









IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, Jan. 7.

This day the Session of Parliament was opened with the usual formalities. The Commissioners appointed to bring in the Speech were, Lords Camden and Westmorland, the Lord Chancellor, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. After the Speech had been read to the House of Commons, in attendance at the bar, the Duke of Devonshire, and the Bishop of Derry took the oaths and their seats. Shortly after five, the Lord Chancellor read from the Woolsack a copy of the Speech. It was again read by the Clerk at the Table, as follows:

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ We are commanded by His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, to express to you the deep sorrow which he feels in announcing to you the continuance of his Majesty's lamented indisposition, and the unhappy disappointment of those hopes of his Majesty's early recovery, which had been cherished by the dutiful affection of his family, and the loyal attachment of his people.

“ The Prince Regent has directed copies of the last Reports of her Majesty the Queen's Council to be laid before you, and he is satisfied that you will adopt such measures as the present melancholy exigency may appear to require.

“ In securing a suitable and ample provision for the support of his Majesty's Royal dignity, and for the attendance upon his Majesty's sacred person during his illness, the Prince Regent rests assured, that you will also bear in mind the indispensable duty of continuing to preserve for his Majesty the facility of resuming the personal exercise of his Royal Authority, in the happy event of his recovery, so earnestly desired by the wishes and the prayers of his family and his subjects.

“ The Prince Regent directs us to signify to you the satisfaction with which his Royal Highness has observed, that the measures which have been pursued for the defence and security of the kingdom of Portugal, have proved completely effectual, and that on the several occasions in which the British or Portuguese troops had been engaged with the enemy, the reputation already acquired by them has been fully maintained.

“ The successful and brilliant enterprize which terminated in the surprize, in Spanish Estremadura, of a French corps by a detachment of the Allied Army under Lieutenant-Gen. Hill, is highly creditable to that distinguished Officer, and to the troops under his command, and has contributed materially to obstruct the designs of the enemy in that part of the Peninsula.

“ The Prince Regent is assured, that while you reflect with pride and satisfaction on the conduct of his Majesty's troops, and of the Allies, in these various and important services, you will render justice to the consummate judgment and skill displayed by General Lord Viscount Wellington, in the direction of the campaign. In Spain the spirit of the people remains unsubdued; and the system of warfare so peculiarly adapted to the actual condition of the Spanish nation, has been recently extended and improved, under the advantages which result from the operations of the Allied Armies on the frontier, and from the countenance and assistance of his Majesty's navy on the coast. Although the great exertions of the enemy have in some quarters been attended with success, his Royal Highness is persuaded, that you will admire the perseverance and gallantry manifested by the Spanish armies. Even in those provinces principally occupied by the French forces, new energy has arisen among the people; and the increase of difficulty and danger has produced more connected efforts of general resistance.

“ The Prince Regent, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, commands us to express his confident hope that you will enable him to continue to afford the most effectual aid and assistance in support of the contest, which the brave nations of the Peninsula still maintain with such unabated zeal and resolution.

“ His Royal Highness commands us to express his congratulations on the success of the British arms in the Island of Java.

“ The Prince Regent trusts that you will concur with his Royal Highness in approving the wisdom and ability with which this enterprize, as well as the capture of the Islands of Bourbon and Mauritius, has been conducted under the immediate direction of the Governor-General of India; and that you will applaud the decision, gallantry, and spirit conspicuously displayed in the late operations of the brave army under the command of that distinguished Officer Lieutenant-General Sir Samuel Auchmuty, so powerfully and ably supported by His Majesty's Naval Forces.

“ By the completion of this system of operations, great additional security will have been given to the British commerce and possessions in the East Indies, and the colonial power of France will have been entirely extinguished.

“ His Royal Highness thinks it expedient to recommend to your attention the propriety of providing such measures for the future government of the British possessions in India, as shall appear from experience, and upon mature deliberation, to be calculated to secure their internal prosperity, and to derive from those flourishing dominions the utmost degree of advantage to the commerce and revenue of the United Kingdom.

“ We are commanded by the Prince Regent, to acquaint you, that while his Royal Highness regrets that various important subjects of difference with the Government of the United States of America still remain unadjusted, the difficulties which the affair of the Chesapeake frigate had occasioned have been finally removed; and we are directed to assure you, that in the further progress of the discussions with the United States, the Prince Regent will continue to employ such means of conciliation as may be consistent with the honour and dignity of his Majesty's Crown, and with the due maintenance of the maritime and commercial rights and interests of the British Empire.

“ Gentlemen of the House of Commons, His Royal Highness has directed the Estimates for the service of the current year to be laid before you. He trusts that you will furnish him with such supplies as may be necessary to enable him to continue the contest in which his Majesty is engaged, with that spirit and exertion which will afford the best prospect of its successful termination.

“ His Royal Highness commands us to recommend that you should resume the consideration of the state of the Finances of Ireland, which you had commenced in the last Session of parliament. He has the satisfaction to inform you, that the improved receipt of the revenue of Ireland in the last, as compared with the preceding year, confirms the belief that the depression which that Revenue had experienced is to be attributed to accidental and temporary causes.

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ The Prince Regent is satisfied that you entertain a just sense of the arduous duties which his Royal Highness has been called upon to fulfil, in consequence of his Majesty's continued indisposition.

“ Under this severe calamity, his Royal Highness derives the greatest consolation from his reliance on your experienced wisdom, loyalty, and public spirit, to which in every difficulty he will resort, with a firm confidence, that through your assistance and support, he shall be enabled, under the blessings of Divine Providence, successfully to discharge the important functions of the high trust reposed in him, and in the name and on the behalf of his beloved Father and revered Sovereign, to maintain unimpaired the prosperity and honour of the nation.”

The Earl of Shaftesbury rose to move an Address of Thanks, and after some general observations, his Lordship read the Address, which was merely a recapitulation of the leading points of the Speech.

Lord Brownlow seconded the Address.

Lord Grenville said, it would have been most satisfactory to his feelings if the matter of the Speech and Address had been such as to have prevented all difference of opinion on the subject; but he was not surprised that this was not the case. From some expressions in the Address, none could dissent. That part which referred to the affecting intelligence relative to the state of his Majesty's health—that which announced their fixed determination to support his Royal Highness the Prince Regent in administering the great trust reposed in him, in a manner conducive to his own honour and the prosperity of these realms—had his most hearty concurrence. With regard to the conduct and valour of our troops and officers, he was ready to join his thanks to the applause and admiration of Europe. (Hear, hear!) But as to what were the advantages of such valour and conduct, depended upon a consideration of the policy of the Government, unconnected with their exertions. Their merits were not founded upon the policy of the Government, nor were their laurels to be blighted by the system which their employers might think proper to pursue. So far he concurred with the Address; but here, he believed, his concurrence ended. To different parts of the rest, his objections might be more or less strong; but to these expressions alone, he could give his entire and complete approbation. The first day of the meeting of Parliament, was one, on which it had been usual to give a general outline of the prominent objects which were likely to engage the attention of Parliament during the Session; a practice not only parliamentary, but in the highest degree useful. How far this had been done, their Lordships would judge. But he freely confessed, that if on this day the task had been imposed upon him; his heart would sink under the magnitude of the difficulties to be surmounted. The objects which he would have to consider, if he meant to provide, not for the happiness alone, but even the safety of the country, were so numerous, so great, so important, that he felt it almost impossible to do justice to the subject; and if he were to make the attempt, little advantage could at any rate result from it, when no distinct steps were to be proposed in consequence. It would be in vain, therefore, to trouble their Lordships at present with a vague, indistinct statement. He did not even mean to suggest an amendment to this Address: but would content himself with protesting in the strongest terms against being included in any expressions implying approbation of the past, or a pledge of perseverance in the same system which had of late been acted upon; convinced as he was, that it was only by a total, radical abandonment of that system, that there existed any hope of safety for the country. (Hear, hear!) There were many topics of the highest importance lightly passed over in the Speech and Address, but which would force themselves upon their attention at no distant period. They might endeavour to shut their eyes, but in spite of their efforts these things would be seen: they might strive to shut their ears, but these things would be heard. He wished it to be fully understood, that he retained all his objections to the system upon which the Ministers had acted. He still objected to the lavish profusion with which our resources had been squandered, when they should have been husbanded for a protracted war, of which no one could see the end. He still retained all his objections, and in their utmost force, to that policy which had inflicted a blow on the enemy that had recoiled with greater execution upon our commerce and manufactures. (Hear, hear!)—He still retained his decided objections to that system, which united the Bank and the Government (Hear, hear,) and enabled the former to issue base coin and depreciated paper. (Hear, hear!) A system, of which the Bank alone reaped the profit; while the guilt and dishonour fell on the Government, and the loss on the public. (Hear, hear!) But, above all (his Lordship continued) I still retain with ten-fold force all my opinions respecting the system which the Ministers have been pursuing with regard to Ireland (Hear, hear, hear:) upon which I cannot trust myself at present to utter a single sentence. Your Lordships will observe the manner in which this momentous subject has been passed over in the Speech and Address. No ample view is attempted to be given there of the state of that country; nothing is said about the discontents of the people; but the situation of the revenue—comparatively, a pitiful consideration—is alone introduced. To that single object, and to none else, is our attention directed. But these Ministers might have known, that the way even to make the revenue of a country flourish, since that is the only object of their consideration, is by increasing its industry—by communicating equal rights,—and giving satisfaction to public opinion. (Hear, hear.) I have said more on the subject than I intended; but I must farther observe, that in the present Session, it must be decided, what is to be the relation between Great Britain and Ireland. (Hear, hear.) The matter will bear no more procrastination,—delusion will no longer avail,—the affair is come to a point (hear), and the majority of the people of Ireland must be admitted to an equal share of your privileges, or no longer be considered as men enjoying the advantages of British subjects. I should not have thought myself justified in touching so slightly on this momentous topic this day, were it not that the subject will be brought separately before your Lordships at an early period,—probably next week. I am glad to give this notice to your Lordships both for your sakes and my own: on your account, my Lords, that you may come to the consideration of this question with all that preparation which its magnitude deserves; and on my own account, because it is my apology for not having entered more fully into the merits of a subject the most important that can at present occupy the attention of the United Parliament.

The Earl of Liverpool knew not what system others might advise; but he was prepared to maintain, that the continuance of the system pursued by Ministers was essential to the safety of the country, and on that ground he and his colleagues were willing to stand or fall. He would only at present observe, that all the reflection he had been able to give that point, and all the experience he had acquired, had only served to convince him the more of the wisdom and justice of the measures which had been adopted.

Earl Grey said, that in concurring generally in the Address which was proposed, he could not refrain from joining his Noble Friend; he should feel unhappy if he departed from that House without declaring, that he retained all the opinions he had before held, on subjects of great magnitude; opinions con-

firmed by experience and the evidence of facts—opinions which he should be ready to maintain and defend, on future opportunities of discussing them. He thought the House bound immediately to take into their consideration the treatment of the people of Ireland, not only with a view to what had already passed, but with a prospective view, for the adoption of such timely and just measures as might avert the ruin of the country. Government, however, he must repeat, appeared, for any thing he had heard to the contrary, to be resolved on pursuing a system which would risk the destruction of the public safety.

The Address was agreed to *sine die*.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, Jan. 7.

Soon after the Speaker had entered the House, they were summoned by the Deputy Usher of the Black Rod, to the House of Peers, to hear the Commission opened in the usual way; and, on their return, the House proceeded to business.

The Speaker acquainted the House, that he had, during the vacation, ordered new writs to be issued for Inverness, in the room of Thos. Bayley, Esq. deceased; for York, in the room of Sir William Mordaunt Milner, Bart. deceased; for Totness, in the room of William Adams, Esq. deceased; for Shrewsbury, in the room of Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt Jones, Bart. deceased; and for East Grinstead, in the room of Sir Nathaniel Holland, Bart. deceased. The five new Members now took the oaths and their seats.

New writs were next ordered, on motions—for Weymouth, in the room of Sir William Lowther Johnson, Bart. deceased; for Lewis, in the room of T. Shelly, Esq. deceased; for Barnstaple, in the room of G. Woodford Thelluson, Esq. deceased; and for Alborough, in the room of John MacMahon, Esq. who had accepted from the Crown the office of Paymaster to the Fund for Widows' Pensions.

The Speaker having read the Speech from the Chair,

Sir Francis Burdett rose before Lord Jocelyn, and was proceeding to address the Chair, when some Members named Lord Jocelyn; but

The Speaker said, that the Hon. Baronet was in possession of the ear of the House, and was entitled to speak first.

Sir Francis Burdett proceeded. Under the present circumstances of the country, he felt himself called upon to take the earliest opportunity of drawing the attention of the House, to such an Address to the Prince Regent as would entitle them to the approbation of their country. He was the less willing to let go this opportunity of addressing the Regent, as his magnanimous character differed so widely from those Princes of whom we read in history, that their delight was in mischief and despotism. He agreed with the speech which had been read, in all those encomiums which had been most deservedly bestowed on the valour of our arms. He heard of our victories with satisfaction, though not with surprise—they proved, at least, that English courage had not degenerated, though there appeared nothing characteristic of that love of freedom which so proudly distinguished our ancestors. In tracing the calamities of the country, he must revert to a very remote period. Not only were the last 18 years more calamitous than the preceding, but the transactions of the whole present reign, including more than a long half century, were such as must convince the most thoughtless, that the system must have been radically bad which had been productive of such lamentable effects. The causes of these events were not difficult to discover—they were to be found in that detestation of the principles of liberty, which had been equally the origin of the present unfortunate war, and of that with America. He should consider the present Speech as peculiarly the Speech of Ministers, as it talked of prolonging the struggle; and proceeded entirely upon those principles upon which the war had been begun, and which were so notoriously repugnant to the mind of him whose address it purported to be. It held out hopes, which no man in his senses could entertain, of the final success of our arms in that Peninsula. There was no chance of our succeeding in driving the French out of Spain. Our laurels were great, but barren; and our victories were in their effects mere defeats. It was true that General Hill had gallantly surprised a small division of the enemy; still the French were making regular and rapid strides towards the subjugation of the country; while for our triumphs, we had nothing to shew. The cause of this failure was the radically vicious principle of supporting despotism in this instance, as we did all over the world,—the attempt to support desperate, falling, and not to be supported States, instead of the good old British reason of maintaining the cause of freedom. To this it would be said, Do the French proclaim liberty?—No; but they endeavoured to conciliate the minds of the people by such concessions as may

please them; while it was a serious fact, that the Inquisition remained in existence in those parts only of the country of which the English had possession. But there was a curious contrast to which he must call the attention of that House: we were fighting strenuously to maintain the Catholic religion in the country of our Spanish allies; though, at the same time, those whom he should conceive to be our more valuable allies at home—the Irish—a generous, brave, and a long suffering people, were for a trifling condition, withholden from their best and dearest rights. The exclusion of our most natural allies, he could not but consider as an act of gross treachery. The speech of the Right Hon. Gentleman (for so he should call the Regent's speech) contained all faults, by being guilty of all omissions. It was not sufficient to call together the supposed Representatives of the People of England, and to tell them—(Cries of Order! Order!)

The Speaker called the Honourable Baronet to order, and observed, that the House could not recognize such language as applied to it.

Sir Francis Burdett said, that nothing could give him greater pleasure than to hear that from the Chair; since it proved, that there was a firm conviction that the House of Commons ought to represent the people of England, when to hint a contrary opinion was considered as an insult not to be borne: and yet, on the 11th May, 1808, a Minister was detected in the traffic of seats, a practice which was not only not denied, but unblushingly avowed to be notorious as the sun at noon day; and, therefore, it might have been conceived that Gentlemen would not have been over delicate at hearing such things suggested. The Honourable Baronet then called the attention of the House to the shackles imposed on the Prince Regent—restrictions, than which nothing more insulting could be conceived, as they supposed that the son was capable of using his power contrary to the interests of his father; but, happily for the country, these restrictions would soon expire—an event to which they would look with anxiety, as the Prince had, by many gratuitous professions long pledged himself to those enlarged principles, and that liberal system of policy, which had raised the nation to the lofty pinnacle of happiness and glory on which it stood at the close of the reign of George II. He had the greater hopes and confidence in the Prince, because he had felt the power which was so much complained of. Able writers had, indeed, written in praise of different forms of Government—the absolute, the democratical, and the mixed; but none had been found hardy enough, in the worst of times, to be the advocates of oligarchy; and our present oligarchy was one of the worst species,—not of a few of the best men, and of the greatest interest in the State, but an oligarchy of rotten boroughs,—a sort of men known in the history of no other country except our own. If the House turned its eyes from the Continent, and from abroad, and looked to the internal state of the country, there was nothing consolatory to rest upon. There existed a system of taxation, the deprivations of which prevented the strictest industry from procuring a livelihood, and generated a pauperism aggravated throughout the land,—a pauperism aggravated by pillage. In short, the whole land was in a state of terror—military possession was taken of the country; depots, and barracks, and fortifications, were formed; and mercenary Germans and foreigners were scattered over the kingdom, as if England could not defend itself, and must have recourse to Germans, who had not been able to defend themselves. The jealousy of our ancestors was such, that a remonstrance was presented to Charles I. for having 1000 foreigners in his pay; but now, not only was the country overspread with foreigners, but even our own soldiers were compelled to wear the German dress and whiskers: as if the whiskered face of a German was more formidable to the enemy than the smooth countenance of an Englishman, though it had been found that the French were never scared by whiskers. But he must say, that the plain red coat excited more respect, and was more associated with our ideas of courage and endurance, than all that military finery and foppery of which the soldiers themselves who wore it seemed ashamed.—Another grievance to which he should call their attention, was the system of military discipline which oppressed the country, and which subjected every soldier for the most trifling misconduct to be corporally punished at the miserable caprice of almost every officer. He was glad to mention this so early in the Session; for the reform of it would, doubtless, form a very important part of its business.—There was some justice in its now coming home, as it were, to the backs of our countrymen; for, now, by the Local Militia system, almost every man in England, every father of a family, was subject to this punishment; so that he had no hesitation in repeating what he had before said in this House, that this was a *flogged nation*. The Honourable Baronet then descanted at some length on the impolicy as well as the cruelty of this punishment, and quoted the opinions of military men against the system. Degraded as the country was, his exertions should never be wanted in its behalf. He then touched upon the Liberty of the press, and said there was no fairer barometer of the intentions of Government, than their conduct towards the press. The first efforts of des-

pots were invariably directed against this bulwark of the Constitution: and the intentions of the present Ministers might be collected from the unprecedented number of informations which their Attorney General had filed *ex-officio*. This was a sort of conjuring word, which deprived the subject of his liberty without the interference of a Grand Jury, whenever the Attorney General might fancy to take it away; and these fancies might depend upon the state of his stomach. It was plain proof of their illegality, that such informations were not defined; for definition was law. The partiality of the Attorney General was manifested in his different conduct to different publishers—some were not brought up for judgment at all; while others were banished to distant goals, and abandoned to solitary confinement.—There had been a late instance of a Judge upon the Bench, who, in the case of White, had anticipated the guilt of the defendant. The Hon. Bart. then descanted on the Attorney General's power of accusing, holding to bail, and of renewing expensive suits against acquitted parties; and intimated, that this was no surprising cause of many other grievances, as it operated to the suppression of important truth. For himself, he admired the courage of gentlemen who wrote for the press by profession, in transmitting their thoughts with any degree of freedom. By the common law, if an indictment was not found against an individual, he incurred no expence: not so in the case of the Attorney General's informations; then, even upon acquittal, the party was compelled to pay his own costs, and that was a fine renewal against him at the Attorney General's pleasure. He saw no reason why the Crown should pay no costs; on the contrary, he thought that there was every reason why it should. He then said, that an office like that of an Attorney General, more important even than that of the Judges, should be for life, and not be changed with every Administration; by which means the law of libel varied and shifted with the opinions of each Ministry. He then adverted to the different degree of rigour exercised in the cases of printers and authors—the former were the mere servants of the later; and yet, in the case of Hart and White, the printer was confined to a solitary cell, upon the common prison allowance, and, as the Hon. Bart. believed, deprived of even small beer. He then observed, that undue severity in the Government ever produced brutality in the people. He should now, therefore, with all respect, and affection, and duty, (not however forgetting the duty he owed to himself,) move an Address to the Regent, which should embrace all these important topics, and trace all the calamities, external and internal, all the various grievances of our debt, and of our taxations, to a want of a free and equal representation of the people in Parliament. He then concluded by saying, that he was happy to have this opportunity, before the restrictions were removed, of affording to the Prince a knowledge of the grievances and afflictions which oppressed the land, and of presenting to him the genuine sentiments of the people on subjects of such vital interest to the country. The Hon. Baronet then read the address to which his speech was introductory, and of which, indeed, it was nearly an echo. It was of course much too long for repetition here.

Lord Cochrane seconded the address of the Hon. Baronet.

Lord Jocelyn said he should oppose the address of the Hon. Baronet. After which he recapitulated and commenced on the Speech of the Prince Regent; he said that the Amendment on the Address, which he should have the honour to propose, was so framed, that he trusted it would meet the unanimous concurrence of the House, probably with the single exception of the Honourable Baronet himself. The Noble Lord then moved his amended Address, which, as usual, was an echo of the Speech.

Mr. Vyse seconded the motion. He expressed his entire concurrence in the address proposed.

The Attorney General was not present when the Hon. Bart. made his speech; but he had heard the Address read, and in it there were particular words which impelled him to offer to the House a few observations. The whole of that address he certainly reprobated; but the particular words to which he alluded, were those which went to stigmatize the character of a Learned Judge, and were, in substance, that "That Learned Judge had anticipated a verdict of Guilty on the trial of Mr. White."—He would take upon himself to say, that this statement of the Hon. Baronet, with respect to Lord Ellenborough, was wholly unfounded.

Sir Francis Burdett, in explanation, said, that what he founded his assertion upon, was that part of Lord Ellenborough's language to Mr. White, where his Lordship advised that Gentleman to reserve his evidence until he should be brought up for judgment.

The Attorney General—It is evident, from the explanation of the Hon. Bart. himself, that Lord Ellenborough acted even a humane part.—(Hear, hear!) It is plain, that Lord Ellenborough only advised Mr. White to reserve his evidence for affidavits, in mitigation of punishment; which, though they would not serve him as evidence on the trial, might be advantageous to him should he be brought up for judgment.

Sir Francis Burdett replied, that he did not think the Noble Lord much benefitted by this triumphant explanation of the Right Honourable Gentleman. One thing was certain, that the remark of the Judge was made before the evidence was heard.

Mr. Ponsonby could neither vote for the original Address nor the Amendment, but should think it his duty to vote against both. As to the original address he would be silent, because he did not think the matter of it proper to be discussed at this particular moment. It travelled wide of the topics in the Speech delivered in the name of the Prince Regent.

The House divided on the original motion—  
For Sir Francis Burdett's Address, 1—  
Against it, 238.—The Amendment was put, and carried without a division.—Adjourned.

Wednesday, Jan. 8.

### REPORT ON THE ADDRESS.

Lord Jocelyn brought up the Report of the Address.

Mr. Whitbread fully agreed to all the expressions of affection in the Address towards his Majesty, and to all its earnest wishes for his final recovery; but not to any other parts, except in congratulating his Royal Highness the Prince Regent on the enthusiastic valour displayed by his Majesty's troops, more especially in the gallant affair of that distinguished officer General Hill. He approved and admired the conduct of Lord Wellington, who had not, during the last year, derogated from his former high character, which placed him on a level, not only with the greatest of modern Generals, but with any of the most celebrated heroes of ancient times. Still, he could not, when he considered the present state of the Peninsula, compared with its condition in the former year, entertain any such hopes of final success as were held out in the Address. True it was, that every thing possible had been done towards the support of the war; yet all that we had achieved was the possession of Portugal; and Lord Wellington was himself forced to retreat as soon as he had driven Massena from the frontiers; and had acknowledged that it was impossible to succeed in making head against the armies of the French. The more, then, that he reflected on the exalted merits of the General, and on the vast resources which had been expended in prosecution of the war, the less was he inclined to hope for final success; and, therefore, he could not consent, without farther information, to pledge himself to the full extent required by the Speech, in the grant of farther assistance. Another point on which he dissented from the present Address, was, the gross delusion which it held out, when it asserted that we intended to pursue, with the American Government, that conciliatory system which had been already adopted. He said, all our notable schemes with regard to America, were fraught with, and productive of base subterfuges, and baser commercial perjuries. He must say, that the whole conduct of Ministers with respect to America, proved that they were acting on those haughty and unconciliating principles which must prevent peace with any Government in the world. Last year America had asserted, that the French decrees were repealed: he defied the Right Hon. Gentleman to adduce one instance to rebut this assertion. The Address to the Regent was also blameable for the great want of information on the subject of our East India possessions, and the policy to be pursued with respect to them. He concluded by saying, that he must make an observation in contradiction to what had fallen from the Noble Lord last night, that the great object of Bonaparte was to obtain ships, and colonies, and commerce; and that he would never make peace till he had obtained them. If, said Mr. Whitbread, this be the sole obstacle to peace, would to God that Bonaparte had colonies! would to God he had commerce!

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, if the Hon. Gentleman was anxious that Bonaparte and France should possess ships, colonies, and commerce, then it was not very difficult to understand, why he preferred to abandon that system which kept those ships, colonies, and commerce, out of his grasp. (Hear, hear, from the Ministerial Benches.) His antipathy to the measures retaliatory on the Berlin and Milan Decrees was on this score very easy to be accounted for. If it had not been for them, Bonaparte might have plumed himself on the success of his Decrees; and the Honourable Gentleman, too, would be able to console himself for not having his present subject of regret. The first topic he had to notice, was the gloomy picture which the Hon. Gentleman thought proper to draw of the state of affairs in Spain and Portugal, and the character which he gave of the war, darkened by all his expressions of despair, and shorn of hope by all his prophecies of evil. It would have been a little fair for the Hon. Gentleman to look back to his declamations at the beginning of last Session; to recollect how he then described the state of affairs on the Peninsula; to travel back to his predictions & prophecies, and to see whether those predictions & prophecies had been fulfilled. But no: the Hon. Gentleman did not like these recollections; his prophecies were quite a pleasant thing; and again was he at his occupation, prepared to foretell and re-prophecy all he had said before—

"Destroy the web, and prophecy in vain;  
The creature's at his dirty work again."

(Loud cries of hear, hear, from the Minis-

terial Benches.)—The French Government had made many boasts, but were they verified? Among others, were we yet driven from Spain and Portugal into the sea? Oh no! but the new reading now is, that we are to be destroyed after our resources shall have been exhausted, and when the Spanish nation shall have been completely subdued. First we were to have been the earlier victims, but now we are to be left for the last. Would any man in his senses listen to trash like this? His argument was, that as Bonaparte had not conquered us, he could not. He had not beat us, because he was not able, because he had not resources competent to such a purpose. If he were competent to form any idea of what military possession was, he could by no means understand how the French could be said to be in such possession. The possession which the French had of Spain was that which their armies locally occupied; but to suppose that in a country where armies rise in the rear after their compatriots are defeated in the front,—where, so far from their spirits being broken by increase of difficulty, they seem to be rather invigorated by defeat,—to suppose that in such a country, military possession is taken by the enemy, appeared to him most absurd. Looking, therefore, at the kind of military possession which the French had of Spain, and seeing the quiet and steadfast possession which the English had of Portugal, he did not hesitate to say, that the affairs of the French were deteriorated, while those of the allied nations were improved; that there were fainter hopes for France, and greater hopes for Spain, than there were a year ago. He had to state, that the English Government wished for measures of conciliation, and to act as a mediator between the colonies and Spain. As to the delay of Sir R. Wilson and Mr. Liston from going out on their respective stations, certain circumstances had occurred which had hitherto prevented the carrying of those missions into effect.—The Hon. Gentleman asked how we were to replace the waste of our resources? It was sufficient and satisfactory for him to state, in answer to this question, that, notwithstanding all our waste of men, our military force was stronger by 10,000 men than it was at this time last year. Another topic, and one which he confessed to be of the greatest importance, observed upon by the Hon. Gentleman, was the state of our relations with America. The true policy for this country to adopt towards America, and the policy which had been adhered to by the Ministers of the Crown, was to stave off that catastrophe,—the catastrophe of war,—which it was the interest of both nations to avoid. The conduct of the Government to America ought to be temperate and moderate, but, at the same time, dignified and consistent; but nothing could impede its plans and progress more than during the pending negotiations, to be thus putting it upon its defence,—to be thus putting the country upon its trial. A war between this country and America would be productive of evil to both; although, in his opinion, not of so much evil to England as to America. So far from considering the interests of both countries to be in any opposition to one another, he would always consider the wealth of America as accessory to the riches, and her prosperity as accessory to the greatness, of England. He would, indeed, be sorry to see America crushed, impoverished, or destroyed. (Here Mr. Whitbread sneeringly repeated the word destroyed.) The Hon. Gentleman might repeat his words, but though he did not use the word destroyed in the sense of a physical annihilation, yet he contended that a war with England would prove *destructive* to America,—destructive to her wealth, her strength, her prosperity, and her progressive civilization. For his part, he was candid enough to confess, that he would bear with more from America than from any other foreign country with whom England could have any relations. The Hon. Gentleman farther remarked, that we should have believed in the revocation of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, because America said that they were repealed. Our charge against America was, that she has been too acquiescent and too partial to France,—too partial to her opinions and too acquiescent in her decrees. So much did he differ from the Americans on this point, that he considered the very notice of revocation itself the very strongest testimony that they were not revoked. If this revocation was as sincere as it has been said to be,—if it, indeed, existed at all,—why did not America produce the instrument itself? Why not give it distinctly, as she has other state papers? But the fact was, that France only gave a notification, and that, too, a conditional one, dependent upon two alternatives. The Hon. Gentleman totally abstracted the *conditionality* of the instrument from its consideration, but he (the Chancellor) could not. What were these conditions? That Great Britain should revoke her Orders in Council, and abandon what it called her *new system* of blockade, or that America should cause the independence of her flag to be respected: that is, that Great Britain should abandon that system which was founded on the law of nations, and her own immemorial practice,—because Great Britain adopted no *new system* of blockade, but adhered to her old principles,—to those principles and maritime rights, which were the productive causes of her greatness, and without adhering to and as-

setting which she could no longer exist as an independent nation. New words had been invented; lately we had heard of *denationalizing* ships, which meant suffering them to be visited by us upon the ocean: but if Great Britain is to be hindered from visiting and searching American ships on the high seas according to her recognised and legitimate rights, then indeed should we cease to be the nation that we have been. As to the observation of the Honourable Gentleman, on the omission of any mention at present of the affairs of the East India Company, that subject he considered as most improper to be now introduced, and any mention of it most ill-timed.

Mr. Whitbread rose to demand an explanation of the expressions which the Right Honourable Gentleman used, with reference to him, in the beginning of his speech. They were the coarsest and most offensive he had ever heard, and he hoped that the Right Honourable Gentleman had said nothing in one place which he was not prepared to defend in another.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that he used the couplet which gave offence merely in a metaphorical sense. The allusion to the spider was not very elegant, perhaps, but certainly he had not the slightest intention of offering any personal offence to the Honourable Gentleman; if he had done so, he would have incurred as much his own displeasure as that of the Honourable Gentleman.

Mr. Whitbread declared himself satisfied with this explanation.

Mr. Creevey could not agree to pledge himself to vote whatever sums Ministers should think proper to demand for the war in the Peninsula, without first asking of the Minister, what were the financial means of the country in the present year? He believed, that in the comparison of the produce of the revenue in the last year with that of 1810, it would be found, that there was last year a deficiency of three millions and an half in the receipt of the taxes, while there had been an additional charge on the consolidated fund, amounting to a million and an half, making a total of five millions, in which the revenue of this year would fall short of that of the last year. He concluded by moving as an Amendment, that instead of the word "now," the words this day se'nnight," should be inserted.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, it was true that the amount of the revenue last year was not equal to that of the year 1810, but the revenue of that year had been most remarkably flourishing, and the product so extraordinary, that it was conceived a proper subject of congratulation to be mentioned in the speech; but although the revenue of the year 1811 was not equal to that of the year 1810, it was however greater than that of the year preceding it. It was true, that in the published statements the comparison was only between the last quarters of the year 1810 and 1811, in which there appeared a considerable increase in the last quarter. He would also allow that the products of the revenue for the remaining three quarters were inferior to those of the year 1810; but at the same time he must point out the attention of the House, that in the last quarter, although it was stated that our trade had entirely failed, the amount of the duty from customs considerably exceeded that of the corresponding quarter in the year 1810. From this circumstance, he thought the House might well indulge the hope, that our trade was not, at present, in that declining situation in which it appeared to some Gentlemen. As to the Excise, which is much the most productive source of our revenue, the receipts of the duties on this account were greater than even in the year 1810. He would admit, however, that, upon the whole, the amount of the revenue of last year fell short by about two millions of the produce of the very favourable year of 1810. As to the security of the public creditors, it was very well known that the quarter ending in January was the heaviest quarter in the year, and yet in this quarter there was a surplus of more than 400,000*l.* The reason why the quarter ending in January was always a heavy one, was, that the taxes imposed, perhaps late in the Session, were not by that time received into the Treasury. In the last year there had been a defalcation in the amount of the duties on spirits: an additional sum of 700,000*l.* had been expected from the distillation from grain; but it appeared that the distillation from sugar had been sufficient to supply the entire demand of the summer.

Colonel Hutchinson could not avoid expressing his dissent to the Address. He was now more confirmed in the opinion which he had delivered last year, that instead of a mere advisory address, it was the duty of the House to speak out, and lay before his Royal Highness the important circumstances which have occurred during the long and eventful reign of his father. He could not approve of that part of it which stated, that we had effectually defended Portugal, as he thought that assertion was contrary to the fact. Differing, as he did, from Ministers in all the main points of this Address, he must give it his unqualified dissent.

After some explanations between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Creevey, the amendment of the latter was negatived without a division, and the report was received and agreed to. The Address was then ordered to be presented to the Prince Regent by such members as belonged to the Privy Council.—Adjourned.

Thursday, Jan. 9.

Lord John Thynne brought up the Prince Regent's Answer to the Address, which was as follows:—

Gentlemen,—I thank you for this dutiful and loyal address. Your assurances of the continuance of your support in the great contest in which we are engaged, are highly gratifying to me and I have the greatest satisfaction in receiving the new proof of your affection and loyalty to the King my father, which is afforded by your readiness to provide amply and suitably for his comfort and dignity, under the pressure of the severe calamity with which it has pleased the Almighty to afflict him.

Tuesday, March 3.

### ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

Mr. Brougham rose to bring forward a motion affecting the state of our commerce and manufactures. His object was to inquire into the result of the experiment of 1807, and to ascertain whether it had oppressed or assisted the enemy; whether it was not better that we should retrace our steps; or if we were to persist, that we should adopt a more effectual, intelligible, and operative mode of enforcing our measures against the commerce of France? Unless they were prepared to tell the people that our present evils were irremediable; that they were such as must be endured with patience, rather than by hope, the House could not refuse the proposed investigation. The system upon which we had so long professed to act, was, in the outset, retaliation.—What then was the system of the enemy upon which it was a retaliation? To sum up all in one word, it was a system of hostility to commerce, a wish to sacrifice the trade of France to the destruction of the trade of England. It was true that, in some moments, while suffering under the vexation of severe naval losses, Bonaparte had expressed a wish for "ships, colonies, and commerce;" but no sooner had his mind resumed its tone, than he turned to the prosecution of his favourite policy of sacrificing his own trade to the ruin of ours. Nay, he (Mr. Brougham) was disposed to go further, and say that he had a hostility to commerce itself, without any view to us, as if there was some thing in its nature injurious to his views upon the liberties of mankind.—The conscription itself was inconsistent with trade; it was a sacrifice of commerce to power, and the same disposition was manifested in the various measures of his Government, as well as in his answers to the petitions of his merchants. To them he had declared that "it was too late in the day to think of trade;" that the failure of their commerce was so much the better, for "he would have soldiers and peasants alone." It was also to be collected from the publication of his Minister, Talleyrand, in which he maintained the superiority of agriculture to commerce since the stormy period of the revolution; the latter having a tendency to unite men the former to separate, to dispirit, and tranquillize them. His system was war with commerce; with commerce as with liberty; with the mother as with the child; with those principles which were favourable to the world he hated; and inimical to the power he had usurped. The system of Bonaparte being, from the evidence of facts, such as he had described, they were next to inquire, what system it was natural for England to adopt on the other hand. The obvious policy of England was to encourage commerce by all means in her power, and to encourage the trade of neutrals. Not of the neutrals most contiguous to France, and therefore most exposed to its power, but of that neutral which was separated from France by an ocean, impassible to her, owning the same interests, and speaking the same language with England, and being the only nation, beside ourselves, in which freedom could be found. We had not only not done our best to secure the neutrality of that power, but we had adopted a system against neutrals which went to oblige them immediately to declare for one side or other.—But looking to the effects of the system we had pursued, they would find by the papers laid before the House in 1809 that the whole of the imports and exports of 1808, as compared with those of 1807, fell short by no less an amount than fifteen millions. It was found necessary in 1809, to substitute a blockade to a limited extent, which was done by the measure of the 16th of April in that year. This measure, he contended, was in effect getting rid by one sweep of the whole principle of the Orders in Council.—The principle was to cripple the French commerce, but this, by opening an inlet to their commerce, defeated the principle. As to the flourishing representations of our trade in 1809, he would set against them the seizure of our vessels by the enemy in 1810, by which upwards of nine millions sterling was lost to this country. The seven millions Droits of Admiralty which we had taken from our friends and natural allies in the course of eighteen years of war, was more than counterbalanced by this fatal seizure of Bonaparte. He denied that Bonaparte had gone on relaxing his decrees after the paring down of our Orders in Council. In 1809 we relieved the pressure on his commerce, and in 1810 he came out with two measures, ten thousand times more strict and more pressing on his commerce and our own. He proceeded to state facts on which his inferences were built, though the numberless petitions preparing in

many parts of the country, the list of bankruptcies, which was doubled since the Orders in Council, the list of the poor, which had increased in Liverpool to 16 times its former amount, were facts, which would bear him out, even in the teeth of the returns upon the table. He could not shut his ears to the cries of the poor people; he could not be indifferent to the petitions which would shortly come from Warwickshire, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, and parts of Scotland; nor could he look upon the returns of Mr. Irvine, as of greater authority—he might be called the saviour of the nation; the Gazette might be represented as mistaken; the country might be held up as flourishing, commercial, and gay, but it must be in defiance of all those proofs of misery which obtruded themselves daily before their eyes. But let them see what was the state of things in 1811, even by the documents of Mr. Irvine himself. The official value of the exports for three quarters of the year 1810, was 27,000,000*l.* The official value of the exports for the three corresponding quarters of the year 1811, was only 16,000,000*l.* being a falling off of 11,000,000*l.* in the three quarters, and by calculation, a falling off of 14 or 15,000,000*l.* in the whole year of official value; or about 21,000,000*l.* real value. The answer to all this, it seemed was, that there had been no considerable falling off in the exports of last year, as compared with the exports of 1809.—It would appear, however, that the difference was only 2,000,000*l.* and that the exports of the three quarters of 1810 were to the amount of 9,000,000*l.* less than the exports of the three corresponding quarters of 1809. But he would go back to a comparison with 1808; and the House would recollect that that was the very worst year of exports. The falling off of the exports of 1808 being 15,000,000*l.* as compared with 1807. In the three quarters of 1808, the exports were 18,000,000*l.* In the three quarters of 1811, 16,000,000*l.* being a difference in real value of 2,500,000*l.* With respect to the exports to South America, the House had only the Custom-house returns, which could not be considered as a fair test of the real trade. By those returns it appeared, that the official value of the exports in 1811, to America, exclusive of the United States and the West Indies, exceeded those of the year 1807 by eight millions. How little harmonious was this statement from the Custom-house, with the actual situation of the country! Those who did not pin their faith to Mr. Irvine's books, when they saw the wretchedness that prevailed in the country, could not help suspecting that those exports went to a market not open to receive them. The great excess of importation in the succeeding year strongly confirmed this suspicion. He proceeded to consider the relaxation of the Orders in Council under the name of Trade Licences, a relaxation which shewed a complete want of confidence in the success of the original measures. The increase of the licences was prodigious. In 1807, 1,600 were issued; in 1811, no less than 18 thousand, thus subjecting the whole foreign trade of the country to a new system. What was the natural result of these licences as they affected the enemy, neutral powers, and this country? With regard to the enemy, in proportion to the extent of the licences was the principle of the Orders in Council abandoned. With regard to neutral powers, the system tended to benefit those alone who were under the influence of France, and to whom France looked for the support of her Marine. With respect to this country, the effect on our shipping would be apparent, by a comparison of the British and foreign shipping employed in 1806, with the British and foreign shipping which had been employed in 1810. By this comparison it would appear that in that period the amount of foreign tonnage and foreign shipping had more than doubled; being at the first period, 567,000 tons of shipping, and 29,000 seamen; and being, in 1810, 1,138,000 tons of shipping, and 60,000 seamen. The British Ship Owners, as the memorials from Hull, Shields, &c. sufficiently testified, sustaining thereby the greatest injury. A considerable diminution had taken place in the building of merchant ships. In 1805, ships were built to the amount of 90,000 tons. In 1810, to the amount of only 61,000 tons. By the system which had been pursued, the trade had been thrown out of the harmless and distant power of America, into the hands of those near us, and ready to assist France in her hostility. Nothing could be more annoying and injurious to the trade of this Country, than the systematic and every day's interference with it to which the Executive Government had resorted. The President and Vice-President of the Board of Trade, were at present the great merchants of the country, and not the residents in London, Liverpool, or Hull. They employed their mornings not in devising the means of protecting British Merchants, of annoying those of the enemy, or of diminishing the hostility of neutrals, but in making assortments of cargoes, an occupation in which, with all due respect to them, he conceived that they were wholly incompetent. It was really ridiculous to contemplate the Noble Lord at the head of the Board of Trade, settling the various component parts of a cargo. Sometimes determining that it should consist of wool, scissars, nails, and cotton-twist; then hesitating

whether or not to leave out the scissars; and finally, perhaps, determining to omit the nails, and allow the scissars to be included. He did not impute any abuse in the granting of licences; he did not mean to accuse Government of partiality in that respect. But it was evident, that those merchants who were consulted by the Board of Trade on the perpetual changes that were taking place, must have very little cunning, if they could not make a probable guess with respect to the projected prohibitions and admissions which to them would be just as great a bonus as any stock-brokers would receive to whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer might communicate the terms on which he meant to fund Exchequer Bills, or to contract for the sale of the Lottery. The merchants also consulted by the Board of Trade were not such men as the Member for Worcester, or the Members for the City of London. No; those who were seen clearing outwards at the office were generally neutrals, and their agents, jobbers and brokers from Duke's place. These were the persons whom the Board of Trade thought proper to consult, and their commercial regulations.—By the perpetual changes in their regulations, the enemy were continually enabled to anticipate and frustrate our wishes. But the most deplorable effect which the new system had, was on the morals of those who were employed under it. It had been said by a high authority (Sir W. Scott), that it was a series of simulation and dissimulation from beginning to end. It would have been still more accurately described, had it been called a system beginning in forgery, continuing in perjury, and conversant with every description of fraud and enormity. He described the nature of the licences and the deceptions which were practised under them, (reading a circular letter which had been sent to various merchants in London, from persons who actually professed to establish themselves for the sole purpose of making simulated papers.) If this was the kind of victory which our commerce was to enjoy over the designs of Bonaparte, he disclaimed any share in the triumph. After dwelling at considerable length on these and similar points, he concluded by moving, "That a Select Committee be appointed for the purpose of taking into consideration the present state of the commerce and manufactures of the Country, particularly with reference to the Orders in Council, and the Licence Trade."

Mr. Rose did not deny that the manufacturing districts of the country experienced much distress, particularly Birmingham, the trade of which place depends materially on the connection with America. But when the Hon. Gent. contended, that that distress originated in the Orders in Council, and was a ground for their repeal, he would ask him, what were the facts on which he founded that statement? He would refer to the papers on the table; and he must observe, that the Hon. Gent. questioned the accuracy of Mr. Irvine's figures, only when they opposed his statements, and not when they seemed to support them. For his part he never knew the correctness of the Custom-house accounts doubted, nor could he allow that they were at all liable to the objections of the Hon. Gentleman. What did those accounts state? The Orders in Council were issued in 1807? The accounts stated in 1807 the general exports were 35,800,000*l.*; that in 1808 they were 34,800,000*l.*; that in 1809 they grew to 60,000,000*l.*; and in 1810 they were 45,000,000*l.* All this was official value, so that the increase in real value was near 30,000,000*l.* The Hon. Gentleman, however, contended that although the general exports might be increased, yet that the particular exports to America were decreased. How was this borne out by the accounts? In 1807 the whole of the exports to all America and the West Indies amounted to 14,800,000*l.* In 1808, to 15,800,000*l.* In 1809, (in which year the Non-Intercourse Act took place in America) to 19,200,000*l.* and in 1810, to 20,418,000*l.* making a difference between the years 1807 and 1810, of six million sterling in the exports to all America, and chiefly attributable to the increase of exports to South America. The Honourable Gentleman asserted that the British shipping had been injured by the system of licences. The accounts on the table, however, showed that there were 200,000 tons of British shipping and fourteen thousand British seamen employed more than when the Orders in Council were promulgated. He admitted that the foreign shipping had increased in great proportion. But if foreign shipping had not been employed, what would have become of our commerce? How could it have been carried on with those ports which were shut against British shipping?—Would Government have been justified in letting the manufactures of the country perish in warehouses rather than allow and sanction them to be transported to those ports in foreign shipping? That the British shipping was completely employed, was evident from the increased rate of transports. What had been the origin of the Orders in Council? France said that there should be no trade to England. Our answer was (an answer which we had the power to enforce) that nothing should go to France that did not come from her to England.

We had a right to say to neutral powers, that if they tolerated a regulation of one of the belligerents inimical to our commercial interests, they must tolerate a regulation on our part in defence of those interests. Nothing hostile was intended towards America. On the contrary, every degree of attention and kindness was shewn to her by Great Britain.—Reverting to the distresses of the manufacturers, he expressed his persuasion that great arts had been used to make the suffering individuals believe that their evils originated in the Orders in Council. Those persons had certainly borne their distresses with a patience and a fortitude which entitled their present complaints to the most indulgent attention; but it was impossible to convince him that the greater part of the individuals who put their names to a petition against the Orders in Council, were at all aware of the mode in which those orders operated; and of this he was assured, that their sufferings would be materially increased were those orders rescinded. With respect to what had been said of the excessive issues of Bank paper in England, he had to say, that our Bank notes had increased within the last two months by the exchange at Hamburgh, from 10 to 15 per cent.; and he had no doubt, if things continued as favourable as at present they appear, that a still farther rapid improvement in the exchange would take place.—He had also to state, that the price of gold was falling, and these facts gave a flat contradiction to what they had heard from the other side, on the Bullion question. The effect of the repeal of the Orders in Council, under the existing circumstances, though beneficial to America and France, would be most injurious to England, and all the former system of perjury would again be revived in our Courts of Admiralty. The trade of this country had flourished under the Orders in Council till last year, when it was crushed by the adoption of a measure on the part of the enemy, which, he believed, no nation had ever made use of against another. The effect of this unprincipled conduct was now recoiling on themselves. The revenue of France had been greatly injured by these measures, as he could prove from official documents. In 1807, the French customs amounted to about 2,400,000*l.* sterling. In the year 1808, after the Orders in Council had been issued, it sunk 740,000*l.* and in 1809, 469,000*l.* more. In 1810 they had got up again, it was true, to 2,000,000*l.* but this increase arose from the proceeds of the vessels seized in the Prussian ports. The customs only rose in consequence of the robberies committed there on individuals. The discounts of the French Bank were in 1810, 30,000,000*l.* In 1811, they were reduced to 16,000,000*l.* The profits in 1810, were 40,000*l.*; in 1811, 4,500*l.* It would thus be seen that the profits of the French Bank were reduced to so small a sum that there was hardly a Bank in England conducted by individuals on their own account which did not divide as much. The view to be taken of the effects of our hostilities on the manufactures of France was equally unfavourable to the enemy. The Right Hon. Gentleman then proceeded to defend the practice of granting licences; and concluded by expressing it to be his conviction, that to repeal the Orders in Council would be the most mischievous thing that could be done, and he therefore hoped the House would not agree to appoint the proposed Committee.

Mr. Baring said, in every point of view he thought it was necessary to repeal our Orders in Council.

Mr. Stephen said, the Orders in Council had run now to such a length, that to make such a motion as that before the House, was as if a Committee should be moved for to inquire into the State of Trade of this Country, or of that part of it which referred to the existing Acts of Parliament. He strongly objected to the appointment of a Committee to go over ground so often controverted in the discussions of a measure of such commercial and political importance. Not only had the Orders in Council been harmless, but our trade had risen to a state of unparalleled prosperity since they were issued. The Hon'ble and Learned Gentleman then took a comprehensive view of what had been the state of our trade, and what the effect of the Orders in Council upon it. In August, September, and October, 1807, a very great depression was felt. So great was this depression, that application was made to the Custom-house for permission for sixty or seventy vessels to land their cargoes again, as all the ports of the Continent were shut against them. The stagnation of trade in that and the following year were so great, that the exports of both amounted to but twenty-nine millions and a half. In the following years, after our retaliative measures were in force, they amounted to 51,414,000*l.* Thus it would be seen, there was an increase of 22,000,000*l.* in those two years, and this was the result of that dangerous experiment, as our attempt to retaliate was called. The state of the imports, and the effect of the Orders on them were much the same. In 1807 and 1808, they amounted together to 26,300,000*l.* and in the two following years their amount was 47,900,000*l.* presenting here an increase of twenty-one millions and a half. He was astonished to hear the outcry raised

against the Orders in Council, when it was thus proved, that under them our trade had flourished more than it had ever done before.

Mr. Canning said, that if he understood the question, he was convinced, that by referring it to a Committee, it would be properly understood, and the public would see that the Government were justified in adopting them, and that they were necessary for the safety of the country.

Sir Charles Price opposed the motion. Mr. Wilberforce was a friend to the proposed inquiry, because it would tend to remove all possible prejudice and objection—(hear, hear!) indeed he conceived it would be paying a due attention to those who suffered.—(Hear, hear!) He thought America had some cause for complaint, for we first excluded her from the Continent by Orders, and then we went there ourselves, by virtue of our Licence system.—(Hear, hear!)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he was under no apprehension of inquiry, confident as he was that the distresses alluded to did not at all arise from the measures to which the Hon. Gentleman opposite would attribute them. What he apprehended was, that the sufferers would be misled, and be induced to attribute their distresses to other causes than the real ones from which they arose. He was glad to perceive that on this night the Orders of Council had not, as formerly, been combated on the ground that they were unjust. This mode of reasoning against them he had always considered as highly injurious, and leading to mischievous consequences. He himself, never considered those orders as founded on any other principle than that of retaliation, and this he thought a just system of acting. The principle of retaliation could not at all be excluded from the Code of International Law. France had emancipated herself from that code by her unjust and despoiling system of war; it was foolish then to talk of treating her in the same manner as nations who were disposed to adhere to it. France had declared by her Decrees, that she would not trade with Great Britain; the Orders in Council went to the object of obliging her to trade with no other nation. Our merchants had undoubtedly suffered a heavy loss in the Baltic, but he would ask, would not that loss, in a great measure, account for the bankruptcies by which the nation was alarmed, and for the distress which now subsisted in the country? Why should the Orders in Council be necessarily supposed to have produced them? He perceived that those Gentlemen who endeavoured to inculcate erroneous notions, and make the people believe that their distresses arose from the want of trade, would hardly propose a measure which would have the effect of reducing that which they admitted we yet retained. But it was pretty generally mentioned that we were the chief sufferers from the Orders in Council, and France was supposed to be comparatively untouched; he could, however, state a few facts which would at once shew the fallacy of this opinion. The receipts of the Customs in France at the time the Orders in Council were issued were sixty millions; those were reduced in the year following by eighteen millions, and in the subsequent years there was a still greater reduction.—The Right Hon. Member then read an address of the Senate to Bonaparte, in which he was informed that a canal between Hamburgh and Lubeck, designed for the purpose of facilitating the communication with the Baltic, would be completed in five years, at the expence of 20,000,000*l.* Was this, he asked, no sign of our measures having injured France? An half fearful, half philosophical opinion seemed to be entertained that the French Emperor was an enemy to trade generally, as he was to liberty. He was indeed an enemy to British trade, but were the various canals and other works projected for the purpose of promoting the internal trade of his dominions, to be considered as indicating his aversion to commerce?

Mr. Whitbread supported the motion in a powerful speech, and concluded by saying, though the vote they were about to give might be an ineffectual, he hoped it would be at least a menacing one.

Mr. Herbert, Lord Grenville Gower, and Lord Milton, all spoke decidedly in favour of the Motion.

The House divided, when there appeared—For the Motion, 144—Against it, 216—Majority, 72.—Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, March 16.

### STATE OF THE NATION.

Earl Grosvenor announced his intention of bringing forward, ere long, a motion on the State of the Nation, and which he thought was called for in consequence of the distracted state of the Councils of Government. He did not intend, however, to bring it forward until after the discussion of the question relative to the Catholics of Ireland, which stood for the 10th of April.

### THE REGENT'S MESSAGE, IN AID OF PORTUGAL.

The Earl of Liverpool said, the defence of Portugal was undoubtedly the most es-

sential point of all our continental operations. The only question upon former occasions was as to the practicability. It was proved, however, now by experience that by the system adopted by Lord Wellington, and acting upon the principles of Lord Wellington, Portugal might be effectually defended. It had been said formerly, and some Officers even who had served in Portugal were of that opinion, that the Portuguese troops could not be disciplined so as effectively to face the enemy. It had been proved, however, by experience, that under the general superintendance of British Officers (and in saying this he did not mean to detract from the merit of the Portuguese Officers, knowing as he did that their services had been highly useful) these troops had been brought to such a state of discipline that they not only effectively defended positions, but that they had effectively met in the field the best disciplined troops of France, commanded by the most distinguished Officers of France. It was proved therefore that the supply granted to Portugal had not been idly wasted, but had been employed in a manner eminently beneficial. It was at the same time a mistaken notion to suppose that Portugal herself did not largely contribute to the same object, the Portuguese Government having during the last year, in addition to the 2,000,000*l.* sent from this country, expended the sum of 1,800,000*l.* in the maintenance and support of the troops. The continuance of the supply from this country was not, therefore, asked for those who would not contribute to defend themselves, but a power which sedulously endeavoured to maintain and increase its means of defence. The difficulties with which Portugal had had to encounter in establishing that system of defence, were well known, difficulties which could only be overcome by the most persevering efforts. In whatever point of view, therefore, the subject was considered, whether our ancient alliance with Portugal, our engagements with that power, the exertions she had made, the beneficial effects produced by our assistance, the essential importance to ourselves of the defence of Portugal, or the experience we had had of the practicability of that defence, he was satisfied there could be no hesitation in continuing the supply which had been voted last year. His Lordship concluded by moving an Address of concurrence in the object of the Prince Regent's Message.

The Address was agreed to *nem. diss.* and ordered to be presented to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent by the Lords with white staves.—Adjourned.

## LONDON, MARCH 8.

We understand it has been finally settled that Lord Melville is to be First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr. Henry Wellesley, Ambassador at Cadiz, and Mr. Adair, late Ambassador at Constantinople, and formerly at Vienna, are, it is said, to receive the Order of the Bath.

The following is an extract of a letter from Gottenburgh, dated Feb. 28:—

"The occupation of Pomerania has materially changed the face of things in Sweden, and were it not for the apprehension that Napoleon would set Russia on our backs, I am persuaded that matters would be on a very different footing. As it is, a person now in London is charged with conditional negotiations.

"The letters by the German Mail not coming regularly, as usual, this Government has prohibited all communication with France, until her motives shall be explained.

"Depend upon it that Ponte Corvo is not the tool of Bonaparte, nor does he in the least owe his present condition to the influence of his Imperial and Royal Majesty.

"Peyron, who commanded at Stralsund, had positive instructions to resist the passage, or entry, of any foreign troops."

In an additional letter, the fact of the contributions required in Pomerania is confirmed, and the exaction at Stralsund is stated at 100,000 rix dollars. It is also said, on the same authority, that an embargo is imposed on all Swedish shipping in France.

Farther letters have been received from the French coast, of a late date. They repeat, that Bonaparte is now certainly going to the North. One of them says, "the Emperor will be off to the North in a day or two; after which nothing will be done in the licence way for some time to come. His Majesty will allow no one in his absence to superintend a business so dear to him as that in which commerce is concerned." We suspect this to be a mere commercial fudge.

A Decree has been published in the Grand Duchy of Berg, in which Napoleon, to the exclusion of his Nephew, the Grand Duke, assumes to himself the Sovereignty, by ordering the execution of the same in his own sole name and under his own sole authority.—By this instrument he takes into his hands all the manufactured or manu-

factured tobacco which shall be found in the territory, and all the machines, implements, &c. employed upon it, for which, he says, compensation shall be made to the proprietors.

American Papers to the 9th ult. have been received. The expectation of a war with this country, and the clamour for it, subside rapidly. There is a report that Congress will adjourn to the 1st of May.

The Marquis of Hertford has appointed his nephew, Col. Seymour, to be Serjeant at Arms, a place worth near 3000*l.* a year. We understand that the Earl of Yarmouth is to be Vice-Chamberlain.

MARCH 15.

Monday the gentlemen concerned in Wines, Silks, and various other branches of business, waited on the Board of Trade, to acquire correct information as to the circumstances under which Licences are conceded for the commerce with France.

The following are the conditions notified by the French Government, viz. from Dunkirk and Ostend:

"One third of the value of the cargo exported is to consist of the Silks of France, and the other two thirds to be composed of Linen Cloths, Porcelain Ware, Clover Seeds, or Lupinus Seeds.

"The articles imported are to be either Raw Sugar, Coffee, Indigo, Cotton, Pepper, Cocoa, Cochineal, Tea, Dyeing Woods, or Medicinal Drugs; and such imports are not to be more than equal in value to the exports from France."

Six Imperial Licences have been granted to divers ports of France for the exportation of Wine:

"For each ton of Wine may be imported, either 1200 killagrams of Raw Sugar, or 1000 ditto Coffee, or 75 ditto Indigo, or 1400 Hides."

Five Licences have been signed for Hamburgh, on the subsequent terms:

"One third of the value of the cargo exported from France is to consist of French silks, the other two-thirds to be composed of linen cloth of Westphalia or Osnabruck, or hog's bristles of the country, Porcelain ware, clock works, or jewellery.

"The articles imported are to be either raw sugar, coffee, cotton, indigo, pepper, cocoa, cochineal, tea, hides, dyeing woods or medicinal drugs.

"The imports are to be not more than equal to the exports. The ships are to proceed on the 1st voyage within two months of the date of the licences on pain of forfeiting such licences."

It is said to be in the contemplation of Government, on the approaching renewal of the East India Company's charter, to reduce the number of Directors from twenty-six to thirteen. It is also stated, that the number of the Company's ships will be reduced, by retrenching the tonnage now allowed for private trade; together with such further reduction as the expected extension of that trade may render expedient by its interference with the Company's monopoly, and that the merchants engaged in the private trade will henceforth be permitted to freight their own ships to an amount of tonnage to be limited, and to take out all goods which the Company itself is permitted to export; instead of being obliged, as now, to take up tonnage from the Company.

MARCH 22.

A Swedish Courier is arrived with dispatches, supposed to be of great importance. A Gottenburgh Mail is also arrived, and proceeding in their system of hostility towards Swedish Pomerania, the French have disarmed and disbanded the Swedish troops in that province. This is supposed to have operated decisively upon the Councils of the Swedish Cabinet.—A Courier was immediately dispatched to this country.

GOTTENBURGH, MARCH 15.

"Accounts have just reached this place, that the Swedish troops in Pomerania have been disarmed and disbanded by order of the French Commander."

Bonaparte, according to the report brought by a vessel from Ostend, has left Paris for the North.

French Licences.—The Board of Trade has refused to comply with so much of the terms of the French Licences as specified that exportations were first to be made from France before any importation from England should be admitted. On this subject several applications have been made to the Board of Trade by the merchants interested in the commerce with France. It is asserted that the Board of Trade has agreed to an arrangement, with which the merchants appeared satisfied, of which these are the conditions:—

"To admit the following articles to be imported from any port between the river Ems and Caeu, provided that the vessel in which they are imported is of 100 tons burthen or upwards..

"Articles allowed to be imported: Cheese, seeds, fruits, bristles, clinkers, threads, and tapes, perfumery, silk thrown and organized, lians, lawns, cambrics, lace, quicksilver, rushes, linen-flax and yarn, jewellery, bronze, and books.

"The articles when imported are to be ware-housed under the joint lock of the Crown and the merchant, until the counter-exportation shall have been made, conformably to the conditions prescribed and made known by Government.

"With respect to the staple commodities of France, such as wine and brandies, no alteration has taken place."