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BRIEF REFLECTIONS

ON

THE INSTALLATION

OF



THE SELF-STYLED REGENCY

OF THE ISLAND OF

TERCEIRA.

TRANSLATED FROM

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BRIEF REFLECTIONS,

&c. &c.

As the installation of the self-styled Regency, in the Island of Terceira, has created some noise among persons, either of weak intellect, or too readily disposed to believe every thing told them, without any great effort of discernment, on my part, it appeared to me expedient to throw a few brief reflections together upon this subject; not that the event, in itself, is deserving of that importance; but, because it is a pity to see the well-disposed led away by ignorance; leaving, as I do, those who, from a principle of malice, may persist in their errors, to be undeceived by other means, as any appeal of mine to either their candour, or their judgment, would be ineffectual.

On starting, I should wish however to impress on the reader's mind that this Regency, as well as the Decree by which it was created, are old topics; the

first having before, for some time, assumed the same name and used the same character in England; whilst the second bears the date of the 15th June, 1829! In the whole matter there is indeed nothing new, except the trip which the self-ycept Regents have just taken to an island, already plunged into the greatest misfortunes, without the additional presence of these revolutionary spirits. The installation alluded to can, therefore, excite no more surprise, than it would if we were soon to see the members of this doughty Regency return whence they came; or, to hear that they were going, that is, should they be allowed, loaded with scoffs and out at their elbows, towards Rio de Janeiro, or some other point of the Brazilian Empire, for greater safety!

Is there any one, however great his enthusiasm, to whom, on a moment's reflection, it will not immediately occur that the decree, above mentioned, is not the best conductor against political storms, as it was of no use to ward off the thunderbolts which the British ministry, in the Parliamentary session of 1830, aimed against the very bearers of that commission, as well as their party!

Were not the Regency of Pedro de Sousa* & Company, in London, with the Decree in their pockets, when Lord Aberdeen, in the House of Peers, averred "that D. Miguel had been acknowledged by the Three Estates of the Realm—that the interruption

* The Family name of the ex-Marquess de Palmella, now deprived of his title and other distinctions in Portugal.

of the political relations between the two countries, could only injure that union which, for so many ages, had subsisted between them—that this interruption might open the way for some other European power to occupy the place which England had long held, in reference to Portugal—that no one, therefore, ought to be astonished at the British government being anxious to secure the most favourable opportunity of returning to that state of things which, for so many ages, had been the firm and invariable policy of England.” Of what use therefore was the Regency, or the Decree ?

Where, but in London, were the Regency and the Decree, or the Decree and the Regency, when Mr. Peel asserted that “ D. Miguel was King of Portugal, by the general consent ; that all the attempts to dispossess him of the Crown, had failed, and that the ancient Estates had confirmed his accession to the throne ?” On that occasion, I again ask, of what avail was the Regency, or the Decree ?

Finally, in order to drain the last drop of the cup of bitterness, these same self-dub'd Regents were in London when, among other things, they had the laudable patience to listen to the following truth from the mouth of Lord Aberdeen, viz. “that Terceira formed part of the territory of Portugal, the integrity of which we are bound to maintain.” And soon afterwards, as it were, to clinch the nail, they heard the greatest man of his age pronounce the following maxim—“ *That the British Government ought not to consent to any such possession of the Island of Ter-*

ceira ;” further adding, “that he understood the policy of England to be, not to consent that the Emperor, D. Pedro, should take possession of any part of the Territories of Portugal.”

Most assuredly, this clear and positive enunciation of the sentiments of the Government of His Britannic Majesty, respecting any intentions entertained against the integrity of the Portuguese Monarchy, must have been a death-blow to the designs of the Regency. After this, let the revolutionary spirits exult, at the same time that the poor ex-Marquess must be ready to acknowledge, that he never before, in his life, had so much reason to be sad and downcast, as at the moment alluded to. The very fact of his pilgrimage to Terceira, amounts to a clear and distinct confession that his hopes were totally disappointed. It was the last effort of despair. How otherwise could any one explain the furtive passage of a government into a blockaded port? Or, did the ex-Marquess imagine that he was taking over to the troops, overawing the Island of Terceira, the same moral force as that which he bore to the unhappy revolution of Oporto? Perhaps he is going to give them another lesson how to run away! The truth is, that the bitterest enemies of Portugal do not form of this movement the opinions which they would gladly inculcate. The departure of Pedro de Sousa from London, after the whirlwind which he there experienced, was calculated only to diffuse dismay. They wear smiling countenances; but their consciences do not allow them to overlook the date of the Decree, at the same time that they

have the evidence, before their own eyes, that the Emperor has never taken any notice of these blustering bullies, since the Decree was signed; it being very clear that he would not thus abandon them to accident, if he could do otherwise. No one could have thought them so frail of memory, as so soon to have forgotten what Lord Aberdeen wrote to the Marquess de Barbacena, under date of the 13th January, 1829, viz. "that His Britannic Majesty was bound to defend Portugal and her remaining colonies, as much against the aggressions of Brazil, as against those of any other foreign Power." This was neither written, nor spoken, in Arabic; but publicly made known in the Documents, submitted to the British Parliament, on the 1st June, in the same year; and the Liberals themselves are not unaware that the simple fact of our troops, which had passed over to Spain, reentering Portugal, produced the *casus fæderis*, in 1827.

If what has already been said, should not be sufficient to dispel the illusions excited by the apparition of the self-formed Regency in the Island of Terceira, what numberless arguments might not be adduced from History, to shew that the establishment of any such government on that isolated rock, seated midway in the ocean, in opposition to the subdued, but nevertheless clearly expressed, wishes of all the inhabitants, as well as contrary to the European policy, on various occasions, sanctioned in Congress, can have no influence whatsoever on the affairs of this Kingdom!

Who is there ignorant that, in the time of King John IV. when that same island actually sided with Spain and we had a powerful enemy at our very doors; when this same class of revolutionary beings abounded in the Kingdom and we were in want of every requisite for its defence and preservation; finally, at a period when we were without Colonies, means, and, I should almost say, without friends, who is there unaware, I again ask, after struggling amidst an ocean of difficulties, that the new government at length became consolidated? To argue that there is any comparison between the present circumstances of Portugal and those of the period above alluded to, were an act of folly. It, therefore, cannot be expected that I should, in this place, make an useless parade of historical erudition, by enumerating the facts which establish, completely in our favour, the difference existing between the two periods; but I cannot omit calling to mind that the Power which, at that time, was waging war against us, at present is our friend, our ally and our defender, and that we have no cause to dread the hostility of any nation being arrayed against us; nor have we any other enemies to contend with than a handful of madmen, now roaming about the world, without plan, or concert.

I do not wish to pass over in total silence the empty proclamation of Pedro de Sousa; and, in order that the Portuguese may duly appreciate the sincerity of his invitations, a literal translation is here given of a notice, published in England, under date of the 23rd of last March. It is as follows;

“**PORTUGUESE EMIGRANTS**—The Committee appointed to relieve the unfortunate Portuguese Emigrants, is compelled to announce to the public that the sum of £84. 6s., subscribed in January, is nearly exhausted. About thirty of the most unfortunate of these individuals have been relieved, by weekly rations, consisting of 4lbs. of bread, 2 of meat and 2 of rice, or barley; the sick with tea, sugar and other necessaries, amounting to 11s. per month; but, if these unfortunate people remain any longer among us, it is probable that their number will be increased to more than sixty, by others who have hitherto been able to support themselves at their own expence, and are indebted to the persons with whom they reside, for the favour of not pressing them for their rent. If this continues, how are these unhappy people who have been brought to our shores, hereafter to clothe and support themselves? The Committee therefore appeal to the humanity of the inhabitants, praying that the monthly subscription may be increased; for which purpose, books are opened at different Banks, viz. at Mr. Nettleton’s and Mr. Shepherd’s, Wimpole Street, and Mr. Balkwil’s, Old Town Street, and in like manner a suitable person will be commissioned to go round to the subscribers, on the first Tuesday in every month, if it should be so deemed expedient. It is also proper to remark, that the Committee is instructed to confine their relief only to provisions. In case, however, the subscription should not suffice, the only resource left to these unfortunate persons is to apply to the Overseers of the Poor, and every one is aware what

kind of relief the latter can afford them. Plymouth, March 23, 1830.”

A mere comparison of the date of this notice with that of the self-styled Regency, and coupled with Pedro de Sousa's proclamation, would be the best possible comment on the affair, and spare me the trouble of indulging in any further reflections.

LETTER

To the Author of the little work, entitled, “ Brief Reflections on the installation of the self-styled Regency in the Island of Terceira.

Having seen and carefully perused your convincing paper respecting the self-styled Regency of the military faction in the Island of Terceira, I observed, amidst so many facts, tending to undeceive the public, that there was a great defect, arising from the silence observed by the writer on the subject of the important Notes of the Earl of Aberdeen, His Britannic Majesty's Minister of Foreign Affairs, addressed to the Marquess de Barbacena, Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty, the Emperor of Brazil, printed in Paris, at Renouard's, Rue Garencier, No. 5.

Although His Lordship's reflections are doubtless a complete demonstration of the manner in which the Government of His Britannic Majesty and his Minis-

ters in Parliament characterized the Portuguese question, they cannot have so much moral and obligatory weight as what is diplomatically expressed in official Notes; and as you have the honour of having called public attention to this subject, I trust you will not be offended at my addressing to you the present Letter, particularly, as I protest to you that I am influenced by no other motive than the purest wishes for the good of my country and the triumph of the legitimate cause of our King.

If the Portuguese revolutionists, I speak only of those still lingering among us, for the rest are going about and by other means receiving a suitable cure, could only reflect for a moment, they would see in the policy itself of Mr. Canning—the flaming star of Liberalism, that the British Government does not vary its course, whatever are the individuals, whether Whigs or Tories, comprising the administration. This indeed could not be otherwise, whoever is the Sovereign of Great Britain, the policy of the State being founded on principles over which greater, or lesser, incidents have no influence. If the extent of the present writing would allow of a substantial analysis of Mr. Canning's conduct, in reference to the Portuguese question, I should willingly undertake it; but, as this would enlarge my plan much beyond the proposed limits, I am satisfied with merely observing that Mr. Canning always professed to follow the principle of non-interference, or neutrality, in this affair, and most assuredly a decision of this kind could not afford the smallest encouragement, or support, to the pretensions of the Liberals.

Let any one, open to conviction, whatever his political opinions may be, even if they are wavering, among the Documents submitted to the British Parliament, on the 18th June, 1829, only read attentively Mr. Canning's despatches, addressed, under date of the 12th July, 1826, to Sir Charles Stuart and Sir William A'Court, as well as of the 17th and 19th of the same month and year, written to the latter, and unless he is blindly obdurate, he will be convinced of the truth of my assertion.

In deference, however, to incredulity, or malice, supposing that some further proofs were necessary, in order to remove all doubts on the proposition which I have advanced respecting the firmness and immutability of the policy of Great Britain, there would be no apprehension, tracing, step by step, the line pursued throughout the whole of this most delicate transaction, of the want of documents fully to bear me out in all I have said—such as cannot be answered by sophisms, however specious they may be. The first document to which I shall refer, is, that part of the Note of the Earl of Aberdeen, written to the Brazilian Plenipotentiary, dated the 13th January, 1829, in which he says as follows: “ If Great Britain had guaranteed the Succession of Portugal to D. Pedro, in spite of his declared reluctance to accept it, confirmed by his subsequent abdication, we should have contracted an engagement, utterly beyond our power to fulfil, and which, from its very nature, must have been known to be so, at the very moment at which it was formed. The

British Government, therefore, did wisely in declining to accede to the proposition of the Marquess de Palmella."

After this comes the Note of the 4th February, in the same year, which the Earl of Aberdeen writes in answer to the one addressed to him by the Marquess de Barbacena, on the 26th January. Speaking of the obligation of Treaties, in order to repel the demand of aid, made by the Brazilian Plenipotentiaries, on behalf of Donna Maria da Gloria, His Lordship observes thus; " His Majesty, nevertheless, in his character of neutral, has certain duties to perform, of the execution of which his Ministers are severely answerable. His Majesty is bound to Portugal by Treaties, of which the Government of that country is also held to fulfil the stipulations. The servants of His Majesty cannot therefore consent that the affairs of any person whatsoever, resident in this Kingdom, however high his character and rank may be, should be conducted in such a manner as to expose His Majesty to remonstrances on the part of the Portuguese Government, by requiring of us the execution of clauses in the existing Treaties, and that we should more scrupulously perform the duties of a neutral power."

In proportion as the urgency of the demands increased, so much greater was the clearness rendered with which the British Government addressed our opponents. In a Note of the 13th February, written by the Earl of Aberdeen, in answer to one addressed to him by the Brazilian Plenipotentiary, under date

of the 10th of the same month, asking some questions respecting the rebels being allowed to continue going over to Terceira, His Lordship expresses himself in the following terms.

“ In the mean while, the Marquess de Barbacena ought to be convinced that the Government of His Majesty could not but have doubts respecting the character which authorized his intervention in this transaction; and although the Minister of Foreign Affairs is prepared to answer the questions proposed, he is far from acknowledging the right by which he is interrogated. However this may be, there are other questions which the Earl of Aberdeen considers it his duty previously to propose to the Marquess de Barbacena, to which he equally hopes he will be pleased to give explicit answers,

“ In what character and in what quality, does the Marquess de Barbacena require categorical answers from the undersigned, to the questions proposed by His Excellency ?

“ In the service of whom are the troops, lately sent from Plymouth to the Azores, the landing of which was prevented by a detachment of the Navy of His Britannic Majesty ?

“ By what order and by what instructions were those troops sent from Plymouth to the Azores ?

“ It is now time for this matter to be cleared up ; it is time that the Government of His Majesty

should know clearly what is the authority which has directed these acts, and who are the persons responsible for them.”

Such is the tone and force with which the British Government repels all interference of the revolutionary party in Portugal, and her dominions, that the Earl of Aberdeen, in his note of the 18th, in reply to one of the 16th of February, written by the Minister Plenipotentiary of Brazil, concludes as follows.

“ As the undersigned does not deem it necessary to assure the Marquess de Barbacena, how much the British Government respects the rights belonging to the diplomatic character, and the immunities which this character enjoys among the civilized nations of the universe, he ought nevertheless to be allowed to observe, that the same common law which authorizes such extensive privileges, on that very account, requires that the conduct of the persons, invested with that character, should be such as not to tend to violate the laws of the country, or to outrage the authority of the Sovereign in whose States they may reside.

“ The Marquess de Barbacena is again informed that he must abstain, as long as he resides in this country, from taking any part, or sustaining the civil war in Portugal, whether it is in the name of the Emperor of Brazil, or in the name of his August Daughter. An intervention, of this kind, let it come from whence it may, is incompatible with the rights of nations and with the laws of this country. It is an

infracton of the prerogatives of His Majesty and a disobedience of his orders, repeatedly communicated to the Marquess de Barbacena, as well as to his colleagues.”

Such was the opinion which the British Government, even at that time, had formed of the criminal and revolutionary manœuvres of the faction which, at the present moment, occupies the Island of Terceira, that the same Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking to the Brazilian Plenipotentiary on the subject of the proposals for the reconciliation, mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, in the last session, expresses himself in the following manner ;

“ The undersigned had hoped to have received the cooperation of the Marquess de Barbacena to realize so important a project, by manifesting to him the wishes by which His Majesty was animated ; but these wishes (the undersigned cannot disguise it) are not professed by a party that labours, with activity, to perpetuate the civil war in the Portuguese dominions ; a party composed of persons who, under the mask of fidelity and patriotism, do not think of any thing else than to advance their own private interests, or to support the projects of a revolutionary faction.

“ It is with sufficient regret that the undersigned finds himself compelled to conclude, by assuring the Marquess de Barbacena that it will be impossible for His Majesty to continue in the present state of his relations with Portugal, nor any longer witness

the state of disorder into which that kingdom has been plunged. The Marquess de Barbacena is already in possession of the general propositions which, in the opinion of the undersigned, present bases for a settlement of the existing differences and the restoration of tranquillity in Portugal. If the Marquess de Barbacena is not prepared to contribute, according to the bases proposed, to so desirable an end, no other alternative is left to His Majesty than that of endeavouring, without loss of time, and for the purpose of attaining the end proposed, to seek out some more direct way, and this step is dictated to him as well by his solicitude for the interests of his subjects, as his desire to maintain the general peace of Europe.”

Finally, in order to undeceive the less credulous, and convince the most stupid that the British Government, as well as the whole of Europe, whatever may be the Regencies and Decrees which make their appearance in the unfortunate Island of Terceira, will never tolerate them, I would gladly refer them to the impressive and peremptory declaration of the Earl of Aberdeen, made in his communication of the 8th May, in answer to one from the Brazilian Plenipotentiary, dated the 21st April, in which his Lordship retorts thus; “That, although the British Government does not acknowledge any right in the Emperor, D. Pedro, to act in the name of his Daughter, in a political character; nevertheless, His Imperial Majesty has a right to dispose of her person and provide for her individual welfare.”

In consequence of these demonstrations, the Brazilian Plenipotentiary could not avoid receiving and acknowledging this firm resolution of the British Government as an *ultimatum*, as in fact he did in his note of the 13th of May, and immediately afterwards made his arrangements for the departure of the Princess of Grão-Pará for Rio de Janeiro.

As declarations, of so precise and strenuous a character, have now rent the mysterious veil by which the conduct of England has hitherto been shrouded, their publication among the Portuguese cannot fail to be of the greatest utility; and their importance will doubtless be acknowledged as being enhanced, when it is remembered that the policy of Europe is one and the same; no Power being allowed to withdraw from the rest; or to deviate from the benign plan, established for the preservation of peace among all.

If reasons of general expediency did not equally prevail in all the European Cabinets, what else could have prevented the present Emperor, or Autocrat of all the Russias, from lately going to plant his victorious eagles on the furthest confines of the Ottoman Empire? Where is the Power that evinced the smallest jealousy, or dread, when one hundred thousand French bayonets penetrated into Spain, in 1823, in order to crush the hydra of the revolution? Where is the nation that now feels the least uneasiness on seeing a formidable expedition, proceeding to punish the audacity of the Algerines? If all the

States of Europe retain the attitude of silent spectators, it is, because such concert and harmony prevail among them, in external affairs, and no negotiation is commenced—no enterprize undertaken which is not deemed interesting to all. Hence is it, that we shall continue to see, notwithstanding the clamours and opposite opinions of party Journalists, as well as the language and stratagems of faction, that all their efforts are of avail, in this great question, which will inevitably go on and prosper, every day more, under the shelter of so efficient a guarantee as that pledged in defence of the Monarchical and Legitimate principle; things, either entirely different from those which the revolutionists call by these names; or, if they are not so, excite only their hatred, aggravated by the simulation and scoffs with which they say they reverence objects so respectable, at the same time that they insult them, by the most revolting actions.

I will conclude this Answer by establishing the following position which, in my mind, no sound reasoning can destroy. The Portuguese question is either an European affair; or simply a national one. If it is an European Affair, the judgment of all the Governments of Europe thereon has already been pronounced, through the enlightened organ of the British ministers, as it would be absurd to admit a diversity of opinions and a contrariety of policy, since, from that moment, the peace of Europe, the great and paramount object of all, would be endangered. If it is a national affair, the most competent

tribunal, with its eyes fixed on the Laws, has already decided, and from its verdict there is no appeal.

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant, &c.

Lisbon, May 13, 1830.

PS. Being still in time, and before closing the present Letter, to have a glance at the English papers, received by the last packet, I caught sight of the answer given by the Earl of Aberdeen to Lord Clanricarde, who inquired of the British ministry whether they had any information of the installation of the Regency in Terceira. The answer of the Minister of Foreign Affairs was, "that they had received news of this installation; but that the Government of His Majesty had no relations, or official communications, with any such government."

Decrees—Regencies—Proclamations, all, what do they amount to, but smoke—borne away before the lightest breeze, and only inconveniencing the island of Terceira for the moment!