 1812, her crown could not be united to another on the same head. But Ferdinand dared to profit by a quibble of the Congress, held at Vienna in 1815, to monopolize the two crowns and blend them into one; thus annihilating the independence of Sicily under this specious pretext.

“The Constitution enacted that, should he recover the throne of Naples, he and his eldest son should agree, as soon as the general peace was signed, which member of their family should be appointed to reign over Sicily. While he, instead of parting with the kingdom in favour of one of his children, declared in 1816, by the arbitrary laws that were passed on the 8th and 11th of December, that Sicily and Naples were to form but one kingdom; thus setting at nought the ancient institutions of the monarchy, and destroying the political basis established by the Constitution of 1812. By these means he substituted the arbitrary rule of royal and ministerial despotism for the ancient and legitimate legislative power of the nation, and the pretended claims of a conquest that only existed in his own brain, to dynastic rights.

« Thus, by violating at one and the same moment the two leading conditions of our political existence, namely, *independence and liberty*, and by substituting might for right, he became an usurper instead of a lawful sovereign, and *ipso facto* forfeited his claims to the throne.

“Therefore could he not transmit to others the rights he himself had lost. His successors, kings but in name, and intrusive usurpers in fact, had only one last resource left to return within the pale of legitimacy, and this would have been to have carried the Constitution into sincere and complete execution, and thus have again become lawful sovereigns by the free consent of the national representation.

“By admitting that the Bourbons could once more become lawful sovereigns, in case they had restored the national institutions and the compact they had sworn to maintain in 1812, the Parliament did but acknowledge the truth of that eternal principle which must ever be the mainspring of all political rights, *i. e. the safety of the people according to the ways of justice*—a principle which might have reinstated the Bourbons had they repented in time, but which now drives them from the throne, seeing that they have persevered in their tyranny and usurpation.”

By the second part of the decree of deposition, the Parliament having declared that it would call an Italian prince to the throne after the Constitution of 1812 had been adapted to its present emergencies, the principal care of the Parliament from the 13th of April to the 11th of July was directed to the restoration and the reform of this Constitution. The executive power organized at the same time the national guard, the army, and every means of national defence, and sent accredited representatives to all the Italian courts, and to the Government of Great Britain, and that of the French Republic. ⁽¹⁾

On the 9th of June Mr. Goodwin, the English Consul-general at Palermo, presented himself in the name of his Government to the President of the kingdom and to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and declared that Great Britain would recognise the new King of Sicily when in possession of the throne; and the same declaration was to be made to the Court of Sardinia, provided the choice fell upon the Duke of Genoa. ⁽²⁾

On the 11th of July, the Parliament having accomplished the reform of the Constitution, proceeded to the election of the

(1) The Letters of the President of the Government of the kingdom of Sicily, accrediting to the British Government as Commissioners the Prince do Granatelli and M. Scalia, were presented to Lord Palmerston 24th June, 1848. See Correspondence, page 345.

(2) See the Dispatches of Lord Napier, Mr. Goodwin, and Mr. Abercromby. Pari. Papers, pp. 338-343.

King. The Duke of Genoa, the youngest son of the King of Sardinia, was called to the throne by the name of Albert Amadeus. ⁽¹⁾

We will not now speak of the reform which the Parliament introduced into the Constitution of 1812. These reforms, required by necessities similar to those to which we have already directed attention in relation to the Act of convocation of the Parliament, were not put into execution, which they should have been as soon as the new King was upon the throne. The only new institution that was enforced was that of the National Guard, the prompt organisation of which was indispensable, the country, after the Revolution, being left without a public force of any kind. Besides this, the National Guard was by no means a newly constituted institution, as some traces of it are to be found in some of the old institutions, which the Constitution of 1812 had tacitly maintained.

The English squadron anchoring in the harbour of Palermo, according to the orders of the Foreign Office, after the election of the King, saluted the Sicilian flag. ⁽²⁾ Admiral Parker and the officers of the squadron took part in the public rejoicings which followed the election. *The Porcupine*, a steamer of the squadron, conveyed a courier from the Sicilian Cabinet to Genoa, to announce the election of the King to the Court of Turin.

The same demonstrations of recognition of the Sicilian independence were made by the French squadron, also anchored before Palermo. This is not the place to discuss the importance of the new connections established between free and independent Sicily and Republican France, which were then commenced as much by these demonstrations as by the diplomatic relations at the same time established between the two countries. The examination of the obligations, more or less explicit, which the French Republic at this time

(1) Vouchers, Letters C C, p. 118.

(2) See the Dispatch of Lord Eddisbury. Pari. Papers, p. 351

contracted in favour of the new State of Sicily, and the examination of the manner in which she has fulfilled these, would be too great a digression from our argument. We will merely follow the course of the Sicilian revolution to the end of the Anglo-French mediation in connection with the question of the relations of Sicily with England.

A deputation of four members from the Chamber of Peers, of four from the Chamber of Commons, and from the Mayor of Palermo, was conveyed by the French war steamer, the *Descartes*, to Genoa to present at Turin the Act of election of the new King.

It must here be recollected that after Ferdinand had been forced to grant a constitution to the kingdom of Naples, the King of Piedmont, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Pope, had also from February to March granted constitutions to their States.

These important events had been followed by the insurrection of Milan, by the expulsion of the Austrians from this town, and by the capitulation of Venice, when Charles Albert, the only one of the Italian Princes who had sincerely pursued the liberal career, entered Lombardy at the head of his army, to which place armies had also been expedited by the constitutional Ministers of Rome, of Florence, and of Naples, and who, as this war had so happily commenced, would have had it in their power to liberate this beautiful part of Italy.

In consequence of the defection of the Pope, and of the King of Naples, this movement was terminated by the defeat of the Italian armies, and by an armistice.

It was at the time of this uncertainty as to the fate of Piedmont and of Charles Albert, that the Sicilian deputation arrived at Turin. The Duke of Genoa did not decide either to accept or to refuse the crown.

The King of Naples at the same time had given the signal of anti-constitutional reaction by the horrible massacres of the 15th of May; he had stifled the revolution of the Calabrias, and the whole of the army that he had recalled from Northern Italy was destined to form an expedition against Sicily.

England would have had a perfect right to have forbidden the King of Naples to carry on this war against Sicily for the purpose of destroying that constitution of 1812, in favour of which, she had by many recent acts, and even formally, declared that she was morally bound to uphold; it was her duty to maintain these engagements, even by force of arms, and she could, in case of any difference of opinion arising with any of the great Powers, to whom the King of Naples might have appealed on the ground that Article 104 of the Treaty of Vienna had united the two kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, and destroyed the constitution of 1812, have opened a conference with the powers who had signed the Treaty of Vienna. It was a precisely similar case to that of Belgium. France, in maintaining the separation of Belgium from Holland, in the conferences with the Powers who signed the Treaty of Vienna, had not the same good reasons that England would have had in enforcing the separation of the two Italian kingdoms. In the first instance, to accede to the wishes of France, the Powers were obliged to set aside the Treaty of Vienna, which, in reality, established the union of Belgium and Holland; in the second, by acceding to the wishes of England, they would only execute the Treaty of Vienna, that Treaty having neither united Sicily to Naples, nor destroyed the constitution of 1812. If, however, Lord Palmerston, in the month of August, had, by the intervention of the English squadron, resolutely prevented the departure of the expedition of the King of Naples against Sicily, the King of Naples would certainly not have gone to war with England; he would have remitted the question to the decision of England herself, or to that of a congress. Let the partizans of peace who are so numerous in England, remember that, even when Great Britain wished to force this same King of Naples to suppress the sulphur monopoly, she

obtained all that she demanded without going to war,—she only made her demand resolutely, and supported that demand by the hostile attitude of a squadron.

None of these means were attempted by Great Britain to prevent this expedition, which was as injurious to the rights of Sicily as to the honour of England. The English diplomacy at Naples, which, three months previous had charged the Consul, Mr. Goodwin, to notify to the Government of Sicily its recognition of the act of deposition of the Bourbons, towards the end of August witnessed the departure of the expedition of Ferdinand, who, after that Act was but a usurper, to make the conquest of the Island; the English squadron, which two months before had recognized the Sicilian flag, witnessed the destruction of Messina, of that beautiful town, the second in Sicily, and one of the richest *entrepots* of English commerce in the Mediterranean. ⁽¹⁾

The orders to preserve neutrality sent to the English squadron were of the strictest nature. Although the town was bombarded for eight hours after it had ceased to offer any resistance, and pillages, massacres, burnings, were committed with a cruelty of which there is no parallel, it was only after the invitation of the Admiral of the French Republic that the English Admiral resolved to intervene, and to put a stop to this war of extermination. It was under these circumstances that France and England imposed this armistice of September, which was only accepted by Sicily after the most ample protestations of her rights to absolute independence; protestations which were renewed at London and at Paris by the Sicilian Commissioners, who addressed most explicit *notes* to the two Governments. The two Powers, however, although they at first intervened in the name of humanity, commenced discussing the political question, but only treating with the Neapolitan Ministers.

(1) When we say *the destruction of Messina*, we are not exaggerating. See Vouchers, Letter D D, page 119, and the Parliamentary Papers on the alleged atrocities committed by the Neapolitan troops in Sicily, and the debate in the English Parliament, February, 1849.

The annals of diplomacy do not contain more than one instance of negotiations conducted and terminated in such a manner as those which took place at Naples, from September 1848 to February 1849. Although the two negotiators were aware that their respective Governments, in conjunction with Russia, having in 1827 interfered in the Greek question in the interest of humanity, did not abandon it until they had solved it not only in that interest, but also according to the maxims of political justice, (1) they did not hesitate to abandon Sicily, first to the political tyranny of Ferdinand, who by a decree destroyed the Sicilian Constitution of 1812, which always existed in right and at that time in fact and in right, and then to the fresh massacres, to the fresh burnings, to the fresh devastations of these barbarous troops; it might have been thought that the French negotiator not understanding the rights of Sicily, or not properly interpreting the recognition that his Government had recently made of them, might have accepted from the King of Naples an *ultimatum*, and might have permitted a French Admiral to be its bearer, and to make it known in Sicily; but it cannot be believed that the Hon. Mr. Temple, who at another period had exhibited sufficient firmness in opposition to other unjust requirements of the same Ferdinand, would have accepted this *ultimatum*, and backed by the authority of the English name this complete destruction of the rights of Sicily recognized and guaranteed by Great Britain. It might at least have been hoped that he would have protested and have abandoned the mediation. When a Neapolitan Minister had proposed to Lord Minto bases of a mediation which, in a greater or less degree, would have destroyed the Constitution of 1812, the Noble Lord answered that far from undertaking the mediation on such bases, he should commence by protesting against them. (2)

Could England, again intervening in the Sicilian question, require from the King of Naples less than Lord Minto had

(1) See the Notes of M. de Rayneval and Mr. Temple to the Prince de Cariati. Correspondence, page 625.

(2) See Letters of Lord Minto. Correspondence, page 153 and 157.

required in March 1848? ⁽¹⁾ Lord Minto had in March said; Sicily has a right to the Constitution of 1812, a negotiation between Sicily and the Bourbon dynasty can not take place except by combining with the free consent of the Sicilian nation, this Constitution, with the union of the two crowns upon the same head. Such was the question resolved by the seventeen propositions of the Sicilian Committee, accepted and proposed to the King in March 1848 by Lord Minto.

We do not say that if England, conjointly with France, had resolutely required from the King of Naples in this new mediation these same conditions, that Sicily would have accepted them. In March 1848, when Sicily proposed these conditions, Ferdinand had not sullied himself with the massacres of Naples, neither had he in fact, suppressed in that kingdom the Constitution nor destroyed Messina; Sicily had not claimed her strict right; but we say that if England had required these conditions, although she would not have acted consistently with her declarations of June and of July, 1848, she would not at least have abandoned the principles of the protection of the Constitution of 1812, and of the separation by right of the two crowns; she would not have lent herself to the destruction of that Constitution, she would have acted consistently with the negotiations of a member of the British Cabinet.

The *ultimatum* of Gaeta ⁽²⁾ is not a Constitution, it is the promise of a Constitution, but such as it is, it completely destroys the Constitution of 1812, and substitutes for the rights of the Sicilians a charter granted by Ferdinand. That has been sufficiently proved; ⁽³⁾ but it would also be easy for us to prove it by examining about a dozen of those Articles.

(1) See the explicit approbation by the Foreign Office of the mediation of Lord Minto throughout the Correspondence, pages 261, 279, and 280.

(2) See Vouchers, Letters E E, page 120.

(3) See several of the liberal journals as the "Sun," the "Daily News" of March 1849, and an excellent pamphlet by M. Amari, "The Anglo-French Mediation, &c."

Compact with the Dynasty. The three Articles on the law of the succession to the throne, 17, 19, and 15, in the Constitution of 1812, which we have already quoted, ⁽¹⁾ which establish the absolute and perpetual separation of the two kingdoms under two branches of the same dynasty which reigned in Sicily in 1812, the obligation of the King to cause himself to be recognized by the Parliament in the course of two mouths, and not to quit the kingdom without the consent of the national representation, are annulled by the 5th, 16th and 17th Articles of the statute of Gaeta; the 5th enacting that "Sicily will continue to make an integral part of the united kingdom of the Two Sicilies;" the 16th ordering the recognition of the decree of the 8th December 1816, and of the other illegal acts of 7th April 1829, and of the 8th March 1836, published during the suspension of the Constitution, with regard to the succession to the throne of Sicily; and the 17th saying that "When the King does not reside in Sicily, he shall be represented there by a Viceroy, with such attributes and such power, as shall be determined by his Majesty."

Having set aside the question of the separation of the two kingdoms by an act of the royal will, the statute of Gaeta establishing by the 32nd Article, the proportion in which the Sicilians can hold the public offices of the united kingdom, and by the 30th, the proportion in which they are to contribute to the common expenses, establishes and fixes the conditions of the union of the two kingdoms. The new statute supposing the king to have the right of annulling the Constitution of 1812, as regards the separation of the two kingdoms; it is to him and not to the two nations that he wishes to unite that it gives the right of dictating the conditions of the union, conditions which can no where be found in the Constitution of 1812. Besides, the 30th Article which establishes the sum to be payed by the Sicilian nation fixedly, and permanently, is contrary to the letter of the three fundamental Articles of the Constitution of 1812, the 2nd, 10th and 12th, ⁽²⁾ which give the Parliament the right of taxation

(1) See page 11 of this pamphlet.

(2) See Vouchers, Letter G, page 10.

without any limitations, as Sicily possessed it for centuries before 1812, and according to the English Constitution.

Executive Power. The Constitution of 1812 had imposed two great limitations on the executive power by the two Articles we have mentioned, ⁽¹⁾ by which the right of making any kind of treaties with the foreign powers being vested in the King, ought to be exercised “without either directly or indirectly contravening the same Constitution,” and the King is forbidden “to introduce or to keep in Sicily any other land or sea forces except those that the Parliament would permit, or those stipulated for by treaty in 1812.”

The new statute, by the 7th Article, giving to the King without any limitation “the right to propose or conclude all treaties of peace or alliance, or of commerce with Foreign Powers;” and by the 18th, confirming “this supreme direction of foreign relations, and reserving to the King the disposal of the forces by land and by sea;” also without any limitation, and only appointing “for the whole monarchy one Minister of War and Marine, and one Minister for Foreign Affairs, both residing in Naples,” destroys those two Articles of the Constitution of 1812, and authorizes the King—1st, to render every constitution nominal in Sicily, by compressing it by a foreign force, either Neapolitan or Swiss, or any of his allies; 2ndly, it appoints two irresponsible Ministers above the Sicilian Chambers, those of War and of Foreign Affairs, who residing at Naples, and being responsible by the Neapolitan Constitution to the Parliament of Naples, cannot be responsible to that of Sicily.

By the 19th Article, it also appoints a Minister for the affairs of Sicily residing at Naples, and according to the 17th, 18th, and 22d Articles, a Viceroy, with powers which shall be determined by the King, and a sufficient number of responsible Ministers, among whom shall be divided the departments of Grace and Justice, of the Interior, of the Finances, of the Public Works, of Agriculture and Commerce,

(1) Page 12 of this Pamphlet.

of Ecclesiastical Affairs, and of Instruction and *Police*. That portion of the Executive power that the King will delegate to the Viceroy not being defined, he will undoubtedly delegate to him the affairs of less importance; and the most serious, even of those branches of the Government which apparently are confided to the Viceroy and to the Ministers resident in Sicily, will, in reality, not be decided in Sicily, but by the King and the Minister of the Affairs of Sicily resident at Naples. But can this Minister, who will have in his hands the chief part of the executive power, be responsible to the Sicilian Parliament, whilst these resolutions have been taken with regard to nine other Ministers who constitute the Council of Naples? On the other hand, how can the Ministers resident in Sicily be rendered responsible to the Sicilian Parliament, if they can avoid that responsibility by alleging an order of the Council of Naples? This question has been very skilfully dealt with, and it has been clearly demonstrated that the executive power established by the statute of Gaeta would be altogether irresponsible to the Sicilian Parliament. ⁽¹⁾

The *Legislative Power* was carefully determined by the Constitution of 1812, and in many of its chapters. We will mention the most important of these enactments.

By the second of the twelve fundamental articles of this Constitution “this Power is vested exclusively in the Parliament; the laws shall have force as soon as they have received the sanction of his Majesty.” By the 2nd section of the first chapter on the Legislative Power, His Majesty is to decide upon the decrees of the Parliament “before dissolving or proroguing it, using the simple form of placet or veto,, and without in any way altering or modifying them.” By the 4th section of the same chapter, “the Parliament alone shall have the right not only to make laws, but also to create and organize new, and to suppress old, magistracies.” By the 2nd section of the same chapter, “the Chamber of Peers shall be composed of all those barons and their successors, and of all those ecclesiastics and their successors, who at that time, in

(1) The Anglo-French mediation in Sicily, by M. Amari.

1812, had the right of sitting and voting in Parliament.” The Articles then proceed to compose a Chamber of Commons, according to a census in proportion to the fiscal conditions of Sicily in 1812. In the first place, the statute of Gaeta contains no chapter on the Legislative Power; it only says very vaguely in two places, in Article 8th of the chapter on the Executive Power, and in Article 37th of that of the Parliament,⁴ that the King shall exercise, collectively with the Parliament, the Legislative Power.” It afterwards says, at the 45th and 46th Articles, that the Peers are appointed for life by the King, under the sole condition that they shall be forty years of age.

The 53rd, 54th, and 55th Articles, the only ones which are in accordance with the Constitution of 1812, appoint the Chamber of Commons according to the same census as that of 1812, which is now enormous in proportion to the diminution of wealth which has taken place in Sicily during the last thirty-three years.

What independence can a Parliament possess of which one Chamber is composed of the creatures of the King, and the other of persons who may have a fortune, but perhaps no talent?—a Parliament, the legislative power of which is so ill defined—whose decrees the King has the power either to sanction or to reject, not before the Parliament is dissolved, not purely and simply, but whenever he pleases, and with all the modifications that he may choose to introduce into them?

The 24th and 25th Articles of the Statute confirm the abolition that the decrees of 1816 had made of all the organic liberal laws relating to the collection of the public revenue, municipal independence, and the organisation of the magistracy, which formed part of the constitution of 1812, borrowed some from the ancient Sicilian constitution, and some from the English. According to the 24th and 25th Articles it is not the organisation of 1812 which is to be put into execution, but the laws of French centralisation which are to be adapted by the Parliament to the new statute. As if a free constitution consisted merely in an assembly in two

Chambers, and in some Ministers, nominally responsible, and not in a collection of liberal and national laws which should form the basis of the Parliament and of the Ministry.

The liberty of the Press, which is the object of a special law in the constitution of 1812, is merely a promise in the statute of Gaeta. By the 4th Article, "The King reserves to himself the plenitude of his power to publish some dispositions (for the repression of abuses of this liberty) in a special law." The right of resistance, which forms part of a special law in the constitution of 1812, and the jury, the object of another special law, are not mentioned in the statute of Gaeta.

Lastly, that no one may be under the delusion that that statute is not the destruction of the constitution of 1812, it imposes a tax on Sicily of 500,000 ounces to defray the expenses of that war, which she was obliged to make in order to maintain that same constitution of 1812.

Such was the result of that mediation which had lasted for six months, and over which England had not any influence. In September, France, who was the first to intervene, dictated the bases of the mediation. ⁽¹⁾ She laid down the principle of the union of the two crowns; a principle, which replaces the island under the influence of the continent; she led England to abandon any guarantee which might have left some remains of independence to Sicily. ⁽²⁾

The influence of Russia was also used to bring about the unfortunate result of these negotiations.

The Count de Chreptovich, the Russian Minister at Naples, refusing to take a share in the mediation to which the Neapolitan Government had invited him, under the pretext

(1) See Correspondence. Dispatch of the Marquis of Normanby to Viscount Palmerston. Page 515.

(2) See Dispatch of Lord Palmerston to Lord Normanby, page 516 of the Correspondence, by which it will be seen that Lord Palmerston, when he acceded to the propositions suggested by the French Government, required that the army, stationed in Sicily, should be Sicilian, but this guarantee did not form a part of the ultimatum of Gaeta.

that, Russia being a party to the Treaty of Vienna, had guaranteed the union of the two kingdoms, ⁽¹⁾ not entering into this question, terminates his note by the following haughty and almost menacing words: "that he will continue therefore strictly to maintain this line of conduct which has been formally laid down for him by the Imperial Cabinet, in whose opinion, this mediation, informal as it is, is stained by one radical and indelible vice, that of an involuntary obligation imposed by force; he would avoid associating himself with attempts at pacification, the principle of which is disapproved by the Imperial Government immediately that it ceases to be compatible with the respect due to every independent Power."

Mr. Temple, far from answering that this independent Power owed the Sovereignty of Sicily to England, who, from 1805 to 1814, employed her armies to protect the island, and to a solemn compact entered into with the Sicilians by means of the intervention of England, who, in 1848, acting in accordance with this principle, had recognised the legality of the Sicilian revolution; M. de Rayneval, far from answering that this same recognition had been made by the French Republic in accordance with the principle of her constitution, only upheld their intervention in the interest of humanity, and merely reminding the Russian Minister that in 1827 his cabinet, in the same interest, had intervened in the Greek

(1) We have not thought it necessary to allude to the strange assumption of the Court of Naples, that the treaty of Vienna by its 104th article (see page 10 of this pamphlet) has united the Two Kingdoms of Naples and of Sicily, as the English Government has never recognized this assumption. Even had Lord Castlereagh himself in March and in June 1821, although at a loss for reasons to justify his tolerance of this extraordinary act on the part of the King of Naples, never referred to the treaty of Vienna for such justification. The two dispatches of Lord Palmerston (Correspondence, pp. 278 and 344), and those of Lord Minto (Correspondence, pp. 153 and 157), and the speeches of those Noble Lords on many occasions in both Houses of Parliament, prove that the present Government of England does not admit in the least this assumption on the part of the King of Naples. As M. Amari has justly-observed, article 104, merely says, "Ferdinand is recognized as King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies." Can the fact of the word Kingdom being used in the singular instead of the plural destroy alike history and right? (see *La Sicile et les Bourbon*, par M. Amari, pp. 41 and 42, where this question is argued at length.)

question. Some expressions contained in the note of M. de Rayneval are very remarkable: "Some of the Count de Chreptovich's observations," he said, "*are* in accordance with ours," and then "if, as everything leads me to hope, the good offices of France and England contribute to re-establish union, peace and confidence between the two portions of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, I am too well acquainted with the sentiments which animate the Imperial Cabinet of St. Petersburg, not to feel assured that it will rejoice the more at such a result, from the fact of its having been obtained without fresh disasters." (1) Certainly, the Cabinet of St. Petersburg could rejoice at nothing more than at the Statute of Gaeta.

The speech from the throne of the 1st of February, 1849, having alluded to the Sicilian mediation, that mediation became the subject of much incidental discussion in Parliament, although the question was never regularly debated. Some of the members of the two houses complained that the policy that had lately been followed by the cabinet in this question was not in accordance with the obligations that England had contracted towards Sicily, and the Earl of Aberdeen said, that these obligations were worthy of being discussed, and if they existed, the honour of the country required them to be maintained. (2) It is very difficult to explain why, at the very time negotiations were being carried on at Naples for the total abandonment of the rights of Sicily, Lord Palmerston should say to the House of Commons, "Those who know the degree in which the British Government was connected with the establishment of the Constitution of 1812 in Sicily, the sort of assurance given by our ministers of that day, must see that any Government of England could not avoid taking a lively interest in the affairs of that country." (3)

(1) See Dispatch of the Count de Chreptovich to the Prince de Cariati, and the Dispatch of M. de Rayneval and of Mr. Temple to the same Prince de Cariati. Pages 612 and 625 of the Correspondence.

(2) See Debates in Parliament of the early part of February, 1849, and more especially the speeches of Lord Beaumont, of the Earl of Ellenborough, and the Earl of Aberdeen in the House of Lords; of Viscount Mandeville and others in the House of Commons.

The *ultimatum* at first carried to Sicily by the two French and English admirals, and then presented in a less irregular form by Mr. Temple and M. de Rayneval, who had themselves proceeded to Palermo, was unanimously rejected by the Parliament. When taken by a French war-steamer, the Ariel, to all the maritime towns of the island, it was also rejected by the whole of the population, and the war recommenced with still greater enthusiasm. ⁽¹⁾

Sicily had organized a land force of considerable importance, although composed of young recruits, and under the command of foreign leaders; but she possessed scarcely any maritime force, and consequently as all her large towns were maritime, they were doubly exposed to destruction, attacked by land and by sea by the considerable forces of the King of Naples. Considering this disproportion of force, the resolution of the Parliament was so much the more honourable; Sicily chose rather to lose all than to modify her rights by accepting a concession from the King of Naples. This war was to decide, not only the liberty or the slavery of Sicily, but her civilization or her return to barbarism. The Parliament during the space of fifteen months had ameliorated the interior condition of the country by the suppression of many unjust laws, some of Finances, some of Police, and others in different branches of the Government, which during 33 years had been enacted by the violence and by the avarice of a foreign and despoiling Government. ⁽²⁾ Ruggiero Settimo who had always enjoyed the public confidence, some months after

(3) Speech of Lord Palmerston in the House of Commons. *Tima*, 3rd February, page 4.

(1) Mr. Temple, who had returned from Palermo to Naples, wrote on the 13th of April, to Lord Palmerston in these words: "Although the alterations in the form of the *ultimatum* of Gaeta enabled Prince Butera to lay the conditions before the Parliament, the feelings of the Sicilians against them were so strong and unanimous, that they were rejected by acclamation. Indeed it appears evident that nothing short of an arrangement which would secure to the Sicilians their Constitution of 1812, had any chance of being accepted by them." Dispatch of Air. Temple to Lord Palmerston: Correspondence, page 701. Thus Mr. Temple recognized that the statute of Gaeta, which the King of Naples declared to have been drawn up on the bases of the Constitution of 1812, (see commencement of the statute of Gaeta) differs entirely from that Constitution.

the 27th of March 1848, had been declared irresponsible. In the three ministries which succeeded each other were to be found some of the most talented, the most devoted, and the most disinterested men of Sicily.

We are not yet in possession of sufficient information to form a judgment upon the events which have recently taken place in Sicily; Catania, after the most noble resistance was burnt and captured; Syracuse was betrayed through the treason of a foreign commander. It seems that a promise of Admiral Baudin, which was not fulfilled, together with a conspiracy of the Mayor of Palermo, one of the former partizans of Ferdinand, who had recently assumed a liberal mask, and some of the chiefs of the National Guard, caused the unexpected *denouement* of that noble revolution. The Parliament, after the fall of Catania and of Syracuse, accepting a new mediation proposed by Admiral Baudin, conferred on Ruggiero Settimo the power of negotiating or of continuing the war, and then prorogued itself to meet again on the 8th August. The abandonment on the part of Admiral Baudin of the negotiations, and the defection of the National Guard, had rendered it impossible for Settimo either to negotiate or to defend the country, and forced him to retire. No legitimate political authority remained at Palermo. Those who afterwards surrendered Palermo and the remainder of Sicily to Filangieri are guilty of high treason to the national representation of Sicily.

Ferdinand, who again reigns in Sicily, will either maintain the statute of Gaeta, or he will not maintain it? Whichsoever course he adopts, he will entirely have suppressed the Constitution of 1812. The suppression of that Constitution

(2) In a dispatch of the Consul, Mr. Goodwin, to the Hon. W. Temple, (Correspondence, p. 706), it will be seen that more than 500 Acts, having for their object the amelioration of the Government, had been passed by the Parliament in the years 1848 and 1849, which are annulled by the Statute of Gaeta. The decree of the Sicilian Parliament of the 23rd of August, 1848, diminish considerably the duties previously levied on goods imported into or exported from the island* (See *Times*, 6th November, 1848.) The commercial statistics of each year collected by the same Consul, Mr. Goodwin, state that the English commercial transactions with that island in 1848 were more than double in amount and value those of 1847.

gives the Sicilians the right of rising against him as they have done in 1848. Sicilians look upon Ferdinand as an usurper, and feel it to be their sacred duty to expel him, and they will do so whenever it may be in their power. But what a responsibility will rest upon Great Britain?

From the facts we have stated we draw the following deductions:

I. —By the part that Great Britain took in the political events which occurred in Sicily from 1812 to 1814, it is proved that she contracted a formal obligation to maintain the Sicilian Constitution of 1812. Sir J. Mackintosh, Lord W. Bentinck and Lord Ellenborough bear testimony as to the existence of this obligation, and no doubt can be entertained on this subject after the publication in 1849 by the English Government of its memorandum of 1814. Since 1814 Great Britain has twice been placed in a situation in which it was her duty to have fulfilled this obligation—after the Sicilian Revolution of 1820, and after that of 1848. This duty was still more incumbent on her in 1848, the Sicilian nation having, in 1848, in the most unanimous and energetic manner pronounced its wish that the Constitution of 1812 should be re-established. If, admitting the obligation of England, it should be contended that it is now too late to fulfil that obligation, we would answer that, although such an assertion may be easily made, and although Lord Castlereagh asserted it as much when six years only had elapsed after the guarantee given by Great Britain, yet we do not find that in the memorandum of 1814 Great Britain said, she would *protect and support* the Constitution of 1812 only until a certain time shall have elapsed, or can we ever imagine that those obligations could be got rid of otherwise than by their complete fulfilment at whatsoever time that might arrive.

II. —Considering some declarations of Lord Palmerston, and of several members of the Cabinet, and looking at the conduct of England towards Sicily from the commencement of the Sicilian revolution up to the end of August, 1849, it

appears certain that she recognised her obligation to maintain the Constitution of 1812. It cannot be contended that at that period she acted as a neutral and disinterested power. At first using every effort as mediatrix to assure to Sicily the full enjoyment of the Constitution of 1812, excepting the separation of the two crowns, afterwards recognizing the necessity of that separation, and promising, after the Sicilian Parliament pronounced the decree of the deposition of the Bourbons, to recognize the new King that it had chosen, receiving Sicilian envoys, acknowledging the Sicilian flag, and by other acts and declarations, she could, only have been acting as the guarantee of the Constitution of 1812. It was by virtue of this Constitution alone that all the acts of the Provisional Government and of the Sicilian Parliament could be legitimate in the opinion of the English Government. It cannot be said that she recognized an accomplished fact, seeing that the King of Naples had in his possession at the commencement of the revolution two fortresses in Sicily, and always held the citadel of Messina, By persevering in this original course of policy, and supporting the Constitution of 1812, England would have accomplished her ancient and new engagements, and would have been enabled to maintain her influence in Sicily; a honourable influence, acquired by the support that she gave during the wars of Napoleon to her independence and to her liberty; an influence rendered necessary by her own great commercial interests and those of her Mediterranean colonies, which will always be threatened by the monopolies of Ferdinand, by his avarice, and by his aversion to every thing that is English.

III. —The English Cabinet having recognised the obligations of 1812 and of 1814, and having by this entirely voluntary acknowledgment encouraged the Sicilian revolution, was in duty bound to maintain this policy by every moral and material means, but instead of doing so she completely abandoned Sicily. By abandoning Sicily, with her cities in ruins, with her country ravaged, with hundreds of her best citizens banished, to the despotism of Ferdinand, England has

rendered herself liable a second time to be accused of having betrayed this island, and has renounced all influence there; and this whilst France and Austria are intervening in Italy, whilst Russia, by her haughty manifesto and by her intervention in Hungary, declares herself the arbiter of the destinies of the East and of Europe.

However, the British ministry still declares it will not abandon Sicily. ⁽¹⁾ But how, under existing circumstances, will the British Government act—will it resume its original line of conduct which it pursued up to the month of August last? will it declare to the Court of Naples that although both the attempts at mediation with the Sicilians have proved unsuccessful, yet Great Britain is not in consequence released from her engagements to Sicily, and that therefore she cannot permit any change to be introduced into the Constitution of 1812 without the free consent of the Sicilians, or will she content herself with writing a note, or despatching an ambassador to King Ferdinand to give him advice, which will meet with the same attention from him as did the advice of Lord Durham from the Czar Nicholas, after the conquest of Poland had been accomplished?

After the vacillating policy which has been adopted by the English Cabinet with regard to this question, it is impossible to conjecture whether Great Britain will return to her old engagements, or to what extent she may take an interest in the future fate of Sicily. It is, however, certain that it will be impossible to avoid a debate in Parliament on this subject, in the course of which the necessity of strictly maintaining the honour and influence of this country in her transactions with foreign states will be no doubt insisted on, for there are men in both houses who are ready to maintain the cause of truth and of justice in opposition to any power, however mighty; and who will contend that by the abandonment of Sicily a

(1) We gather this from the speech of the Marquis of Lansdowne in reply to Lord Beaumont, after the arrival of the intelligence of the first reverses which the Sicilian arms had experienced.—See Report of Debate in the House of Lords of the 19th April, in the *Times* of 20th April, 1849.

second time England has again justly subjected herself to the reproach cast upon her in 1821, by Sir James Mackintosh, when he declared that “she could not abandon these same engagements WITHOUT PERFIDY AND DISHONOUR.”

VOUCHERS

No. 1. - ANCIENT RELATIONS BETWEEN ENGLAND AND SICILY.

(A.) Treaty of Commerce between the Kingdoms of Great Britain and Sicily, drawn up on the 25/8 day of February/March 17 12/13.

WHEREAS, by several treaties of peace, alliance, commerce, and navigation, formerly made between the kingdoms of Great Britain and Spain, and at this time subsisting, but more particularly by the treaty concluded at Madrid the day of the month of May, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-seven, and the schedules annexed thereunto, provision was made for the freedom, security, and perfect ease of the commerce of British subjects trading in the kingdoms and provinces of Spain; the observance and usages of which treaties have been hitherto received in the kingdom of Sicily, in the same manner as in any other the dominions of Spain, and have remained there in full force, except some variations which have been introduced in the course of time, for the rectifying whereof, according to the rules of those treaties, Great Britain has hitherto justly insisted.

Wherefore, on occasion of transferring the kingdom of Sicily to His Royal Highness the Duke of Savoy, Her Sacred Majesty of Great Britain, being watchful to preserve the rights and privileges of her subjects trading in the said kingdom, and being likewise willing to preserve to the Sicilians the privileges they have in Great Britain, which are so very dear to the Most Serene Duke of Savoy, hath been graciously pleased to give instructions to her underwritten ministers plenipotentiary, to agree with the ministers plenipotentiary of His Royal

Highness of Savoy, about making declarations mutually on this subject: in pursuance thereof, the said ministers plenipotentiary of His Royal Highness, in the name of their most serene master, do most solemnly declare and promise, that during the reign of the aforesaid Most Serene Duke in Sicily, as likewise of his heirs and successors, the British merchants are henceforward to have, and shall effectually have, use, and enjoy all those rights, privileges, liberties, and entire security, as to their persons, goods, ships, seamen, trade, and navigation, in the said kingdom of Sicily, which by virtue of the treaties made between Great Britain and Spain, they have hitherto enjoyed, or ought to enjoy; and to that end, that all abuses which deviate from the tenor of the said treaties, shall be forthwith removed, and the rights and privileges acquired to the British subjects, by virtue of the aforesaid treaties, shall not upon any occasion, or under any pretence, ever be violated or lessened; and if hitherto any more favourable privileges have been granted to the merchants of any other foreign nation, or shall hereafter be granted, any way relating to the persons of the traders, their ships, goods, duties, or the business of merchandizing, the British merchants shall likewise in all respects and in the fullest manner enjoy the same.

And in like manner the ministers plenipotentiary of Great Britain do, in the name of Her Majesty, confirm that the Sicilians shall hereafter enjoy the same privileges and liberties which they have hitherto enjoyed, or ought to have enjoyed, as subjects of the king of Spain, by virtue of the aforesaid treaty of the year 1667.

The ratifications of this present declaration and engagement, made in due form, shall be exchanged at Utrecht, within six weeks, or sooner if possible.

In witness and confirmation whereof, the aforesaid ministers plenipotentiary of Her Majesty of Great Britain, and of His Royal Highness of Savoy, have signed this present instrument with their own hands, and put their seals

thereunto, at Utrecht, the *25/8 day of February/March 17 12/13*.

(L.S.) JOH. BRISTOL, C.P.S.

(L.S.) LE C. MAFFEI.

(L.S.) STRAFFORD.

(L.S.) LE M. DUBOURG.

(L.S.) P. MELLAREDE.

No. 2. - ANCIENT CONSTITUTION OF SICILY.

(B.) *Speech of H. R. H, the Hereditary Prince Francis, delegated by His Majesty the King to the Parliament of the Kingdom of Sicily, on its opening on the 10th February, 1810.*

I have ordered that, according to the laws of my august predecessors, the three chambers (*Bracci*) of this kingdom should be assembled in one general Parliament, to discuss the measures that ought to be adopted for supplying the treasury in these difficult times. Believe me, my very faithful subjects, my paternal heart could have wished, the same as in 1806, to have to require no fresh pecuniary sacrifice at your hands. Were I able to provide suitably for the public cause, by such contributions as you have offered me in the preceding Parliament, I would not ask for anything beyond the continuance of those supplies. But the unfortunate state of Europe, which even the obscurest inhabitants of the country are well aware of, is an imperious circumstance that compels me to inform you that the defence of the kingdom requires extraordinary and immediate assistance.

The cause that I defend, and for which I request the necessary supplies, is one that interests not only my own family, but the maintenance of our holy religion, of the privileges of the different classes of society, and of the political institutions of this kingdom in general, to which you are all so strongly attached by the indissoluble bonds of the love you bear your country. And here it may not be out of place to remind you that these great and precious advantages were

possessed by other nations as respectable as yours, but have been every where forfeited from a want of public spirit and national energy, so that one may safely affirm that they exist no where save in the two most famous islands of the world, Great Britain and Sicily.

The aim and end of your endeavours must therefore be to preserve the valuable inheritance of these fine institutions that the kings, my predecessors, have endowed you with, and which it behoves you to transmit to your descendants, at the price of great pecuniary sacrifices and of the greatest personal danger. I therefore doubt not but that you will cheerfully grant whatever may be necessary for the defence of the kingdom. Nevertheless, in assessing the taxes, you must bear in mind that although the present cause is common to all our subjects, it interests more especially still the great landed proprietors. This piece of advice is not superfluous in the times we live in, neither should I fulfil the duties of that sovereignty and royal authority which I hold of God, did I fail to remind you of that just and unvarying maxim which enjoins every one to support his share of the burdens of the State, according to his means.

May our Lord God grant my prayers, and bestow his blessing on you and myself.

(C.) Protestation of the Parliamentary Barons of the Kingdom of Sicily, against the publication of the Royal Edict of 1811.

The undersigned Parliamentary Barons, in consequence of the publication of the royal edict of 1811, enjoining the detention of one per cent, upon all payments, feel the necessity of addressing themselves to the illustrious committee of the kingdom (*Deputazione del Regno*) to whom is entrusted the maintenance of national privileges, and requesting them to lay their just and respectful remonstrances at the foot of the throne.

During an uninterrupted period of several centuries, and under the different dynasties of its kings, the Sicilian people

has never recognized any other means of supplying the treasury of the royal throne, except by such contributions as were approved of by their representatives during the sittings of Parliament. His present Majesty, Ferdinand III, himself enforced the observance of this system. Nay, his Majesty, like his august father Charles III, has been hitherto so scrupulous in maintaining it, that in the month of August, last year, he convened the Parliament for the sole object of modifying the assessment of the taxes granted during the preceding session on the 5th February of the same year. The undersigned are therefore at a loss to comprehend how, after the reason alleged by His Majesty, that royal personage could possibly have been induced to depart from those principles to which he had hitherto so faithfully adhered. Even supposing the kingdom be threatened by a foreign invasion, that the revenues and the outlay be not balanced, and that ministers feel the necessity of fresh taxes, could not His Majesty have shewn the same condescendance as heretofore, and trusted to his faithful subjects assembled as a Parliament? As soon as it will please His Majesty to summon them, they will hasten to give their most serious attention to the present wants of the nation, ever continuing to display the same zeal for the public welfare, and ready to make the most generous sacrifices. The undersigned Barons doubt not but that the illustrious committee of the kingdom will take into consideration the importance and the extent of their duties, and lay before our just monarch the expression of their well founded anxiety. They likewise request the illustrious committee to assure His Majesty of their constant and inviolable fidelity to his person.

**No. 3. - CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN 1812.
ALLIANCE BETWEEN SICILY AND GREAT
BRITAIN. GUARANTY OF THAT
CONSTITUTION BY THIS POWER.**

(D.) *Royal Diploma for establishing a Vicariate General in the Person of H. R. H. the Hereditary Prince.*

Ferdinand, by the Grace of God, King of the Two Sicilies, and of Jerusalem, &c.

My very dear and well beloved son Francis, Hereditary Prince of the Two Sicilies,

Being obliged, for reasons of health and by the advice of my physicians, to try the effects of country air, and to keep away from all serious occupations, I should consider myself guilty before God, especially in these very troubled times, were I not to settle the government of the kingdom in such a manner that even the most important affairs should not be delayed, or that the public welfare should not suffer in consequence of my indisposition; and being thus desirous of easing myself of the cares of government, until it pleases God to grant me strength to bear their weight, I could not do better than entrust such a charge to you, my very dear son, who are my lawful successor, and have already given proofs of your upright feelings and capacity. I therefore constitute and name you, with my free will, my Vicar-General in my kingdom of Sicily, a dignity which you have already twice held in my kingdom of Naples, at the same time granting you, and transferring to your hands, together with the entire clause of the *alter ego*, the exercise of every right, prerogative, supremacy and faculty the same as I myself enjoy. And in order that my will be made known to and executed by all, I command that this act, signed by me and sealed by my royal signet, should be preserved in the office of the prothonotary of the kingdom, and that you should cause a copy of the same to be transmitted to all my councillors and secretaries of state, for their own information and for them to communicate its contents to all whom it may concern.

Given in Palermo, the 16th January, 1812.

(Signed) FERDINAND, REX.

(E.) *Edict for convoking the Parliament Extraordinary in 1812, by the Prince, Vicar-General of the Kingdom.*

Ferdinand, by the Grace of God, King of the Two Sicilies, and of Jerusalem, &c.

We, as Vicar-General, by virtue of the *alter ego* emanating from the act of our august father, drawn up on the 16th January of the present year, have ordered that a general Parliament extraordinary should be assembled in this city of Palermo, and that its usual solemn opening should take place on the 15th of next June.

And as it is our will that this Parliament should not only turn its attention to the wants of the State, but likewise to the correcting of abuses and the amelioration of the laws, and to everything in short that can contribute to the real happiness of this most faithful kingdom, we enjoin you most urgently to assemble to this effect at the time and in the place appointed, in order that you may listen to the propositions that will be made, and discuss them, and deliberate and decide in this Parliament extraordinary, on all the measures that will be submitted to you, for the service of the king and the benefit of the kingdom, the sole aim and end of all our endeavours.

As to the districts of this kingdom, it is our will that they should give a full and authentic power of attorney *more solito* to one of their senators or jurats, or to their syndic, if they think fit, with the faculty of substituting another in his place. (1) In the contrary case it will always be preferable to entrust this power of attorney with the same faculty, to upright and honourable landed proprietors of the country.

We doubt not that you will execute the above with as much zeal as you value our royal favour.

(Signed) FERDINAND, Vicar-General.

(1) According to the ancient constitution, such was the manner of choosing deputies to the Chamber of Commons.

(F.) *Speech delivered by H. R. H. the Prince Vicar-General, at the Solemn Opening of the Parliament Extraordinary, in 1812.*

Well beloved Sicilians,

From the moment the King, my august father, was pleased, by an Act drawn up on the 16th of last January, to entrust the reins of government to my hands, it has been my sole endeavour to make such temporary arrangements as should prepare for your future welfare and relief. In order to give greater stability to the public affairs of this kingdom, I have now thought necessary to assemble this Parliament Extraordinary in order to provide for the wants of the State, the observance and the amelioration of the laws, as well the reform of such abuses as may have crept in during the lapse of years, so that public order should be completely restored.

With regard to the first object, namely, the wants of the State, I could have wished, my faithful Sicilians, not to have been obliged to ask you for any supplies. But how can I do otherwise, in the midst of the distress of past times, and the great assistance required for your defence against an enemy who is continually threatening to make slaves of you, to carry off your children to use them as the instruments of his ambitious and despotic projects, and to waste your riches to satisfy his caprices? Thanks to God and to the foresight of my august father, together with the efficacious help of our powerful ally, you have hitherto been preserved from these calamities; to which you must add, firstly, the steps I have taken that you should not want for anything of absolute necessity in this year of scarcity; secondly, the rapid rise in the price of all articles of consumption, both on account of the improvement in the national riches and prosperity, and of the scarcity; and thirdly, the uncertainty and inefficiency of the register of lands, and the present deficit in the finances. Such are the reasons that have forced me, in spite of myself, to urge you to give your serious attention to providing for the pressing wants of the State. I do not doubt, my faithful Sicilians, but

that you will acquit yourselves of this duty with the utmost generosity and readiness, for you do not want to be told that a nation is always esteemed and respected in proportion to the greater or lesser energy it displays in enforcing its laws, and in maintaining a military force.

There is, however, nothing that tends more powerfully to increase the national riches and consequently the resources of a State, and to contribute alike to the progress of its internal and external commerce, and to the improvement of agriculture and the arts of industry, than the existence of wise laws capable of securing civil liberty and the rights of property. Of this you are thoroughly convinced, and your faithful ally, Great Britain, is a striking example of the truth of what I advance; for it is by the nicely poised equilibrium of a wise constitution that she has raised herself to the state of splendour and power she now enjoys, and that she has such ample means at her disposal for carrying on the struggle she has undertaken against our common enemy. Let therefore this important object engross your minds, my very faithful Sicilians, without allowing yourselves on one hand to be dazzled by the charms of novelty, and led away by abstract theories and specious systems, which prove dangerous innovations in matters of such serious importance; nor on the other, to display too exclusive, I may say, too superstitious an attachment to the old institutions and customs of our ancestors, an alternative equally blameable with the former. It is by following a middle course with due moderation, that your efforts will become useful to the throne and to your country, and that you will mark an ever memorable epoch in history, by laying the foundations of your national grandeur and glory. Remember that the eyes of all Europe are upon us at the present moment. Let us then gloriously achieve this great undertaking, which is, I trust, calculated to shed a lustre on the crown, and to insure its stability and your happiness, which is the constant aim of all my endeavours.

(G.) *Twelve Fundamental Articles of the Constitution of 1812.*

I. The religion of this kingdom shall be solely and exclusively the Catholic Apostolic Roman: the King shall be bound to profess that religion; and in the event of his professing any other, the throne shall, *ipso facto*, be vacated.

II. The legislative power shall be vested exclusively in the Parliament. The laws shall have force so soon as they have received the sanction of His Majesty. All taxes, of every description whatever, shall be imposed by the Parliament alone, and must likewise receive the royal sanction. The formula shall be *veto*, or *placet*; as they must be either accepted or refused by the King, without any modification whatever.

III. The executive power shall reside in the person of the King.

IV. The judicial power shall be distinct from, and independent of, the executive and legislative powers, and shall be exercised by a body of judges and magistrates; who shall be liable to be tried, punished, and removed from office, by a sentence of the Chamber of Peers, at the instance of the Chamber of Commons, in conformity with the practice which prevails under the constitution of England, and as will be treated of more fully under the article, Magistracies.

V. The person of the King shall be sacred and inviolable.

VI. The ministers of the King and the public officers shall be subject to the examination, and their accounts to the controul, of the Parliament; by which they shall be accused, tried, and condemned, whenever they may commit any offence against the constitution and the laws, or any serious crime in the exercise of their functions.

VII. The Parliament shall be composed of two Chambers; one to be called the Chamber of Commons, or Representatives

of the Domanial and Baronial populations, under such conditions and forms as the Parliament shall hereafter establish, in a detailed article upon this subject;—the other to be called the Chamber of Peers, which shall be composed of all those ecclesiastics and their successors, and of all those barons and their successors, possessors of actual peerages, who are at present entitled to sit and vote in the ecclesiastical and military bodies (dracci), and also of such others as may be selected by His Majesty, under the conditions and limitations which the Parliament may establish, in the detailed article upon this subject.

VIII. The Barons, as peers, shall have only one vote each, the plurality of votes at present existing, in proportion to the number of their populations (or peerages), being abolished. The prothonotary of the kingdom shall prepare a list of the present Barons and ecclesiastics, which shall be enrolled among the archives of Parliament.

IX. It shall be the prerogative of the Crown to convoke, prorogue, and dissolve the Parliament, according to the forms and regulations which will hereafter be established. His Majesty shall, however, convoke the same every year.

X. No Sicilian shall be arrested, banished, or punished, or molested in the possession and enjoyment of his rights and property, except in pursuance of the enactments of a new code, which will be passed by the Parliament, and by means of orders and sentences of the ordinary magistrates, and in such form, and with such provisions of public security, as the Parliament shall hereafter determine. The peers shall be entitled to the same forms of trial which are enjoyed by the peers in England, as will be hereafter more fully specified.

XI. Feudal rights shall no longer exist; and all lands shall henceforth be possessed as allodial property, in Sicily, preserving, however, in the respective families, the same order of succession as at present prevails. The baronial jurisdictions shall also cease, and the Barons shall be exempted from all

those burthens to which they have hitherto been subject on account of such feudal rights. Investitures, remainders, escheats to the Crown, and every other burthen incident to the feudal system, shall be abolished; preserving, however, to each family its titles and honours.

XII. Lastly, every proposal relating to supplies, must be exclusively originated and concluded in the Chamber of Commons, and be transmitted from thence to the Chamber of Peers, which shall merely assent to, or dissent from, the same, without making any alteration therein; and that all propositions which relate to matters of legislation, or other matters, may be brought forward in either chamber indiscriminately, the right of rejecting the same being reserved to the other Chamber. ⁽¹⁾

(H.) *Treaty of Alliance and Subsidy between Great Britain and Sicily.*—Signed at Palermo, 30th March, 1808.

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, being equally animated by a sincere desire of strengthening more and more the ties of friendship and good understanding which so happily subsist between them, have judged that nothing could contribute more efficaciously to that salutary end, than the conclusion of a Treaty of Alliance and Subsidy; for this purpose their said Majesties have named their respective Plenipotentiaries, viz.—

His Britannic Majesty, the Right Honourable William Drummond, one of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, and his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of his said Sicilian Majesty; and

(1) Besides the twelve articles above quoted, and the one establishing the independence of Sicily, which has been given in the preceding Memoir, we must remark, that in "*The Constitution of the Kingdom of Sicily, Anno 1812,*" published in Palermo, in 1813, are to be found a great number of laws, and especially those upon elections to the Chamber of Commons, on the succession to the throne, on the magistracy, likewise those relative to the liberties, duties, and rights of citizens, to trial by jury, to municipalities, to the liberty of the press, &c.

His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, the Right Illustrious and Right Excellent Thomas de Somma, Marquis of Circello, his Gentleman of the Chamber, Field-Marshal of his Armies, Knight of his Royal Order of St. Januarius, his Councillor of State, Secretary of State for the Department of Foreign Affairs, and Superintendent General of the Posts; who, after having communicated their respective full powers, have agreed upon the following Articles:—

ART. I. There shall be a continuance of the sincere and constant friendship between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, their heirs and successors, which has always subsisted up to the present time.

II. The two high contracting parties shall afford to each other, during the present war with France, every succour and assistance in proportion to their respective forces, and shall prevent by common consent everything that can cause them trouble or detriment.

III. His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies engages to grant to the troops of His Britannic Majesty, stationed in the fortresses of Sicily, and to all British ships of war, an exemption from all duties belonging to him, upon everything of which the British squadrons in the Mediterranean and the troops of that nation may stand in need, and which the country can furnish, in provisions, food, and in military and naval stores.

IV. His Sicilian Majesty, being desirous of giving an additional proof of the sentiments by which he is animated, also engages to exempt from all duties belonging to him upon such provisions as may be requisite for the British ships of war at Malta, as well as all military stores which are to be found in the country; on condition, however, that each vessel or vessels of war be furnished with a requisition from the Governor of the said Island, which shall specify the articles and the quantity required.

V. His Sicilian Majesty further engages, in virtue of the present treaty, never to allow the enemies of Great Britain to bring into any of his ports during the present war, any British ships taken by the enemies of Great Britain.

VI. His Sicilian Majesty also engages to open the ports of the Two Sicilies, during the present war, to British squadrons, as well as to all merchant and other ships belonging to British subjects, without any restriction whatever, referring to the third article, with respect to exemption from duties.

VII. His Britannic Majesty engages in return to defend during the present war the fortresses of Messina and Augusta, and to maintain there for that purpose, at his charge and expense, a body of troops which, in the present war, shall consist of 10,000 men, and to augment their number if the case shall require it; the disposition of which troops in the said fortresses, shall be in such manner and proportion as the Commanding Officer (to whom every requisite facility shall be given) shall judge expedient: and His Britannic Majesty stipulates, that the said General Officers shall have the power of exercising martial law in the above-mentioned garrisons, with respect to their British troops, in the same manner, and according to the same rules, as are observed in other English garrisons.—Quarters for the said troops shall be provided in the above-mentioned fortresses by His Sicilian Majesty.

VIII. His Britannic Majesty further engages to pay to His Sicilian Majesty, during the continuance of the present war, an annual subsidy of £ 300,000. (to commence from the 10th of September, 1805, when the British and Russian troops landed in the Neapolitan territory,) payable at the rate of £ 25,000. per month; which payment shall always be made one month in advance, computing from the date of the signature of the present treaty. His Sicilian Majesty purposing to employ the said subsidies for the use of his marine, and of his land forces, shall regulate the distribution of them in such proportion as these two services may require, for the defence of his States, and for operations against the common enemy, and an account shall be given every three months to the British Government, of the manner in which His Sicilian Majesty shall have employed the subsidies paid to him by Great Britain.

IX. The two high contracting parties desiring to strengthen more and more the ties which unite the two nations, and to

extend their mutual relations, will employ themselves, as soon as possible, in concluding a treaty of commerce, the articles of which shall be equally advantageous to the subjects of both states.

X. His Sicilian Majesty engages not to conclude with France a peace separate from England; and His Britannic Majesty on his part also engages not to make a peace with France, without comprehending and saving in it the interests of His Sicilian Majesty.

XI. The present treaty of alliance and of subsidy, shall be ratified by the two high contracting parties, and the ratification shall be exchanged in due form in London, within the space of four months from the date of its signature, or sooner if possible.

In witness whereof, we the undersigned, furnished with full powers from our respective sovereigns, have signed the present treaty, and have thereunto affixed the seal of our arms.

Done at Palermo, this 30th day of March, 1808.

(L.S.) W. DRUMMOND.

(L.S.) THOMAS DE SOMMA.

I. Treaty of Alliance and Subsidy between Great Britain and Sicily.—Signed at Palermo, 13th May, 1809.

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, being animated by the desire of drawing closer the alliance so happily subsisting between the two crowns, and of increasing their efforts against the common enemy, have thought it expedient to conclude between them a fresh treaty of alliance and subsidy; for which purpose their said Majesties have named their respective Plenipotentiaries, viz.—

His Britannic Majesty, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord William Pitt, Lord Amherst, Peer of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, Lord of His said Majesty's Bedchamber, and his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of His Majesty the King of the

Two Sicilies; and His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord Thomas de Somma, Marquis of Circello, Lord of his Bedchamber, Marshal of his Camps and Armies, Knight of his Royal Order of Saint Januarius, his Councillor of State, and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and his Postmaster-General; who, after having mutually communicated their respective full powers, have agreed upon the following articles:—

ART. I. The several articles contained in the treaty of alliance and subsidy signed at Palermo, the 30th March, 1808, with the exception of the eighth and eleventh articles of the said treaty, are herein renewed and confirmed, and shall be considered as having the same force and validity as if they were inserted, word for word, in the present convention.

II. His Sicilian Majesty engages to augment the number and amount of his land and sea forces, to the greatest extent that the resources of his own dominions, and the pecuniary succours furnished by His Britannic Majesty, will allow.

III. For this object His Britannic Majesty engages to pay, for the use of His Sicilian Majesty, an annual subsidy of £ 400,000., to commence from the 5th April, 1809, on which day the payments of the subsidy stipulated for in the eighth article of the 30th March, 1808, are finally to cease and determine. This subsidy of £ 400,000. is to be considered as annulling all claims, of every description whatever, for arrears of subsidy previously granted to His Sicilian Majesty; and in order to obviate every difficulty which has arisen in fixing an equitable course of exchange between London and Palermo, it is agreed that the subsidy shall be paid in twelve monthly payments (to commence from the 5th April, 1809, as here in before stated), in sterling money of Great Britain, or in foreign specie (the value of this latter to be determined by the current price of the aforesaid specie on the Exchange of London), at the option of His Britannic Majesty, to the Minister of His Sicilian Majesty resident in London, whose receipts shall be deemed as a sufficient discharge for each monthly payment, of

which the first is to be made on the 8th April, as is above stated.

IV. As His Sicilian Majesty proposes to employ the said subsidy for the use of his land and sea forces, he will regulate the distribution of it in the proportion that these two services may require, for the defence of his dominions, and for operations against the common enemy; and every three months an account shall be rendered to the British Government of the manner in which His Sicilian Majesty shall have employed the subsidies furnished to him by Great Britain.

V. The present treaty of alliance and subsidy shall be ratified by the two high contracting parties, and the ratification thereof shall be exchanged in due form at London, within the space of four months from the date of its signature, or sooner, if possible.

In witness whereof, we, the undersigned, furnished with the full powers of our respective Sovereigns, have signed the present treaty, and have affixed thereto the seal of our arms.

Done at Palermo, this 13th day of May, 1809.

(L.S.) AMHERST.

(L.S.) THOMAS DE SOMMA.

Separate Article.

In order to enable His Sicilian Majesty to carry into immediate effect the engagements contracted on his part by this convention, His Britannic Majesty consents to give directions for an advance of £ 100,000. being made to His Sicilian Majesty's Minister in London, which sum is to be considered as forming part of the subsidy of £ 400,000. agreed to be paid by this convention, for the year commencing the 5th April, 1809. The residue of the sum of £ 300,000. shall be paid in twelve monthly instalments, as is here in before stated. It is understood that if any payment shall have

been made on account of the ancient subsidy at Palermo, after the said day, the amount thereof shall be deducted from the above-mentioned monthly payments.

The present separate article shall have the same force and validity as if it were inserted, word for word, in the treaty signed this day.

In witness whereof, we, the undersigned, furnished with the full powers of our respective Sovereigns, have signed it, and have thereunto affixed the seal of our arms.

Done at Palermo, this 13th day of May, 1809.

(L.S.) AMHERST.

(L.S.) THOMAS DE SOMMA.

(J.) *Supplementary Treaty of Alliance and Subsidy between Great Britain and Sicily. —Signed at Palermo, 12th September, 1812.*

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, being persuaded that, in the present state of affairs on the Continent, a more energetic system of military policy in the Mediterranean, against the attempts and exertions of the common enemy, might not only be productive of the most advantageous consequences in the present war against France, but would, above all, more effectually contribute to the defence of the Kingdom of Sicily, which is precisely the object of the treaties of alliance and subsidy which have been concluded between their said Britannic and Sicilian Majesties, under date of the 30th of March, 1808, and of the 13th of May, 1809, and which are at this time in their full force, have judged it necessary to make some modifications of those treaties, and to stipulate another, as a supplement to the two preceding ones, in order that it may never be supposed that they have been in any respect departed from.

For this purpose, their Majesties have named their respective Plenipotentiaries, viz.:—His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Lord William Cavendish

Bentinck, Lieutenant-General of his Armies, Commander-in-Chief of the English Forces in Sicily, and his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies; and His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies,-the Most Illustrious and Most Excellent Signor Don Joseph Ventimiglia, Prince of Belmonte, his Gentleman of the Bedchamber in office, Knight of the Royal Order of St. Januarius, and his Councillor of State, and Secretary of State having the Department for Foreign Affairs; who, after having communicated their respective full powers, have agreed upon the following Articles:—

ART. I. The two treaties of alliance and of subsidy, signed at Palermo the 30th of March, 1808, and the 13th of May, 1809, are hereby renewed and confirmed; they are to be considered as having the same force and value, as if they were inserted word for word in this treaty, with the exception of the third, fourth, and fifth articles, so far as the same do not agree with the present treaty.

I. His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies consents to place a division of his army at the disposal of His Britannic Majesty, and under the orders of a British General, to be employed against the common enemy, within and upon the coasts of the Mediterranean.

II. This division to be of 7,314 men, including the officers of the respective corps.

It is to be formed in the following manner:—

1. A division of artillery, with its train of 21 officers, 318 men, and 153 horses.
2. Another of horse artillery, of 5 officers, 107 men, and 111 horses.
3. A battalion of grenadiers, consisting of 23 officers and 787 men.

4. Three regiments of infantry; that is to say, one of Sicilians and two of Neapolitans, each of 45 officers and 1341 men.

5. A fourth regiment of infantry, which is to be raised and formed entirely of Sicilians, of 45 officers and 1,341 men.

6. A regiment of cavalry, of 26 officers, 423 men, and 417 horses.

IV. In order to ensure the maintenance and support of this division, and to prevent the salaries of the officers, the pay of the soldiers, the rations of food and forage, and the funds for the equipment as well as the remounting of the horses, from falling at all into arrear, His Sicilian Majesty agrees that the amount of the charge for the said objects, which has been fixed at 30,839 ounces and 9 tarins for each month of thirty days, and at 374,000 ounces, 73 tarins, and 10 grains for the year, shall be deducted from the subsidy of £ 400,000. per annum, which Great Britain furnishes to the Crown of the Two Sicilies, by virtue of the two said treaties; so that every necessary expense for the above- mentioned purpose shall be at the charge of the British Government.

For this purpose two officers shall be appointed as commissaries, the one by His Britannic Majesty, the other by His Sicilian Majesty, who shall be charged, by orders given respectively, with the superintendence of the pecuniary affairs of this division.

Their receipts shall be sufficient vouchers for the employment of the sums thereto appropriated.

V. A sum of 2,000 ounces per month shall be appropriated besides by His Sicilian Majesty, to the repair of the arms and artillery, to the field equipage, to the hospitals, tents, &c., as well as for every extraordinary expense of any nature whatsoever necessary to the said division; which sum shall likewise be deducted from the subsidy of Great Britain.

VI. His Sicilian Majesty will cause this division to be made over, clothed, armed, and provided with horses, conformably to the contents of the third article; excepting only the fourth regiment, which is to be composed of Sicilians. As the payment by the King of the Two Sicilies of the sum appropriated to this regiment should commence from the first day of the present month of September, precisely as if it were already in existence, the expenses attending the clothing, equipment, recruiting, and every other necessary object, shall be furnished by the British Government.

VII. His Sicilian Majesty will employ every means in his power to keep this division always complete; and in case that any insurmountable difficulties shall arise, the two Governments shall concur in deciding upon the best means of fulfilling this object.

VIII. It is agreed by the two high contracting parties, that a part of the corps forming this division shall, from time to time, be brought back into Sicily, to be replaced by an equal number drawn from the other corps of the army destined to the defence of Sicily. By this means the whole will participate in the double advantage of being considered on the same footing, and of becoming equally accustomed to war.

His Britannic Majesty promises on his part, that when the division or any one of the corps shall return to Sicily, the individuals composing it shall be provided with every article of equipment belonging to them, and the cavalry with the same number of horses as it carried away. All the arms, clothing, horses, &c., which shall have been either destroyed or lost, shall be replaced at the expense of the British Government.

IX. With respect to the promotion of the officers to those ranks which may become vacant, from whatsoever cause it may be, the British Commander of this division shall propose them to the Government of the King of the Two Sicilies, and shall receive orders in consequence.

But in the case of vacancies on the field of battle, His Majesty grants to the said British Commander the permission to make such promotion as he may think necessary.

X. The choice of brigadiers to serve in this division shall be entrusted to the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Sicily; and His Sicilian Majesty declares that these brigadiers shall be always under the orders of the British General commanding the division.

XI. It is stipulated and agreed that, after deducting the sums specified above by the fourth and fifth articles, amounting together to 388,073 ounces, 3 tarins, and 10 grains, as well as every sum stipulated for the service of the royal flotilla at Messina, amounting to 7,000 ounces per month, or 84,000 ounces by the year, the remaining surplus of the subsidy, according to the rate of exchange, as it existed at Palermo the preceding month, shall be paid at Palermo monthly, and always a month in advance, according to the tenor of the treaties, to His Sicilian Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whose receipt shall be considered as sufficient acknowledgment of each payment.

XII. An account of the expenses attending the said division shall be given every three months to the Government of His Sicilian Majesty by the two officers acting as commissaries. The same shall be done with respect to the flotilla of Messina; and in the event of there being any surplus of the subsidy appropriated to these two services, that surplus shall be applied by the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Sicily, to the repair or construction of fortifications, or to such other objects as may appear to him the most conducive to the defence of Sicily. A regular account of the appropriation of this surplus shall be given in like manner to His Sicilian Majesty.

XIII. His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland engages, in return, most solemnly to guarantee to His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, and to

his royal family, the full sovereignty, dominion, and possession of his kingdom of Sicily, in any treaty of peace whatsoever which he may conclude with France.

XIV. In consideration of the above stipulations, His Britannic Majesty also promises to renounce all claim to the sums which may have been employed, above the amount of the subsidy, in the defence of Sicily.

XV. The present treaty, additional to the treaties of alliance and subsidy of the 30th March, 1808, and the 13th May, 1809, shall be ratified by the two high contracting parties, and the ratifications shall be exchanged in due form at Palermo in the space of four months, or sooner, if possible.

In faith whereof, we, the undersigned, by virtue of the authority of our respective Sovereigns, have signed the present treaty, and have affixed thereto the seals of our arms.

Done at Palermo, this 12th of September, 1812.

(L.S.) W. C. BENTINCK.

(L.S.) JOSEPH DE VENTIMIGLIA.

(K.) *Speech of King Ferdinand the Fourth, on the opening of the General Parliament of Sicily.—Palermo, 18th July, 1814.*

Illustrious Peers, Honourable Representatives of the Commons of the Kingdom,

Amongst the thousand thoughts awakened by this memorable day, I prefer communicating those which most rejoice my heart. I come in the midst of you, as a father in the bosom of his affectionate family. I have but one sole object,—the welfare, felicity, and greatness of the Sicilian nation.

Providence, before whom the imaginations of men are but vain and insignificant, has guided the great events of Europe by ways the most extraordinary and unexpected. Sicily herself

is now on the verge of being able to recover all her ancient splendour. Abroad she has reassumed her rank among the hierarchy of nations, because the enormous mass which stifled independence and political liberty has been destroyed. At home, the wishes and efforts for a useful and salutary reform have seconded the spirit and general impulse of the age towards perfection. I was not ignorant of the wisdom of your ancient laws. I could appreciate the institutions and regulations which reflect so much honour upon your Parliaments, and upon the illustrious Princes who were the founders and restorers of this monarchy. But I was convinced that no human work is lasting; that time, by changing the relations of things, renders the best systems susceptible of correction; and that political, like civil laws, continually require to be brought back to the purity of their first principles, and cleared from the abuses which often times disfigure them, and render them abortive.

Sicily has now a written constitution; that constitution having for object the establishment of a certain order in the various modes of exercising power, with a view to prevent their being confounded with each other; the assigning a limit to the different functions of that power, so that one might not encroach upon the other; the fixing the grand focus in which private rights and public necessities should harmoniously concentrate themselves; the protecting the civil liberty of individuals, and the full security of persons and property; in short, that constitution, having for its object the laying the foundations of the prosperity and welfare of Sicilians, has been regarded by me with feelings of the tenderest affection, and has taken for its model the form of the government of a great and enlightened nation which commands the admiration of the world, and which has given, and is still continually giving astonishing proofs of riches, power, and magnanimity.

It is true that these great benefits have not entirely answered the expectations formed of them. The consequences of a general war, the fear of a contagion which threatened our

shores, the convulsions which usually accompany great changes and sudden and unprepared transitions, and the destruction of ancient habits and customs, have perhaps occasioned some irritation, and (I must confess it) some dissensions. But on this solemn day we are at length united together, in order to enjoy and increase the good we possess, and to obliterate the recollection of every ill. Sons and brothers of the same family, actuated by the same interests, and influenced by the same love of glory, you will have but one mind, but one will. As becomes the descendant of Henry IV., the only ardent desire of my breast shall be the true felicity of my people; and in that, and for that alone, will I employ all the moments of my existence, and all the powers and prerogatives which the constitution secures to my crown.

Direct your attention, therefore, to the objects for which you have been called together. May concord, unanimity, justice, humanity, honour, and patriotism preside among you, diffuse themselves into your discussions, and enlighten your resolves.

Let your first and most especial care be, to support the dignity of the nation. The balance of power, and the free use of those relations which are the right of every nation, being restored, Sicily will have her own proper existence, and will enjoy her political independence. Be justly proud of this sacred privilege; but be careful to support it with all your powers, so long as it wants strength, and so long as our political horizon is not entirely cleared of those clouds which might, at any hour, produce the storm and the tempest. Be upon your defence, and render the first moments of your independence secure by the presence of an armed force which shall make you respected. Consider that these temporary sacrifices will perhaps save you from the humiliation of falling into contempt and insignificance, and that you will be indebted to them for the consolation of soon perceiving that your political existence will be much more durable, and much less costly.

Complete, therefore, what is still wanting in the civil edifice which you have raised. The legislative code, and the defining of the functions of the magistrates, are the noblest and most necessary portions of it. Your lives, your persons, your property, will be insecure, if justice do not appear open and undisguised. That heavenly virtue will reject the petition of those who invoke her in an unrighteous cause, and who wish to make her the instrument of iniquity, or the torch of discord.

Retouch and correct such imperfections as may be met with in the execution of your work. The productions of man are defective from their very origin. Avail yourselves of the experience of past ages; consult the prudent provisions of pre-existing laws; assimilate, as much as possible, ancient usages with modern ones; adapt the modes of thinking, of feeling, and of living, of the inhabitants of this happy soil, to the times and to the progress of intelligence and civilization; and do not forget to consider, in every point of view and in all its relations, the present state of their industry and commerce, as well as that which they may hereafter attain.

The injustice and obscurity attending the ancient method of taxation being removed, and the clearest and most practicable system of assessment substituted in its stead, it will be your care that this equitable distribution shall not be nullified when brought into operation, and that the confusion from which the classification and assessment of the taxes are now freed, shall no more embarrass the public revenue.

Devote also a portion of your time to the consideration of the copper coinage,—a subject more important than is generally believed. The counterfeiting that portion of the circulating medium has, under favour of the public disasters, taken deep root, like the small seed of mighty evils. Destroy this mischief with an energy worthy of yourselves, and with a disinterestedness similar to that evinced by the late Parliaments. Finally, promote and hasten as much as possible the construction of the public roads. While so much attention is bestowed upon the amelioration of the laws, the facility of

communication between the subjects of the kingdom must not be forgotten.

Honourable Representatives of the House of Commons,

It is for you to concur in securing benefits like these by furnishing the necessary means. The state cannot be happy and great, unless its vitality and vigour be preserved. Upon this point there can be no doubt, if the order of things which we have adopted be considered. You know what are its exigencies; you will provide the necessary supplies, and superintend the application of them. I have directed the estimate, for the next session to be laid before you, together with the necessary documents.

The account of the national debt will be submitted to you, and you will find its amount somewhat greater than that of last year, owing to the loans made to the State, under the guarantee of Great Britain, and also because, to the claims unsatisfied during the last session, must be added those of the current year, which approaches its close.

It causes me the deepest regret to find that the persons who have the most legitimate claims upon the State, viz., those who have advanced money upon the security of the old and moderm donatives, or upon that of the silk duty now abolished, and the religious communities, abbeys, and similar institutions, which have relieved the State from the greatest difficulties, with the proceeds of their estates, upon the sacred promise of proper indemnification, remain still unsatisfied;— a circumstance which causes many families and communities to languish in indigence, contrary to every principle of equity and justice. Apply an immediate remedy to these evils, and consider that, if this is a sacrifice, it is solely for this once. The revenues of the State being again set in activity, there will be no recurrence of such an evil. There is thus good reason to hope that an entire and perfect tranquillity will in future diminish the wants of the State, and consequently the amount of the estimates which you will fix for the next session.

I will not wrong you so much as to conceive that you can be inconsistent with yourselves; that you can desire results without means; that you can expect to see the nation flourishing and secure, the constitution consolidated, the public debt liquidated, public credit unshaken, and justice respected and protected, without preparing the foundation upon which all these advantages must rest.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I feel it my duty to attest thus publicly my approbation of and satisfaction at the manner in which my dearest son, the Hereditary Prince, has performed the office of Vicar. The experience I have thus acquired has confirmed me in the idea I had formed of the purity of his intentions, his wisdom, and the rectitude of his conduct; and he has enabled me to enjoy by anticipation the pleasure of seeing in the successor to my throne the virtues which will render him deserving of that inheritance.

No other event has occurred of sufficient importance to merit your attention, except it be the glory and reputation acquired by our troops in Spain and in Italy, where they have been employed with those of our august and ancient ally, the King of Great Britain, and under the orders of the able Commander-in-chief, Lord William Bentinck, for the purpose of co-operating in bringing to a successful issue the just and general cause—the putting down of usurpations, and the re-establishment of justice and legitimacy. It must not be forgotten that the circumstances of the present year require general and extensive views. The eyes of Europe, now that the theatre of universal war is closed, will be directed to the first steps taken by the nations in the road of peace. It is sometimes more difficult to bear a good than an adverse fortune. You have given bright examples of constancy in the hour of peril. The Lord has blessed your virtues, and the tempest has respected your shores. Will you act differently at the moment when tranquillity resumes her sway? You possess

a name and a reputation in history. You will not prove yourselves unworthy of your ancestors!

(L.) *Memorandum by Mr. W. A' Court, published in Sicily at the time when the English Troops evacuated the Island.*

The fortunate events which have lately taken place in Europe, having materially altered the relative position in which Great Britain is placed with respect to Sicily, it becomes necessary for her representative to make known to the Sicilian nation the sentiments by which the British Government is actuated, and the views to which its attention is principally directed at the present moment. This is the more necessary, because, in the conflict of parties, the right of interference has, perhaps, been as much exaggerated on one side, as it has been unnecessarily and unwisely denied on the other. The sacrifices which Great Britain has made for the safety and prosperity of this Island, entitle her to expect that her suggestions should be received with respect and attention; whilst the moderation with which she is disposed to exercise the privilege, which the benefits she has conferred have given her, ought to be considered as a sufficient proof that she is little disposed to aim at the acquirement of any undue influence, inconsistent with the principles of the constitution, or with the dignity of an independent State.

It is necessary to go back to the causes which led to the general expression of the national desire for a reform in the constitution of the country; causes which may be found in the progressive advancement of civilization; in the more general diffusion of knowledge, and in the inadequacy of all human institutions to resist the abuses and deterioration to which they are necessarily subject, and to afford, amidst the change of opinions and circumstances, the same security for the happiness of the people, which they might perhaps have possessed at the time of their original formation.

But although the wish for a change was almost unanimous, the definition of the precise limits which ought to be given to the proposed alterations was attended with considerable difficulty. In this emergency it was not unnatural that the

nation should turn its eyes towards a country which, possessing an extent and population comparatively small and unimportant, was not only herself affording a success-fill opposition to the torrent which had overwhelmed the most powerful monarchies of Europe, but was extending the hand of succour to those who were oppressed or menaced in every part of the world.

To the wise and excellent institutions of that country it was supposed, and very justly supposed, that its splendour and prosperity were to be attributed; and a hope was entertained, that by the adoption of a similar form of government the same advantages might be secured to Sicily, whose insular position and early institutions offered a certain degree of resemblance to those of its more powerful ally.

England could not be insensible to the appeal which was made to her; and whilst she charged herself with the protection of Sicily from any foreign invader, she at the same time lent herself to the invitation she had received, and became the protectress and the supporter of alterations, founded upon principles so just in themselves, and so creditable to those from whom they had originally emanated.

Under such auspices the work of the Constitution was begun. If in its progress it has met with difficulties which could not be foreseen; if it has encountered obstacles, which may still appear to be insurmountable; the magnitude of the undertaking should be considered; the comparative ease, with which some very important changes have already been effected, recollected; and above all, that tone of despondency and discouragement should be resisted, which leads to the condemnation of every attempt at amelioration as a vain and visionary project.

It is difficult, it may almost be said to be impossible, to transfer from one Country to another, without any previous preparation, the whole of its Laws, Forms, and Institutions. The difference of manners, prejudices, religions, and education, offers an insurmountable barrier to the accomplishment of so total a revolution. Great Britain never wished to impose this condition upon Sicily. As the friend and

the ally of the Sicilian Nation, she wished to favour the adoption of such parts only of her Constitution, as, after grave and deliberate examination, should be found in consonance with the wishes of the people, and calculated to insure their prosperity and happiness.

In the further deliberations which may precede the completion of the Constitution, she is desirous of recommending to the serious consideration of the nation, the necessity of leaving an adequate proportion of power in the hands of the Executive Government; and on the other hand, she would hold up to the Executive Power the example of the King of France, who on his restoration to the throne of his ancestors, has confirmed to the nation the privileges and advantages of a free government, as far as is consistent with the necessary authority of the Crown, the maintenance of order and tranquillity amongst the people, and with the habits and character of the French nation.

She would further recommend an early attention to the Code of Laws, and to the arrangements necessary to ensure their due administration. She would call to the recollection of the nation, that the happiness of a people depends more upon a pure and impartial administration of justice, than upon the proportion of political power that may be entrusted to them. The full possession of Civil liberty is the only secure foundation upon which political power can be established; and to the acquirement of this invaluable blessing, she would willingly call that attention which has hitherto been principally directed to objects of lesser importance.

In any temperate and prudent modification of the government, England would willingly lend that aid and support which it may be in her power to afford; she exacts only as a condition of this assistance that it be done by the Parliament itself; that it be accomplished in a legal and constitutional manner, as far removed from any direct intervention of overbearing authority on the one hand, as from any undue exertion of popular interference on the other. She tenders this advice and this assistance in no other light than as the most intimate friend and ally of his Sicilian

Majesty. The offer which was lately made of withdrawing her troops from Sicily, would be a sufficient proof (if indeed any proof were wanting) that England has not the remotest wish to exercise a military influence over the Councils of the King or of the nation. The attitude which she was obliged to assume during the war, may have given rise to the propagation of a variety of erroneous reports, the best refutation of which is to be found in the well-known loyalty of her conduct, and in her acknowledged good faith.

The continued prevalence of party spirit in Sicily cannot sufficiently be lamented. The views of Great Britain being solely directed to the general prosperity of the island, there can be nothing more remote from the intentions of her Government than that the British minister at Palermo should appear as the centre of a party. But in making this declaration, it may not be unnecessary to add, that the British Government considers itself as deeply interested in the fate of those individuals who have supported the measures of internal policy in Sicily, which the critical situation of the country during the last three years compelled its representative to recommend. The upright and honorable intentions by which these individuals were actuated, are perfectly well known, and their abandonment under such circumstances would be inconsistent with the character and dignity of the British nation. It has an undoubted right to insist that no person shall suffer, either in his person or property, for the part he may have taken in the establishment and support of the Constitution; and the perfect security of these individuals must be considered as the *sine qua non* of the continuance of British protection and alliance.

The different position in which the two countries are necessarily placed by the conclusion of a general Peace, has drawn from the representative of Great Britain this general declaration of the views and sentiments of his Government. The interference of Great Britain in the domestic policy of Sicily, has never sprung but from the purest motives of disinterested friendship. She will be amply compensated for all the sacrifices she has made, if it be eventually found that

her exertions have contributed to the welfare, happiness, and prosperity of the Sicilian nation. ⁽¹⁾

WILLIAM A'COURT.

Palermo, October 20th, 1814.

**No. 4.- CORRESPONDENCE AND ROYAL
ORDINANCES IN DECEMBER, 1816,
RELATIVE TO THE SUSPENSION OF THE
CONSTITUTION**

(M.) *Correspondence between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. W. A'Court.*

No. I. Viscount Castlereagh to William A'Court, Esq.

Foreign Office, 6th September, 1816.

The necessity which is felt by the King of Naples, and which has been equally recognized by the Parliament of Sicily, of effectuating certain changes in the Constitution of that country, has been submitted to the Prince Regent.

The Prince Regent's sincere regard for his Ally, the King of the Two Sicilies, as well as the cordial interest which His Royal Highness can never cease to feel for the Sicilian nation, renders him, on such an occasion, deeply solicitous that the approaching change may be wisely and auspiciously conducted, with a view to the permanent interests and happiness of all concerned: but you will acquaint the Marquis de Circello that, as far as regards the Prince Regent's own conduct, His Royal Highness must decline any interference in the internal affairs of a Foreign and Independent State, which his own honour, and the good faith of his Government, shall not strictly impose on him.

You may apprise the Neapolitan Minister, that the Prince Regent would consider such interference imposed on him as a duty, if, (which he persuades himself, after the assurances received from His Sicilian Majesty, can never happen,) those individuals who acted with the British authorities during the

(1) It is to be observed, that this most important document was not presented to the House of Commons by Lord Castlereagh, when the debate on the Sicilian question took place in the sitting on the 21st June, 1821.

late difficult times in Sicily, should be exposed either to unkindness or persecution on account of such conduct.

His Royal Highness would feel himself equally compelled, however reluctantly, to interfere, if he had the mortification to observe any attempt made to reduce the privileges of the Sicilian nation, in such a degree as might expose the British Government to the reproach of having contributed to a change of system in Sicily, which had, in the end, impaired the freedom and happiness of its inhabitants, as compared with what they formerly enjoyed.

With the above reserve, His Royal Highness must wholly exonerate himself from the responsibility of any interference whatever. He feels that he has neither the means nor the right to judge of the necessity of the change, the extent to which it should be carried, nor of the mode in which it should be effectuated.

You will not fail, in all your representations, to do justice to the principles upon which the British Government were alone induced, when charged with the defence and security of that part of His Sicilian Majesty's dominions, to interfere in its internal concerns: the necessity constituted the right, and with the discontinuance of that necessity, every pretension as well as disposition on the part of Great Britain to interpose, has also ceased; except so far as the considerations of good faith and honour, to which I have above alluded, and which arise out of our former position in Sicily, might again impose it on us as a duty.

The Prince Regent has had the happiness of seeing, after a long struggle, his ally restored to his dominions; and the calumnies of their common enemies, which imputed sinister views to the Councils of Great Britain, whilst the British army occupied Sicily, have been fully and practically refuted.

His Royal Highness has only one wish now to form, which is, that His Sicilian Majesty may so conduct his Government for the happiness of his subjects, that he (The Prince Regent) may never have to regret the task, which circumstances imposed upon him, of employing the British arms in that island, and that His Royal Highness may hereafter have

nothing to express to His Sicilian Majesty on this subject, but his satisfaction.

CASTLEREAGH.

William A'Court, Esq.

No. II. William A' Court, Esq., to Viscount Castlereagh.

Naples, 5th November, 1816.

It was not until the 30th ultimo, that I communicated to the Neapolitan Government the nature of the instructions which I had received from your Lordship.

On that day, in a conference, at which were present the whole of His Sicilian Majesty's Cabinet Ministers, I made a formal declaration of the views and feelings of the British Government with respect to Sicily, according to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 6th September. I pointed out the Prince Regent's desire to avoid all interference in the government of an independent State, unless such interference was rendered necessary by a consideration of his own honour, or the good faith of his Government. The two cases where this interference would be imposed as a duty upon His Royal Highness were, a spirit of persecution or unkindness exhibited towards those who had acted in concert with the British authorities during the late very difficult times, or an attempt to reduce the privileges of the Sicilian nation, in such a degree as to expose Great Britain to the reproach of having contributed to a change of system in Sicily, which had impaired the freedom and happiness of its inhabitants, as compared with what they formerly enjoyed.

With this reserve, I observed, His Royal Highness must wholly exonerate himself from the responsibility of any interference whatever. He feels that he has neither the means nor the right to judge of the necessity of the change, the extent to which it should be carried, nor of the mode in which it should be effectuated.

The two Houses of Parliament having, in concurrence with the Executive Government, fruitlessly laboured at effectuating the change in contemplation, have themselves called upon the Crown to nominate a Commission for deliberating on the proposed alterations. I then continued, in your Lordship's words, to state, "that due justice ought to be done to the principles upon which the British Government was alone induced, when charged with the defence and security of Sicily, to interfere in its internal concerns. The necessity constituted the right, and with the discontinuance of that necessity, every pretension, as well as disposition, on the part of Great Britain, to interpose, had also ceased; except so far as the considerations of good faith and honour before alluded to, and which arose out of our former position in Sicily, might again impose it on us as a duty."

This discourse appeared to make a considerable impression on his Sicilian Majesty's Ministers, who requested that I would deliver it to them in writing. I did not feel myself authorised to comply with this request, but I said that I had no objection that a note should be taken of all I had said, which proposal was immediately accepted, and ***** committed the whole to paper.

As soon as I had thoroughly explained the line which the British Government had determined to pursue, and had received the most unqualified assurances of His Sicilian Majesty's intention, strictly to abide by the conditions which His Royal Highness the Prince Regent had thought proper to declare to be necessary, to ensure his **non-interference**, I was asked whether, (setting aside my public character, in which I had disclaimed all responsibility whatever,) I would, as Mr. A'Court, allow them to detail to me the projects they had in contemplation, and point out anything which might, in my opinion, expose them to the charge of having violated the conditions prescribed.

As this proposal was not at variance with the instructions I had received from your Lordship, I did not hesitate in giving

to it my consent. In order to prevent any misunderstanding, I again repeated, that whatever fell from me, under these circumstances, must not be considered as official, nor as binding the British Government or British Minister to anything.

*****, at the desire of his colleagues, then entered into a long historical detail of the privileges which had been at different times granted to the Sicilian nation, and afterwards, passing to the project now in contemplation, endeavoured to convince me of the many advantages which would accrue to the Sicilians from the new arrangements, in comparison with those they formerly enjoyed.

The King, by a proclamation, will declare the perpetual union of the two countries, and will in consequence assume the title of Ferdinand the First, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, &c. &c. &c. Fresh credentials and patents will be made out for all foreign ministers, consular agents, &c. &c. A second decree will announce the institution of a General Chancery for the United Kingdom, in which all laws and decrees are to be registered; this Chancery will be presided over by one of the Secretaries of State, who will take the title of Grand Chancellor. A Council, to be called the Supreme Chancery Council, will be established for discussing all important affairs, before they are submitted to the Royal decision in the Council of State.

The office of Minister Secretary of State will be abolished, and its duties transferred to the Grand Chancellor.

At the same time that these decrees are made' * public, a third will be issued, confirming to the Sicilians all the privileges conceded to them by the present Sovereign and his predecessors. In order to combine the observance of these privileges with the unity of the political institutions, which are to form *le droit public* of the United Kingdom, the following regulations will be made:

All civil and ecclesiastical offices and employments in the Island of Sicily to be granted to Sicilians only, including the Archbishopric of Palermo, which former Sovereigns had always reserved to be disposed of according to their pleasure. The population of Sicily forming, as nearly as possible, one-fourth of the whole population of the United Kingdom;—the Sicilians are to hold *by right* the same proportion of all the great offices of State;— one-fourth of the seats in the Cabinet;—the same in the Council of State;—the same in the Grand Chancery Council;—the same in the great offices at Court;—the same in the Corps Diplomatique.

The Army and Navy, as well as all inferior offices about the Court, to be open to individuals of either nation.

The Government of the United Kingdom to be where- ever the King resides. If in Sicily, a Prince of the Royal Family, or a person of distinguished rank, to be the King's Lieutenant at Naples, or *vice versa*, if his residence be at Naples. If the lieutenant be a Prince of the Royal Family, he will have near his person a Minister of State> charged with the official correspondence, and also two directors, to whom such portion of the official business will be confided as the Minister of State shall think proper:—these directors to be of either nation. If the lieutenant be not a Prince of the Blood Royal, he will himself have the character of Minister of State.

All Sicilian causes to be finally decided in Sicily. The Tribunals of Palermo to be entirely independent of those of Naples, as also the Tribunals of Naples of those of Palermo.

The permanent revenue of Sicily to be fixed by the King, but never to exceed the sum of 1,847,687 ounces, voted by the Sicilian Parliament of 1813, as the permanent revenue of the State. This sum to be considered as the *maximum*, susceptible of diminution according to the King's pleasure.

From this revenue a sum of 150,000 ounces to be applied annually, in the first place, towards the extinction of the debts of the State, bearing no interest, and afterwards towards

forming a sinking fund for the payment of the interest, and for the ultimate liquidation of all other debts.

This very necessary and just disposition will be particularly agreeable to the Sicilians, who have long despaired of receiving either principal or interest.

His Majesty finally declares, that he will at no time, nor under any circumstances, attempt to levy any taxes in Sicily, exceeding this permanent revenue, *without the consent of the Parliament.*

This last expression gave rise to a considerable degree of discussion in this, as well as in several subsequent conferences; ***** wishing to substitute the words, *without the consent of the Sicilian nation:* to this I most strongly objected. The immense importance of the word will certainly not escape your Lordship. It is, in fact, the key-stone of our consistency, the omission of which would undoubtedly subject us to the reproach particularly pointed out in my instructions. We cannot consent to its omission, and of this the Neapolitan Government is fully aware.

The remaining points are, the confirmation of the entire abolition of the Feudal System in both Kingdoms, and the regulation of the order of succession, according to the settlement of Charles III. in 1759. This last article will be inserted in order to silence the absurd reports in circulation respecting Prince Leopold, and the Crown of Naples,

As soon as these decrees are promulgated, the nomination of the Sicilians, who are to fill the great offices, will take place; and this nomination, I am happy to inform your Lordship, *will include every individual of note who took part with the British authorities during the late turbulent times.*

Such is the plan proposed; and it must be allowed that (admitting the necessity of the changes) it could hardly be effected in a more prudent manner. There is not a word in either paper that can be objected to by the Power most

delicately situated, and most interested in these alterations. There is no offensive allusion to the past, and nothing that leaves an opening for any just accusation against us for dereliction of principle.

The union of the two kingdoms necessitates certain changes; these changes involve, without pronouncing, the abolition of several parts of the former system. The ancient privileges of the nation are distinctly preserved, by the stipulation that the King shall raise no taxes exceeding the fixed revenue of the State, without the consent of his Parliament. The fixed revenue of the State is that voted by the Parliament itself. And, finally, a number of personal advantages are granted to Sicilian subjects, which cannot but prove most acceptable to them.

It may still, and no doubt will be, necessary to keep a watchful eye over all that is done in Sicily; and your Lordship may be assured, that I will continue to do so, and in such a manner as in no way to commit my Government. The advancement of those who acted with us, to offices of trust and profit, will be a secure pledge to your Lordship, that nothing in the proposed changes will take the character of a re-action. This is a very principal point, and I have every reason to hope that, in other respects, the alterations will be so conducted as to leave little for me to do, but to congratulate your Lordship upon our total release from all the responsibility arising from the part we were obliged to take, and the position we held during so long a period in that island. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM A'COURT.

Viscount Castlereagh, K. G.

No. III. William A'Court, Esq., to Viscount Castlereagh.

Naples, 9th December, 1816.

Your Lordship has already been made acquainted with the decision with respect to the projected alterations of the Sicilian Constitution.

The important stipulation, that the King shall raise no taxes exceeding the fixed revenue of the State, without the consent of Parliament, remains unaltered. The whole plan will be put into execution immediately.

The Marquis Circello has forwarded to me the enclosed official answer to my verbal declaration upon Sicilian affairs. He has also communicated to me, officially, the three papers, translations of which I have the honour to enclose. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM A'COURT.

Viscount Castlereagh, K.G.

(N.) *Dispatch from the Marquis Circello to William A'Court, Esq.*

Naples, 6th December, 1816.

The Marquis Circello has taken into his mature consideration the verbal declaration, which his Excellency Mr. A'Court, His Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, has made to him.

It was stated in this declaration, as nearly as the Marquis Circello can remember, that His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, from motives of friendship to his ally, the King of the Two Sicilies, wished that these changes should be wisely and prudently effectuated;—that, as to his own conduct, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent would abstain from all interference in the internal affairs of a foreign and independent State, provided his own honour and the good

faith of his Government did not otherwise require it, and this would be in the two following cases:— 1st. If the Sicilians, who, during the last few years, had acted in concert with the British authorities, were exposed to a re-action; and 2ndly. If the condition of Sicily should be rendered worse than it was in former times.

The Marquis Circello having submitted, as was his duty, this declaration to His Majesty the King, his master, must first assure Mr. A'Court, that His Majesty acknowledges in this declaration a new proof of the particular regard and friendship of his august ally; and he desires that Mr. A'Court will express his most lively gratitude to His Royal Highness.

Reverting to the contents of the declaration, His Majesty, applauding the principles by which the British Government is animated, declares that he accepts and confirms the two reserves, which are expressed in the declaration.

With respect to the first, concerning the Sicilians who have acted in concert with the British authorities; His Majesty will not only consider them in the same light as his other subjects, but promises, besides, that wherever, by their talents or their moral qualities, they may be capable of rendering themselves useful, he will employ them without any regard to the opinions which they may have formerly professed. The conduct pursued by His Majesty since the recovery of the Kingdom of Naples, is an evident proof of the sanctity of the principle he professes, that all those of his subjects distinguished by talent, zeal, and good moral conduct, have an equal right to his royal consideration.

With respect to the second reserve, the annexed papers, which the Marquis Circello has the honour to transmit to Mr. A'Court, will explain to him the system of organization, which the King proposes to establish in Sicily. His Majesty could do no less than occupy himself about it, when he saw that the Commission of State, charged with this labour, did not

correspond with his royal wishes, and had let eighteen months pass away without doing anything.

It must be observed, that His Majesty has, in some measure, diminished his authority in the impositions, by the maximum to which he has consented, which modifies the amount of the public revenue fixed by the Parliament of 1813; and His Majesty has not hesitated to promise, in the event of there being a necessity to exceed it, that it shall not be done otherwise than with the consent of the Parliament. If His Majesty has reserved to himself the repartition of this revenue, he has not determined so to do, but by a consideration of the public good; for the experience of ages has proved, that the poorer classes, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Government, have always hitherto been overloaded, oppressed, and sacrificed, in the repartition of the taxes, beyond any just proportion.

Finally, amongst the benefits granted by His Majesty to the Sicilians, the confirmation of the abolition of the Feudal System is deserving of the notice of the British Government.

The Marquis Circello profits, &c.

H. E. Mr. A'Court.

THE MARQUIS CIRCELLO.

(O.) *Fundamental Law of the King relative to the Government of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.*

Ferdinand I. by the Grace of God, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, &c.; Infant of Spain, Duke of Parma, Placentia, Castro, &c.; Hereditary Grand Prince of Tuscany, &c.

The Congress of Vienna having, by the solemn Act to which Europe owes the re-establishment of justice and peace, confirmed the legitimacy of the rights of our Crown, and thereby recognised us, and our heirs and successors, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies:

And we being desirous on our part, after the ratification of that Act by all the Powers, to cause it to be carried into full effect, have determined to ordain and declare the following Dispositions to be the fundamental and perpetual law of our States:—

ART. I. All our royal dominions on this and the other side of the Straits shall constitute the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

II. The title which we assume, from the moment of the publication of the present law, is the following:—

“Ferdinand I, by the Grace of God, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, &c.; Infant of Spain; Duke of Parma, Placentia, Castro, &c. &c.; Hereditary Grand Prince of Tuscany, &c. &c. &c.”

III. All the Acts that shall be issued by us, or that shall be promulgated in our Royal name by the public functionaries in our kingdom of the Two Sicilies, shall be headed by the title specified in the preceding article.

IV. The full powers and patents which have been furnished to any of our ambassadors, ministers, and agents, residing with foreign powers, shall be immediately withdrawn, and at the same time changed for others, to be made out conformably to the IInd? Article.

V. The succession in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies shall be regulated for ever agreeably to the law of our august father, Charles III, published at Naples, on the 6th of October, 1759.

VI. We establish a general Chancery in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, which shall always be held in the place of our usual residence, and shall have for its president one of our ministers and secretaries of State, to be styled the Minister Chancellor of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

VII. In this general Chancery there shall be kept a register of, and there shall be deposited, all the laws and decrees that shall emanate from us.

VIII. The Minister Chancellor shall affix our Royal seal to all our laws and decrees, and shall authenticate and countersign upon them our signature. He shall also be charged with the transmission of all our laws and decrees to all the constituted authorities of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies; and he shall cause them to be published and carried into execution.

IX. There shall also be held in the same general Chancery, a council for the discussion and preparation of the more important affairs of State, previous to their being laid before us by our ministers, for our Sovereign decision in our Council of State, and it shall be denominated the Supreme Council of Chancery. The Minister Chancellor shall preside over the latter.

X. A special law shall fix the internal organization of the General Chancery, and shall define- therein, more distinctly, the attributes of the Minister Chancellor, and of the Supreme Council of Chancery.

It is our will and command, that this our law, signed by us, authenticated by our Councillor and Secretary of State, the Minister of Grace and Justice, sealed with our Great Seal, and countersigned by our Councillor and Secretary of State, the Minister Chancellor, and registered and deposited in the General Chancery of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, be published with the usual solemnities throughout the kingdom, by means of the respective authorities, who shall cause it to be registered, and see that it be carried into effect.

Our Minister Chancellor of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies is specially charged to watch over its publication.

Given at Caserta, the 8th of December, 1816.

FERDINANDO.

The Secretary of State, Minister of Grace and Justice,
MARCHESE TOMMASI.

The Secretary of State, Minister Chancellor,

TOMMASO DI SOMMA.

(P.) Decree of the King, establishing the office of Chancellor of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

Ferdinand I, by the Grace of God, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, &c. &c. &c.

Agreeably to Article VI. of our law of this day, by which we have established a General Chancery in our Kingdom of the Two Sicilies;

We have decreed, and do decree, as follows:

ART. I. The office of Minister, Secretary of State, provisionally maintained by us, in our Royal dominions, on this side of the Faro, by our edict of the 5th day of June, of the year 1815, is abolished.

II. All the functions of the said office are transferred to that which we have instituted, of Chancellor of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

III. All the papers and registers existing in the department of the said Minister Secretary of State, shall be transferred to the General Chancery of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and there preserved.

IV. For the time being, and until we shall have made fresh dispositions, the functions of Chancellor shall be exercised by the Marquis Circello, our Secretary of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

V. All our Secretaries of State and Ministers, and the Chancellor, are charged, each in his respective department, with the execution of the present Decree.

Given at Caserta, the 8th of December, 1816.

FERDINANDO.

The Secretary of State, Minister of Grace and Justice,
MARCHESE TOMMASI.

The Secretary of State, Minister Chancellor,

TOMMASO DI SOMMA.

(Q.) *Law of the King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies,
concerning the Island of Sicily.*

Ferdinand I, by the Grace of God, King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, &c.; Infant of Spain; Duke of Parma. Placentia, Castro, &c. &c.; Hereditary Grand Prince of Tuscany, &c. &c. &c.

Desiring to confirm the privileges conceded by us, and by the Monarchs our illustrious predecessors, to our well-beloved Sicilians, and to combine the full enjoyment of those privileges with the unity of the political institutions, which are to form the public law of our kingdom of the Two Sicilies, we have by the present law sanctioned, and do sanction as follows:—

ART. I. All the offices and employments, civil and ecclesiastical, in Sicily, beyond the Straits, shall, conformably to the capitularies of the Monarchs our predecessors, be conferred exclusively on Sicilians, without the other subjects of our States on this side the Straits being ever entitled to pretend to them,—in the same manner as the Sicilians cannot advance any claim to civil and religious appointments in our other dominions above mentioned. We place among the number of the appointments exclusively to be given to Sicilians, the Archbishopric of Palermo, although our august father, Charles III, reserved the disposal of it to the Sovereign, in the great Charter which he granted to the Sicilians.

II. Our Sicilian subjects beyond the Straits shall be admitted to all the great dignities of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, in proportion to the population of the island.

The population being one-fourth of that of our entire dominions, the fourth part of the members of our Council of State shall be composed of Sicilians, and the other three-fourths of subjects of our other dominions.

The same proportion shall be observed in the appointments of our Ministers and Secretaries of State, of the first dignities of the Court, and of our representatives and agents at foreign Courts.

III. Instead of two Sicilian consultors, who, pursuant to the concession of our august father, were members of the ancient Junta of Sicily, the supreme council of the Chancery of the Two Sicilies shall always contain a number of Sicilian councillors, according to the proportion fixed in the preceding article.

IV. Appointments in our army and navy, and in our Royal household, shall be conferred on all our subjects, without regard to the part of our dominions of which they may be natives.

V. The whole Government of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies shall be always in our hands. When we reside in Sicily, we shall appoint as lieutenant of our dominions on this side of the Straits, during our absence, a Prince of our family, or some other person of distinction, whom, we shall choose amongst our subjects.

If he be a Prince of the Royal Family, he shall be attended by one of our Ministers of State, who shall correspond with the Ministers and Secretaries of State who reside near our person, and who shall, moreover, have with him two or more directors, to preside in those sections of the offices of the Ministers and Secretaries of State, which we shall think fit to leave on the spot to administer the government of that part of our dominions. If the lieutenant be not a Prince, he shall himself be invested with the character of Minister Secretary of State; he shall correspond directly with the Ministers and

Secretaries of State whom we have with us, and shall have two or more directors for that purpose.

VI. When we reside in our Royal dominions on this side of the Straits, Sicily shall in the same manner have, as its lieutenant, a Royal Prince of our family, or a person of distinction, whom we shall choose from amongst our subjects. If he be a Royal Prince, he shall likewise have with him one of our Ministers of State, who shall correspond with the offices of the Ministers and Secretaries of State residing with us, and he shall, moreover, have two or more directors, to preside in those sections of the said offices of the Ministers and Secretaries of State which we shall think fit to leave in Sicily. If the lieutenant of Sicily be not a Prince of the Royal Family, he shall himself be invested with the character of our Minister and Secretary of State; he shall correspond directly with the Ministers and Secretaries of State whom we have with us, and shall have two or more directors for that purpose.

VII. These directors, in both cases, shall be chosen indiscriminately from amongst all our subjects, as was fixed with regard to Sicily, for the ancient offices of consulter, and secretary of the government, whose duties will in future be performed by the said directors.

VIII. The law-suits of the Sicilians shall continue to be decided, even in the last resort, by the Sicilian tribunals. There shall, in consequence, be established in Sicily a Supreme Court of Justice, which shall be superior to all the tribunals of that island, and independent of the Supreme Court of our Dominions on this side of the Straits, as the latter shall be independent of Sicily, when we reside in that island: the organization of this Court shall be regulated by a special law.

IX. The abolition of Feudal rights shall be maintained in Sicily, as well as in our other Dominions on this side of the Straits.

X. We shall fix every year the portion to be borne by Sicily of the permanent expenses of the State, and we shall regulate

the manner of its application; but this annual portion shall never exceed the sum of 1,847,687 ounces, 20 tari, which was fixed in 1813 by the Parliament as the actual revenue of Sicily. No greater sum shall, under any circumstances, be imposed, without the consent of the Parliament.

XI. There shall be deducted every year from the said portion a sum, which shall not be less than 150,000 ounces, to be applied towards the liquidation of the debt bearing no interest, and of the arrear of interest of the debt which bears interest, until the entire extinction of both. When these two debts shall be extinguished, this sum shall be annually employed in forming a sinking fund for the public debt of Sicily.

XII. Until the general system for the civil and judicial government of our kingdom of the Two Sicilies shall be promulgated, all the departments of justice and administration shall continue on the same footing as at present.

We will and ordain that the present law, signed by us, certified by our Councillor and Minister of State for the affairs of Grace and Justice, countersigned by our Councillor, Chancellor, and Minister Secretary of State, enrolled and preserved in our General Chancery of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, be published throughout the kingdom, with the ordinary solemnities, by the competent authorities, who shall register the same, and see to its execution.

Our Chancellor, Minister of State of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, is specially charged with its publication.

Given at Caserta, 12th December, 1816.

FERDINANDO.

The Secretary of State, Minister of Grace and Justice,

MARCHESE TOMMASI.

The Secretary of State, Minister Chancellor, t

TOMMASO DI SOMMA.

**No. 5. - DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO THE
RESTORATION OF THE CONSTITUTION IN
1820. DISCUSSION OF THE GUARANTY BY
THE ENGLISH PARLIAMENT IN 1821.**

(R.)—*Extract from a Protestation made by the Sicilians, and addressed to the English nation, the guarantee of the Constitution since violated by the King of Naples, inserted in the Political Journal, called 'The Statesman, in 1817, and published in the same year, by Schulze and Dean, 13, Poland Street, and Ridge-way, Piccadilly, London.*

[This Protestation begins by retracing the history of the Constitution, in Sicily, from its origin in the 11th century, after the Norman conquest, down to 1812, when it was reformed under the influence and the guarantee of Great Britain. It next recalls the last oaths taken by King Ferdinand, on the opening of Parliament in 1814, to maintain the Constitution, and his treachery, after returning to Naples, in converting free and independent Sicily into a Neapolitan province. This treachery is attributed not only to the King, but to those Neapolitan ministers and councillors who had long plotted reducing the island to slavery, and detaching His Majesty from the friendship of his English ally. The Protestation then proceeds in the following terms:]

“Just and illustrious Bentinck! you whose name and whose virtues will be for ever endeared to Genoa, and to all Italy!—it is your testimony that is claimed by the Sicilian nation against those men, who alone are the authors of an injustice repugnant to the hearts of all Englishmen, who are alike the enemies to tyranny and to factions.

“Can it be in the 19th century, when a nation claims the enjoyment of its rights, which have been recognized by the

Sovereign and guaranteed by Great Britain, that ministers shall be allowed to trample on a Constitution that has stood through seven centuries, and that amongst other merits has the especial one of resembling the Constitution of the English nation?

“The Sicilians would already have opposed to such an act of destruction that resistance which is the right of every unjustly oppressed nation. Our history furnishes an abundance of examples calculated to strike terror into the hearts of faithless Princes and Ministers, which both had better consider attentively, and the Sicilian vespers might teach them the abhorrence with which slavery inspires us, and that even our women are ready to take up arms for the defence of our country. The Sicilians, we repeat, would have already shown themselves worthy their ancestors by opposing force to injustice, even though their efforts should cost them their lives; but before they gave vent to their indignation, they solemnly protest, in the eyes of all Europe, against those acts that strike at their Constitution and the guarantee given by England; and while waiting for the propitious moment, (which will doubtless be accelerated by the utter neglect of the promises sworn to the people by their rulers,) they invoke the protection of Great Britain and of the Prince who governs it with glory; as from that nation and from himself alone do they claim the independence that was to confer every happiness upon them.

“Magnanimous Prince, you whom Providence made use of to humble the most terrible of conquerors, you whose wisdom combined with power was the means of rescuing our island from his ravages, deign to listen to the voice of the Sicilians, who anticipate from the recovery of their Constitution, the possession of the same degree of justice, tranquillity, and liberty enjoyed by England through the means of her Constitution. It behoves yourself, Prince, and English honor, to recall our King to the letter of his oaths.”

“Palermo, 1st February, 1817.”

(S.) *Letter from H. R. H. the Prince Francis, Vicar of the Kingdom of Naples, to the Palermitans, written when the Revolution of 1820 took place in Sicily.*

Palermitans,

You whom I used to call my children, have been the first to abandon yourselves to sedition and disorder, and to overlook the noble principles that have always distinguished your country. You have forgotten in one moment the duties of men and of nations; you have acted against your own interest and against that of the common cause. What is most painful to my feelings is, that no sooner had I separated from you, and before I could possibly make known to you my arrangements for diminishing your taxes, and ameliorating your situation, you forgot my constant affection, and the sacrifices I have made in your behalf.

Rather than believe myself deceived in those demonstrations of attachment and fidelity which I have ever received at your hands, I am willing to attribute your errors to those who have instigated you to commit them. No case, however, need be deemed hopeless! Return to a state of order, to a due respect for the law, and to your obedience to your King. By offering you a free pardon, my heart feels somewhat relieved of the deep affliction which has entered into my very soul. Beware how you persist in the horrors of a revolution; remember it may carry you further than you at present contemplate. If any thing be wanting to your happiness, put your trust in me, who have never ceased to deserve it. Imitate the example of your Neapolitan brethren! Let them say if the King's intentions and my own do not correspond with all their wishes! I am desirous of knowing what may be most conducive to the welfare of your State, and to the security and glory of the nation; but I cannot return you my affection until you cease to display the disgraceful symptoms of sedition. Lay down your arms, and do not compel me to have recourse to measures most repugnant to my heart; submit to the laws and the magistrates, and let me believe you capable of wiping away

your faults by repentance. I solemnly promise to pardon you all, and not even to enquire into the cause of the revolt, nor who were its instigators, if you hearken at once to my voice, and feel remorse at having so ill returned the love I bear you.

(Signed)

FRANCIS, Vicar-General.

Naples, 20th July, 1820.

(T.) *Answer of the Palermitans to H. R. H. the Prince, Vicar-General.*

A violent crisis has shaken society to its very foundations, and threatened its entire destruction. A glorious revolution, planned with talent and forethought, and carried into effect with equal calmness and courage, aided by the troops, had already taken place in Naples, The revolution which was begun on the 2nd July, ended in the night of the 5th. The liberty that was the fruit of this revolution, and which was equally dear to the Sicilians, proved the fatal gift that was to become, in a manner, one of the elements of our disorganization. It certainly required nothing short of the series of faults committed by Government under these circumstances to produce so unexpected an effect, and to convert so precious a gift into a source of disasters and misfortunes for us; and if such was the Government's object, it may well congratulate itself on the result of its efforts. The measures it took were crowned with success. Anarchy, disorder, and civil war threatened our capital; but Providence, who generally watches over the safety of nations rather better than Governments, saved us from total ruin. The Sicilian people being averse to disorder, and naturally of a docile character, returned at once to a state of tranquillity, and by giving the world an example of rare moderation, acquired fresh claims to the esteem and good opinion of other nations. Such is the state of affairs with us, and scarcely have we emerged from so painful a situation, when we receive the proclamation of your Royal Highness, dated July 20th.

Your Royal Highness refuses to call us your children, and reproaches us with the benefits conferred and the sacrifices made by your Royal Highness for our happiness; your Royal Highness accuses us of ingratitude, and alternately styles us seditious, rebellious, and factious, now urging us to return to our allegiance to our King, with a full promise of amnesty and pardon, and now threatening us with fresh disasters in case we prove refractory.

We cannot conceal from your Royal Highness the deep affliction we experienced on reading this proclamation. It has opened anew the wounds that required a healing balm, instead of fresh irritation. Far from recognizing the paternal heart of your Royal Highness in this document, we but too plainly trace the style, the spirit, and the principles of those unworthy advisers, who have always plotted to bring about the degradation of our country.

May this filial and respectful remonstrance which we lay at your Royal Highness's feet, and our fervent wishes, which will be transmitted by the deputation which has already set off for Naples, serve to convince your Royal Highness of the filial attachment and tenderness the whole population of this town feel towards the person of your Royal Highness.

It is true that we would fain throw a veil over the past, and avoid even adverting to events which, at the present moment, would only tend still further to irritate the minds of all; but the reproach of ingratitude cast upon us is one so black and so heinous, that we owe it alike to your Royal Highness, to ourselves, and to all Europe, to clear ourselves of such an imputation.

Your Royal Highness, instead of imagining yourself deceived by the demonstrations of attachment and fidelity that we have ever shewn your Royal Highness, is much more surely misled by the perfidious advice of those who persuade your Royal Highness that all the sacrifices are on the side of the court, and all the benefits received on that of the nation;

and who would, in short, insinuate that nations are made for the convenience of princes, and not princes for the welfare of nations.

What has hitherto been the position of Sicily? What has been her fate? Twice over has his Majesty, your august father, and the whole royal family, been forced to leave Naples, and to seek a refuge amongst us. How many proofs of fidelity, devotion, and attachment, did not the nation display on these occasions! Not only did Sicily preserve the Crown in all its splendour, but she lent the King both troops and pecuniary assistance to regain his lost kingdom. Her treasures were lavished to maintain, in splendour, a whole host of Neapolitan emigrants. Such were the sacrifices made by the Sicilian nation! Yet of what avail were they to her, or what advantages did she reap from them? A resident Court and a solemn Parliament were indeed promised her, but was such promise ever fulfilled? Did the court, on returning home for the second time in 1806, seek to ameliorate the fate of Sicily? Were not the honours, offices, and pensions of the State conferred exclusively on Neapolitans, while the finances of the nation were frittered away upon spies and inquisitors, and in maintaining a numerous army of Neapolitans, besides paying a horde of emissaries and brigands that infested the kingdom of Naples? Sicily, in short, became a colony governed by a handful of Neapolitan emigrants. Such was the state of things, at a time, too, when the court was obliged to enforce the most illegal and arbitrary duties, in order to meet so profuse an expenditure, when Sicily witnessed some of her best citizens torn from the bosoms of their families, in the middle of the night, by military force, and banished to some islands, where they were kept in strict and painful durance, under the pretext of their being the disturbers of public tranquillity. Yet what was their crime,—unless it be one to have protested, respectfully, against the violation of the fundamental laws of the kingdom?

Sicily then decided in favour of the English constitution, and that constitution was adopted. Your Royal Highness was

named Vicar-General of the kingdom by his Majesty. The independence of Sicily was resolved upon and solemnly sanctioned. His Majesty having resumed the reins of government, promised the Parliament, held in 1815, not only to maintain but to complete the constitution that had been adopted.

The kingdom of Naples returned under the domination of his Majesty,—and what benefits did Sicily derive therefrom? She was immediately despoiled not only of her new constitution, but even of the one which, during the lapse of so many ages, preceding dynasties had invariably sworn to maintain, and had religiously respected; her flag was uprooted, her national emblems were broken, her coinage abolished, and her very name—that name that has shed so bright a lustre in the history of the world—obliterated! Degraded, vilified, and insulted, she was at length admitted to the honour of becoming one of the provinces of the kingdom of Naples, or of the Two Sicilies. And what compensation did she receive in exchange? For the first time in the annals of the nation, mothers beheld their children taken from them, not to defend their country, but to fill the ranks of the Neapolitan battalions on the distant shores of Puglia. The riches of the nation, which were daily being drafted off to Naples by the taxes of stamped paper, registers, and other duties as heavy as they were arbitrary, had turned prosperity and opulence into the most hideous penury. The mania for systems and new organizations was constantly introducing confusion and disorder into the different administrations, and unsettling people's minds.

A host of functionaries, chosen from amongst the most abject Sicilian classes, spread themselves throughout Sicily, and exhausted her last resources. A kind of rage for obtaining offices under government ran like an epidemic through all classes of citizens, who abandoned useful professions, arts, and industry, that had now sunk into insignificance compared with these offices, which were looked upon as a last and only resource.

From the smallest to the most important matters, every thing was settled at Naples. Thousands of unfortunate suitors were daily obliged to cross the sea, and go and fill the stairs and ante-rooms of ministers, who are mostly invisible, and expose the degrading sight of our humiliation to public view. Even the person of your Royal Highness, which with the august functions of Lieutenant, satisfied, if not the real wants, at least the imagination of the Sicilians, was recalled from the island and taken away from us.

The glorious revolution of Naples was accomplished. The Neapolitans gained their liberty. The government - must have guessed, or at least suspected, the consequences likely to result from the reaction, considering the state and disposition of the public mind; nay, it was warned and solicited to take suitable measures, by several Sicilians residing in Naples. Arrangements were proposed that would have had the effect of preventing all that happened, but they were despised and rejected. What measures were taken? None but secrecy and silence. The revolution was effected in Naples on the 6th; the most necessary provisions for the new constitutional system were nearly all published the same day; and although the telegraphs, which are burdensome enough to the State, and ships of war of all kinds were in the habit of displaying extraordinary activity, whenever it was question of bringing us some fresh calamity, or loading us with some new tax, they remained totally inactive at this important juncture. Though all was concluded in Naples on the 6th, yet it was not until the 15th, and only after some merchant ships had brought us news of the events that had taken place, that the government of Sicily published his Majesty's first proclamation to the people of *the kingdom of the Two Sicilies*, dated the 6th. Could the government be ignorant of the fact that we had neither a civic guard, nor any internal safety, and that our militia had been dissolved, disarmed, and annihilated?

Nothing was heard on all sides but shouts of joy and exultation. Soldiers and citizens joined in the celebration of such agreeable news. The headlong violence of a General was

the signal for riots and confusion. Between pusillanimity and terror, the Lieutenant-General brought about the fatal catastrophe. The citadel and arms were given up to the people, yet the riots did not seem to gain ground. In the night of the 16th, in spite of the opinion of the Junta, the garrison was armed, and marched out against the populace—a measure that brought on the fatal events of the 17th, and the consequent disturbances, that every good citizen so bitterly deplores. Who can say where the mischief would have ended, had not the moderation of a naturally pacific people, the zeal and activity of our consuls, and of the corporations of arts and trades, whose conduct can never be sufficiently praised, combined their efforts to restore order? It is therefore the members of government whom we have a right to call to account for the disturbances that took place, of which they alone were the authors, and on whom alone falls so odious a responsibility.

Tranquillity is now restored, and a provisional Junta, elected by the wish of the nation, and presided over by Prince de Villafranca, regulate and direct every thing.

Nevertheless, the wish of the capital and of the whole island is not the less strongly decided in favour of liberty and independence, under the government of a prince of the royal family. Every body is convinced that no liberty can exist without independence, and all are determined to defend both to the fast drop of their blood. They will perish together, but not till every true Sicilian shall have yielded up his last breath.

Should this universal wish be repressed in any one corner of Sicily, either by the intrigues of the factious, from motives of private interest, or by compulsory measures on the part of government delegates, its explosion will only prove the more terrible and the more fatal to those who have endeavoured to stifle it.

As to ourselves we cannot sufficiently deplore the errors into which your Royal Highness has been led, by those who

have caused your Royal Highness to confound the unanimous and decided wish of the Sicilians to obtain the liberty and independence of their country, with the seditious outbreaks or chance crimes of a few individuals who are thus made use of, by a most shameful artifice, to degrade the patriotism of our people, and the sacred cause it has undertaken to uphold.

We earnestly entreat your Royal Highness, in the name of the Sicilian nation, not to allow yourself to be deceived by such advice as may be dictated by selfish motives, or an overstrained national vanity, into heaping obloquy on the first steps taken by the Neapolitan people in the glorious career of liberty.

Let your Royal Highness remember that such measures might prove fatal to the mutual welfare of two nations of brethren, whom nature intended to love each other, and not to fight or tyrannize the one over the other,—and perhaps more fatal still to the interest of the throne and of the reigning dynasty.

(V.) Letter from General Florestan Pepe to King Ferdinand I., written after the Neapolitan Parliament annulled the Capitulation of Palermo on the 5th October, 1820.

Sire,

The high reward that your Majesty has been pleased to bestow upon me, is infinitely above what I have deserved. My gratitude will only end with my existence. Nevertheless, I entreat your Majesty to listen to some respectful observations that have become necessary from the painful position in which I am placed.

I was sent to Sicily against my will. I was neither the oldest nor yet the youngest of the lieutenants-general of your army. I had been absent from the service for the last five years, when I was entrusted with this mission, though by what right I know not. When duty called, I felt the necessity of obeying the orders of his Highness the Vicar-General, of the Junta, and of

the Minister of the Interior, and of the Minister of War, who were annoyed at the just reasons I alleged for declining their proposals. Having resolved on obeying, *I received my instructions, and carefully adhered to their spirit.* In applying these same instructions, however, according to the Prince de Paterno's advice, and in the interest of this country, and of the conciliatory measures deemed necessary, *I suppressed some expressions unbecoming the dignity of the Government.*

I must respectfully inform your Majesty that the small number of troops employed in this expedition, although deprived both of ammunition and artillery, and fighting against forces ten times more numerous, and before a vast city surrounded by walls, protected by bastions, forts, and four hundred pieces of ordnance well provided with ammunition, had yet acquired a degree of superiority, of which I should never have thought of taking advantage to change the orders I had received. Moreover, I felt convinced that, without transgressing my instructions, there were just and upright means of satisfying the general wish.

The Sicilians, finding themselves deceived in the promises held out to them, might have accused me of betraying them. Their generosity, which I can never forget, would not allow them to suspect me of such baseness.

Believe me, Sire, the rewards conferred by your Majesty are extremely flattering; and under other circumstances I should have felt myself especially honored by the one your Majesty has been pleased to offer me. But in spite of the feelings of respect and attachment that I owe your Majesty, I think myself called upon to refuse a reward that I cannot accept, since *the promises I made according to the orders I had received to that effect,* have been broken.

It is the only means left me to prove myself worthy of the esteem with which the Sicilians have been pleased to honor me.

The excellent and noble conduct of the officers and troops entrusted to my command, deserves the espeeial attention of your Majesty. They surmounted immense difficulties. It is doubtless a deplorable kind of glory to have to fight against one's fellow citizens; but great military achievements are always deserving of praise and reward. The hope of promotion opens a wider career to the talents and energies of these brave men, and gives them greater opportunities of rendering useful services to the State. I therefore entreat your Majesty to back the steps I am taking in their behalf with the Minister of War, and to receive favorably my entreaty to his Royal Highness to support this recommendation with your Majesty.

Sire, in the first report I transmitted from Palermo, through the medium of the general of the staff of my army, I informed the Minister of War that reasons of health did not allow me to continue in the service, and requested permission to retire. I now renew my entreaties to your Majesty, to have my military services examined by a commission, and to allow me to retire from the service.

I remain, with the most profound respect, &c.

(Signed)

FLORESTAN PEPE.

(V.) *Extract from, the Speech of Lord Ellenborough, delivered in the House of Lords during the sitting on the 2nd March, 1821.*

(Conduct of the Allied Powers in Naples.)

When his noble friend (the Marquis of Lansdowne) asked him, whether he supposed that the Austrian army would withdraw upon our making a remonstrance, he felt no hesitation in answering that it would not: but it was evident that circumstances must soon arise, in which the interposition of England would be as earnestly desired by the Austrians as by the Neapolitans, and that in consequence of our connexion

with Sicily. He could not forget that connexion; nor the circumstances under which a Constitution had been established in that island; nor the pledge which we had given to its inhabitants on leaving it. We had promised them that they should not be left in a worse situation than that in which we found them. And yet the King of Naples, who had no more right to unite Naples and Sicily than the King of England had to unite England and Hanover, had annulled the Constitution we had guaranteed, and which he had himself sworn to observe; had annulled the Constitution which existed previously to that, and which he had sworn by his viceroy to preserve inviolate; had, in violation of both Constitutions, united Sicily to Naples. Not only the pledge which we had given, and which we ought to have redeemed in 1816, but the combined interests of Austria and England called upon us to declare, and to support that declaration by arms, if necessary, that no Constitution should be established in Sicily to which the Sicilians had not consented in their ancient Parliaments. That Constitution had been violated by the present Government, as well as by the King, and we therefore ought not to decline advocating the cause of injured Sicily. He knew, from his own personal observation, the attachment of the Sicilians to England; it had originated in the hour of common danger, and had been cemented in the field of victory.

(X.) *Extract from the Report of the sitting of the House of Commons on the 20th March, 1821.*

Lord William Bentinck said:

The noble Lord opposite (Lord Castlereagh) had said that he had stipulated with the Government of Naples, that persons who had distinguished themselves in the service of Great Britain, should not be punished or injured; and that the people of Sicily should not be deprived of the rights which they had enjoyed under the Constitution which England gave to them, as well as the rights which they had previously possessed. But the British authorities had scarcely taken their departure from Sicily, when the King of Naples tore from the

people, not only the new Constitution, but deprived them of all their rights and privileges. Since he had left Sicily, he had had little communication with that country, but from something which had fallen from the noble Lord the other night, he was induced to make inquiries, and was made acquainted with the extraordinary fact, that in 1818,¹ by a public edict, the King of Naples, in compliance with the recommendation of the Congress of Vienna, had united the Government of Sicily and Naples.

Lord Castlereagh, in explanation, declared he had never heard of any such document as that quoted by the noble Lord. He hoped the noble Lord would produce the document, if in existence. When applied to on the subject, he had refused to give the King of Naples any advice as to his conduct with regard to Sicily. The noble Lord knew very well that he (*Lord Castlereagh*) had endeavoured in vain to administer that system to which he alluded. The Parliament not being able to reform itself, threw itself into the arms of the King.

Sir J. Mackintosh said, that the statement of the noble Lord was of importance, not merely as it related to the case of the individual, but to the general affairs of Europe. The noble Lord opposite imagined that there was a contradiction between him and the noble Lord behind him. There was; but it was merely as to words. It was asserted that the King abrogated the Constitution of Sicily, in consequence of the act of the Congress of Vienna. The noble Lord denied the fact; but did not the noble Lord recollect the secret treaty between Naples and Austria,

dated the 12th of June? That flagitious treaty had produced the effect of which the noble Lord behind him complained. It was a treaty conceived in the true spirit of foreign tyranny; it bound the King of Naples not to introduce any regulation in the affairs of its internal government without the sanction of Austria.

(1) This is evidently an error on the part of the noble Lord, who confounded the date of 1818 with that of 1816.

Lord W. Bentinck then read the document in question.

Lord Castlereagh expressed his doubts of the authenticity of this document.

(Y.) *Extract of the Report of the sitting of the House of Commons of the 21st June, 1821. (Affairs of Sicily.)*

Lord William Bentinck rose to bring forward his motion respecting the affairs of Sicily. In presenting himself for the first time to the notice of the House, after being so many years a member, he trusted they would readily believe him, when he declared the extreme reluctance he felt on the present occasion. He might have easily found more competent persons to have brought forward this question; he could have put them in possession of all the information which he had upon the subject; but he was not equally aware that he could transfer to them, even humble as it was, that weight and authority which, from particular circumstances, he must be supposed to have acquired in the history of these transactions. Still more impossible would it have been for him to infuse into a stranger that cordial attachment and affection towards a people which he cherished in his own bosom for the co-operation they had afforded him, and the benefit which had been reaped from their conduct. He who had had an opportunity of seeing the progressive improvement of Sicily, and had had the mortification of seeing all the best rights and privileges of the people taken away, their prospects blasted, and themselves, after the promises held out to them, placed in a worse situation than they were in before the British had been among them—he who had seen all these things, must be supposed to feel deeply upon such an occasion. He' had no personal vanity to gratify; his sole object was to complain that liberty had not been practically granted to a people to whom it was promised—a promise in which he conceived the honour of the country was involved, and the due fulfilment of which was loudly required by the people, though in a manner in no degree inconsistent with the principles or declarations of the parties concurring in the Holy Alliance. The late manifesto of

the allied monarchs at Lay- bach declared their determination not to countenance any form of constitution not legally established. The liberty required for the people of Sicily had been, he would contend, as legally pledged, and upon authority as legitimately sacred, as that which bound the governments of these sovereigns themselves. In asserting this on behalf of the Sicilians, he pledged his word of honour that he did not step forward at the instigation of any individual or party; he had received no solicitation whatever, neither had he had any communication with Sicily since he left that country. When he quitted Sicily, there were two conditions solemnly stipulated for on the part of the people. One, that no individual should be molested for his connexion with the English while they administered the affairs of the island; the other, that their rights and privileges should not be impaired by the transfer of their administration. So far from these stipulations having been fulfilled, there never was a more complete /annihilation of all rights and privileges than that which followed. If the House followed him in that view of the subject, what better time could occur for enforcing their sense of justice, than when the King of Naples was about (as he had promised) to put the constitution of the Sicilians upon a solid basis? The grounds of the occupation of Sicily by the British were perhaps generally known. In 1805, the royal family quitted their residence at Naples, and retired to Sicily, where they had the protection of a British army. Murat had then possession of Naples, and meditated the invasion of Sicily. Sir John Stuart, at that time, could only get from the Sicilian Government one regiment of cavalry to assist in the defence of their country; and at length, when Murat's invasion actually took place, it was repelled by the valour of the British troops, aided, not so much by the Sicilian Government as by the voluntary efforts of some of the Sicilian people. The first six years of the occupation of Sicily passed on in much the same spirit with the local government; and it was at length determined that a more efficient attempt should be made to place matters on a better footing. A noble Marquis (Wellesley) who had presided over the affairs of India with so much

honour, then filled the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and, he would venture to say, that of all the enlightened counsels which have marked the progress of the administration of that noble Lord in various parts of the world, there was none which did him more honour than the line of policy which he recommended to be followed with respect to Sicily. '

The instructions now laid upon the table, with which our connexion with Sicily terminated, appeared to be dictated by the same spirit of liberality. There was, however, this unfortunate difference to be remarked, that in the one case the instructions were completely executed, and in the other they had been *vox et praterea nihil*. These instructions made no sort of impression on the Neapolitan Government, and the consequence was, that more decided measures were adopted, and the policy of the State was completely changed. The Neapolitan advisers were withdrawn, and Sicilian ministers were placed in their stead. Unfortunately, the King made his appearance at that moment. He said unfortunately, because it led to a sort of feeling that the King did not mean to agree to the changes proposed; and it was feared that if he pursued the measures which had formerly been sanctioned, he would destroy the prosperity of the country, by annihilating the new constitution. Under these circumstance^ the Hereditary Prince was appointed to a commanding situation; and having had the honour of being placed near his person, he could bear testimony to the excellence of his conduct. Sicilian ministers having been appointed, the whole of the new code was carried completely into execution. Every thing went on well. In the course of nine months, 7,000 men were detached to Spain, and in a few months more than double that number were available. The Neapolitan army, which before that period was wholly useless, soon became worthy of assisting the general force. The constitution was faithfully executed in all its parts. The General who commanded, well knew the sufferings which the people had undergone, and was anxious to prevent their recurrence. He was perfectly acquainted with the cruelties

that were practised in 1809 and 1810; he was aware of the severity exercised towards five barons of the island, who were sent off, *d la Romeo*, without any trial, and confined in five different places. As he was conversant with the conditions appertaining to the new state of things, he exerted his best efforts to have them properly observed. The conditions required that the lives, liberties, privileges, and happiness of the Sicilians should not be less the care of the State than they formerly were. The old constitution of Sicily had existed for centuries, and had been respected by every monarch of Europe. Sicily was free—it had a constitution of its own—certainly a very independent one. Though connected with Naples, it possessed very important privileges. It had its own flag; it coined its own money; and it possessed its own Parliament. That Parliament, it was true, assembled only once in four years; but it exercised the power of voting taxes for that period, and of seeing that they were applied to the purposes for which they were voted. During the interval between each meeting of Parliament, a deputation was appointed from its own body to inspect the collection of the revenue, and see that it was applied to no other purpose than that which was intended. When the new Sicilian commissioners came in, they proceeded to reform the abuses that had taken place in the constitution. In 1812, the three Houses unanimously agreed on the basis of a new form of constitution. On that occasion, the barons of Sicily presented one of the most glorious spectacles that the world ever beheld: they came forward with the voluntary surrender of their own feudal rights. It was determined to adopt, as far as possible, the form of the British constitution. The three Chambers were reduced to two; the Lords Spiritual and Temporal formed one, and the Commons the other. The Parliament met in the years 1812, 1814, and 1815. In 1814, the King resumed the reins of government, and renewed his oath to observe inviolably the form of government that had been established. In 1815, his Majesty went to Naples. With regard to the correct manner in which the various powers of the constitution were executed up to this time, many concurrent testimonies could be adduced;

and he thought the noble Marquis opposite must have fallen into some mistake when he stated that the instructions of this Government, relative to the newly-established constitution of Sicily, were given at the period of our evacuation of that island. The evacuation took place in May, 1814, and the instructions were sent out in September, 1815. Some instructions were, he believed, delivered about the time of the King's proceeding to Naples; because he had learned from two gentlemen who were then at the Sicilian court, that a paper was given in by Sir W. A'Court. One of those gentlemen told him that before the departure of the King the British minister gave in a document, stating that, from a total change of circumstances, the influence of England was about to cease entirely in the island; that if the Government of Sicily required alteration, this country could have no objection to it, provided the alterations were made conformably with the existing laws and the free consent of the nation. The document concluded with an express statement, that England would not allow any violent or arbitrary change in the existing constitution. This memorandum was given by England to Sicily, when we entirely abandoned the Sicilians to their fate; and it was clear that the writer could have had no knowledge of the papers laid on the table by the noble Lord.—With respect to the instructions that had been sent out, he was free to confess that if he had had the framing of them, he did not think he could have drawn up any thing better calculated to satisfy the deep interest he felt in the welfare of Sicily. But what efforts were made to give effect to them? None whatever. They were received with joy in Sicily, but they were immediately followed by the decree of the King, which united the two countries. This act of union not only did not support the Sicilian constitution, but in fact destroyed it altogether, and made Sicily a province of Naples. Thus was Sicily treated. No country in the world was more attached to England; none bore a greater antipathy to Naples than the power with which it was thus forcibly united. When Murat was in possession of Naples, the people of Sicily were promised an independent government of their own, if their Monarch should ever regain the dominions of his

ancestors. That promise, however, was not kept. At the time that the revolution took place in Naples, the feelings of the Sicilians were displayed in the clearest light. About the same period, another revolution broke out in Palermo; but the object of the insurrection in Sicily was evidently different from that of the insurrection at Naples. The first act of the Neapolitans was to attack the people of Palermo; but the resistance of the Palermitans was so strong as to force their opponents to retreat. On this subject the House had the evidence of General Church, who commanded at Palermo. An indiscretion of his was said to have occasioned a disturbance; and he had published a justification, which completely established his innocence. General Church said, "That in the middle of a revolting populace, he remained faithful to the sovereign whom he served, and refused to join those who would have compelled him to violate his allegiance."

He farther stated, "That every body knew that for a great length of time the Sicilians desired a change, and that the discontent which reigned amongst them was profound." One of the acts of the King was to fix the sum of 1,842,000 ounces as the *maximum* of the expenditure for Sicily. A grosser imposition never was practised. The calculation was founded on the budget of 1813-14, when the price of * produce was nearly double what it was at present. But there were the budgets of 1814-15 and 1815-16, the latter of which estimated the revenue at 1,400,000 ounces; and this ought to have been taken as the standard of expenditure rather than the larger sum. But when the King took on himself to impose what taxes he pleased, how was it possible for the country to go on prosperously? If there were a national council to examine into the expenditure of the public money, the evil might be controlled; but where the King was a despot, all control was out of the question. By the constitution as now altered, all high offices were to be held by Sicilians; but it was strange to point that out as a praiseworthy provision, which had existed in the constitution of the State for many centuries. Great merit was attached to the King for having agreed to the abolition of

the feudal system. His view, however, was to get rid of the only check that existed against the unlimited power of the Crown. Neither must it be forgotten that the barons themselves had freely given up their feudal rights. And why did they part with those rights? They parted with them on condition that the King should abandon some of his privileges. In all that he had said, he had no object whatever but to restore to the Sicilians those rights and liberties which had with so much difficulty been acquired for them. He would conclude with moving, "That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, humbly to represent to his Majesty that the House has the mortification to learn that attempts have been made by the Government of the Two Sicilies to reduce the privileges of the Sicilian nation in such a degree as may expose the British

Government to the reproach of having contributed to a change of system in Sicily, which has impaired the freedom and happiness formerly enjoyed by its inhabitants; and humbly to pray that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to interfere, for the prevention of these evils, in such a manner as the honour and good faith of this nation absolutely require."

The *Marquis of Londonderry* said, that in rising to trouble the House with such observations as appeared to be necessary for the purpose of answering the argument of the noble Lord, he was happy to have it in his power to compliment him on the calm, intelligent, and candid manner in which he had introduced this subject. He was ready to admit that no individual, connected as the noble Lord had been with these transactions, could have brought forward a question of this description with more propriety or moderation. But while he paid his homage to the noble Lord on these considerations, he must remark that the noble Lord had chosen rather a late period for making his statement. He now called on the House to come to the conclusion that the conduct of the court of Naples towards its Sicilian subjects was so reprehensible that this country ought to interfere. The noble Lord had stated that he approved of the instructions sent out to Sir W. A'Court; yet

it appeared that it was on these very instructions that he founded his complaint. The circumstances to which he alluded took place so far back as 1816; and certainly the conduct of this Government was not altered by any thing that had since occurred. Now, if the alterations then made in the constitution of Sicily were of such a description as called for the interference of this country, it was at that period when the circumstances had recently occurred, that Parliament should have been called on to vindicate the national honour. It was a little too late to come to Parliament now, in order to criminate the court of Naples on account of circumstances that happened five years ago; more particularly when they were told that Sicily was about to undergo another organization, but of what nature he was ignorant. He certainly did not know the nature of the contemplated change, but it was supposed that it would partake of the character which the noble Lord so highly prized—that of a separate and independent nation. It was to possess a government wholly distinguishable from the government of the kingdom of Naples. It was, therefore, rather late to introduce this subject, when Sicily was on the point of becoming a separate, instead of being part of a united government. The happiness and interest of a State were not, however, always secured by its being separate and independent. They all knew with what reluctance Scotland gave up what it deemed its independence; and yet, he believed, the learned gentleman opposite (Sir J. Mackintosh) who certainly had the love of freedom as much at heart as any man, would not willingly go back to that palladium of liberty—to that invaluable blessing— Scottish independence. They lived nearer the period of the union with Ireland; and he knew that many Irish gentlemen could not give up the idea of the separate and independent government of Ireland. They had not had time to get rid of that feeling of partiality; but he believed that a different principle was making rapid strides in Ireland, and that it was now pretty generally acknowledged that a combination of government tended more to the happiness of the people, under particular circumstances, than a separate and independent one. The present question

naturally divided itself into two views; 1st, What was the course of measures adopted when England was in the military possession of Sicily?—and, secondly, when Sicily was evacuated, what duties were imposed on this Government, either in consequence of that military occupation, or arising out of any declaration, such as that to which the noble Lord had alluded? As to the nature of the connexion of England with Sicily, although Government had always felt a strong esteem and affection for that country, yet it was not merely on that account, or to secure the happiness of the people, that British troops were stationed there. It was, in fact, a military occupation. Government, looking at the state of Europe, thought it was necessary for the safety of the royal family, as well as to oppose a barrier to the strides which France was taking over the world, that Sicily should be protected. Her insular situation rendered her more capable of profiting by our naval resources. It was easy not only to defend that country from further molestation, but it was evident that a military position might be established there, from which a diversion might be made in favour of the liberties of Europe, and with the view of rescuing Italy from the French. This was the case; and with the exception of having guaranteed to the Sicilian people not to form a constitution, but to protect that part of the dominions of the King of the Two Sicilies, this Government had entered into no arrangement of an express nature with them. Portugal and Sicily were the only two States, as far as he was aware, with respect to which this country had entered into any guarantee of a specific nature. Undoubtedly the people of Sicily were satisfied that Great Britain sent troops to their country without any idea of territorial aggrandizement, and without any view to spoliation; but there was no express assurance given to them with reference to any new or altered constitution. When the British troops arrived in Sicily, they found the people discussing the merits of a constitution of their own. It was formed, as nearly as possible, on the model of the constitution of this country; and the people flattered themselves that they would enjoy under its protection the same blessings which the

people of England enjoyed. It was true that while the British troops were in the country, it was found necessary that a strong interposition should take place on the part of the British power, for the purpose of impressing on the mind of the Sicilian Government the propriety of supporting the constitution. If this had not been done, the government could not have gone on, and the place would not have been fit for a military station. The consequence of this interposition was, that the noble Lord was “mixed up” in a great variety of remonstrances (a laugh) which were sent in to render the King’s- interest sufficient to support the then existing state of things; but he certainly never did feel, that in resorting to those remonstrances, the noble Lord was doing anything more than what was necessary for his military occupation of the island. He never supposed that the noble Lord was entering into any arrangements with respect to the Sicilian constitution. He did not mean to disguise from the House that the noble Lord had great difficulties to encounter in his situation. It must have been revolting to the feelings of the people to see a foreign army in such a situation as rendered it necessary to interfere with their concerns. He was ready to justify that interference, but still it must have been most displeasing to the people. As far as he could judge, he never knew a constitution less suited to the genius of a people, or which seemed less likely to work beneficially for them than that which had been formed; and he believed there was no feeling more general when the British troops left the island, than that that constitution could not stand. Those who formed it affected to take the British constitution for their model; and he believed they took measure of the table on which he was then leaning, so determined were they to be correct, even in the most minute point of arrangement (a laugh); as far as the administration of government, the raising or the supporting an army was concerned, no constitution could be more defective; and it was equally inefficient for securing the happiness of the people. At length all parties determined that a fundamental change should be made. In 1814, Sir W. A’Court was authorised to explain to the people of Sicily the

reasons which compelled Great Britain to withdraw her troops from the island; and it was perfectly true, that in the memorial which he presented on that occasion, he expressed a hope that whatever changes were made in the constitution should be worked out by means of the constitution, and not effected, as modern alterations in government were, either by the army or by secret associations. However, after working for near twelve months in remodelling the constitution, the parties entrusted with that duty came to a dead stop. The consequence was, that the two Houses addressed the Crown, and a royal commission was appointed to effect the desired object. This royal commission also failed; and then the King was called on to renew the constitution of 1812, which it had been found impracticable to carry into effect. This was referred to the Council of State, under whose cognizance it was for several months, without any good being effected; so that if it were wished to establish the reign of chaos in Italy, those individuals appeared to have pursued the most feasible means for the accomplishment of that object. The noble Lord said that our evacuation of the island was in 1815, and the instructions were sent out in 1816. That was very true; and when our troops left Sicily, this Government had no idea of making a constitution for the people of that island. He hoped the making of a constitution for any country, unless it was governed by us, would be the last task which Great Britain would ever undertake. He conceived it to be a task which we could not perform; and if we made the attempt, it would render our name odious throughout Europe. He should therefore always set his face against those who in that House complained that this country would not indulge itself in manufacturing constitutions, or who wished England to become the constant monitor of other States, ready on all occasions to carry remonstrances to the thrones of foreign sovereigns. Those instructions were not issued when our troops evacuated the island, because it had always been our maxim not to interfere, unless there was an absolute necessity. The Government of this country originally stated that no spirit of meddling, no desire of spoliation, caused us to

send British troops to Sicily; and he had no hesitation in saying that no instructions would have been sent out to Sir W. A'Court, if a communication had not been made on the subject by the Neapolitan Government. The Government had certainly felt it to be its duty to the Sicilian nation, to lay before the Government of Naples, under what state of circumstances we should feel it necessary to interfere on behalf of the Sicilians. But he was not aware of there having been, during the six years that had elapsed since the period of our leaving Sicily, a single instance of a Sicilian alleging that he had been ill-used on account of his previous connexion with the British. So far from it, Sir W. A'Court, in a communication made to His Majesty's Government, expressly declared that all the offices in the Government, as it had been newly framed, were filled up by those Sicilians who were known to have been in connexion with the British. As far, therefore, as private interests were concerned, he might take some credit for the King of Naples, for a line of conduct dictated by liberal policy, or rather perhaps by a grateful recollection of the eminent services of Great Britain towards him. He himself (Lord L.) had anticipated that there would be no end to the persecution to which the British Government would be exposed, from the complaints which were likely to be perpetually preferred by Sicilians conceiving themselves to have been individually injured by the Neapolitan authorities. To his total astonishment, no such cases had occurred. One exception, indeed, might be named, and that was Captain Romeo. With all the respect which he entertained for the noble Lord, it was rather too much for the noble Lord to bring forward such a proposition as this. It was, in fact, demanding that his Majesty should adopt a measure crminating the conduct of the Neapolitan Government towards its Sicilian subjects. As to the Sicilian institutions themselves, the noble Lord had dressed up both the ancient and the modern government of the island in all those gorgeous habits with which it was so easy, in description, to invest any government; but if the House referred to the papers on the table, or even to the documents sent to England during the time that the noble

Lord was in Sicily, they would find them depicted in a very different manner. The Parliament, such as it was, hardly ever sat and it had no powers beyond making certain grants, and the privilege of setting forth certain grievances as the immediate condition of those grants. To talk, therefore, of the Sicilian "constitution" generally, was one of those oratorical flourishes which told very well in a debate, but that was really an illusion which the dispatches transmitted by the noble Lord himself would serve in a moment to dispel. He did protest against the extravagant notion that the British Government was to be held to an eternal interference in Sicilian affairs; for such was the effect of that principle of obligation which was contended for by the noble Lord. It would be perfectly unjustifiable and impracticable, unless we had made a specific contract for such interference. Whatever, therefore, had been done, was not to be referred to any general principle of that kind, but was to be tried on the special case of the year 1815. It would be idle to suppose that this country stood pledged beyond what was then arranged to protect the Sicilians against the consequences of any changes which might in future years be worked by ambition, accident, or hostility, or from the influence of any such motive as it was now attempted to charge against the Neapolitan Government. But the representations of our own minister warranted no such imputations. Sir W. A'Court was a man of great ability in his line; he could not name, at that moment, the man who was of greater ability in the like capacity. As far as he had seen the dispatches of that gentleman, he could find nothing in the conduct of the Neapolitan Government which should alarm the jealousy of this. That jealousy might have been warranted by the adoption of any suspicious measures of concealment on their part; but so far from there being any reluctance to make us acquainted with their councils, they solicited our observation. Sir W. A'Court was invited to be present at a conference where the treatment to be observed towards Sicily was discussed. His opinion was asked, and they would have been very glad to have involved him in the responsibility of advising them how to proceed in such a matter. Our minister,

with great prudence, had laid the business before his Government; and he (Lord L.) had certainly advised his adhering to the same principle of noninterference which had been all along acted upon. And certainly, seeing that we had already burnt our fingers in another case, where we had attempted rather to settle than to give a constitution, he was not at all disposed to undertake the task of framing a constitution for his Neapolitan Majesty. The fact was, that the Neapolitan Government finding that Sir W. A'Court was unwilling to mix himself up with any proceedings on this question, said to him in his public capacity—"If you don't like to do this, for fear of involving your own Government, do at least, as a private friend, tell us what to do in this case." Here it was that Sir W. A'Court had manifested great wisdom and discretion in refusing to commit himself in the matter; and as to what the noble Lord had said about no steps having been taken by this Government upon receiving a communication of the whole affair, the House, he thought, would not be very much surprised that those lights, which had not broken even on the noble Lord till after a period of six years, had not broken upon his Majesty's ministers the first moment of receiving the intelligence. Now, in point of fact, he did not believe that at the very moment he was addressing the House, a single vestige remained of that system which the noble Lord was calling upon them to protest against. He firmly believed that it was no longer in force. Let the House then conceive, if they could, the ridicule which would attach to this country if it should formally proceed to criminate his Neapolitan Majesty for retaining a system of government which had no existence. With respect to the conduct which this Government was bound to pursue upon being advised of the course of policy that was adopted by Naples towards Sicily, the only questions they had to ask were, did her proceedings carry with them such a character of malignity—were they so obviously calculated to destroy the rights of the Sicilians, that the British Government was bound to interfere on behalf of that people? In short, was this Government bound so to interfere upon the advice or representation of the most enlightened minister

abroad? Quite the contrary. The dispatches of that gentleman observed, with respect to the then intended changes in the Government of Sicily, that nothing in the proposed alterations would affect those who had been engaged in the British service. Neither was it to be inferred from those dispatches, that the union of Sicily with Naples produced any where that general tone of discontent which had been represented. When the news arrived in England of the union of Sicily and Naples, he, so far from being dismayed or alarmed, felt some lurking impression on his mind that Sicily would be happier in consequence. He considered that union as calculated to raise her to whatever importance Naples might be supposed to possess. Under all these circumstances, he thought there was nothing which could justify our interference, and that it was impossible for the House to acquiesce in the motion of the noble Lord.

Sir J. Mackintosh said, the complaint alleged against the noble Marquis and his colleagues was shortly and simply this—that the British Government, in its conduct to Sicily, had deviated from that principle which was laid down in the noble Lord's own dispatch, and had not performed those obligations which they had voluntarily undertaken to discharge. The noble Lord had expatiated upon the delay which had taken place in the bringing forward the present motion. But did the noble mover, did any man in Europe know the pledge which had been given by the British Government to preserve the ancient rights and privileges of Sicily, before the papers on the table were printed? He should have thought it impossible that instructions should not have been sent out to the noble Lord at the time of the evacuation of Sicily. The House had heard, however, what were the facts. From the noble Marquis's dispatch, it appeared that there had been some previous communication between the two governments. He talked there "of the King of Naples' assurances." These assurances must have been made in answer to some representations on the part of this country. Where were they? Where were the instructions from which those representations must have been

drawn up? Where was the note of Sir W. A'Court, written in 1814? In 1814, this Government had not adopted a dread of every thing like popular rights, a terror of public liberty, the proscription of which seemed to have been sealed at the Congress of Vienna. The noble Marquis had said a great deal upon the fact of there having been no representation made to this Government of any Sicilian alleging ill-usage to have been sustained by him from the new Government of his country; and from this he inferred the general satisfaction of the Sicilians with that Government. But could he really believe that this abstinence from complaint was a proof of that satisfaction? No Government, however wise, virtuous, or beneficent, ever yet existed, against which, in the course of six years, some complaints might not have been preferred; and, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the silence of the Sicilians was to be attributed to that universal feeling of distrust which the constitution of that system had excited in their minds—which alarmed them by the apparent character of its connexion with this country, and was of such a kind as forbade them to hope for relief from us. When they were themselves exposed to punishment, and when they saw the most distinguished officers of the British Government treated with ignominy, was it likely that they should complain? In 1815, the noble Lord, going to perform his duty at Naples, was refused admission, on account of acts in Sicily for which he had received the approbation of his own Government.

After the English Government had suffered a distinguished officer, and a friend of the Sicilian Government, to receive this treatment, was it likely that the Sicilians would complain? The Sicilians well knew that the powers of the alliance gave sufficient guarantee to each other of suppressing any complaint on the part of the people against their Governments; and they knew that the English Government had not disapproved of that guarantee. The main question was, whether the English Government had performed their contract with the Sicilians, as to the proceedings which had taken place in that country? This question, as replied to by the

noble Marquis, involved three propositions. First, there was no evidence before them, or before Europe, of the impracticability of the political Government established in Sicily under the auspices of the noble Lord (Bentinck). Secondly, he would submit to the House, that if the Government were really found impracticable, and was proved to be so, instead of the ancient constitution being restored, the constitution which we were obliged to restore if the one which superseded it should be destroyed, the whole of their ancient constitution had been overturned, all their privileges were abolished, and there was an entire establishment of despotism instead. The third proposition for which he would contend was, that the change which was now made by the King of Naples re-opened the question, and entitled the Sicilians still to have their ancient system restored. If the Government of Sicily had been much worse since 1816 than the former Government, the King of Naples was placed in the same situation as before by restoring the ancient constitution of Sicily. The noble Lord was therefore entitled to support from that House in his motion. First, as to the impracticability of the Sicilian constitution, he must advert to the manner in which the noble Marquis had ridiculed the minute imitation which the Sicilians showed in 1812, in adopting the British constitution, as the conduct of novices in political knowledge. This ridicule was not very becoming, nor very generous. Commiseration for men struggling for liberty, reverence for the British constitution, ought to have suggested other sentiments. But where were the noble Marquis's proofs of the impracticability of the Sicilian constitution? The experience, the personal observation of the noble mover, were entitled, it seemed, to no regard; but the speculative sagacity of the noble Marquis was to be relied on without one particle of evidence. What was it that was found impracticable? It was stated that all were opposed to the constitution. If it were so, he was not disposed to regard all parliamentary opposition to a constitution obtained by any means, as decisive of the character of that constitution. But there was no evidence of this sort. The majority were of opinion that the constitution

contained the means of an effectual reform; and an honest Administration co-operating with the majority would have given effect to those means. The Marquis of Circello was naturally disposed to judge unfavourably of the Sicilian constitution, but neither the Marquis nor Sir W. A'Court asserted any such thing, as that the Parliament implored their own extinction. He never knew despotism decided to be the proper government of a country, with so little pretence of evidence—with so little that was complimentary to the ingenuity or address of its abettors. If they proceeded in the trials of individuals upon such evidence, and decided as summarily as in legislative measures, their justice was detestable indeed. He believed that the difficulty of effecting a reformation had been held out merely as a pretence for having recourse to despotism. The people were so destitute of experience and political knowledge, as not to think absolute monarchy the best mode of governing them; and that was the proof that they were qualified for no other government. That was the great difficulty of reformation. What want of authority could the noble Marquis opposite feel? He had the authority of the ministers of Naples. The Marquis of Circello stated the difficulty of carrying changes into execution as a ground for altering the constitution. Was that the real ground? No. The real ground was the flagitious agreement signed on the 12th of June, 1815, by which the King of Naples bound himself not to allow any form of Government to exist in his dominions inconsistent with the principles of the Government of his Imperial and Apostolic Majesty in Italy. If the constitution of Sicily had been more practicable, it would, in consequence of this agreement, have been considered more dangerous. If a popular form of Government had been found practicable in Sicily, what would become of the maxims by which Austria governed in Italy? So false and fraudulent had this agreement been, that the King of Naples, not satisfied with having at first concealed it from the English Government, had concealed it from the noble Lord and Sir W. A'Court to the end of the year 1817. Did the Neapolitan Government think this binding, or did they not? If they did, then they abolished the Sicilian

constitution, in compliance with this nefarious article. What evidence, then, was this of impracticability? The Austrian Government was not, in fact, oppressive,—_at least he was not prepared to say so; but an absolute Government, maintained by military force. It was a simple despotism. The Neapolitan Government then became bound to establish a despotism in Sicily, and determined to perform its obligation at last, however much it might slight its duty to Sicily, and its obligations to this country. After this, what credit would they give to assertions of impracticability without testimony? Would they take the assertion of an enemy bound to destroy the constitution, determined to overturn that form of Government, and only looking out for pretexts to delude Sicily and its most faithful ally? On the 9th of June the general treaty of Congress at Vienna was signed, and on the 12th this deed was signed, which aimed a secret stab at English honour and Sicilian liberty at the same time. This flagitious engagement its authors concealed for two years. For that time none of its stipulations were known to the very power which was in closest connexion with Sicily, or to the Sicilians themselves. It was very true that the noble Lord had found opposition in Sicily to the constitution established there. But where was that opposition found? There was some delicacy in this point. He would tread gently on the ashes of the dead;—he would touch with tenderness on royal names and privileges which were not always tenderly or delicately treated by those at war with them. Whatever opposition existed against the Sicilian constitution, had not been in the two Houses of Parliament, but in the court, in the councils, and, if Europe was not deceived, in the very family of the King. The only friends of England were the friends of the Sicilian constitution. The lovers of liberty naturally become attached to England. The English constitution had been the ancient standard, England the classic ground of liberty. All who attempted to obtain their own freedom thought of England with reverence. Thus the Sicilians had acted; and with such feelings had they supported the military enterprises of the noble Lord, and sent troops to Spain, for the purpose of aiding

the general struggle for national independence. They had then no idea that an English minister would say that their political extinction was a point which it required the microscopic eye of a Lilliputian to descry. He should be sorry to follow the noble Marquis in the sort of special pleading which he had had recourse to in discussing a question of national engagement. He should be ashamed to answer a species of argument which would imply that, because the abolition of feudal rights had succeeded the occupation of Sicily by an English army, therefore we were bound to restore the oppressions with the privileges of a former period. He should be ashamed to contend against such logic. He believed he must have misapprehended the noble Marquis. If this country were to restore its Government as existing at any former period, would all the restrictions of the feudal system form a part of that restoration? The English Government were bound to restore to the Sicilians the ancient constitution, so far as that was essential to liberty, and to preserve all the improvements which had been quietly introduced. The noble Marquis said that the new constitution removed every difficulty, and that the old was full of defects and difficulties. Why? Because the new constitution was a simple despotism. The noble Marquis was grossly misinformed if he supposed that the King had not been bound to call the Parliament together once in the four years. He was compelled to do that every four years which the King of Great Britain was compelled to do once every year. Our ancestors had been for centuries struggling before they compelled their King to hold regular Parliaments. This power alone was of the utmost importance, and now it was taken from the Sicilians. The King had the power of changing taxes at his pleasure. Suppose he should by such changes treble his revenue, where were the means of resistance? Where was the member for Aber- been, to detect the imposition? Thus, then, the Parliament of Sicily became as miserable a dead letter as could be detected in the annals of a first cheated, and then oppressed nation. The noble Marquis regarded, as a ridiculous absurdity, the coupling of grievances with supplies. Good God! Did we live to hear such a practice treated with derision

in the British House of Commons? He asked, wherein the constitution now given to the Sicilians could be distinguished from the most absolute monarchy? It was a very fashionable topic, that certain nations were not fit for political liberty. Where in the world had any nation become qualified to enjoy liberty, without the possession of it? The Italians were now in the same situation as the English three centuries ago. They were now struggling, as we had done, while laying the foundation of the noblest fabric of liberty the world ever saw; and by the same struggles they might yet be restored to their ancient splendour and glory. Two years in Sicily was decided to be experience enough of the impracticability of liberty, and absolute monarchy was restored. What would have become of England if it had been compelled to renounce its liberty after so short a trial? That House, which by means of the struggles of liberty had risen to be the greatest representative assembly the world ever saw, ought not to condemn liberty, because there had been a difficulty in establishing it during the first two years of the experiment. If there were Englishmen who countenanced the last changes in Sicily, their opinions were not English. (The honorable member here entered into a history of the present character of the Sicilian councils, which he characterized as worse than the Parliaments of Paris in the worst of times.) None of its members were recommended by character to the good opinion of their fellow-citizens. They were ready and obedient slaves. It was a naked despotism, instead of the constitution which had been pretended to be accepted in 1816, as saving the honour of the nation. The noble Lord had guaranteed the constitution by good faith and national honour. This country could not depart from that engagement without perfidy and dishonour. There was an acknowledged interference. As soon, therefore, as the constitution of 1816 was withdrawn, we were bound to place the Sicilians in the same situation as before. The noble Lord now proposed a motion, which called for no censure, and manifested no severity. It only asked something more of their ancient privileges for the Sicilians, than the constitutions of 1821 or even 1816 had given. He should rejoice if any

improvement were derived by a defenceless people from the interference of Great Britain, who had offended deeply against them. Their ancient constitution had not been supported by 10,000 foreign troops. It had not been formed by Austrian bayonets. In the last decree, there was one passage so flagrantly insulting, that he could not read it without indignation. It was—"as much independence as was good for them." That was no independence at all. Sicily did not seek independence of Naples, as Scotland or Ireland had once been separate from England. She sought not separation as a country, but independence in its Government. When, therefore he found foreign mercenaries dictating a constitution which would be degrading to an Asiatic slave—when he found them saying that they would give as much independence to the Sicilians "as was good for them," he could not adequately express his indignation and abhorrence at such a shameful abuse of terms.—The House divided. Ayes, 35; Noes, 69.

**No. 6.- RESTORATION OF THE
CONSTITUTION IN 1848. ENGLISH
MEDIATION IN MARCH, 1848. ANGLO –
FRENCH MEDIATION IN FEBRUARY, 1849.**

*(Z.) Convocation of the General Parliament of Sicily, by the
General Committee of the Provisional Government in
Palermo.*

To the People.

From the moment at which Sicily took up arms against an illegal power that, after despoiling her of her most sacred rights, had reduced her to the most degrading slavery, her first cry, which has been repeated a hundred times since, was, "that she should not lay down those arms till a General Parliament, assembled in Palermo, should have adapted her constitution to the wants of the times— that Constitution

which she had possessed for centuries, and which had been reformed in 1812 under the influence of Great Britain.”

Providence has no sooner blest our arms, and sealed the justice of our cause by victory, than the members of the General Committee feel it to be their first and most sacred duty, by way of answering to the confidence which the unanimous consent of all Sicily has placed in their hands, to hasten as far as possible the solemn moment when our free nation shall assemble in Parliament, in order that by adapting its Constitution to the wants of the present times, it should strengthen the foundations of public prosperity, and under the all-powerful hand of the Most High, should raise the nation to that lofty position to which nature and the courage of its sons have alike calculated it to fill.

Thirty-three years of despotism, and the necessary moral and intellectual progress of the people, have greatly altered the face of society; and the wants of the nation are so urgently imperious, that it would be impossible, at the present moment, to assemble a General Parliament, under the strict rules of the Constitution of 1812, in order afterwards to introduce into it those modifications which alone can satisfy the spirit of the present times. It is, therefore[^] under this pressing necessity that the General Committee enjoins the whole nation to assemble in a General Parliament, under the following regulations: (1)

(1) The King of Naples recognized this decree of the General Committee, and gave it the form of a royal edict by adding the following preamble: “We, Ferdinand, &c., being desirous of permanently insuring the prosperity and Parliamentary Constitution of our Sicilian subjects, have deliberated and do resolve as follows,” &c. Moreover he drew up the Article in the following terms:

—
 Art. I. The General Parliament is convoked at Palermo, in order to adapt the Constitution of 1812, to the political exigencies of the present times, and to provide for the wants of Sicily; the entirety of the monarchy still remaining vested in the single person of the King.

To this he added the following Article:

Art. 25. The two Parliaments of Naples and of Sicily will agree upon all matters concerning the interests of both nations. While Art. 26 contains the final formula of the Neapolitan decrees, viz.—“Your Minister,” &c. Besides this

1. The General Parliament is called upon to meet in Palermo, in order to adapt the Constitution of 1812 to the present times, and to provide for the wants of Sicily.

2. To this end the Chambers of Commons and of Peers will assemble in Palermo on the 25th of next March, being the solemn feast of the Annunciation of the Holy Virgin.

3. All cities and parliamentary towns, which according to sec. 3, 4, and 5 of the chapter referred to, and such other cities as according to the following laws of Parliament have a right to be represented, shall proceed to elect their representatives on the 15th March.

4. All the twenty-three districts, which according to sec. 2 of chap. v. Tit. I. of the Constitution and the annexed tables, have a right to send representatives, together with the new district of Aci-Reale since created, will each elect two representatives on the 18th March in their respective capitals.

5. The number of representatives that each city will be able to send, will be in proportion to its population, according to the census resulting from the alphabetical index of the cities and towns of Sicily, containing the returns of the population compiled from the general Committee of Statistics, in August, 1846, printed and published in Palermo, in the same year, a first decree, which is dated 6th March, 1848, five others were signed by the king on the same day.

1. Organization of a Ministry for the affairs of Sicily in Naples, and nomination of M. Scovazzo.

2. Establishment of a Lieutenant-General in Sicily, with three Ministers, State Secretaries for the several departments of Justice and Public Worship, the Interior, and the Finances, together with a Director of these Ministries.

3. Nomination of Rear-Admiral Ruggiero Settimo to the dignity of Lieutenant-General.

4. Nomination of the three Ministers and of the Director.

5. Formula of the oath taken by the political, civil, and military functionaries, in which is to be found this most unconstitutional expression: "I promise and swear before God, fidelity and obedience to King Ferdinand II, and the exact accomplishment of his orders."

These six decrees contain the whole spirit of the propositions made by the King of Naples to the Provisional Government of Sicily, through the organ of Lord Minto, who transmitted them to the Committee.

copy of which is annexed to and forwarded with the present regulation; so those cities which shall have reached the amount of eighteen thousand inhabitants, will return two members, while such as reach six thousand, will return but one.

Should there, however, be amongst these cities any that had a right to be represented according to the Constitution of 1812, and whose population shall have diminished since that period, they shall, notwithstanding, elect the number of members fixed by the Constitution.

6. The Island of Lipari shall elect its representative according to the terms of sec. 7 of the Constitution, at the chapter referred to.

7. All the cities and towns beyond that are now capitals of an arondissement (circondario) even though they may not number six thousand inhabitants, shall, nevertheless, each name a representative.

8. The Universities of Catania and Messina will each send a representative, and the University of Palermo will send a couple, in conformity with sec. 8 of the designated chap. v. of the Constitution, Tit. I.

9. Seeing that at the present moment the electoral lists are wanting, as well as all the magistrates whom the Constitution and the regulations require for proceeding to the elections, and circumstances not allowing of the delay necessary for the creation of the latter, the following persons will be entitled to elect members for the approaching General Parliament:

I. All landed proprietors possessing either a life income or a perpetual one amounting to eighteen ounces, according to sec. I of chap. VIII. Tit. I. of the Constitution.

II. Doctors or licentiates, of whatever faculty they may be.

III. The members of the literary, scientific, and artistic academies of the kingdom.

IV. The professors of the Universities, the members of the Institution of Encouragement, those of the societies and of the economical commissions of the kingdom.

V. All tradesmen inscribed on the last rolls of the abolished tax upon merchants.

VI. All artists and masters inscribed on the lists of the National Guard, and in those places where a National Guard may not yet be organized, all artists and professors who are at the head of lay congregations.

VII. All such in short who are set down upon the lists of eligible municipalities recently published.

10. Those who cannot exercise the right of election are the following:

I. AU who cannot read or write, according to chap. x. of the Constitution, under the head of liberty, and rights and duties of citizens.

II. Those who are excluded from being representatives by sec. 10, and 2nd of chap. vi. Tit. I. of the Constitution.

III. Those who are under an accusation, and such as are suspended solely for common crimes according to the penal code provisionally existing.

11. Any Sicilian citizen who shall possess any of the above-mentioned qualifications for voting, so soon as he may have obtained the majority of the votes of such electors as may give their votes on the election day, will become the representative of the district, or the city, or the university that shall have elected him, without any other requisite being necessary on his part, save and except he incurs exclusion from any of the causes pointed out in the preceding paragraph.

12. The Provisional Committees of the cities and towns which are to proceed at once to hold their elections, will immediately, on receiving the present act of convocation,

appoint the place and the hour where the elections are to take place.

They shall choose by a majority of votes one of their members, who in conjunction with the high priest, the parish priest, or curate, or whoever discharges his duties, and the oldest amongst the notaries of the town, will form the Commissions entrusted with the care of conducting the electoral business; the member chosen by the Committee will become its president.

These Commissions will perform the following duties:

I. For two days previous to the one fixed upon for the election, they will keep an open register, arranged in alphabetical order, in which all persons having the necessary qualifications for voting, shall inscribe their Christian and surnames, their family, and their domicile.

II. They will watch that no persons should enter their names but such as have a right to do so; to which effect they will judge provisionally whether the person who presents himself has or has not the qualifications required above, subject to an appeal to the Chamber of Commons, which will decide upon the matter definitively; and in case of admission, they will furnish him with a bulletin, signed by all three, to be presented on the day of election.

III. They will preside on the said day over the electioneering business; they will collect the votes; they will name two electors as scrutators.

IV. In short they will adopt all proper measures for the elections to be accomplished with the greatest tranquillity and order, by sending away any parties who might attempt to disturb the same.

13. The elections will be effected by secret ballot, namely, each elector shall entrust his ballot, on which will be inscribed the name of his chosen candidate, to the hands of the

President of the Commission, who will deposit it in a closed urn in presence of the voter, and of the two other members of the Commission.

14. When the hour fixed for closing the poll shall be past, the President of the Commission will withdraw the ballots one by one from the urn, will read them in a loud voice, and hand them successively to the two other members; and the two scrutators will return and write down the name of the candidate with the successive votes; having summed up these he will proclaim the result of the voting, all of which proceedings will have been carried on publicly in presence of the electors.

15. Should none of the proposed candidates obtain one vote more than half of the votes given, recourse must be had to voting by writing secretly *aye* or *no* over the name of each candidate, beginning by the one who shall have obtained the greatest number of votes, and continuing by degrees down to the name of the one who will obtain one more than half of the votes.

16. No one shall come armed to inscribe their name upon the registers, or to vote for the elections, on pain of not being allowed to vote at all during the present election.

17. When the elections shall be over, the Electoral Commissioners shall deliver to the chosen representative a certificate of the election, to which their signature shall be appended; a copy of which, signed likewise by them, and revised by the President of the Local Committee, shall be dispatched to the General Committee, who will present it to the Chamber of Commons so soon as they shall have assembled. They will also draw up the minutes of the electoral proceedings, which they will keep under seal, together with the register of the electors, at the disposal of the Chamber of Commons.

18. In those cities that have several parishes, the Electoral Commissions will be composed of a member of the committee

chosen by a majority of votes, according to Art. 12, by each parish, of the parish priest of the same parish, and of the most ancient notary domiciliated in that parish.

These Commissions will restrict themselves to the preliminary business, previous to the collecting of the ballots; after which, all the Commissions of the various parishes will assemble in the Town Hall, where the votes will be summed up, and they will declare elected the party or parties (where there is to be more than one representative) who combine the majority of the united votes of all the parishes, according to Art. 15.

19. All the Temporal Peers designated in sec. 2 of chap, iv. Tit. I. of the Constitution, and in the annexed table, or in default of them, their successors to the title, according as the law of succession shall have been established in individual families in 1812, and all Ecclesiastical Peers, indicated in the same section and in the same map, shall sit in the Chamber of Peers.

20. Such as are not Sicilians are excluded alike from the Temporal and Ecclesiastical Peerage, as likewise those who held it as Commanders.

21. And seeing that many Temporal Peerages are now extinct, or held by such as are not born Sicilians, and many Spiritual Peerages are vacant, or held by Commanders or Prelates who are not Sicilians, in order to restore the Chamber of Peers, the same number of members which, according to the tables annexed to the Constitution, it contained last session, it is to be completed in the following manner:

The Chamber of Commons being legally established, and the formalities indicated by Art. 23 having been duly performed by the Chamber of Peers, the former will present the Chamber of Peers as many triple nominations of lay and ecclesiastical members as there are Temporal and Ecclesiastical Peerages wanting.

And as it is not question of constituting the election of such persons into definitive Peerages, any one eligible to the Chamber of Commons may be comprised in these nominations for replacing the missing Peers.

22. The Chamber of Peers and the Chamber of Commons will assemble for the first time in places prepared by the General Committee, under the Presidentship of the eldest of the members present of each Chamber, to proceed to the election of their respective Presidents and Vice- Presidents, and to the verification of the titles of their respective members.

23. As soon as the President shall be elected, the Chamber of Peers shall not proceed to any other acts, until the list of vacant Temporal and Ecclesiastical Peerages shall have been dispatched to the Chamber of Commons.

Should the Chamber of Commons not consider it to be exact, a Committee composed of twenty members of the Chamber of Commons, and of as many from that of the Peers, presided by the President of the Chamber of Commons, shall regulate the list definitively, and proceed immediately to propose the supplementary nominations, according to Art. 21.

24. In all measures that shall involve a difference of opinion between the two Chambers, a mixed Committee, composed as stated in the preceding article, and always elected on each special occasion, shall decide on the contested subject.

The Chambers are obliged to choose their Committee within a delay of a week; at the expiration of which, the Chamber that has proved the most active will make its choice from the other. Mixed Committees have attained their legal number when they have assembled two-thirds of the entire number of members.

When the General Parliament shall have thus assembled, the wishes of our heroic nation can be accomplished; and the General Committee look forward with impatience to the much wished for day, in order that, under the rule of the national representation, there may be an end of those temporary powers which necessity and the confidence of the people imposed upon us during the most trying days of our glorious revolution.

Done and carried unanimously on this day, 24th February, 1848.

Palermo, 26th February, 1848.

(Here follow the 82 signatures of the Members of the Committee,')

The President of the General Committee,

RUGGIERO SETTIMO.

The Secretary-General,

M. STABILE.

(AA.) Speech of the President of the General Committee of the Provisional Government, on the opening of the Sicilian Parliament,—25th March, 1848.

My Lords, and Representatives of the Chamber of Commons of Sicily,

The line of conduct upon which we are this day about to enter, in the face of God and man, is perhaps the most solemn step that can be taken in the history of a people. The General Parliament of Sicily, which was dissolved thirty-three years ago by a usurped power, now assembles for the first time to revise the national institutions, after a lapse of the third of a century, during which the rest of the world has rapidly progressed, while Sicily has been burdened with wrongs past endurance, and suffered countless evils and calamities

unnumbered. It has pleased God to permit that this Parliament should not be opened by the royal power that suppressed it in 1815, but by the will of the people, who have proved victorious in the unequal struggle between soldiers and unarmed civilians—a struggle so gloriously maintained by an inexperienced crowd against disciplined troops both military and naval, and in spite of the array of artillery and the preparations for war that had so long been prepared to subdue us. Let us, gentlemen, recognize the hand of an all-wise Providence, in this our glorious revolution. God began by raising a holy Pontiff, and inspiring him with resolutions betokening that love of liberty and those feelings of independence so long entertained by all Italian hearts. While our Italian brethren were taking a longer road to reach the same goal, the Almighty darkened the understanding of the Potentate he was about to confound, and excited the courage of the Sicilian people, to whom was reserved the glory of really beginning the great work of redemption. Let us return thanks to the Most High, and pray Him to direct and to support the General Parliament in the work it has undertaken to perform, and may its efforts be productive of the everlasting liberty, peace, prosperity, and greatness of Sicily, no less than of all other members of the vast Italian family.

The General Committee, which now resigns within your hands the power with which it was invested during the heat of the insurrection, owes you a faithful account of its acts, and, first of all, must expound the principles which directed its policy. The Committee placed great faith in the revolution, and put its trust in the people: it trusted to the public spirit of the Sicilian nation,—at all times so jealous of its liberty, its constitutional rights, and its independence. This deep-seated and vital feeling of independence has not only resisted all the efforts made by the Neapolitan Government to extinguish it, but has been still further inflamed by compression; and having acquired fresh force in proportion to the injuries, contumely, and senseless excesses heaped upon us by the Government, has extended to the remotest cantons of Sicily.

The General Committee appointed by the people of Palermo found this feeling so rife in their hearts, from the very first day of the struggle, as to form the rallying word of the revolution, and this was clearly expressed in the answer given by its members to the fallen Government—namely, that the Sicilians would never lay down arms till the day when they should have assembled as a General Parliament in Palermo, and have adapted to the wants of the present time that Constitution which they have possessed for so many centuries, which they reformed in 1812 under the influence of Great Britain, and of which no one ever dared openly to attempt to deprive them. The object of the revolution thus explained, was in strict conformity with the universal wish; hence the wonderful unanimity of all the towns, of all classes, and of all inhabitants of the island. The General Committee could not have chosen a safer guide than the device they adopted; they but followed in the people's wake, and were thus enabled both to preserve the confidence of every one, and to maintain their authority throughout the various phases and difficulties of a revolution that shook society itself to its very foundations.

We need not here relate the particulars of the efforts resulting from this unanimity of all parties throughout Sicily. At the first news of the events that had taken place in Palermo, every town gave in its adherence to the revolutionary party spontaneously, and with demonstrations of the utmost joy. The few cities that were garrisoned backed their declaration by taking the initiative in the most courageous manner. In a few days Termini, Trapani, Catane, Melazzo, Girgenti, and Licata, took possession of the fortresses that threatened them; sent the Neapolitan soldiers prisoners to Palermo, substituted committees appointed by the people in place of the royal authorities, and entered into correspondence with the General Committee: the same thing happened throughout all other districts, where gendarmes and soldiers of all sorts were arrested and sent to Palermo. Then again, what praise is not due to Messina and Syracuse? Did not Messina, who was the first to attempt an insurrection

in September last, now gloriously accomplish its deliverance, under a discharge of artillery from one of the most formidable fortresses in Europe? With that boldness and decision, of which Messina's annals furnish so many a glorious example, the intrepid citizens hoisted a tri-coloured flag opposite the battery, appointed a temporary committee, and in spite of the bombardment and the disadvantages attending so unequal a struggle, attacked and carried all the forts, with the exception of that of Salvatore and of the citadel. The former is partially destroyed, and the latter considerably damaged; so that though hostilities are at present suspended on both sides, the situation of the forts is now far more critical than that of the town itself/ Syracuse, too, deserved the admiration of all Sicily for displaying an equal degree of courage and prompt decision, and fortunately without our having to deplore any bloodshed.

In this state of things, Sicily being unanimously resolved upon maintaining its rights, and the Neapolitan Government hesitating to recognize them, the General Committee did not think fit to adjourn the convocation of Parliament. It is superfluous to add, that not being able to restrict themselves entirely to the statute of 1812, the members of the Committee have been under the necessity of modifying it to suit the spirit of the age and the present wants of the nation, and have therefore agreed upon the new stipulations with which you are all acquainted, by virtue of which we represent the country in this assembly.

The General Committee will submit to Parliament the state of the negotiations pending with the Neapolitan Government, on the subject of the fundamental laws of the State. From the first moment that Palermo entered so fearlessly upon the struggle, the Committee, who doubted not but that victory would inevitably compel Government to acknowledge our rights, conceived the idea of addressing themselves to the illustrious English diplomatist then at Rome on a mission of friendly interference in aid of the Italian cause. The only object of the first communication made by the Committee,

was to inform the British Ambassador of the state of affairs in Palermo, and to entreat him, in the event of a reconciliation taking place, to be pleased personally to secure the inviolability of the stipulations which Sicily might obtain. Nor was the Committee deficient in perspicacity in so doing; for it was not long before the Neapolitan Government likewise solicited Lord Minto's mediation in the affairs of Sicily. The noble Lord, who had by that time left Rome for Naples, was willing to comply. He hastened to communicate to the Committee, through the medium of the Consul-General of England, a statement which was immediately printed and published, together with the Committee's answer, in which the British agent declared his acceptance of the part of mediator, in the following terms: "The ancient constitutional rights of Sicily will be guaranteed, and her independence recognized." The Neapolitan Government displayed such a spirit of procrastination and subterfuge, as to induce the Committee to hasten the convocation of Parliament, though without breaking off the negotiations that have been opened, or seeming over-precipitate, but merely to shew that the Sicilians were not to be put off their purpose. The Neapolitan Government then gave in its adhesion to the act of convocation; but as the other royal decrees, dated March 6th, with which all of you, gentlemen, are acquainted, did not grant Sicily the securities it had a right to claim, the Committee was justified in considering such decrees as null and void. The negotiations had thus been brought to a close, and the illustrious person who directed them having arrived in Palermo, that diplomatist declared explicitly to the General Committee that the result of his interference might be summed up in these words: "On one side, the unity of the Crown —on the other, all the institutions necessary to secure the Constitution and the independence of Sicily." This was the subject of a long and mature deliberation amongst the members of the Committee, which determined on accepting the sole clause proposed by the negotiator, and to propose in exchange the following conditions:

“That the King should keep the title of King of the Two Sicilies;

“That his representative in Sicily, who would always be called a Viceroy, should be either a member of the Royal Family, or a Sicilian;

“That a complete and irrevocable *alter ego* should be attached to the dignity of Viceroy, with all the attributes conferred on the executive power by the Constitution of 1812;

“That all persons appointed to different offices by the General Committee should retain them, and that all acts emanating from the Committee should be maintained; in like manner that all offices already conferred, or that might be conferred by the other Committees of the Island, as long as their power lasted, should be maintained;

“That the act of convoking the Parliament, published by the General Committee, should form an integral portion of the Constitution;

“That all kinds of offices, whether diplomatic, civil, or military, as well as ecclesiastical dignities, should be conferred exclusively on Sicilians, by the Executive Power resident in the Island;

“That the institution of the National Guard should be preserved, together with any reforms decreed by Parliament;

“That, within a week, the royal troops should evacuate the two fortresses they still occupied, and that such works within the fortresses as might appear likely to threaten the safety of the town, be demolished: the designation of these works to be entrusted to the committees, or, in default of the latter, to the municipal magistrates;

“That Sicily should coin its own money, according to a system resolved upon by Parliament;

“That it should preserve its cockade and tri-coloured flag;

“That a quarter of the fleet, arms, and ammunition now belonging to Government should be made over to the Sicilians, or that an equivalent be given them in money;

“That neither side should claim from the other the amount of the war expenses; but all the damage done to the free port of Messina, and to the goods it contained, to be repaired at the charge of the Neapolitan Treasury;

“That the Ministers of War, of the Navy, and of the Foreign and Home Departments, should reside in the Island, near the Viceroy, and be responsible, according to the articles of the Constitution;

“That Sicily should recognize no minister of Sicilian affairs in Naples;

“That the free port of Messina should be restored to the state it was in previous to the law of 1826;

“That all affairs equally interesting to both countries should be settled by mutual agreement by their respective Parliaments;

“That in the event of a commercial and political league being formed between the Italian States, which all Sicilians so ardently wish for, Sicily should take part in it as an independent nation, being represented by such deputies as the Executive Power residing in Italy should appoint;

“That the steam-boats employed on the service of the post and the custom-houses, that were purchased by Sicily with Sicilian money, should be returned to the nation.”

Such were the different points which the General Committee reserved themselves the right of developing, expounding more minutely, and drawing up in a better form, so soon as the English diplomatist should require it, on receiving an intimation to that effect from Naples. The Committee had added that the articles of the treaty were to be submitted to Parliament on the very first day of its opening.

But we only mention these circumstances as a fact not to be passed over in oblivion, and by way of recording the steps taken by the Committee in this important affair, although these steps have not produced any results. The negotiations appear to have been broken off, according to a communication the General Committee received yesterday from Lord Minto, accompanied by a protestation from the King of Naples, against any act that might take place in Sicily not strictly conformable (such are his very expressions) to the decrees of the 6th March, and to the fundamental statutes and the Constitution he swore to uphold. The General Committee, on its part, replies to this protestation by now solemnly convoking the Parliament.

The General Committee will now turn its attention to the subject of war affairs. The forces which Sicily numbers under the present circumstances, and beneath the sway of the passions that are fermenting in every bosom, are not such as could be reckoned on a military parade. If we count up the number of men able to bear arms, if to these we add women, children, and old men, if we fathom their devoted courage, supposing it were possible to do so, and if we seek in its ancient annals, or in our own times, for Sicily's claims to glory, we may guess the extent of her resources if called upon to take up arms in defence of her rights. This the Parliament knows full well, since it is composed of Sicilians. The forces ready to enter the field are the National Guard, the Municipal Guard, the armed bands, the troops of the line, and the navy. In Palermo we have twelve battalions of National Guards, mostly armed with muskets, who are being drilled and will soon be completely equipped. A National Guard is being organized all over the island. We have already begun to raise more than fourteen battalions of troops of the line, two squadrons of cavalry, two batteries of artillery, and several companies of skirmishers chosen amongst the paid bands. The men are nearly all enlisted, the horses are assembled, and the cost of equipping and lodging them in barracks has been defrayed. We have entrusted the organization of the army to a

most experienced officer, who came from Italy during the first days of the revolution, and who immediately repaired to Messina to direct the military operations in that city. The staff of the army has been formed, officers of all ranks have been named, even to the commanders of the battalions, and all have been chosen amongst those who distinguished themselves during the insurrection, or amongst such Sicilian soldiers who were best able to instruct the new troops. The service of the military hospitals has been provided for, the administration of the army and navy has been organized, and persons appointed to the different offices. So much for the personal appointments. As to the material portion, besides the objects abandoned by the royal army, two foundries, namely, a bronze foundry for casting cannons, and an iron foundry for making projectiles, have been established. The greatest activity prevails in the powder mills and in the arsenal. The siege of the fort of Messina lasted long enough to afford our countrymen practical experience in the use of artillery. Neither men nor ammunition were wanting in all the engagements that took place beneath its walls. The arsenals of Palermo will be able to furnish all the necessary stores. In the naval service the officers have likewise been chosen in the same manner as already mentioned. There is no lack of sailors in Sicily, and vessels are being fitted out as quick as circumstances permit. Besides which, the Committee has not neglected an important duty that justly engrossed the public mind. A sufficient number of muskets will be distributed, within the shortest delay, amongst the National Guards and the army. The Committee trusts that the assurance of this fact will be deemed satisfactory, without its being necessary to enter into further explanations on this head, which would be out of place.

The finances of the State have been in a critical position. To say nothing of the first days of the revolution, during which the bank was occupied by the royal troops, it was necessary to provide for the expenses of the war, and the nourishment of the indigent classes by means of voluntary contributions; it

may therefore easily be understood that our pecuniary embarrassment did not cease even after the money belonging to the public treasury, which we afterwards found at the bank, had been launched into free circulation. It should be observed that certain returns ceased partially or wholly, such as the duty on grinding corn, which was suspended in some districts, and diminished in others; while land taxes and others of the same kind, could not be raised very actively under the present circumstances; then again, custom-house duties yield but little, although subsisting to their full extent, without any other modification, save the very proper suppression of the duty on the importation both of weapons and books. Less loss has been incurred on the minor duties, such, for instance, as the tax upon the lottery, which institution has been reluctantly suffered to continue its existence for the time being, in order not to deprive the many individuals it employs of their bread. As to the expenses, the Committee have paid the arrears of the national debt up to the month of December, 1847; it continued to pay the salaries of all functionaries, and defrayed the heavy expenses of those of the navy, and of the armed bands, including the recruiting department, artillery, naval equipments, the military hospital, the assistance given to the wounded, &c. To this should be added 15,000 ounces (£ 7,500.) destined for the purchase of muskets, 10,000 ounces (£ 5000.) sent to Messina in specie, and all the money of the public treasury of this department, which was put at the disposal of the Messinian Committee. Lastly, alms and assistance to a large amount have been drawn from the treasury in aid of a number of persons whom the political events had deprived of all means of subsistence.

Nor has the Committee been so absorbed by these cares as to have wanted leisure for attending to other branches of public administration. It has re-established the telegraphic line from Palermo to Messina; provided means for the conveyance of com, so that the capital should not fail receiving the necessary supply; revived several charitable institutions; demolished the bastions of the palace that called to memory

such odious events; ordered the roads to be kept in repair; and discharged all the other duties incumbent on Government. It may be well to mention especially the improvements effected in public instruction, the creation of a new professorship in the university, and a plan for the general reform of the schools throughout the island, and the establishment of infant asylums. As regards the municipal administration, the General Committee empowered the committees of the towns and departments to exercise the same offices as belonged to the functionaries of the fallen government.

In short, the Committee endeavoured to provide for the administration of justice and of the general police, by reorganizing first the criminal courts, and next the civil tribunals of commerce and peace. The present commercial crisis has forced the Committee to suspend momentarily the payment of bills of exchange. The same reason induces it to grant a delay for the inscription of acts on the public registers. It has provided for the safety of the rural districts, by reorganizing a company of gendarmes in each district. Two of these companies are appropriated to the service of the district of Palermo, under the command of two officers, who have deserved well of their country by fighting in its defence. A Municipal Guard has been entrusted, conjointly with the National Guard, to watch over the safety of the town. This Municipal Guard has already proved extremely serviceable, and will become more so when the organization, proposed by the Committee, shall be effected, and when it comes to be commanded by superior officers, and divided into different companies, each corresponding to one of the sections of the town. Such, gentlemen, are the principal measures that have been adopted by the General Committee and the four Special Committees into which it is subdivided; the all-important motive of public safety, and the sovereign will of the people having rendered the dictatorship, which the Committee has exercised during the whole time of the revolution, and now resigns into the hands of the Parliament, as legitimate as any

other government throughout the world. Previous to its dispersion, the Committee exercises its last prerogative as the executive power recognized by the Constitution of 1812, and with which none of the successors of Ferdinand (the third of the name in Sicily) had been invested, when the Parliament was closed in 1815. The Committee, setting at nought the protestation made by Ferdinand, and dated from Naples on the 22nd of this month, as being contrary to the 17th paragraph of the chapter of the Constitution, "On the Succession to the Throne," declares the General Parliament of Sicily to be legally opened, in the church of St. Dominic, on this day, 25th March, 1848, according to the imprescriptible rights *of* the nation, and requests you, my Lords and Gentlemen, to repair to the place set apart for your usual sittings, there to pass a law, with all suitable dispatch, for the organization of the executive power.

The legislative power being thus installed, no sooner will you have provided for the executive power, than you will be enabled to effect the necessary reforms in the Constitution, and in the various branches of Government. The country may then expect a solid, free, and durable

Government, that will make itself respected; and when the agitation, inseparable from so great a change, shall be somewhat calmed, Sicily will behold that glory and liberty that she has now conquered, still further ensured and strengthened by peace, the progress of civilization, public morality, and worldly prosperity.

May God bless and inspire the parliamentary votes tending to this desirable and most holy aim; may He look down favourably upon Sicily, and allow her to participate as a united, free, and independent State, in the great destinies of the Italian nation.

(B. B.) *Decree and Proclamation relative to the Bourbon Forfeiture of the Throne of Sicily.*

General Parliament of Sicily.

The Parliament declares:

1. That Ferdinand de Bourbon and his dynasty have for ever forfeited the throne of Sicily.

2. That Sicily adopts a constitutional form of Government, and will call an Italian Prince to the throne, as soon as she shall have reformed the Constitution.

Drawn up and resolved upon in Palermo, the 13th April, 1848.

The President of the House of Commons, (*Signed*) MARQUIS DE TORREARSA.

The President of the House of Peers,

(*Signed*) DUKE DE SERRADIFALCO.

Certified as conformable to the original:

The President of the House of Commons,

(*Signed*) MARQUIS DE TORREARSA.

Certified as conformable to the original:

The President of the Kingdom,

(*Signed*) RUGGIERO SETTIMO.

Certified as conformable to the original:

The Minister of the Home Department and of Public Safety,

(*Signed*) CALVI.

The Parliament of Sicily

To all Civilized Nations.

An act of the greatest justice has been accomplished.

Sicily has declared Ferdinand of Bourbon and his dynasty to be for ever excluded from the throne.

For the last thirty-three years the members of this family, who carry on a system of perjury, have constantly violated the sacred rights of that nation; by their violence and want of all faith, they have gradually converted a free and independent kingdom into an enslaved province; not satisfied with violating the ancient Constitution of the State, and the pacts they had sworn to maintain, in 1812, they have revelled in the savage delight of trampling all the rights of humanity under foot, with a degree of ferocious tyranny unequalled in the annals of the world; in short, this family was proscribed in the eyes of God and of the people, even before the Parliament had solemnly declared its exclusion, by a decree passed on the 13th April, 1848.

Be it observed, that it is not the justification of having exercised this right that the Parliament is about to proclaim in the face of all nations and governments, but the enumeration of the causes that have led to a fact now accomplished, which emanated from an undeniable right, in harmony with those principles of universal justice that ought to govern nations as well as individuals.

For more than seven centuries, since the foundation of its monarchy, Sicily was a free and independent kingdom; her national representation was secured by the assembling of the several orders of the State as a General Parliament, by which means she contributed to found her own laws and provide for her treasury.

In 1812, after the violent encroachments attempted by Ferdinand III. de Bourbon, when, on being driven from the Neapolitan throne, he twice took refuge in Sicily, she consolidated the pacts and securities of her political constitution, which both the nation and the king swore to maintain.

But scarcely had he re-ascended the throne of Naples, when Ferdinand broke the national pact, and by this means sapped the foundations of his *dynastic rights* (if indeed there can exist any rights but such as are based on justice and the happiness of nations) which the Sicilian Constitution ensured to his descendants.

This Constitution forbid his leaving the country until he had settled, conjointly with the Parliament, by whom, and on what conditions he should exercise the power it conferred upon him; while he, unmindful of any such agreement, went and took up his abode elsewhere.

Ever since the foundation of the monarchy, Sicily has been an independent kingdom, and according to the Constitution of 1812, her crown could not be united to another on the same head. But Ferdinand dared to profit by a quibble, which was either the result of an inadvertence or of the bought suffrages of the Congress, held at Vienna in 1815, to monopolize the two crowns and blend them into one, thus annihilating the independence of Sicily, under this specious pretext.

The Constitution enacted that, should he recover the throne of Naples, he and his eldest son should agree, as soon as the general peace were signed, which member of their family should be appointed to reign over Sicily. While he, instead of parting with the kingdom in favour of one of his children, declared in 1815, by the arbitrary laws that were passed on the 8th and 11th December, that Sicily and Naples were to form but one kingdom, thus setting at nought the ancient institutions of the monarchy, and destroying the political basis established by the Constitution of 1812. By these means

he substituted the arbitrary rule of royal and ministerial despotism for the ancient and legitimate legislative power of the nation, and the pretended claims of a conquest that only existed in his own brain, to dynastic rights.

Thus, by violating at one and the same moment, the two leading conditions of our political existence, namely, *independence* and *liberty*, and by substituting might for right, he became an usurper instead of a lawful sovereign, and *ipso facto* forfeited his claims to the throne.

Therefore could he not transmit to others the rights he himself had lost. His successors, kings but in name, and intrusive usurpers in fact, had only one last resource left to return within the pale of legitimacy, and this would have been to have carried the Constitution into sincere and complete execution, and thus have again become lawful sovereigns by the free consent of the national representation.

By admitting that the Bourbons could once more become lawful sovereigns, in case they had restored the national institutions and the treaties they had sworn to maintain in 1812, the Parliament did but acknowledge the truth of that eternal principle which must ever be the main spring of all political rights, *i.e. the safety of the people according to the ways of justice*—a principle which might have reinstated the Bourbons had they repented in time, but which now drives them from the throne, seeing that they have persevered in their tyranny and usurpation.

But Ferdinand the Third's successors did not even rest content with the arbitrary laws of 1816. After having annihilated the political and municipal institutions, the last remains of a separate administration, and the limits assigned to taxation (which limits the Bourbons themselves acknowledged, by the acts drawn up in 1816, could not be overstepped without the consent of Parliament) were openly cancelled. Tyranny of the most absolute description now stood openly revealed, and broke through all bounds of restraint.

Europe, and indeed the whole world, has rung with the unheard of acts of barbarity committed in Sicily under Ferdinand the Second's domination. History has already inscribed his name amongst the despots that have been the most cruel persecutors of human kind.

We had been despoiled of all our political rights—therefore that source of cruelty was exhausted; but it was reserved for him to shew to what a pitch of barbarous refinement despotism could be carried. In 1837, the violation of the sanitary laws, the last remains of Sicilian independence, by allowing the cholera to enter Sicily and decimate its population, opened a vast field to the accomplishment of crimes at which humanity shudders. Syracuse and Catania were devastated by massacres, by order of Del Carretto; and while the inhabitants of these unhappy cities were left a prey to exactions, pillage, and murder, their chief executioner was loaded with honours and rewards.

A decree declaring that all offices in both countries should be filled indifferently by natives of either kingdom, was next published, for the sole purpose of fomenting discord between the two nations, under the specious seeming of establishing perfect equality amongst them. The most important offices were accordingly seized upon by such as were not Sicilians, and were moreover a set of haughty men, difficult of access, who trampled under foot not only the rights but even the honour of Sicily. An all-powerful and unrestrained police entangled both penal and civil laws in its vast meshes, mocking at justice, and respecting neither personal safety nor the privacy of the domestic sanctuary. A censorship as absurd as it was arbitrary, not only restrained our very thoughts, but became a means of laying snares, and an instrument of espionage and calumny. The Sicilians were thrown into prison, and exiled without even the formality of a writ or a judgment; they were tortured in the barracks of the gendarmes, and in the gloomy dens of the commissaries; public safety was abandoned to the caprice of malefactors, and was made a pretext for every species of violence on the part of

the rabble rout of Sbirri and gendarmes; in spite of custom and national institutions the episcopal sees were not filled by Sicilians, while the holy calling of priesthood was desecrated by a system of espionage enjoined upon the minister of God as one of his duties. More than half of the public revenues of Sicily was spent in Naples, and the greater part was converted to the profit of the exchequer or the private treasury of the king; the whole machinery of government was one complication of oppression and peculation; public works became the pretext for unbearable taxes, and all kinds of dilapidations; the necessary, nay, the indispensable formalities of power, were constantly violated, the ministers being entrusted with an unlimited privilege to abrogate the established laws by their own act, and their extortions and cruelties being encouraged by impunity: the organs of the private Cabinet, though chosen amongst the meanest and most obscure individuals, were all powerful in working mischief, while the constituted authorities, as they purported to be, were in reality but shadows without substance, and not even obliged to reside in the country. In Sicily the most justly founded claims could not obtain a hearing; while in Naples the most humiliating appeals were only listened to in order the more surely to despoil the plaintiff's. The sacredness of public faith was constantly violated in all public contracts, which were broken through at pleasure; and espionage and depravity were the only roads to fortune. Agriculture, trade, and industry were alike degraded by such a system, and overloaded with heavy and unfairly distributed taxes, by an iniquitous system of exaction. It was forbidden, nay, looked upon as a crime, to give our island the name of Sicily. In one word, administrative anarchy and depotism were combined in so fearful a manner, that it was rather a political chaos than a mere state of simple tyranny.

Such was Ferdinand's government in Sicily!

Feeling conscious of his illegal position, instead of cancelling it by a sincere return to the political institutions of

the kingdom, he preferred the rule of brutal force over ignorance and degradation.

The only means now left for Sicily to regain her rights was to take up arms; yet this she hesitated to do.

For the sake of the tranquillity of Italy, and in the hope of pacific reforms, Sicily kept putting off the act by which she was to demand that independence and liberty, which the eternal laws of justice gave her a right to claim to their full extent, and quietly requested such reforms to be carried into effect. Ferdinand of Bourbon only replied by laying still heavier burthens upon her, by rewarding the oppressors of the people, by condemning the worthy to be imprisoned, and by adding insult to tyranny.

The people again protested, and this time with the threat of taking up arms as a last resource, if their petitions were disregarded. The appeal was treated with contempt. At length the people were obliged to rise, and the Government answered them with volleys of grape shot, and by burning and bombarding their towns.

There was now no option left the Sicilians but to fight for their national institutions, to reconquer them at the price of their blood, and establish their safety on a solid basis, by recovering the full extent of their rights. One sacred cry rang throughout the whole kingdom: "The Sicilians will never lay down arms until they shall have joined in one general Parliament in Palermo, and have adapted that Constitution which their country has possessed for so many centuries, and which was reformed in 1812, to suit the wants of the present day."

All Europe has shuddered at the account of the unheard of cruelties perpetrated during this war worthy of the Vandals, of the massacres of unarmed men, and of all the atrocities which Ferdinand of Bourbon heaped upon the people in reply to their complaints. But what can never be sufficiently held up to execration, was the incredible barbarity of letting loose upon

Sicily all the condemned felons and galley slaves, by emptying the prisons and bagnios of both kingdoms, in the hope of stifling liberty amidst the horrors of anarchy and bloodshed—a new and infamous mode of warfare, which he had already resolved upon, at the time that he prevented the establishment of a National Guard in our country.

Yet the Sicilians, after being reinstated in their full rights, and while still the object of Ferdinand's implacable rage, at the moment of convoking their national representation, gave a noble example to all Europe, by shewing themselves willing to listen to overtures of peace on the part of their oppressor. Well aware that their Parliament was ready to apply the utmost rigour of the law against the Bourbon dynasty, they nevertheless consented, in the hope of sparing heroic Messina and unfortunate Syracuse any fresh ravages, and of bringing about the much wished for confederation of Italy, to abandon a portion of their rights—a determination which they transmitted through the medium of the General Committee. They condescended to enter into negotiations with Ferdinand, and rested satisfied with reducing him to recognize that Sicilian Constitution which, after being modified in its most vital parts, could alone enable him to reign lawfully.

But their hope proved vain! If Ferdinand of Bourbon had trampled upon our Constitution in the height of his despotic rule, he did not cease to disown it most obstinately, even when compelled by the Sicilians taking up arms, to effect some reforms which were drawn up in Naples. Amongst the thousand proofs that might be adduced in support of such an assertion, take as an example the decrees dated the 18th January and the 10th February, 1848, in the former of which he takes upon him to remind Sicily of the ordinance of 1816, and in the latter, while granting a Constitution to Naples, he contests Sicily's right to her ancient franchises, remodelled in 1812.

Considering, therefore, all these circumstances, together with the series of endless outrages by which the Bourbon

dynasty, during three generations, has infringed the very Constitution that placed it on the throne, and trampled on the sacred rights of the people, by exercising the most unbridled tyranny;—considering the unheard of cruelties by which Ferdinand attempted to stifle the murmurs of a nation, which he and his predecessors had sought to expunge from the face of the earth—coupled with his obstinacy in persisting (even in the teeth of the victories of the 12th January) that Sicilian law and Sicilian rights ought again to become subject to the dishonest decrees of 1816, or to such ordinances as would be incompatible with Sicilian liberty and independence, Parliament can no longer hesitate declaring him and his dynasty for ever excluded from the throne of Sicily.

By such an act, Parliament has done more than merely exercising a right; it has scrupulously fulfilled a duty,— for a duty it is, both towards the eternal laws of justice, which demand that tyranny, when carried to the last excess, should not be left unpunished—towards a people who, after having re-conquered its imprescriptible sovereignty by the force of arms, laid down that sovereignty in the hands of this assembly to rule its destinies—and lastly, towards that grand spirit of Italian nationality, founded on the powerful coalition of States, each independent in themselves, and bound in one common confederation by commercial and political ties. One of the greatest obstacles to this federative union, which Italy stood in such need of, was, as the Parliament well knew, the usurped dominion exercised over Sicily by a family that, from father to son, has always been the slave and tool of foreign Governments, and that has converted two nations of brothers and friends into two nations of enemies, by making one become the scourge of the other.

It will easily be seen, from the small number of forces that Naples, and especially Sicily, were able to send to join the holy cause of the insurgents of Lombardy, to what a pitch the subjection in which the Bourbons sought to hold the two countries, by making use of the one against the other, would have proved fatal to the free use of the forces of both nations.

Hence came the scandal of a civil war, that absorbed for its fratricidal purposes those forces that ought to have been employed to exterminate a foreign enemy.

It is with feelings of regret that Parliament recalls those glorious times, when this Island, the bulwark of Italian independence, was one of the able supporters of the Lombard crusade, and when, whether in Legnano's plains or in the councils of Venice, Sicily, then the powerful ally of free cities and of a noble Pontiff, threw the weight of her heavy sword in the scale against German invasion, and repelled the efforts of a Barbarossa and of all the enemies of Italy.

And now that the great struggle is about to be resumed on a wider field—now that God's inspired Vicar has raised the standard of Italy's regeneration—Sicily longs for the happy day when she shall once more appear on the political horizon, as an independent nation possessing a well-organized Government, suitable to our enlightened age, and when allied by sacred bonds to the States of the Peninsula, she shall be enabled to lend both the aid of her armed forces and the example of her free institutions, to give a fresh impulse to the independence and political renovation of Italy.

The Parliament, as the organ of the wants and wishes and present condition of Sicily, thinks it therefore its duty to declare that Sicily intends having a free and constitutional Government, and will call an Italian Prince to the throne so soon as she shall have reformed her Constitution.

All nations, and Italy especially, can but applaud the upright and generous conduct of a people who, after being violently deprived of their political rights, protested during the third of a century, in the hope of recalling the dynasty that oppressed them to a sense of justice; who, after being trampled upon and goaded by slavery, with its attendant horrors, still continued their peaceful protestations till, finding their complaints remained unheard, they had recourse to threats; and when at length forced to rise to re-conquer

their imprescriptible sovereignty and acknowledged rights, stopped thus far, and grounding their claims on their own Constitution, have only deduced from it such consequences as are indispensable to the safety of the nation, and in harmony with the wants of the Italian confederacy, which is henceforward necessary to the balance of power and peace of Europe.

Guided by these principles, and trusting to the sacredness of its rights, the Sicilian Parliament does not for a moment doubt of the full adhesion and fraternal sympathy of all nations and all governments who acknowledge (and all must acknowledge this truth) that it is indispensably necessary, at the present day, to restore each nation to its individuality, in the real and lawful interest of each people, and on the indestructible basis of national rights.

Justice and the peace of the world alike demand such a measure.

Drawn up and resolved upon in Palermo, the 8th May, 1848.

The President of the House of Commons,

(Signed) MARQUIS DE TORREARSA.

The President of the House of Peers,

(Signed) DUKE DE SERRADIFALCO.

Certified as conformable to the original:

The President of the House of Commons,

(Signed J) MARQUIS DE TORREARSA.

Certified as conformable to the original:

The President of the Government of the Kingdom of Sicily,

(Signed) RUGGIERO SETTIMO.

Certified as conformable to the original:

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and of Commerce,

(Signed) MARIANO STABILE.

(CC.) *Decree of the Election of the Duke of Genoa.*
General Parliament of Sicily.

The Parliament decrees:

ART. 1. That the Duke of Genoa, second son of the present King of Sardinia, is called, together with his descendants, to reign over Sicily, according to the constitutional statute of the 10th July, 1848.

2. That he shall take the title of *Alberto Amedeo the First, King of the Sicilians, according to the Constitution of the Kingdom.*

3. That he shall be requested to accept the same, and to take his oaths, according to Art. 40 of the Statute.

Done and resolved upon in Palermo, on the 11th July, 1848.

The President of the Chamber of Commons,

(Signed) MARQUIS DI TORREARSA.

The President of the Chamber of Peers,

(Signed) DUKE DI SERRADIFALCO.

Certified conformable to the original:

The President of the Chamber of Commons,

(Signed) MARQUIS DI TORREARSA.

The President of the Government of the Kingdom of Sicily makes this decree known to all the authorities and municipalities of the Kingdom, both for their information and that they may carry the same into execution.

Palermo, 11th July, 1848.

The President of the Government of the Kingdom of Sicily,

RUGGIERO SETTIMO.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and of Commerce,

MARIANO STABILE.

(DD.) *The Syndic of Messina's Notice to the Public.*

Seeing that the Syndic of this town is entrusted with the care of providing quarters for the troops, and considering the *small number* of residences that can be disposed of for that purpose, as the *greater part have been burnt or destroyed*, the Syndic enjoins all absent citizens, or such whose houses may be shut up, to return to town, or send trusty persons to open their dwellings, and thus contribute to accomplish this important portion of the King's service.

The Syndic trusts that his good fellow-citizens will eagerly answer his appeal, and hopes they will not compel him to resort to rigorous measures.

Messina, 12th September, 1846. The Syndic,

MARQUIS DE CASSIBILE.

(E E.) *Proclamation of the King of Naples to the Sicilians. —28th February, 1849, communicated to the Government of Palermo by Admirals Parker and Baudin.*

Ferdinand the Second, by the Grace of God King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, &c.

Sicilians,—If the errors of a few have sufficed for a moment to induce some amongst you to become alienated from the attachment that your forefathers had to our dynasty, which has presided with so much affection over your destinies for more than a century, we who have passed our infancy amongst you, and have never ceased to love you with the

tenderness of a father, are willing to delay no longer telling you, that we satisfy the desires of our hearts, and fulfil the dearest duty imposed upon us by our august and holy religion, when we assure you that we have forgotten, and will consider as if they had never happened, the faults and political offences which have brought upon you so much misfortune from the beginning of the past year, 1848. Return, therefore, at once to your private occupations, cultivate in peace your fruitful fields, restore to the land of Ceres, by the force of your constant toil, its former fertility, which Divine Providence always yields to man as a recompense for the labour that it prescribes to him. Give back its former activity to your industry, to your traffic, to your mercantile navigation, and shut your ears to the seductions of those who are seeking to delude you and lead you to sedition, to rebellion, and thence to anarchy, which is their inevitable consequence. After the most mature reflection and accurate examination of your necessities, and of those wishes which can with utility and equity practically satisfy them—considering all the acts which have appeared in Sicily since the 12th of January as not having occurred, and of no effect, either in right or in fact—we henceforth grant a statute, the basis of which is the Constitution of 1812, with the exception of those modifications demanded by the change of circumstances and by the law now in existence.

This statute, which we reserve to ourselves to put into ample form before the end of June of the present year, shall contain in substance the following disposition:

1. The religion of the State shall be only and solely, exclusively of every other, the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman.
2. Individual liberty is guaranteed, and no one shall be arrested or proceeded against except in cases provided by the laws, and in the manner prescribed by them.
3. No one shall be forced to give up his property, except for the sake of public utility, and after being previously

indemnified. A special law shall be made by Parliament, in accordance with the King, for the purpose of determining the competency and form of their forced appropriations made for the public good.

4. The Sicilians have the right of printing and publishing their opinions, conforming to the dispositions which exist for the repression of abuses of this liberty. The King reserves to himself the plenitude of his power to publish the aforesaid dispositions in a special law.

5. Sicily, continuing to make an integral part of the United Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, shall be governed by a Constitutional Monarchy, with a division of powers as follows:

OF THE EXECUTIVE POWER

6. The Executive Power belongs exclusively to the King. His person is sacred and inviolable.

7. The King is the representative of the nation with all foreign States. He has the right to make war and peace, and to propose and conclude any treaty of peace, of alliance, and of commerce with foreign powers.

8. He exercises, in connexion with the Parliament, the Legislative Power,—he sanctions and promulgates laws, and makes the regulations and ordinances which are necessary for the execution of the law and the security of the State.

9. He convokes, prorogues, and dissolves the Parliament.

10. He commands and disposes of all the forces of the army and navy.

11. He superintends the internal and external commerce of Sicily, all public works, and the public instruction.

12. He names and elects the public functionaries, and those who are charged with the administration of the same.

13. He confers titles of nobility and decorations, and exercises the full right of pardon.

14. He confers all the ecclesiastical benefits which are of Royal patronage, and makes the other accustomed provisions and ecclesiastical nominations.

15. He exercises, according to the Concordats, the hereditary Apostolic Legation.

16. The solemn act for the regulation of the succession of the Crown of the august King Charles III., dated the 6th of October, 1759, confirmed by the august Sovereign Ferdinand I., in the 5th Article of the 8th of December, 1816; the Sovereign Acts of the 7th of April, 1829; of the 12th March, 1836; and all the acts which relate to the Royal Family, remain in full force.

17. When the King does not reside in Sicily, he shall be represented there by a Viceroy, with such attributes and such power as shall be determined by his Majesty.

18. There shall be in Sicily a sufficient number of ministers, among whom shall be divided the departments of grace and justice, interior, finance, public works, agriculture and commerce, ecclesiastical affairs, public instruction, and police; the Constitution reserving to the King the disposition of the army and navy, and the supreme direction of foreign relations; there shall be only one minister of war and marine, and one minister of foreign affairs, for the whole monarchy, who shall both reside near the King. Military and international questions which present themselves shall be considered by a delegation from the King, either through the Viceroy or through one of his ministers.

19. There shall reside, moreover, near the King, a minister for the affairs of Sicily.

20. The Cabinet shall be composed of the ministers, to whom it shall be in the power of the King to join one or more of the Counsellors of State.

21. The aforesaid ministers shall countersign, either collectively or each of them for the affairs of his own ministry, every act of the Executive Power.

22. Ministers shall be responsible.

23. The King cannot grant a pardon to a minister who is condemned, except on the explicit requisition of one of the two Legislative Chambers.

24. The administration of justice, and of all other public administrations, shall be regulated by the organic laws now in force, reserving to the Parliament, in according with the King the power to make modifications which may be deemed necessary to bring them into agreement with the present statutes, or to improve them.

25. Until these modifications have been made, the laws, the decrees, and the acts of the Sovereign, which are at present in force, shall be fully observed as well in what relates to the territorial boundaries, juridical competency, Government dependencies, as well as in every other part of their dispositions.

26. The judicial order shall be independent, the collegiate magistrates shall be irremovable after three years of satisfactory exercise of their functions, and which shall date from the day of their definitive election.

27. The agents of the public ministry in the courts and the tribunal are essentially irremovable.

28. The judges which are elected for life may be translated; the whole of these provisions being in conformity with the organic laws of June 7, 1819.

29. Every promiscuous arrangement of functions between Naples and Sicily having ceased, the minister, the public functionaries, and all persons who are charged with any administrative power, shall be Sicilian, and all public benefices and ecclesiastical dignitaries, which from henceforth are to be provided for, shall be conferred on Sicilians alone.

30. The budget shall be entirely separated, and the public expense of the Two Sicilies shall be apportioned between the two parts of the kingdom in the numerical proportions of their population, and shall be fixed at the sum of three millions of ducats annually (3,000,000 ducats).

31. Moreover, the extraordinary issues of the Treasury of Naples, which have been occasioned by the events of the years 1848 and 1849, which are valued much below their real estimates, shall be fixed at 500,000 ounces (£ 250,000.) sterling. This sum, united to that which the Treasury of Naples is creditor for, shall form the debt of Sicily, and being consolidated by means of an emission of rentes, inscribed with the corresponding sinking fund, shall give the capital necessary to discharge the aforesaid advances of the Treasury of Naples. In the same manner the debts of Sicily contracted before the 12th January, 1848, and those subsequently contracted, shall remain in charge in the Treasury of Sicily itself.

32. The Sicilians shall have an equal share, in proportion to the population, of diplomatic employment. The other public offices which are paid from the united funds shall be conferred indifferently on Sicilians and Neapolitans.

OF THE PARLIAMENT

33. The Parliament of Sicily shall be composed of two Chambers—the one of Peers, the other of Commons.

34. The duration shall be for four years from the date of its convocation. At the end of four years it shall absolutely cease.

35. If a prorogation or dissolution take place, Parliament shall be convened within the year.

36. The two Chambers shall be convoked at the same time, and shall begin and end their session at the same period.

37. The Parliament shall exercise, unitedly with the King, the legislative power. It has the right to impose new taxes of every kind, and alter those which are established. The direct taxes shall be voted for the year by the Legislative Chambers. The indirect taxes can be voted for a longer period, or for many years.

38. Whatever taxes and subsidies are proposed by Parliament shall not have the effect of law if not sanctioned by the Sovereign.

39. The formula of “placet” expresses his sanction, that of “veto” expresses his refusal.

40. No proposals shall be submitted to the King for his sanction unless they have met the consent of the two Chambers.

41. A proposition which has been rejected by one Chamber can only again be proposed in the session of the next year.

42. Each Chamber is the judge alone, and without any appeal, of the conditions under which its members are eligible.

43. The discussions in the Chambers are public, except when they are sitting in secret committee.

44. No member of the two Chambers can be molested or proceeded against, or punished for any thing said, done, discussed, or deliberated in their respective Chambers, and which is in conformity with the Constitution, and does not violate the statute, reserving to the Chamber the power of taking cognizance of any excess committed by their members,

and of punishing the author with a vote of censure, and in cases of gravity by forbidding to take a part in the discussions.

OF THE CHAMBER OF PEERS

45. The Peers shall be named by the King and for life. The number shall be unlimited.

46. No one can be elected a Peer if he has not reached his 40th year.

47. The Chamber of Peers, in accordance with a Royal ordinance, shall constitute itself into a high court of justice, for the purpose of taking cognizance of the crime of high treason and of attempts against the Constitution, and of which members of either Chamber are the accused parties. The King shall appoint the magistracy, who shall discharge the functions of public Ministers.

48. The meeting of the Chamber of Peers, at a period when the Commons are not in session, is illegal and divested of all right, except in cases contemplated by the previous article.

OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

49. The House of Commons shall be composed of the deputies of twenty-four districts, of deputies elected by the universities of Sicily, of Palermo, Messina, and Catania, and of the deputy of the communes, according to the number established by the Constitution of 1812.

50. The communes which, from their increased population, have acquired the right to elect a representative, or to elect more than one, and those populations which, after 1812, were created into communes, and have the number of inhabitants established by the aforesaid Constitution, can make a demand to the Chamber of the Commons, who will take cognizance, in a legal manner, of the truth of their exposition.

51. The two Chambers having agreed in their vote and obtained the Sanction of the King, the Minister of the Interior shall give the orders for carrying the results into operation.

52. The mode of electing representatives shall be that which was established by the Constitution of 1812, and if the public offices by which the elections were conducted are abolished or suppressed, the King will reserve to himself the appointment of public functionaries in their place.

OF THE ELECTORS

53. The representatives of a district in the Chamber of Deputies shall be elected by all those who possess in that district a net rent, for life, of eighteen ounces by the year, whether it proceed from freehold or usufruct, or from any rent or mortgage, as well as any other kind of property. The representatives of the city of Palermo shall be elected by all those who possess in the city or its territory a net rent, for life, of at least fifty ounces by the year, whether it arise from freehold or usufruct, or from any other rent or mortgage, or any other sort of property.

The representatives of every other city or Parliamentary territory shall be elected by all those who possess in that city or territory a rent for life of at least eleven ounces annually, whether it arises from freehold or usufruct, or any rent or mortgage, or any other kind of property.

54. The Professors of the Universities of Palermo, Messina, and Catania are alone exempted from the possession of the aforesaid rents, and the necessity of proving them, for the election of their own representatives.

OF THE PERSON TO BE ELECTED

55. Those alone can represent a district who have in Sicily a net revenue for life, either from freehold or usufruct, from rent or mortgage, or from any other kind of property, amounting to 300 ounces by the year.

Those alone can represent Palermo who are in possession in Sicily of a revenue of the above-mentioned kind, of 500 ounces by the year.

Those alone can represent a city or parliamentary territory who possess a revenue of the above nature of 150 ounces by the year.

If the professors of the university are elected, they shall only be under the obligation of proving the revenue which is prescribed for all others.

56. Public functionaries cannot be elected representatives of the districts and communes comprised in the circuit of their jurisdiction.

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