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P A P E R S

RELATING TO

THE SLAVE TRADE.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Majesty's Command

May 1823.

LONDON :

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CORRESPONDENCE

RELATING TO

THE SLAVE TRADE.

No. 1.

The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Secretary Canning, dated Paris 21st. September, 1822.—Received the 24th.

(Extract.)

I HAVE taken an opportunity of talking to the French Minister respecting the Slave Trade, and of urging him to adopt some effectual measures for its repression.

He stated that the King, and the French Government were sincerely anxious to put an end to this Traffick; but that they could devise no measures to produce that effect which they could hope would be adopted; that the measure so often recommended to their attention by the British Ambassador at this Court, that of attaching a *Peine Infamante* to the conviction of this crime, would be inefficient even if passed into a law. He said that he could not conceal from me the fact, that the Abolition of the Slave Trade was unpopular in France; and he begged me to observe, that the existing Law for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, was the only Law that had ever passed the Legislature without discussion.

I replied that I did not think we were called upon to point out to them the measures which they ought to adopt, in order to carry into execution their own engagements. That we stated the measures which had been found most effectual in England and elsewhere, and we certainly had reason to complain, if no measures were adopted by France to carry into execution Her Engagements, the Decree of the King, and the Law of the Country.

The French Minister said, that they had done, and would do, all in their power; that they maintained Cruizers on the Coast of Africa, and off Madagascar, for no purpose, excepting to check this Traffick, to which they were sincerely desirous to put an end.

I told him that I should certainly draw the attention of the Allied Courts to this subject at the Congress; as they, equally with ourselves, were anxious for the total Abolition of this Traffick.

No. 2.

Mr. Secretary Canning to the Duke of Wellington.

(Extract.)

Foreign Office, October 1, 1822.

SINCERE as is the anxiety of His Majesty and His Government to devise all means which may tend in any way to the extirpation of that scandal of the

civilized world, the Slave Trade ; and confident as I am, that your Grace will exert yourself, with the utmost alacrity and zeal, to impress upon the minds of the Allied Sovereigns and their Ministers, the duty of perfecting the work of the Abolition, I confess that the Report which I have received from your Grace, at Paris, has greatly damped the expectation of any decisively favourable result from the approaching Conferences.

The refusal of France, not only to enter into any new Engagements, or to pass any new Laws for the suppression of the Slave Trade, but Her neglect and apparent repugnance even to execute those by which She has already bound herself, notwithstanding the too notorious continuance of that Traffick by her Subjects, leave little hope that the authority of France will be employed otherwise at Vienna than to prevent the adoption of any effectual resolution.

Every effort must, nevertheless, be made to bring, the influence of the Congress to bear upon this most momentous subject ; and from the other three Members of the Alliance we may hope to obtain such a manifestation of opinion, as may show that their feelings, as declared in 1815, have undergone no change.

The difficulty under which this Country now labours, in pressing the accomplishment of the Abolition, beyond what it experienced in 1815, arises partly from the lowered tone of sentiment throughout Europe, upon subjects appealing to the feelings of mankind, compared with that which prevailed at a moment of general excitement and enthusiasm ; and partly from the notion, sedulously inculcated by other Powers having Colonies, that self-interest now mingles with our humanity ; and that by our persevering efforts to bring about the Abolition in these Countries, we are only seeking to inflict upon the Colonial Possessions of our rivals, a portion of the evils which the partial Abolition is alleged to have brought upon our own.

Your Grace may confidently affirm, in reply to such insinuations, that among the causes which have contributed to the depression of Colonial Produce in this Country, so far is the Abolition of the British Slave Trade from being one, that its continuance would unquestionably have aggravated that depression ; and its revival would be deprecated by no class of men more than by the Colonists of Great Britain.

But in proportion as the interests of that class of His Majesty's Subjects have been exposed to hazard, by the Legislature of this Country, in setting the example of the unqualified renunciation of a practice originally incorporated with the system of Colonies, and long supposed, however falsely, to be necessary to their existence (a renunciation dictated by considerations of a higher order than have usually guided the conduct of States) ; in the same proportion is the British Government called upon to leave no effort untried to give effect to that example, and to take care that it shall not have been set in vain.

At present, whatever may have been the advantage or disadvantage to the British Colonies, it is much to be feared that to Africa the Abolition by Great Britain has been injury rather than gain. The Slave Trade, so far from being diminished in extent, by the exact amount of what was in former times the British demand, is, upon the whole, perhaps, greater than it was at the period when that demand was the highest : and the aggregate of human suffering, and the waste of human life, in the transport of Slaves from the Coast of Africa to the Colonies, are increased in a ratio enormously greater than the increase of positive numbers. It would seem as if those, who continue this abominable Traffick, had a malicious pleasure in defeating the calculations of benevolence, and in visiting upon the innocent victims of their avarice, the fruitless endeavours to rescue those victims from their power.

Unhappily it cannot be denied, that our very attempts at prevention, imperfect as they yet are under the Treaties which now authorize our interference, tend to the augmentation of this evil. The dread of detection suggests exp-

dients of concealment productive of the most dreadful sufferings to a Cargo, with respect to which it hardly ever seems to occur to its remorseless owners, that it consists of sentient beings. The numbers put on board in each venture, are so far from being proportioned to the proper capacity of the vessel, that the probable profits of each voyage are notoriously calculated only on the survivors : and the mortality is, accordingly, frightful to a degree unknown, since the attention of mankind was first called to the horrors of this Traffick.

To these enormous, and I am afraid, even growing evils, we have nothing to oppose, but the Declaration of the Congress at Vienna ; our Treaties with Spain and the Netherlands, abolishing the Trade definitively and totally ; and that with Portugal, restricting the Portuguese Slave Trade to the South of the Line.

The provisions of those Treaties are about to receive a beneficial extension, by an Article which those Governments, respectively, have agreed to add to them ; inflicting the same penalties of capture and confiscation on vessels on board of which Slaves may *have been*, as on those on board of which Slaves are actually found at the time of visiting them.

I inclose a copy of this proposed Article to His Majesty's Missions at the Courts of the Hague, Madrid and Lisbon.

I inclose also a copy of a proposed Article, the object of which is to procure a further extension of the same principle, by admitting the peculiar fitting up of a Slave ship, as evidence of the purpose, and proof of the criminality of its voyage.

It is, in truth, absurd to talk of *prevention*, if the vessel must actually have completed the purpose of its voyage, before that purpose, however evident, can be suspected ; and if, while the having on board a single Negro is to be conclusive proof of guilt, manifest preparations for the reception of hundreds are not to be considered as leading to a presumption of it.

But, even when all this is done, little, very little, way is made towards the accomplishment of our great work, so long as Portugal continues the trade with half the continent of Africa,—and so long as France is determinately opposed to any further measures of restriction.

As to France, I fear, that so far from any advantage being likely to be obtained by the separate urgency of the British Government with that of His Most Christian Majesty, every fresh representation does but irritate and confirm the spirit of resistance, and tend to convert more and more, a question of moral duty and political obligation, into one of national pride.

It is necessary to take this plain, though discouraging view of the situation of this great question, because neither the past efforts of His Majesty's Government, nor those which your Grace is directed to make at the present Congress, can be viewed in their just light ; if it is supposed that they have been, or are to be, employed altogether upon willing, or even upon unprejudiced minds ; or that the failure to produce the desired effect, is to be attributed to want of zeal or of importunity on our part.

It is the truth (however lamentable or incredible) that by the testimony of the French Government itself, there is no publick feeling—none, on this subject in France, which responds in the smallest degree to the sentiment prevalent in England ;—that no credit is given to the People, or to the Legislature of this Country, for sincerity in those sentiments ; that our anxiety upon the matter is attributed to a calculation of national interest ; and that a new Law, formed on a proposition from England for new Restrictions on the illicit Slave Trade, would, at this moment, infallibly be thrown out in the Legislature of France.

It has been recommended by persons, laudably anxious for the attainment of the great object in view, that the Congress should declare the carrying on of the Slave Trade to be Piracy. But does there appear the slightest proba-

bility that the French Plenipotentiaries would concur in a position qualifying as acts of Piracy, acts which the French are committing every day; and laying open the ships and properties of those subjects, not merely to a right of visit to be mutually exercised, but to sweeping uncompensated capture by the cruisers of Great Britain?

Would such a Declaration by Powers who have no Colonies of their own, carry great weight? and would not an assumption on the part of the Congress, of a pretension to legislate on matters of Publick Law, and to establish a new principle of Maritime Police, excite, in other Powers, a disposition to demur to its jurisdiction?

There is a minor degree of coercion, which is undoubtedly within the right, as well as the power of the Sovereigns, which has been more than once pressed upon their attention. It is that they should, each, in their dominions, whether severally or by joint compact, prohibit the introduction of Colonial Produce from the Colonies of States which have not legally and effectually abolished the Slave Trade.

This would be attended with some immediate and perhaps with greater ultimate good effect; and this would be done in the exercise of an undoubted and legitimate authority, which even those who might suffer by it, could not call in question.

The principal advantages then to be derived from the union of Sovereigns to the cause of the Abolition, appear to resolve themselves into these two,—

1st. An Engagement on the part of the Continental Sovereigns to mark their abhorrence of this accursed Traffick, by refusing admission into their dominions of the produce of Colonies belonging to Powers who have not abolished, or who notoriously continue the Slave Trade.

2d. A Declaration in the names, if possible, of the whole Alliance,—but, if France shall decline being a party to it, then, in the names of the three other Powers, renewing the denunciation of the Congress of Vienna, and exhorting the Maritime Powers, who have abolished the Slave Trade, to concert measures among themselves for proclaiming it, and treating it, as Piracy;—with a view to founding upon the aggregate of such separate Engagements between State and State, a general Engagement to be incorporated into the publick Law of the Civilized World.

Such a declaration, as it assumed no binding force, would not be obnoxious to the charges which would attach to a declaration of new publick law, by an incompetent authority; while at the same time its moral influence might materially aid us in our negotiations with other Maritime States.

We could have no difficulty in consenting, that subjects of the United Kingdom found trading in Slaves should be treated as Pirates, upon a reciprocal admission of the same principle by other Powers.

No. 3.

The Duke of Wellington to Mr. Secretary Canning, dated Verona, 29th November 1822.—Received December 9th.

(Extract.)

I INCLOSE you the Protocols of the Conferences, and the several papers annexed, on the Slave Trade.

You will observe that what I intended should be a general declaration, is in the shape of resolutions; and that there is no separate declaration upon any of the points, by the several Powers who agree to them.

(First Inclosure in No. 3.)

Procès-Verbal de la Conférence relative à l'Abolition de la Traite des Nègres, &c.

(Extrait.)

Vérone, le 24 Novembre 1822.

MESSIEURS les Plénipotentiaires d'Autriche, de France, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse et de Russie, se sont réunis ce jour, pour prendre connaissance de la communication que M. le Duc de Wellington a faite au nom du Gouvernement Britannique, telle qu'elle se trouve ci-annexée.

Elle avait pour objet la continuation déplorable du Commerce des Nègres, en dépit des Déclarations, des Lois et des Traités, qui ont interdit et condamné ce Commerce depuis 1815. M. le Duc de Wellington a présenté dans son mémoire des observations sur ce qu'il regarde comme les causes du mal, et il a indiqué différentes mesures qui pourraient y mettre un terme.

M. le Comte de Nesselrode a déclaré au nom de Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, que Sa Majesté Impériale ne désavouerait jamais les principes et les sentimens, qui Lui avaient fait envisager de tout tems la Traite des Nègres comme un commerce réprouvé par la Religion, la Justice et l'Humanité; et qu'Elle était prête à concourir aux mesures, que Ses Alliés jugeraient exécutables pour assurer l'Abolition totale et définitive de ce Commerce.

Messieurs les Plénipotentiaires d'Autriche, de France et de Prusse, ont également déclaré que leurs Souverains persistaient dans les principes, en faveur desquels Ils s'étaient prononcés dès le Congrès de Vienne; et on est convenu de consacrer de nouveau ces principes, par une Déclaration analogue à celle du 8 Février 1815.

Quant aux mesures particulières proposées par M. le Duc de Wellington, Messieurs les Plénipotentiaires de France se sont réservés d'en faire l'objet de leurs réflexions, et de soumettre les résultats de ces réflexions à une Conférence prochaine.

(Signé)

METTERNICH.	CARAMAN.	WELLINGTON.	HATZFELDT.
NESSELRODE.	LEBZELTERN.	FERRONAY.	LIEVEN.
	CHATEAUBRIAND.		TATISCHEFF.

(Translation.)

Procès-Verbal of the Conference relative to the Abolition of the Slave Trade, &c.

(Extract.)

Verona, November 24, 1822.

THE Plenipotentiaries of Austria, of France, of Great Britain, of Prussia, and of Russia, met this day, to take into consideration the communication which the Duke of Wellington has made, in the name of the British Government, in the form in which it is hereunto annexed.

The subject of it is, the deplorable continuation of the Slave Trade, in spite of the Declarations, the Laws and the Treaties, which have interdicted and condemned this Trade since 1815. The Duke of Wellington offered in his memoir, observations as to what he considers to be the causes of the evil, and pointed out different measures which might put an end to it.

Count Nesselrode declared, in the Name of His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, that His Imperial Majesty never would disavow the principles and the sentiments, which had made Him, at all times, look upon the Slave Trade as a Traffick reprov'd by Religion, Justice, and Humanity; and that he was ready to concur in such measures as His Allies should think practicable, to secure the total and definitive Abolition of this Traffick.

The Plenipotentiaries of Austria, of France, and of Prussia, also declared that their Sovereigns continued firm in the principles, in favour of which they had pronounced themselves, since the Congress of Vienna; and it was agreed to record anew these principles, by a Declaration analogous to that of the 8th of February 1815.

With respect to the particular measures proposed by the Duke of Wellington, the Plenipotentiaries of France reserved to themselves to make them the subject of their reflections, and submit the result of those reflections to a subsequent conference.

(Signed)

METTERNICH.	CARAMAN.	WELLINGTON.	HATZFELDT.
NESSELRODE.	LEBZELTERN.	FERRONAY.	LIEVEN.
	CHATEAUBRIAND.		TATISCHEFF.

(Annexed to first Inclosure in No. 3.)

Memorandum on the Slave Trade, by the Duke of Wellington.

THOSE Ministers who had the honour of representing His Britannick Majesty at the Conferences at Vienna, at Paris, and at Aix-la-Chapelle, called the attention of the Sovereigns and of their Ministers upon each of these occasions to the state of the Slave Trade; but there never was a moment, at which it was more important that their attention should be drawn to this subject, than the present.

In the year 1815, after a solemn deliberation, in which the Ministers representing the Eight Powers, which signed the Treaty of Paris, of May 1814, took a part, they unanimously expressed their desire to put an end to a scourge which had so long desolated Africa, degraded Europe, and afflicted Humanity.

Of these eight Powers, seven have passed Laws, having for their object entirely to prevent the subjects of their several States from engaging in this Traffick:—One only (Portugal) still permits it in its own Territories and Factories South of the Equator, but has prohibited the Trade by its subjects

North of the Equator; and all the Maritime Powers of Europe, and the United States of America, as well as the South American Governments, with the exception of Brazil, have equally, by Law, prohibited their subjects and citizens from carrying it on.

Yet I have the means of proving that this Traffick has been, since the year 1815, and is at this moment, carried on to a greater extent, than it had been at any former period; that in seven months of the year 1821, not less than thirty eight thousand human beings were carried off from the Coast of Africa in hopeless and irremediable Slavery, and that not less than three hundred and fifty-two vessels entered the Rivers and Ports of Africa, North of the Equator, to purchase Slaves between July 1820, and October 1821. Each of these was calculated to carry off from five to six hundred Slaves.

Surely then, it is time that the Sovereigns, whose Ministers assist at this Conference, should mark their continued sense of the horrors of this Trade, and should take some measures, which shall be effectual to put an end to a Traffick so revolting, as that the very mention of its result is sufficient to afflict humanity, without adverting to any of its disgusting details, which are but too well known to all those to whom this paper is addressed.

It is obvious that this crime is committed in contravention of the Laws of every Country of Europe, and of America, excepting only of one, and that it requires something more than the ordinary operation of Law to prevent it.

Portugal is the only Country in the World, which now, by Law, permits a Trade in Slaves, and that only in its own Factories and Territories South of the Equator; and as there is no legal sale for Slaves, imported in Slave Ships, excepting in the Portuguese Colonies, which are generally South of the Equator, the whole Trade North of the Equator, whether in the purchase, sale, or transport of Slaves, is forbidden by the Law of every Country in Europe, and is contraband.

But it is not carried on with the usual secrecy of a contraband trade. This contraband trade is carried on generally under the protection of the flag of France. The reason is obvious—France is the only one of the great Maritime Powers of Europe whose Government has not entered into the Treaties, which have been concluded with His Britannick Majesty, for giving to certain of the ships of each of the contracting parties, a limited power of search and capture of ships engaged in this horrible Traffick; and those employed in this service have too much respect for the flag of France, to venture, excepting in cases of extraordinary suspicion, to search the vessels which sail under its protection.

An endeavour has recently been made to improve these Treaties with Spain, the Netherlands, and Portugal; but no improvement of the measures to be carried into execution under these Treaties, however well calculated under other circumstances to affect the object in view, can be effectual, so long as contraband traders in men can carry on their trade by assuming any foreign flag, particularly one in every view so respectable as that of France.

The consequence of this state of things is, that this contraband trade is attended by circumstances much more horrible, than any thing that has ever been known in former times. It is not necessary here to enumerate all the horrors respecting it, which have come before the publick, in the different discussions which have taken place, as well in France as in England; but it cannot be denied that all the attempts at prevention, imperfect as they have been found to be, have tended to increase the aggregate of human suffering, and the waste of human life, in the transport of Slaves from the Coast of Africa to the Colonies, in a ratio far exceeding the increase of positive numbers carried off in Slavery. The dread of detection suggests expedients of concealment productive of the most dreadful sufferings to a cargo, with respect to which it hardly ever seems to occur to its remorseless owners, that it consists of sentient beings.

The numbers put on board in each venture, are far from being proportioned to the proper capacity of the vessel ; and the mortality is frightful to a degree unknown, since the attention of mankind was first drawn to the horrors of this Traffick.

There is no hesitation in declaring that it would have been far more consoling to humanity, and that by far a smaller number of human beings would have lost their lives by cruel and lingering sufferings, if the trade had never been abolished by the Laws of any Country.

In this case, Christian Sovereigns and Legislatures would have considered it their duty to provide, that those of their subjects, who carried on a Trade in Human Creatures, should take care of those whom they carried off in perpetual captivity,—that the space in which they should be confined, whether in their settlements on the Coast of Africa, previous to embarkation, or in their ships on passage to the place of sale, should be sufficient to give such human beings the faculty of breathing, and the chance of life,—that the water and food supplied to them should be sufficient in quantity at least, if not wholesome in quality, for the sustentation of life,—that measures should be adopted for the restoration and preservation of the health of those who should have shared the common fate of mankind, and should have become sick,—and, above all, there would have been no necessity for the destruction of men for the purpose of concealing that a Traffick in Slaves was carried on.

This contraband trade is, in many, too many instances, carried on in vessels fitted out in France, and commanded and manned by Frenchmen. It is a known fact that, although the profits of a voyage, of which two, or even three, may be made in a year, are three hundred *per cent.* the risks are so small, the chances of detection, so as to become liable to the punishment which the French Law inflicts upon conviction, so few, and so little is the punishment commensurate with the offence, even after conviction, that the insurance upon each voyage is not more than fifteen *per cent.*

His Most Christian Majesty, having in the year 1815, voluntarily abolished the Slave Trade, by His declaration ; having subsequently engaged Himself by Treaty with the four then Allied Courts to abolish that Traffick ; having since recommended to the French legislature, that Laws should be passed to carry into execution His Royal declaration, and the stipulation of His Treaty ; having besides employed a squadron to cruize off the Coasts of Africa, with a view to prevent a contraband Trade in Slaves by the use of His flag ; it cannot be supposed that His Most Christian Majesty is not sincere in His desire to effect the abolition. But there exists no public sentiment in France on this subject ; and the real miseries entailed upon the whole Continent by the continuance of the Slave Trade, principally by the fraudulent use of the flag of France, and the cruelties to which such use gives cover, are generally unknown in that Country.—It is believed, certainly erroneously, that the views of Great Britain in the abolition are interested, and quite distinct from those of humanity.

To these unfortunate circumstances must be attributed the failure to produce any effect, of all the measures hitherto adopted in France, and the disinclination of the French Government to propose any new or stronger measure to the legislature, however well inclined to endeavour to put down this evil.

His Majesty's Government cannot but feel, that, notwithstanding the Declaration of the Congress of Vienna of 1815, they still stand alone in this question in Europe. Upon them has fallen the burden of the execution of all the Treaties with the Maritime Powers for putting down the Slave Trade, and upon them the task of soliciting those Powers to put those Laws into execution.

These importunities are erroneously attributed to some selfish commercial Interest, and to a desire to bring the Colonies of other Countries to the state of distress in which those of Great Britain are supposed to be.

Under these circumstances, I should wish those to whom this paper is addressed, to consider whether it is now desirable, that they should adopt some measure to manifest to the World that their sentiments are unchanged—that they still consider the Slave Trade, as “a scourge which had too long desolated Africa, degraded Europe, and afflicted humanity;”—and that they will persevere in their endeavours to effect its total abolition.

It is at present obviously carried on to the northward of the Equator solely by contraband, and in a considerable degree, under the French Flag, and by a fraudulent use of that Flag, notwithstanding the measures adopted by His Most Christian Majesty to carry into execution His Treaty with His Allies, His Own Royal Declaration and the Law of France.

There is no article or stipulation of the Treaties with the King of France, whether regarding the political or pecuniary interests of any Power in Europe, or even of any individual, which has not been strictly carried into execution,

Shall it then be said, that the Powers of Europe are indifferent to the complete execution of those stipulations alone which regard the interests of humanity, and that rather than urge His Most Christian Majesty to adopt those measures which are necessary effectually to put down the Slave Trade, they will suffer this disgrace to human nature to exist?

The additional article of the Treaty of Paris of November 20th, 1815—does not describe any particular measure, or set of measures to be adopted to effect its purpose, but states that “the Contracting Parties engage to renew conjointly their efforts, with the view of securing final success, and to concert the *most effectual measures* for the entire and definite abolition of a Commerce so odious and so strongly condemned by the Laws of Religion and Nature.”

The following appear to be the measures, which the Allied Powers might adopt or recommend, which would have the effect of checking, if not of entirely putting down the Slave Trade.

A Declaration on the part of the Powers whose Ministers are now assembled at Verona, renewing the denunciation of the Slave Trade of the Congress of Vienna, and exhorting the Maritime Powers, who have abolished the Trade, to concert measures among themselves for proclaiming and treating it as Piracy, with a view of founding upon the aggregate of such separate engagement between State and State, a general Law to be incorporated into the publick Law of the Civilised World.

A Declaration on the part of the Powers, whose Ministers are here assembled, that they withdraw the protection of their Flags from those persons, not natives of their dominions respectively, who shall be found making use of such flag to cover a Trade in Slaves.

A Declaration on the part of the Allied Sovereigns, that they would refuse admission into their dominions of the produce of Colonies belonging to Powers who should not have abolished the Slave Trade. This measure will apply entirely to Portugal and the now revolted Colony of the Brazils, where alone the Laws allow the Trade to be carried on. By these Countries it ought to be carried on only south of the equator; but it is notorious, that the Governors and Officers in the Portuguese Settlements on the coast of Africa, north of the equator, encourage the Trade and assist by every means in their power the Slave Traders, who resort, contrary to Treaty and to Law, to that part of the coast.

These Traders, when likely to be detected with Slaves on board, show the French flag, and thus escape the penalties which the law would inflict upon them.

To join with His Majesty in entreating His Most Christian Majesty to adopt some of those measures for putting down the Slave Trade, which had been found effectual in other Countries.

The measures which depend upon His Most Christian Majesty's Government, independently of the Legislature, are,

1st. The establishment in the Colonies of a strict Registry of Slaves, whereby to ascertain at all times, whether any newly imported Slaves have been purchased on any plantation. The effect of this measure would not be confined to the check it would give to the importation of Slaves,—it would manifest in a still stronger degree the determination of the King to put an end to the traffick; and it would stimulate the Governors and Officers to attend to the strict execution of the laws on the subject. It must be observed, that the measure was suggested at the late Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, by the late Minister of France, but has not yet been ordered by an "*Ordonnance*."

2d. That His Most Christian Majesty should encourage the capture of Slave Ships, fraudulently carrying on a Contraband Trade under the French flag, by the grant of the vessel and equipments, in the way of prize, to the captors, and of head-money for the Negroes captured.

This measure would have the same effect in stimulating to the performance of their duty, those charged with the task of putting down this Trade, by shewing them His Most Christian Majesty's continued determination that it should be put down.

His Most Christian Majesty's Government might then propose to the Legislature, that the Law might be improved, and its severities against persons engaged in carrying on the Slave Trade be increased. Those improvements might be, first, to make the proof of Slave Trading consist, not alone in having Slaves on board, but in having on board those means of coercion, and that description of equipment and fitting up of the vessel, which is known to be necessary for a vessel so employed, and for no other.

The penalties of the Law might be increased to "*Peines Infamantes*," which, with the forfeiture of the Ship and Cargo, and the more active check upon the Trade, might, it may be hoped, put an end to it entirely in France.

(*Second Inclosure in No. 3.*)

Procès-Verbal de la Conférence du 28 Novembre.

(Extrait.)

TRAITE DES NÈGRES.

ON s'est occupé dans cette Conférence des communications de M. le Duc de Wellington faites à celle du 24 Novembre, relative à l'Abolition de la Traite des Nègres.

Messieurs les Plénipotentiaires d'Autriche, de France, de Prusse, et de Russie, ont fait lecture de leurs réponses à la dite communication; ces réponses se trouvent ci-annexées sub Litt. A. B. C. D.

A la suite de cette lecture, M. le Duc de Wellington a cru devoir relever une observation qui se trouve dans la réponse de MM. les Plénipotentiaires de France, portant, "qu'une délibération qui obligerait tous les Gouvernemens à appliquer à la Traite des Nègres les châtimens infligés à la Piraterie, ne pouvait pas, selon leur avis, être de la compétence d'une réunion politique." —M. le Duc de Wellington en se référant aux termes de son mémoire, a remarqué, "que sa proposition n'avait absolument eu pour objet que d'engager les Puissances Maritimes, qui ont aboli le Commerce en Esclaves, à se concerter entr'Elles sur des mesures à prendre, pour déclarer et traiter ce Commerce comme la Piraterie."

M. le Vicomte de Chateaubriand a répliqué, "que les Plénipotentiaires de S. M. Très Chrétienne avaient bien compris que M. le Duc demandait de chaque Gouvernement en particulier, une loi assimilant la Traite des Nègres

“ à la Piraterie, mais qu'ils ne pourraient signer une déclaration où ce vœu serait exprimé, vû qu'ils ne pourraient prescrire à leur Gouvernement le nom, les formes, la teneur, et l'étendue d'une loi.”

Sur l'observation de plusieurs de M. M. les Plénipotentiaires, qu'il serait difficile de prendre des mesures contre le Commerce avec le Portugal et ses Colonies, par rapport à la Non-abolition de la Traite des Nègres, sans en avoir prévenu le Gouvernement Portugais, et sans l'avoir entendu à ce sujet, M. le Duc de Wellington a remarqué, qu'il n'avait point eu l'intention de proposer une marche différente, et qu'il admettait de même la nécessité d'entrer en explication avec le Gouvernement Portugais, avant de se porter à une pareille mesure.

Il a été lu ensuite un projet de déclaration générale, ayant pour bût de manifester, que les Puissances Alliées persistaient toujours, relativement à l'abolition définitive de la Traite, dans les principes proclamés par la Déclaration de Vienne du 8 Février 1815. Ce projet a été adopté, tel qu'il se trouve ci-joint sub Lit. E. ; et on est convenu de le consigner au Procès-Verbal sous le titre de *Résolutions*.

M. le Duc de Wellington a exprimé en outre le désir, que pour se concerter ultérieurement sur les mesures proposées pour effectuer l'Abolition définitive de la Traite des Nègres, les Cours Alliées établissent une Conférence à Londres. MM. les Plénipotentiaires d'Autriche, de Prusse, et de Russie se sont énoncés en faveur de cette proposition, et MM. les Plénipotentiaires de France se sont réservés d'en faire référer à leur Cour.

(Signé)

METTERNICH.	CARAMAN.	WELLINGTON.	HATZFELDT.
NESSELRODE.	FERRONAY.		LIEVEN.
	CHATEAUBRIAND.		TATISCHEFF.

(Translation.)

Procès-Verbal of the Conference of the 28th November.

(Extract.)

SLAVE TRADE.

THE attention of this Conference was directed to the communications made by the Duke of Wellington at the Meeting held on the 24th November, relative to the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

The Plenipotentiaries of Austria, of France, of Prussia, and of Russia, read their answers to the said communications. These answers are hereunto annexed sub Litt.:—A. B. C. D.

After the reading of these Papers, the Duke of Wellington considered it his duty to notice an observation in the answer of the French Plenipotentiaries, purporting, “ that a Deliberation which would tend to oblige all Governments to apply to the Slave Trade the punishments inflicted for Piracy, could not, in their opinion, be within the province of a political conference.”—The Duke of Wellington, in referring to the expressions contained in his Memorandum, remarked, that his proposition had absolutely no other object than to engage Maritime Powers, who have abolished the Slave Trade, to concert among themselves the measures to be adopted, in order to declare this Traffick Piracy and punish it as such.

Viscount Chateaubriand replied, “ that the Plenipotentiaries of His Most Christian Majesty had perfectly understood, that the Duke required each Government separately, to pass a law assimilating the Trade in Slaves to Piracy; but that they could not sign a Declaration in which this desire should be expressed, because they could not prescribe to their Government the title, form, tenour, and extent of any Law.”

On the observation of several of the Plenipotentiaries, that it would be difficult to adopt measures against Commercial Intercourse with Portugal and her Colonies, with reference to the non-abolition of the Slave Trade, without having first intimated the same to the Portuguese Government, and without having heard them upon the subject, the Duke of Wellington observed, that he never had it in contemplation to propose a different course; and that he equally admitted the necessity of entering into an explanation with the Portuguese Government, before such a measure should be carried into effect.

The Projèt of a General Declaration was afterwards read, the object of which was to show, that the Allied Powers still adhered, with regard to the definitive Abolition of the Trade, to those principles which were proclaimed in the Declaration signed at Vienna the 8th of February 1815. This Projèt was adopted, in the form annexed under letter E. ; and it was agreed to insert it in the Procès-Verbal under the head of "*Resolutions.*"

The Duke of Wellington moreover expressed a desire, in order to concert further the measures proposed to effect the definitive Abolition of the Slave Trade, that the Allied Courts should establish a Conference in London. The Plenipotentiaries of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, declared themselves in favour of this proposal; and the Plenipotentiaries of France reserved to themselves to refer it to their Court

(Signed)

METTERNICH.	CARAMAN.	WELLINGTON.	HATZFELDT.
NESELRODE.	FERRONAY.		LIEVEN.
	CHATEAUBRIAND.		TATISCHEFF.

(*A. in Second Inclosure in No. 3.*)

Réponse du Cabinet d'Autriche au Mémoire de Monsieur le Duc de Wellington, relativement à la Traite des Nègres.

LE Ministre d'Autriche a ordre de l'Empereur son Maître, de déclarer:

Que Sa Majesté Impériale rend la plus entière justice à la noble persévérance avec laquelle le Gouvernement Britannique a soutenu l'honneur des Gouvernemens Chrétiens et la cause de l'humanité souffrante, dans l'importante question de l'Abolition de la Traite des Nègres;—Que, loin de consentir à ce que Sa Majesté Britannique fût chargée seule en Europe de ce qu'il pourrait y avoir d'embarrassant et de pénible dans cette Question, Sa Majesté Impériale, ne se refusera pas à concourir, autant qu'il sera en Son pouvoir, à toute mesure qui pourroit en faciliter et accélérer le succès.

Conformément à ces sentimens, Sa Majesté Impériale est prête :

A se joindre à une nouvelle Déclaration Générale annonçant l'intention invariable des Puissances de mettre un terme à la Traite des Nègres :

A prendre part aux démarches par lesquelles on engagerait les Puissances Maritimes, qui ont aboli la Traite, à se concerter entr'Elles pour la déclarer *piraterie* :

A retirer l'usage et la protection de Son pavillon, aux individus nés hors de son territoire, s'il devait en exister, qui se serviraient de ce pavillon pour couvrir un Commerce en Esclaves.

Quant à celles des mesures proposées par Monsieur le Duc de Wellington, qui regardent particulièrement le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne, Sa Majesté Impériale se réserve, aussitôt que ces mesures pourront former l'objet d'une délibération commune, de les faire appuyer par Son Ministre à Paris, dans telle forme qui serait jugée convenable.

(Translation.)

Answer of the Cabinet of Austria to the Memoir of the Duke of Wellington, relative to the Slave Trade.

THE Minister of Austria has received orders from the Emperor his Master to declare ;—

That His Imperial Majesty renders the most complete justice to the noble perseverance with which the British Government has sustained the honour of Christian Governments, and the cause of suffering humanity, in the important question of the Abolition of the Slave Trade ;—That far from consenting that His Britannick Majesty should be the only Sovereign in Europe charged with whatever there may be embarrassing and painful in this question, His Imperial Majesty will not refuse to concur, as far as may be in His power, in every measure which could facilitate and accelerate His success.

In conformity to these sentiments, His Imperial Majesty is ready :

To unite in a renewed general declaration, announcing the invariable intention of the Powers to put an end to the Slave Trade :

To take part in the measures by which the Maritime Powers, who have abolished the Traffick, might be induced to concert among themselves in order to declare it *Piracy* :

To withdraw the use and protection of His Flag, from individuals born out of his territory, (if such should exist) who should avail themselves of that Flag to cover a Commerce in Slaves.

With respect to such of the measures proposed by the Duke of Wellington, as regard particularly the Government of His Most Christian Majesty, His Imperial Majesty reserves to Himself, so soon as these measures shall form the subject of common deliberation, to cause them to be supported by His Minister at Paris, in such form as may be judged expedient.

(B. in second Inclosure in No 3.)

Réponse de Messieurs les Plénipotentiaires de France au Mémoire de Monsieur le Duc de Wellington, relativement à la Traite des Nègres.

Le Mémoire dont Sa Grâce le Duc de Wellington a donné connaissance au Congrès, dans la Séance du 24 de ce mois, a été pris en considération par les Ministres Plénipotentiaires de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne.

Ils commencent par déclarer, que le Gouvernement Français partage toute la sollicitude du Gouvernement Britannique, pour faire cesser un Commerce également réprouvé de Dieu et des hommes. Le nombre des Esclaves Africains transportés depuis quelques années dans les Colonies, fût-il moindre que ne le calcule l'Angleterre, il serait toujours beaucoup trop grand. L'accroissement de la souffrance des victimes d'une infâme cupidité, inspire une profonde horreur. Les Nations Chrétiennes ne feront jamais trop d'efforts pour effacer la tâche que la Traite des Nègres a imprimée à leur caractère ; et on ne saurait trop louer le zèle que l'Angleterre a mis dans la poursuite de ses desseins bienfaisans.

Mais si les Puissances Alliées sont d'accord sur la question morale et religieuse ; si Elles font des vœux unanimes pour l'Abolition de la Traite des Nègres, cette Abolition renferme des questions de fait, qui ne sont pas d'une égale simplicité. Les Ministres de Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne vont les parcourir, en suivant le Mémoire présenté par Sa Grâce le Duc de Wellington.

Toutes les Loix des nations civilisées, le Portugal excepté, prohibent aujourd'hui la Traite des Nègres ; il s'ensuit que ce crime, autrefois légal, est

devenu un crime illégal, et qu'il est doublement condamné par la Nature et par les Lois.

Selon le Mémoire Anglais, cette détestable contrebande d'hommes, est surtout exercée sous le pavillon Français, soit que ce pavillon flotte sur des vaisseaux appartenant à la France, soit qu'il protège des bâtimens étrangers.

Des Pirates peuvent arborer des couleurs respectables ; la France ignore si quelques brigands n'ont point emprunté les siennes : ce ne sera jamais qu'à son insçu, que le déshonneur et le crime trouveront un abri sous le pavillon Français.

On fait observer encore, que les bénéfices de la Traite des Nègres sont si grands, et les pertes si petites, que le prix d'assurance en France pour chaque course, ne s'élève pas au delà de 15 pour cent.

Ceci n'est ni un cas particulier à la France, ni un résultat singulier du genre de contravention dont il s'agit.—En Angleterre les marchandises les plus sévèrement prohibées, sont importées moyennant l'assurance de 25 pour cent. Quand le Commerce est parvenu, comme de nos jours, à une précision mathématique, toute contrebande a son tarif ; et plus le système prohibitif multiplie les entraves, plus il augmente la fraude en accroissant les profits.

Le Mémoire reconnoît que Sa Majesté Très-Chrétienne a rempli religieusement toutes les stipulations de son Traité avec les quatre Cours Alliées ; qu'Elle a promulgué une Loi contre la Traite de Nègres ; qu'Elle a fait croiser ses flottes dans les parages de l'Afrique pour maintenir l'exécution de cette Loi : mais le Mémoire ajoute, que le public en France ne paroît pas porter le même intérêt à la cause que soutient le Gouvernement ; que ce public suppose au fond de la question, des vues mercantiles et un dessein hostile contre le Commerce Français. Il se peut, que quelques classes commerçantes de la Société en France, nourrissent des soupçons que toute rivalité d'industrie fait naître : cependant on ne peut croire raisonnablement, que le peu de Colonies que la guerre a laissé à la France soit un objet de jalousie pour une Puissance Européenne, qui possède des îles florissantes dans toutes les mers, de vastes territoires en Afrique et en Amérique, et un Continent tout entier en Asie.

Si l'opinion est moins fixée en France qu'en Angleterre sur l'objet qui nous occupe, cela tient à des causes qu'il est de notre devoir de développer : un peuple aussi humain, aussi généreux, aussi désintéressé que le peuple Français, un peuple toujours prêt à donner l'exemple des sacrifices, mérite qu'on explique ce qui semblerait une anomalie inexplicable dans son caractère.

Le massacre des colons à St. Domingue, et l'incendie de leurs habitations, ont d'abord laissé des souvenirs douloureux parmi des familles qui ont perdu parens et fortune dans ces sanglantes révolutions. Il doit être permis de rappeler ces malheurs des Blancs, quand le Mémoire Anglais retrace avec tant de vérité, les souffrances des Nègres, afin de faire comprendre comment tout ce qui excite la pitié exerce une puissance naturelle sur l'opinion. Il est évident que l'abolition de la Traite des Nègres eût été moins populaire en Angleterre, si elle eût été précédée de la ruine et du meurtre des Anglais dans les Antilles.

Ensuite, l'abolition de cette Traite n'a point été prononcée en France par une Loi Nationale discutée à la Tribune ; elle est le résultat de l'article d'un Traité par lequel la France a expié ses victoires. Dès lors elle s'est associée dans les idées de la foule à des considérations étrangères : par cela seul qu'on l'a cru imposée, elle a été frappée de cette impopularité qui s'attache aux actes de la force ; il en fut arrivé ainsi dans tout pays où il existe un esprit public et un juste orgueil national.

Une motion Parlementaire, à jamais honorable pour son auteur, a finalement été couronnée de succès en Angleterre ; mais combien d'années ne fut-elle pas repoussée avant d'être convertie en loi, quoique soutenue par l'un des plus grands Ministres que l'Angleterre ait produit ? Pendant ces longs débats, l'opinion eut le temps de se mûrir et de se fixer ; le Commerce qui prévoyait l'événement prit ses précautions ; un nombre de Nègres, surpassant le be-

soin des Colons, fut transporté dans les îles Anglaises, et l'on prépara des générations permanentes d'Esclaves, pour remplacer le vuide laissé par la servitude casuelle, lorsqu'elle viendrait à s'abolir.

Rien de tout cela n'a existé pour la France; la fortune et le temps lui ont manqué. La première convention entre la France et l'Angleterre après la restauration, avait reconnu la nécessité d'agir avec une prudente lenteur dans une affaire d'une nature si complexe; un article additionnel de cette Convention accordait un délai de cinq années pour l'entière abolition de la Traite des Nègres. La déclaration de Vienne du 8 Février 1815, s'exprimant sur la même matière, porte : "que quelque honorable que soit le bût des Souverains, ils ne le poursuivront pas sans de justes ménagemens pour les intérêts, les habitudes et les préventions mêmes de leur sujets." Un louable et vertueux empressement a fait depuis dépasser ces termes, et a peut être multiplié les délits, en froissant trop subitement les intérêts.

Le Gouvernement Français est déterminé à poursuivre sans relâche des hommes engagés dans un négoce barbare; des nombreuses condamnations ont eu lieu, et les tribunaux ont puni dèsqu'on a pu atteindre les coupables. "Il serait affreux," dit le Mémoire Anglais, "que la nécessité de détruire des hommes ne fût que devenue la suite de celle de cacher un Trafic proscrit par les Loix." Cette remarque trop juste, démontre que la Loi Française a été rigoureusement exécutée, et l'excès des précautions cruelles prises par les fauteurs de la Traite pour cacher leurs victimes, prouve d'une manière péremptoire la vigilance du Gouvernement.

Une Loi qui porte à de tels excès pour soustraire le délinquant, à l'action même de cette Loi, pourrait paroître assez forte. Néanmoins la résolution du Gouvernement Français est de faire augmenter les pénalités légales, aussitôt, que les esprits seront préparés dans la Nation, et par conséquent dans les Chambres Legislatives, à revenir sur le sujet de la Traite des Nègres. Sous ce rapport il est fâcheux, mais utile, de faire remarquer que toute insistance étrangère ajoute aux difficultés du Gouvernement Français, et va contre le bût que se proposent les sentimens les plus généreux.

Il reste à dire quelques mots sur les moyens coercitifs que Sa Grace le Duc de Wellington propose dans son Mémoire.

Les Ministres Plénipotentiaires de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne sont prêts à signer toute Déclaration collective des Puissances, tendante à flétrir un commerce odieux, et à provoquer contre les coupables la vengeance des Loix. Mais une Déclaration qui obligerait tous les Gouvernemens à appliquer à la Traite des Nègres les châtimens infligés à la piraterie, et qui se transformeroit en une loi générale du monde civilisé, est une chose qui ne paraît pas aux Ministres Plénipotentiaires de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne être de la compétence d'une réunion politique. Quand il s'agit d'établir la peine de mort, ce sont, selon la nature des Gouvernemens, les corps judiciaires, ou les Corps législatifs qui sont appelés à statuer.

Retirer l'usagé et la protection du pavillon Français aux individus étrangers qui se serviroient de ce pavillon pour couvrir le Commerce des Esclaves, rien n'est plus juste; mais la France n'a pas besoin de défendre ce qu'Elle n'a jamais permis.

L'engagement de prohiber l'entrée des Etats des Alliés, aux produits des Colonies appartenant à des Puissances qui n'auroient pas aboli la Traite des Nègres, est une résolution qui frapperait uniquement le Portugal; or, le Portugal n'a point de Représentant au Congrès, et il est de droit avant de passer outre, de l'entendre dans sa cause.

Les mesures indiquées relativement à la France sont bornées, mais elles sont toutes matière de Loi, et par conséquent elles doivent attendre cette faveur de l'opinion qui assure le succès. Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne prendra conseil de lui même, quand le temps sera venu: il sera possible qu'il admette l'enrégistrement des Esclaves; cependant il ne se dissimule pas

que cette intervention de l'autorité porteroit une espèce d'atteinte au droit de propriété,—droit le plus sacré de tous, et que les Lois de la Grande Bretagne respectent jusques dans ses écarts et ses caprices.

Le Mémoire du Gouvernement Britannique exprime le regret “ que la France soit la seule des Grandes Puissances maritimes de l'Europe, qui n'ait pas pris part aux Traités conclus avec Sa Majesté Britannique, dans l'objet de conférer à certains bâtimens de chacune des parties contractantes, un droit limité de visite, et de confiscation, sur les vaisseaux engagés dans la Traite des Nègres.”

La Constitution que Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne a octroyée à son peuple, abolit la confiscation.—Quant au droit de visite, si le Gouvernement Français pouvait jamais y consentir, il aurait les suites les plus funestes : le caractère national des deux peuples, Français et Anglais, s'y oppose ; et s'il était besoin de preuves à l'appui de cette opinion, il suffirait de rappeler, que cette année même, en pleine paix, le sang Français à coulé sur les rivages de l'Afrique. La France reconnaît la liberté des mers pour tous les pavillons étrangers, à quelque Puissance légitime qu'ils appartiennent ; elle ne réclame pour Elle, que l'indépendance qu'Elle respecte dans les autres, et qui convient à Sa Dignité.

(Translation.)

Answer of the Plenipotentiaries of France to the Memorandum of His Grace the Duke of Wellington, relative to the Slave Trade.

THE Memorandum which His Grace the Duke of Wellington submitted to the Conferences at the sitting of the 24th of this month, has been taken into consideration by the Plenipotentiaries of His Most Christian Majesty.

They commence by avowing that the French Government participates in the solicitude of the English Government to suppress a Traffick, equally reprehensible in the eyes both of God and Man. The number of African Slaves conveyed to the Colonies for some years past, even if it were less than it is estimated by England, would be still far too great. The accumulated sufferings of these victims of an infamous cupidity, awaken feelings of the greatest horror. Christian Nations can never do too much to efface the stain which the Slave Trade has impressed upon their character; and too much praise cannot be given to England for the zeal she has evinced in the prosecution of this beneficial design.

But if the Allied Powers are agreed on the moral and religious part of the question,—if they are unanimous in the desire for the Abolition of the Slave Trade,—that Abolition embraces points which are not equally simple. The Ministers of His Most Christian Majesty will proceed to refer to them in adverting to the Memorandum presented by His Grace the Duke of Wellington.

The laws of all civilized nations, Portugal excepted, now prohibit the Traffick in Slaves ; it follows, that the crime, formerly legal, has become illegal ; and that it is condemned, both by Nature and by the Laws.

According to the English Memorandum, this detestable, illicit Traffick in Human Beings, is chiefly carried on under the French flag, whether borne by her own vessels, or protecting those of Foreign Countries.

Pirates may hoist the Colours of respectable States ; France is ignorant whether Brigands may not have assumed Her's ;—but it shall never be with Her knowledge that dishonour and crime shall find shelter under the French flag.

It is further stated, that the profits of the Slave Trade are so great and the losses so small, that the rate of insurance in France, for a voyage, is only 15 per cent.

This is neither a singular case with regard to France, nor a singular result of the species of infraction in question. In England, goods the most strictly prohibited, are imported at an insurance of 25 per cent.

When trade has attained, as it has at the present day, such a mathematical precision, every description of illicit traffick has its tarif; and the more prohibitions multiply restraints, the more they augment fraud, by increasing the profits.

The Memorandum acknowledges that His Most Christian Majesty has religiously fulfilled all the stipulations of His Treaty with the four Allied Courts; that He has promulgated a Law against the Traffick in Slaves; and that He has caused His fleets to cruize on the coasts of Africa to enforce the execution of that Law;—but the Memorandum adds, that the French Publick do not seem to take the same interest in the cause, which is manifested by the Government; that the publick imagine that at the bottom there are mercantile motives and views hostile to the commerce of France. It is possible that some commercial classes of society in France entertain such suspicions, which is ever the case where there is any rivalry in industry; nevertheless it cannot reasonably be imagined, that the few Colonies which the War has left to France, should be an object of jealousy for an European Power which possesses flourishing Islands in every sea, vast Territories in Africa and America, and a whole Continent in Asia.

If publick opinion is less decided in France than in England on the question before us, it is to be attributed to causes which it is our duty to develope. A People so humane, so generous, so disinterested, as that of France,—a People always ready to give the example of submitting to sacrifices, deserve to have explained what may appear to be an inexplicable anomaly in their character.

The massacre of the Colonists of St. Domingo, and the burning of their habitations, left, in the first instance, painful recollections amongst families who lost relations and fortunes in those sanguinary Revolutions. It should be permitted to call to mind these misfortunes of the Whites, when the English Memorandum paints with so much truth the sufferings of the Blacks, in order to show, that every thing which excites pity, naturally influences publick opinion. It is evident that the Abolition of the Slave Trade would have been less popular in England, if it had been preceded by the ruin and murder of the English in the Antilles.

Moreover, the Abolition of this Traffick was not decreed in France by a National Law, discussed in the Tribune,—it is the result of a stipulation in a Treaty, by which France has atoned for her victories. From that moment the measure was coupled, in the eyes of the multitude, with foreign considerations, merely because they believed it to be imposed upon them, and it therefore became subjected to that unpopularity which attends compulsory measures: the same thing would have happened in any country where publick spirit and a proper degree of national pride exist.

A Motion in Parliament, ever honourable to its author, was finally crowned with success in England;—but for how many years was it not rejected before it was carried into a law, although the measure was supported by one of the greatest Ministers England ever produced? During these protracted debates, publick opinion had time to mature, and to come to an ultimate decision. The Mercantile Interest, which foresaw the event, took its precautions; a number of Negroes, exceeding the wants of the Colonists, were conveyed into English Islands; and successive generations of Slaves were provided to fill up the void to be occasioned by the Abolition, when it should take place, of casual Slavery.

No advantage of this description was possessed by France,—good fortune and opportunity failed Her. The first Convention between France and England, after the restoration, recognized the necessity of acting with prudent caution in

a matter of so complex a nature ; an additional Article to that Convention allowed a delay of five years for the entire abolition of the Slave Trade.

The Declaration of Vienna of the 8th February 1815, expressing itself upon the same subject, speaks as follows : “ that however honourable might be the intentions of the Sovereigns, they would not prosecute the measure without due consideration for the interests, habits, and even prejudices of their subjects.” An anxiety, praiseworthy and virtuous, subsequently occasioned the exceeding of these terms, and perhaps multiplied transgressions by affecting too suddenly private interests.

The French Government are determined to prosecute without intermission persons engaged in this barbarous traffick : numerous condemnations have taken place, and the Courts of Judicature have punished as soon as they could fix upon the guilty. “ It would be dreadful,” states the English Memorandum, “ that the necessity to destroy human beings has become the consequence of that of concealing a Traffick proscribed by the laws.”

This too just remark proves that the French law has been rigorously executed ; and the extreme of cruel precautions taken by the violators of the Treaty to secrete their victims, proves in a striking manner the vigilance of the Government.

A law which induces the delinquent to proceed to such an extremity in order to screen himself from its operation, may be considered as sufficiently severe. Nevertheless the determination of the French Government is to augment the legal penalties, as soon as the publick feeling, and consequently that of the Legislative Assembly, will permit, the reconsideration of the question of the Slave Trade.

With this view it is painful, although proper to point out, that all foreign interference adds to the difficulties of the French Government, and runs counter to the object proposed by the most generous sentiments.

It remains briefly to advert to the coercive measures proposed by His Grace the Duke of Wellington in His Memorandum.

The Ministers Plenipotentiary of His Most Christian Majesty, are ready to sign any Declaration collectively with the other Powers, tending to put down this odious Commerce, and to inflict upon the guilty the vengeance of the Laws.—But a Declaration which would oblige every Government to apply to the Slave Trade the punishment inflicted upon Piracy, and which would convert it into a general law for the civilized world, is a thing which does not appear to the Ministers Plenipotentiary of His Most Christian Majesty, to be within the competency of political Conference.—When the punishment of death is in question it is the Judicial or Legislative Bodies, according to the particular forms of Government, that are called upon to enact it. Nothing is more just than to withdraw the use and protection of the French Flag from Foreigners, who might use it to cover the Traffick in Slaves ; but France has no occasion to prohibit that which She has never permitted.

The Engagement to prohibit the importation into the States of the Allied Powers, of Colonial Produce belonging to States which should not have abolished the Slave Trade, is a measure which would only affect Portugal ; and She having no Representative at Congress, it is but an act of justice to pause and allow Her to be heard in Her own cause.

The measures indicated with regard to France are limited, but they are all matter of Law, and consequently they ought to wait the approbation of publick opinion to insure their success. The Government of His Most Christian Majesty will take them into their consideration when the time for doing so shall have arrived : it may possibly permit the registration of Slaves ; but it cannot disguise its opinion that such an interference of authority would be a violation of the right of property ; a right sacred, above all others, and which the Laws of Great Britain respect, even in its extravagancies and caprices.

The Memorandum of the British Government expresses regret “ That

France should be the only one amongst the Great Maritime Powers of Europe, where Government has not entered into the Treaties which have been concluded with His Britannick Majesty, for giving to certain of the Ships of each of the contracting Parties, a limited power of search, and capture of Ships engaged in the Slave Trade."

The Constitution which His Most Christian Majesty has granted to His people, abolishes confiscation.—With regard to the right of search, if the French Government could ever consent to it, it would have the most disastrous consequences.—The national character of the two people, French and English, forbids it; and if proofs were necessary to support this opinion, it would suffice to call to mind, that even in this year, in profound peace, French blood has flowed on the coasts of Africa.—France acknowledges the liberty of the Seas to all Foreign Flags, to whatever legitimate Power they may belong; She only demands for Herself that independence which she respects in others, and which belongs to Her own dignity.

(C. in Second Inclosure in No. 3.)

Réponse de Messieurs les Plénipotentiaires de Prusse au Mémoire de M. le Duc de Wellington, relativement à la Traite des Nègres.

Vérone, le 28 Novembre 1822.

LES Plénipotentiaires de Sa Majesté le Roi de Prusse, n'ayant été mis qu'hier tard dans la journée en possession du Mémoire de Sa Grace M. le Duc de Wellington, relatif à la Traite des Nègres, qui a été lu à la Conférence du 24 de ce mois, doivent se borner aujourd'hui à déclarer préalablement:—

Que le Roi, leur Maître, reste invariablement fidèle au principe d'humanité qui a porté les Puissances signataires de l'acte du Congrès de Vienne, à prononcer l'Abolition de la Traite des Nègres, et qu'ils sont pleinement autorisés à concourir, au nom de Sa Majesté, à toute nouvelle Déclaration, que les Cours Alliées jugeraient nécessaire, pour manifester encore une fois Leurs sentimens à cet égard:

Que quant aux mesures politiques et législatives, que le Gouvernement Britannique juge les plus propres à l'effet de voir reprimer les abus qu'il dénonce, ils ne sauraient que prendre, *ad referendum*, une position, dont l'adoption excéderait leur pouvoir: et

Qu'ils pensent, qu'avant de se prononcer sur ce que le Gouvernement Anglais demande à la France, il sera convenable d'attendre les explications, que Messieurs les Plénipotentiaires de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne vont donner à ce sujet.

(Translation.)

Answer of the Prussian Plenipotentiaries to the Memorandum of the Duke of Wellington respecting the Slave Trade.

Verona, November 28, 1822.

THE Plenipotentiaries of His Majesty the King of Prussia, not having received until a late hour yesterday, the statement of His Grace the Duke of Wellington, on the subject of the Slave Trade, which was read at the Conference of the 21st instant, must for the present confine themselves to declaring in the first instance:—

That the King, their Master, continues invariably faithful to the principle

of Humanity which induced the Powers who signed the Act of the Congress of Vienna, to decree the Abolition of the Slave Trade; and that they are fully authorized, in the name of His Majesty, to concur in any fresh Declaration which the Allied Courts may deem necessary, in order to manifest anew their sentiments on this head:—

That with respect to the political and legislative measures which the British Government may consider the best adapted to correct the abuses complained of, the Plenipotentiaries can only take, *ad referendum*, a proposition, the adoption of which would exceed their powers:—and

That they are of opinion, that prior to deciding upon what the English Government requires from France, it would be expedient to wait for the explanations which His Most Christian Majesty's Plenipotentiaries are about to give upon the subject.

(D. in Second Inclosure in No. 3.)

Réponse des Plenipotentiaires de Russie au Mémoire Britannique: sur la Traite des Nègres.

Le Mémoire par lequel Son Excellence Monsieur le Duc de Wellington vient de rappeler à l'attention des Cours Alliés l'objet important de la Traite des Nègres et d'indiquer les mesures, que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique croit les plus capables d'anéantir les restes de cet odieux Commerce, a été porté à la connaissance de l'Empereur, qui charge son Cabinet d'y faire la réponse suivante.

Depuis long temps, Sa Majesté Impériale a prouvé toute l'horreur que Lui inspire un Trafic, qui fait la honte de la civilisation.

Il était certainement digne d'une époque, qui a vu les principes de la morale religieux présider enfin aux combinaisons de la politique, et les droits légitimes reprendre leur salutaire empire, de frapper d'interdiction un Commerce que réprouve hautement le culte professé par tous les États de l'Europe, et que leur intérêt bien entendu ne doit pas moins réprouver, s'il est vrai que jamais la violation des premières loix de l'humanité et de la nature n'ont assuré d'avantages réels ni aux peuples ni aux Gouvernemens.

Convaincu de ces grandes vérités, l'Empereur se fit un devoir de les reconnaître solennellement, dès que la conclusion d'une paix glorieuse offrit aux Puissances Européennes l'occasion de consacrer comme bases de leurs relations nouvelles, toutes les maximes de sagesse, d'équité et de bienveillance réciproque. En 1814, Sa Majesté Impériale s'empressa de donner Son approbation aux clauses qui devaient préparer l'abolition définitive de la Traite des Noirs. En 1815, Ses Représentans signèrent la déclaration publiée au nom du Congrès de Vienne. Depuis lors, les soins de Son Cabinet ont eu pour objet constant, d'accélérer la réalisation franche et complète de ces honorables promesses. Les actes des Conférences de Londres prouvent qu'à cet égard sa sollicitude ne s'est jamais démentie. Ceux de la réunion d'Aix-la-Chapelle l'attestent également, et le Gouvernement Britannique devait être sûr de trouver Sa Majesté Impériale prête à le seconder dans les efforts qu'il renouvelle, pour amener la cessation totale de la Traite des Nègres.

Parmi les mesures proposées à cet effet, il en est quelques-unes qui concernent directement la Russie, et au sujet desquelles ses Plenipotentiaries vont exprimer l'opinion de l'Empereur. Il en est d'autres qui regardent plus spécialement les Alliés de Sa Majesté. Au nombre des premières doit être rangé le projet d'une Déclaration qui annoncerait à l'Europe que les Puissances persistent dans la ferme résolution d'empêcher ce Trafic si condamnable partout où la cupidité ose le continuer encore. Les Plenipotentiaries de Sa Majesté Impériale ont ordre de signer une telle Déclaration. Ce sera avec la satisfaction la plus vive que l'Empereur donnera cette garantie de la persévérance avec

laquelle Il s'efforce d'accomplir les engagements qu'il a contracté, et Sa Majesté Impériale est prête à faire connaître en même temps de concert avec ses Alliés, qu'Elle ne souffrira jamais, que des individus nés hors de son territoire se servent de son pavillon et abusent de la protection qu'il leur garantirait, pour couvrir un Commerce d'Esclaves.

A la catégorie des mesures qui concernent directement l'Empereur, appartient aussi la proposition d'interdire le Commerce des denrées coloniales, avec les Etats qui refuseraient d'abolir le Commerce des Noirs.

En reconnaissant la nécessité d'avoir recours à des moyens efficaces envers ces états, Sa Majesté Impériale pense, que si les Cabinets Alliés se bornaient à prendre la détermination indiquée par le Cabinet de Londres, ils seraient encore loin d'atteindre l'objet qu'ils ont en vue, et qu'une suspension générale de tout Commerce quelconque, avec la seule Puissance qui n'ait point encore défendu la Traite des Nègres au midi de la ligne, conduirait bien plus promptement au résultat désiré. Quelque préjudiciable que dût être à la Russie l'interruption des rapports commerciaux, qu'une longue série d'années a établis entr'elle et le Portugal, si les Alliés de Sa Majesté Impériale consentaient à prendre cette mesure, l'Empereur n'hésiterait pas de s'imposer le même sacrifice; mais il Lui semble que, dans tous les cas, il serait juste de prévenir d'avance la Cour de Lisbonne des suites qu'entraînerait le refus d'abolir totalement la Traite des Nègres. Les Cabinets Alliés conviendront sans doute, que l'équité exigerait cette démarche préalable.

Quant aux autres propositions faites par Son Excellence Monsieur le Duc de Wellington, et qu'intéressent plus particulièrement les Puissances maritimes; le Cabinet de Sa Majesté Impériale exprimera constamment les vœux que forme l'Empereur pour qu'il puisse s'établir entre ces Puissances un accord qui fournirait à chacune d'Elles les moyens de réprimer, parmi leurs sujets respectifs, la continuation de la Traite, en la déclarant Acte de Piraterie; et comme, parmi ces propositions, il y en a qui concernent spécialement le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Très Chrétienne, l'Empereur est prêt à les faire appuyer dans les négociations qui pourront s'ouvrir à ce sujet.

(Translation.)

Answer of the Russian Plenipotentiaries to the Duke of Wellington's Memorandum on the Slave Trade.

THE Memorandum by which His Excellency the Duke of Wellington has recalled the attention of the Allied Courts to the important subject of the Slave Trade, and pointed out the measures which the British Government consider as best calculated to do away the remains of that odious Traffick, has been submitted to the Emperor, who has commanded His Ministers to make the following reply :

His Imperial Majesty has for a long time felt all the horror that a Traffick, the disgrace of civilisation, could inspire.

It was certainly worthy of an age which saw the principles of morality and religion at length preside over political combinations, and legitimate rights reassume their salutary sway, to interdict a Commerce so totally repugnant to the religion professed by all the States of Europe, and which their own interests would equally forbid, if it be true that never did the violation of the first laws of Nature and Humanity secure real advantages either to Governments or to Nations.

Convinced of these great truths, the Emperor considered it His duty solemnly to acknowledge them, so soon as the conclusion of a glorious peace afforded the Powers of Europe an opportunity to consecrate, as the bases of their new relations, all the maxims of wisdom, of equity, and of reciprocal benevolence. In 1814,

His Imperial Majesty hastened to give His approbation to the clauses which were to lead to the definitive abolition of the Slave Trade. In 1815, His Representatives signed the Declaration published in the name of the Congress of Vienna. Since then, the attention of His Cabinet has been unceasingly directed to accelerate the fair and complete fulfilment of those honourable intentions. The Acts of the Conferences in London, prove that in this respect His solicitude has never varied. Those of the meeting at Aix la Chapelle bear equal testimony to the fact; and the British Government may confidently rely upon His Imperial Majesty's readiness, to second its renewed efforts to bring about the total Abolition of the Slave Trade.

Amongst the measures proposed to this effect, there are some in which Russia is immediately concerned, and respecting which Her Plenipotentiaries will now state His Imperial Majesty's opinion. There are others which affect more particularly His Majesty's Allies. Amongst the first should be classed the project of a Declaration announcing to Europe, that all the Powers continue in the firm resolution to prevent this culpable Traffick, wherever cupidity still dares to prosecute it.

The Plenipotentiaries of His Imperial Majesty have orders to sign such a Declaration. It will be with the highest satisfaction that the Emperor will furnish this guarantee of the perseverance with which He seeks to fulfil the engagements He has contracted; and His Imperial Majesty is ready at the same time to make known, in concert with His Allies, that He will never suffer individuals, born out of His territories, to adopt His Flag and abuse the protection it would afford them, in order to cover a Commerce in Slaves.

The proposition of interdicting trade in Colonial Produce with States who should refuse to abolish the Slave Trade, also forms part of the measures in which the Emperor is more particularly concerned.

In admitting the necessity of having recourse to efficacious measures, with regard to those States, His Imperial Majesty thinks, that if the Allied Cabinets were to confine themselves to adopting the determination pointed out by the Cabinet of London, they would still be far from attaining the object which they have in view; and that a general suspension of all Commerce whatever, with the only Power which has not hitherto forbidden the Slave Trade to the South of the Line, would tend much more promptly to the wished-for result. However prejudicial to the interests of Russia, the interruption of the Commercial Relations established for so long a series of years between Her and Portugal, might be, if the Allies of His Imperial Majesty were to consent to adopt this measure, the Emperor would not hesitate to impose on Himself the same sacrifice; but it appears to him that it would in any case be right, previously to apprise the Court of Lisbon of the consequences which their refusal, totally to abolish the Slave Trade, would entail upon them.—The Allied Cabinets will doubtless admit that equity demands this prior measure.

As to the other Propositions made by the Duke of Wellington, and which are more particularly interesting to the Maritime Powers, the Cabinet of His Imperial Majesty will constantly express the wish which the Emperor forms, that such arrangement may be made between those Powers as will enable each of them to suppress the Traffick amongst their respective subjects, by declaring it to be an act of Piracy; and, as amongst these Propositions there are some which particularly concern the Government of His Most Christian Majesty, the Emperor is ready to support the same in the Negotiations which may take place upon this subject.

*(E. in Second Inclosure in No. 3.)**Résolutions relatives à l'Abolition de la Traite des Nègres, adoptées à la Conférence, du 28 Novembre 1822.*

LES Plénipotentiaires d'Autriche, de France, de la Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, réunis en Congrès à Vérone—Considérant—Que Leurs Augustes Souverains ont pris part à la Déclaration du 8 Février, 1815, par laquelle les Puissances réunies au Congrès de Vienne ont proclamé à la face de l'Europe leur Résolution invariable de faire cesser le Commerce connu sous le nom de la Traite des Nègres d'Afrique :

Considérant de plus—que malgré cette Déclaration, et en dépit des mesures Législatives dont Elle a été suivie dans plusieurs pays, et des différens Traités conclus depuis la dite époque entre les Puissances Maritimes, ce Commerce solennellement pros crit, a continué jusqu'à ce jour, qu'il a gagné en intensité ce qu'il peut avoir perdu en étendue, qu'il a pris même un caractère plus odieux et plus funeste par la nature des moyens aux quels ceux qui l'exercent sont forcés d'avoir recours :

Que les causes d'un abus aussi revoltant se trouvent principalement dans les pratiques frauduleuses, moyennant lesquelles les entrepreneurs de ces spéculations condamnables éludent les lois de leurs pays, déjouent la surveillance des bâtimens employés pour arrêter le cours de leurs iniquités, et couvrent les opérations criminelles dont des milliers d'êtres humains deviennent, d'année en année, les innocentes victimes :

Que les Puissances de l'Europe sont appelées par leurs engagements antérieurs, autant que par un devoir sacré, à chercher les moyens les plus efficaces pour prévenir un trafic, que déjà les Lois de la presque totalité des pays civilisés ont déclaré illicite et coupable, et pour punir rigoureusement ceux qui le poursuivent, en contravention manifeste de ces Lois ;—

Ont reconnu la nécessité de vouer l'attention la plus sérieuse à un objet d'aussi grande importance pour le bien et l'honneur de l'humanité, et déclarent en conséquence au nom de Leurs Augustes Souverains ;

Qu'ils persistent invariablement dans les principes et les sentimens, que ces Souverains ont manifestés par la Déclaration du 8 Février 1815.—Qu'ils n'ont pas cessé, et ne cesseront jamais de regarder le Commerce de Nègres comme —“ Un fleau, qui a trop long-tems désolé l'Afrique, dégradé l'Europe, et affligé l'humanité,” et qu'ils sont prêts à concourir à tout ce qui pourra assurer et accélérer l'Abolition complète et définitive de ce Commerce.

Qu'àfin de donner effet à cette Déclaration renouvelée, leurs Cabinets respectifs se livreront avec empressement à l'examen de toute mesure compatible avec leurs droits et les intérêts de leurs sujets, pour amener un résultat, constatant aux yeux du monde la sincérité de leurs vœux et de leurs efforts, en faveur d'une cause digne de leur sollicitude commune.

(*Translation.*)

Resolutions respecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, adopted in the Conference of the 28th November 1822.

THE Plenipotentiaries of Austria, of France, of Great Britain, of Prussia, and of Russia assembled in Congress at Verona, Considering,—that their august Sovereigns have taken part in the Declaration of the 8th February 1815, by which the Powers assembled at the Congress of Vienna, have proclaimed in the face of Europe, their invariable resolution to put a stop to the Commerce known by the name of the African Slave Trade :

Considering moreover, that notwithstanding this Declaration, and in spite of the legislative measures which have in consequence been adopted in various Countries, and of the several Treaties concluded since that period between the Maritime Powers,—this Commerce, solemnly proscribed, has continued to this very day ; that it has gained in activity what it may have lost in extension ; that it has even taken a still more odious character, and more dreadful from the nature of the means to which those, who carry it on, are compelled to have recourse :

That the causes of so revolting an abuse are chiefly to be found in the fraudulent practices, by means of which, the persons engaged in these nefarious speculations, elude the Laws of their Country and the vigilance of the Cruizers stationed to put a stop to their iniquities ; and veil those criminal operations, of which thousands of human beings annually become their innocent victims :

That the Powers of Europe are called upon by their previous engagements, as well as by sacred duty, to seek the most efficient means of preventing a Traffick, which the Laws of almost every civilized Country have already declared to be culpable and illegal ; and of punishing with severity those who persist in carrying it on, in manifest violation of those Laws ;

Acknowledge the necessity of devoting the most serious attention to an object of such importance to the honour and welfare of humanity ; and consequently declare in the name of their august Sovereigns :—

That They continue firm in the principles and sentiments manifested by those Sovereigns in the Declaration of the 8th of February 1815 ;—that They have never ceased, nor ever will cease, to consider the Slave Trade as—“ a scourge which has too long desolated Africa, degraded Europe, and afflicted humanity ;” and that They are ready to concur in every thing that may secure and accelerate the complete and final Abolition of that Traffick :

That in order to give effect to this renewed Declaration, their respective Cabinets will eagerly enter into the examination of any measure, compatible with their rights and the interests of their subjects, to produce a result that may prove to the world the sincerity of their wishes, and of their efforts in favour of a cause worthy of their common solicitude.