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Prince Metternich, On the Vienna Congress, 1815

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Prince Richard Metternich, ed. MEMOIRS OF PRINCE METTERNICH, 1773-1815. Volume II. Translated by Mrs. Alexander Napier. Classified and arranged by M.A. de Klinkowstrom. New York: Howard Fertig, 1970.

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AT THE TIME OF THE BEGINNING OF THE PEACE ERA.

1815

THE VIENNA CONGRESS

(Note 80, Vol. I.)

192. Memoir by Frederick von Gentz, February 12, 1815.
193. Metternich to Hardenberg, Vienna, December 10, 1814.
194. Talleyrand to Metternich, Vienna, December 12, 1814.

192. Those who at the time of the assembling of the Congress at Vienna had thoroughly understood the nature and objects of this Congress, could hardly have been mistaken about its course, whatever their opinion about its results might be. The grand phrases of "reconstruction of social order," "regeneration of the political system of Europe," "a lasting peace founded on a just division of strength," &c., &c., were uttered to tranquillise the people, and to give an air of dignity and grandeur to this solemn assembly; but the real purpose of the congress was to divide amongst the conquerors the spoils taken from the vanquished. The comprehension of this truth enables us to foresee that the discussions of this Congress would be difficult, painful, and often stormy. But to understand how far they have been so, and why the hopes of so many enlightened men, but more or less ignorant of cabinet secrets, have been so cruelly disappointed, one must know the designs which the principal Powers had in presenting

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themselves on this great battle-field, and the development which particular circumstances and personal relations have given to these designs. The following observations will serve to characterise them.

Designs of the Powers at the Opening of the Congress.

The Emperor of Russia has come to Vienna, in the first place to be admired (which is always the principal thing in his thoughts), and next to direct personally the important arrangements which should fix the boundaries and future position of the many states who claim their share of the immense spoil which is placed at the disposal of the Allies, by their success against the common enemy. The three principal objects of the Emperor Alexander were: first, to take possession for ever of the whole, or almost the whole, of the Duchy of Warsaw, with the exception of some small portions, which he would give to the two neighbouring powers; 2nd, to prevent Austria from profiting too much by the advantages of her new position; 3rd, to enrich Prussia as much as possible, not only to compensate her for her ancient Polish provinces, which he had carried away from her by surprise, and which he retained because it pleased him to do so, but also to make her a useful and powerful ally, the only one on whom he could rely in the future. Such were the real objects he had in view; the ostensible object was to mingle in all the affairs of Europe, and to pass as the arbiter of their destinies.

On arriving at Vienna the Emperor was already more or less embroiled with Austria, England, and France. His displeasure with Austria was chiefly on account of the many and deep grievances which he had, or pretended to have, against Prince Metternich. The first and true origin of these grievances dated from

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the opposition of that minister to the Emperor's proposal to become himself the commander-in-chief of the allied armies. His resentment, which was restrained during the first period of the war, and even hidden under an appearance of great friendliness, broke out for the first time in the month of December, 1813, on the occasion of the Allies entering Switzerland, a plan which all good generals had approved, but which the Emperor opposed, because, in one of his philanthropic moods, he had given his word to some Vaudois apostles of liberty that the neutrality of Switzerland should be respected. Since that moment there has been no return of harmony. Angry and bitter discussions took place almost every day during the last part of the campaign, and by the time the Allies reached Paris they preserved, with difficulty, the outward appearance of a friendliness which had no longer any foundation. The Emperor accustomed himself to look on M. de Metternich only as a permanent obstacle to his designs, as a man occupied without intermission in opposing and thwarting him; at last, as a sworn enemy. The calmness and serenity which M. de Metternich always opposed to these prejudices, instead of softening the Emperor, appeared only to embitter him the more; private feelings, above all a strong jealousy of M. de Metternich's success, both in politics and society, increased this irritation. At last it reached the point of an implacable hatred, and during his stay in Vienna, his daily explosions of rage and frenzy afforded an inexhaustible fund of curiosity and amusement to frivolous minds at the court, whilst sensible men deplored them as a great calamity. This hatred is the key to most of the events of the Congress; if it has done infinite harm to the affairs, and essentially spoilt the most important interests of Europe, we have at least

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the poor consolation that it has not turned to the personal advantage of the Emperor. His perpetual tirades against Prince Metternich, the details into which he entered with twenty women of society, to indoctrinate them with the crimes of this minister and designs for overthrowing him, as badly conceived as foolishly carried out, and only succeeding in adding to his credit -all this has given the Emperor Alexander an irreparable blow in public opinion; and it is perhaps one of the most useful effects of this Congress, and one of the greatest benefits it has given to Europe, to have cooled the general admiration with which some of this sovereign's brilliant qualities had inspired almost all his contemporaries. The true worth of his character is now seen, and if men have ceased to admire, they have also entirely ceased to fear him.

His relations with England (a Power which he had always cordially detested, and which he only cultivated either from interest or fear) have been sensibly disturbed since his visit to London. Lord Castlereagh was particularly disagreeable to him; he called him cold and pedantic, and there were moments in Vienna when he would have treated him as he did M. de Metternich, if extreme fear of openly compromising himself with the British Government (the only one before whom he trembled) had not forced him to dissimulate. Neither was the Emperor inclined to friendly relations with France. He had not pardoned the King for having adopted a system of government contrary to the advice which he had wished to give him; he was furious against Prince Talleyrand, who, at the time of the Allies entering Paris, had appeared to recognise no law but the will of the Russian Emperor, and who, four weeks afterwards, had found the means of rendering himself

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independent. In the first months of his stay in Vienna there were some violent scenes between the Emperor and M. de Talleyrand; subsequently Talleyrand understood how to impress the Emperor by his cleverness, his repartees, and his savoir-faire; but the secret aversion remained the same. The King of Bavaria, although his brother-in-law, was odious to him on account of his close relations with Austria, and because he believed Marshal de Wrede to be one of the blind instruments of Prince Metternich. The King of Denmark was equally insupportable to him, because he had had the courage to reproach him for his wrongs and evil conduct. The King of Prussia, therefore, was the Russian Emperor's only friend, a prince whose personal attachment was secured by his gratitude, his weakness, his infatuation, and by his distrust of everyone else, whose cabinet, foreseeing the general opposition to its schemes for self-aggrandisement, had allied itself with Russia, and made the first principle of her policy a blind submission to the will of that Power.

Prussia only brought to the Congress an immoderate desire for extending her possessions at the expense of all the world, and without regard to any principle of justice or even of decency. This passion for conquest had its origin neither in the character of the King nor

of his Prime Minister; for the King, although below mediocrity in intellect and judgment, is yet at bottom a good sort of man, and Chancellor Hardenberg one of the best that ever existed. But the system of this court does not depend after all either on the King or Prince Hardenberg. This system, founded and pursued for the last century, has found fresh support in the general enthusiasm of the nation, in the energy of the army, and in the irresistible power which a certain number of

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distinguished military men exercise at present on the cabinet. Since the moment of Prussia's resurrection, the principal object of this party has been the total acquisition of Saxony. Being neither able nor willing to compete with Russia, they transferred all their designs to Germany; the acquisition of Saxony, however enormous it was, was for them but the beginning of a grand series of political operations, by which they hoped sooner or later to unite to Russia the largest part of the north of Germany, to efface the influence of Austria, and to put themselves at the head of the whole German Confederation. Reckoning on the help of Russia in the execution of this vast scheme, they wished at least to carry away from the congress the foundation stone of their new edifice; and if Austria has not been able entirely to thwart them, she still deserves some merit, in having at least prevented a considerable part of their schemes. England appeared at Vienna with all the brilliancy which she owes to her immense successes, the prominent part which she had played in the coalition, to her influence without limits, to a condition of strength and solid prosperity which no other Power has attained in these days, and lastly to the respect and fear which she inspires and which govern her relations with all the other governments. In profiting by these advantages, England could have given the law to all Europe; by making common cause with Austria, whose interests were also hers, she might have prevented the aggrandisement of Russia, made Prussia fall back within her own boundaries, re-established a true equilibrium in Germany, and guaranteed for a long time the repose of Europe. England renounced this noble privilege, for reasons which I prefer to explain on another occasion, and which touch on the most delicate ground in this

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history. It is true, Lord Castlereagh for some time resisted the ambitious schemes of Russia, but he ended by abandoning this opposition. Guided by the purest intentions, but with some radically false views, he first supported Prussia's designs on Saxony to their utmost extent, returned later to a course more in conformity with just principles, and more favourable to Austria, but, stopping half way, he finally only saved a part of Saxony by a thoroughly bad arrangement. He observed in all the other questions (with the exception of those directly concerning England, such as the establishment of the House of Orange, the slave treaty, &c.) a neutrality often astonishing. But, though capable of being the arbiter for Europe, he gave her only weak and partial support. This was, without doubt, the principal cause of the unsatisfactory issue of the Congress.

The part of the French Ministers at this Congress was decidedly the most simple and agreeable of all. Everything relating to France having been regulated by the Treaty of Paris, they had nothing to demand for themselves, and could confine themselves to watching the conduct of others. Defending the feeble against the strong restrains each Power within its proper limits, and to working in good faith for the re-establishment of political equilibrium. To do them justice, their general course has been in accordance with these principles, for they have made no proposal, started no scheme tending directly or indirectly to the least change in the stipulations. of the Treaty of Paris, to the slightest extension of their frontiers, or to any pretension whatever, incompatible with the rights of their neighbours or general tranquillity. In spite of all the lies which are current in society, of all the schemes, measures, and intrigues which inveterate hatred against

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France has falsely and even absurdly attributed to her ministers, a faithful history cannot refuse them this honourable testimony; and I, who have been a close observer of everything, and am better able to write this portion of history than anyone else, I am the first to give them this testimony. But if M. Talleyrand and his colleagues have never worked against the general good, it is also true that some special obstacles have prevented their co-operating in it, in any efficacious manner. In the first place, the secret article of the Treaty of Paris which authorised the formerly allied Powers to arrange the division of the countries conquered by France, "according to arrangements agreed on between themselves," was a terrible barrier to all their measures, and if the Powers who, like Austria, only demanded order and justice, or, like England, were willing to give up the power which this article allowed them, Russia and Prussia, who were solely guided by ambition and desire of acquisition, would never have suffered it. This, and the often exaggerated fear of the other Powers, of appearing to conspire with France, will explain to you in a great measure the nullity of the French plenipotentiaries in all the negotiations, and above all during the beginning of the Congress. Another cause contributed very much to this. To hold a firm and imposing attitude against cabinets such as the Russian and Prussian, who considered their wills as almost irresistible, France must be prepared and perfectly decided for war. She pretended to be so, but was not in reality; and, when once the secret of her policy was suspected, her arguments could no longer encourage her friends, or her menaces terrify her enemies. The present French Government longs only for peace; believing it indispensable for reorganising the Government, the finances,

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the commerce, and all the resources of France, it looks on peace as the only means of solid security, whilst a fresh war would bring alarming chances of danger and revolution.

The energetic demonstrations by which the French Ministers are sometimes carried away, contrast too much with what we know of the true intentions of their cabinet to produce a great effect; and if M. de Talleyrand is to be reproached with a mistake, and still more his

coadjutor Duke d'Albert, it is perhaps that of having in their communications and private conversations, above all at the beginning of the Congress, held a language somewhat too haughty against people who did not want for means of knowing up to what points they would support them at Paris. However, I do not wish to imply by this observation, that if Austria and England had preferred war to hurtful concessions, France would not have allied herself to these Powers to take part in it. I believe the contrary; but what I wish to remark is, that France was not decided enough to give an impulse to the Powers who, for causes which you will find explained later, only wished to fight with the pen and in conferences, and would prefer in secret the most detestable arrangements to a fresh explosion, which they feared above all.

Austria found herself between these four Powers, in the most embarrassing position. She could not look on the Emperor Alexander, in spite of all his protestations of friendship for the Emperor, but as a declared enemy, and Prussia, always carried away by her own rapacity and ambition, as the inseparable ally of this enemy. She was deterred from too great a friendship with France, not by any reason of direct repugnance or distrust, for she was perfectly convinced of her loyal and friendly

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disposition, but by what is called respect of mankind, that is to say, by the fear of lowering herself in public opinion, by leaguering herself openly with a Power which had formerly been the common enemy of Europe, and which still preserved its bad reputation in the minds of the multitude, led away by the hypocritical declarations of the Russian and Prussian party.

Another consideration also stopped Austria. Perfectly agreed with France in her views on the affairs of Poland and Germany, she was not so in regard to those of Italy. France had a natural interest in regaining her old influence in Italy, by the re-establishment of the deposed branches of the Bourbon family at Parma, and principally at Naples, whilst Austria wished first to consolidate her own power; then, to preserve Parma, which a recent and formal convention had secured to the Empress Marie Louise; also to support the King of Naples, whose cause she had embraced from the wisest and most powerful motives. The cabinet of Vienna had therefore to fear that, by allying herself too closely with France, whose support was essentially useful in her contests with Prussia and Russia, she might have to sacrifice to this Power a part of her great interests in Italy. This is why, during the three months of the Congress, Austria has always remained somewhat separated from France, and it is only since the beginning of this year that a real intimacy has been established between the ministers of these two Powers. There remained then only England as any support to Austria; but England wished for peace, peace before everything, peace--I am sorry to say it--at any price and almost on any conditions. Thus Austria was absolutely in the position of having to rely on herself alone, against Russia and Prussia united; she had but one ally, who would follow

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her at the first call, Bavaria; if war broke out, she could rely on the help of France; but this help would be tardy and constrained, and would turn the opinion of all the rest of Germany still more against her. As to England, decided not to quarrel with anyone, she would not even give a subsidy to Austria. By reflecting on this ensemble, you will understand the course of the negotiations, of which, in this preparatory paper, I am about to give you a very short but exact abstract.

The Affairs of Poland.

On arriving at Vienna, the Emperor of Russia declared, through Count Nesselrode, at the first conference (which, as well as all the others of the first month, was attended only by the ministers of Austria, Russia, Prussia, and England), that he demanded as a just indemnity for his sacrifices the possession of the Duchy of Warsaw, and at the same time the power of regulating its position and future constitution according to his convenience. This declaration was regarded as a first attempt, and received with indifference. Persuaded that the only means of treating with the Emperor Alexander was by confidential conversations, Prince Metternich, although quite aware of all the inconveniences of this mode of negotiation, determined to try it. He had four or five private conferences with the Emperor; he found him so obstinate that nothing could move him; his exasperation and violence ever increased from one interview to another; and at last the interview of October 24 was so stormy, that the Prince declared to his friends that after the scene which had just taken place he neither would nor could see the Emperor again in private. He has kept his word; with the exception of one explanation, which the honour of the Prince rendered in-

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evitable, he has never again set foot inside the Emperor's door. They are still seen at the court, and at large assemblies given by a third party; but since October 21, the Emperor will not go to any ball, to any fete at Prince Metternich's house; the remonstrances of his sisters, of the Archduke Palatine, his brother-in-law, of several of his friends, of all the women whose acquaintance he cultivates at Vienna—nothing can conquer this repugnance; and whilst affecting to treat Madame and Mademoiselle Metternich with marked consideration, he always maintains that the Prince has offended him too mortally for them ever again to have any personal communication. I have no need to add that the accusation was absolutely false; that the Emperor, carried away by his passion, was alone to blame in these interviews, and that M. de Metternich has conducted himself up to the present moment with all the wisdom and politeness which are characteristic of him, and with all the propriety inherent to his person and manners.

This first great instrument, and certainly the most skilful of all, put hors de combat, Lord Castlereagh entered the field. He addressed to the Russian Emperor three private memorandums, in which he showed with much vigour, and sometimes with little tact, the

injustice of his conduct and his pretensions, and the dangers with which his projects would threaten Europe. He spoke to him in these memoranda, sometimes in his own name, but more often in the name of his Government. The Emperor replied to each of these papers by bad arguments, sometimes in an evasive manner, sometimes with disdain; but always with extreme bitterness. This private correspondence was not only useless, but absolutely hurtful to the success of the negotiation. Lord Castlereagh was wrong in undertaking it;

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we were wrong in consenting to it. Arguments were wasted that should have been reserved for a formal negotiation which alone can be of any use, and which should never have been renounced, for the very reason that the Emperor opposed it with all his might.

It is true that a presentiment of the failure of all these measures had excited Austria and England to put in train a veritable negotiation; but the method of conducting it was not happily chosen. Prussia having, at least in appearance, a great interest in reclaiming her part of the duchy of Warsaw, it was thought possible to associate her in the measures that the two other Powers intended to take for moving the Emperor of Russia, and it was decided to make him understand that the affairs of Saxony would be more easy if he conducted himself well in those of Poland. You will see from the following article what were the terrible effects of this resolution on the great quarrel about Saxony. Its perfect uselessness for the end directly in view was soon recognised. Prussia, after having affected for some weeks to associate herself in the course of Austria and England with respect to Russia, and to second their combined plans, declared all at once, towards the middle of November, that having reflected on all the consequences of this plan, sounded the intentions of the Emperor Alexander, and seen the impossibility of effecting any change in his projects, she could no longer continue this course, and had no better counsel to give to her friends than that of giving in to Russia with a good grace. From this moment the whole edifice crumbled away. A rupture was pronounced between Austria and Prussia. A reciprocal animosity took the place of those intimate relations which had united them since 1813, but which the last events of the war had already greatly

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shaken and changed. England wavering for some time between these two Powers, Austria found herself, in this painful interval, isolated on the field of battle. There was no longer any question about the affairs of Poland; they were tacitly regarded as lost.

Meanwhile the most lively debates took place about the territorial arrangements of Germany, and above all on the unfortunate affair in Saxony. Austria, seeing the pretensions of Prussia increase and strengthen, and the quarrel growing more bitter day by day, made at the end of the year 1814 some indirect attempts to conciliate Russia. Abandoned by Prussia in her plans for thwarting Russia, she hoped to be able to make

use of Russia, up to a certain point, in moderating the projects of Prussia. Russia pretended to agree, but she exacted first the arrangement of the affairs of Poland in the sense of her previous demands with some modifications. Austria, persuading herself that she could not save both Saxony and Poland, decided to allow the latter to fall.

Meanwhile, on December 29, the famous conferences began between the Ministers of Austria, Russia, Prussia and England, to which at last M. de Talleyrand was admitted on January 8. Since December 30 the Count Razoumowsky, appointed for these Conferences because the Emperor believed Count Nesselrode too much attached to Austria, communicated the proposals of Russia relative to Poland. The Emperor declared that he demanded the whole of Warsaw, with the exception of the ancient palatinates of Gnesen and Posen, and some old districts of Western Prussia, the whole amounting to 850,000 souls, which he would give up to Prussia, and a small territory on the right bank of the Vistula, opposite to Cracow, in which are situated the salt mines of

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Wieliczka, which he would give to Austria, as well as the circle of Tarnopol with 400,000 souls, ceded by that Power according to the Treaty of Vienna. Cracow and Thorn should be declared free and independent cities. This scheme was adopted without any discussion. Austria had taken her part. Prince Talleyrand, finding it impossible to contend alone against Russia, declared that all the wishes of France had been for the independence of Poland; but this question being abandoned by the Powers most directly interested, could not be supported by France alone. Lord Castlereagh contented himself with sending a memorandum on January 12, in which, while submitting to the projects of the Emperor of Russia, he confined himself to expressing some empty regrets, announcing some sinister presentiments, and giving some philanthropic advice to the three Powers. In reply to this note, count Razoumowsky returned on January 19 the most remarkable document which has appeared at this Congress. The most striking part of this document is the clear and positive manner in which the Poles are informed that all hope of the re-establishment of their independence is lost. It is astonishing that the Sovereign who for two years has not ceased to flatter them with this hope, should be the very one who informs them now of the "impossibility of restoring that ancient political system of Europe of which the independence of Poland formed a part."

The constitutional government with which they have been deluded so long is only vaguely mentioned in this document; it is believed that the Emperor feels the difficulty so much, that he no longer dreams of bringing it about, and he believes he will satisfy his admirers by offering them some phantom of the so-called nationality which will shut their mouth as to the new arrange-

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ment. It is certain that he has gained sufficiently in carrying the territorial question, and that so marked an advantage will soon make him forget all his constitutional dreams.

Such has been the end of the Polish affair, by which the Empire of Russia has gained one of the most fertile countries of Europe, and three millions and a half of new subjects, after subtracting the 850,000, which she gives to Prussia, and the 400,000 which she gives to Austria, in the province of Tarnopol. When I say the end, I speak only of the Congress and of actual negotiations, for the ulterior consequences of this event are incalculable. No one can conceive how Austrian Galicia, although Russia has offered to be her guarantee, can remain for two years in her present state; and how, after the enormous progress of Russia which this last acquisition has brought to its height by the menacing position which it gives her with her neighbours, and with the domineering and ambitious spirit which she has constantly manifested in these transactions, the equilibrium and tranquillity of Europe will be exposed to perpetual dangers and the most frightful revolutions.

However, no treaty has been signed or drawn up at present on this 'new distribution of forces,' to use the ominous terms of the Russian note. Austria does not wish definitely to subscribe to this division of the Duchy of Warsaw, till those of Germany shall be terminated, and the Emperor Alexander, less out of complaisance for Austria, than by an affectation of delicacy for Prussia, has announced the same intention.

Territorial Affairs of Germany.

There are in Germany, besides a great number of secondary interests, and independently of the question

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of a future constitution uniting all parties in Germany, two territorial questions of the first importance to decide: one, on the means of reconstituting the Prussian monarchy on its old dimensions; the other on the indemnities of Bavaria for the provinces which she should cede to Austria. The first of these questions has most occupied the ministers of the Congress, which embraces all the other political subjects, and for several months it has stopped and absorbed all the others.

The same motives which determined Austria and England not to approach, during the continuance of war, the knotty question of Poland with Russia, compelled them to keep silence about the pretensions which, since the end of the year 1813, Prussia had openly made to Saxony. It appears, even, that, as to the latter, they were not content with simple temporisation, but that they had several times given Prussia strong hopes. However that may be, this Power, protected and warmly encouraged in this project by the Russian Emperor, arrived at the Congress with a fixed intention of taking possession of the whole of Saxony, as equivalent for its ancient Polish provinces, lightly and imprudently (perhaps even craftily) ceded to Russia by the treaty of Kalisch. Austria, in the unfavourable relations in which she found herself with the Russian Emperor, could not

resist this project of Prussia's, except with the open and determined assistance of England; for the opposition of France, although strongly marked from the beginning, could not suffice to support Austria in a contest which might terminate in war. There were several reasons for believing that the English Government would make common cause with Austria in this important' affair, to which the equilibrium of Germany, and the future relations of these two Powers, were

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directly bound. This expectation was disappointed. Lord Castlereagh, drawn on by the great interest which he attached at first sight to the affair about Poland (completely abandoned afterwards)--by some false ideas of the necessity of strengthening Prussia, and many other reasons, which there is not time to unfold--joined the project of Prussia, and employed his means of influence and persuasion to engage the Cabinet of Vienna to consent to the execution of this project. You know from several of my despatches the powerful objections of Austria against this measure, objections which were never replied to, except in representing the horror and the dangers of an open rupture with Prussia and Russia. These representations alone would not have made Austria accede; but the entreaties of England, joined to the deceptive hope that Prussia would second her measures against the aggrandisement of Russia, produced a momentary effect, which other circumstances soon rendered irretrievable. It was promised to Prussia, in a confidential note of October 22, as the condition of her assistance in the negotiations, that war should be entered upon with Russia; that if no other means could be substituted for this, to satisfy the just pretensions of Prussia, the Emperor would even consent to the incorporation of Saxony with the Prussian monarchy. This step, which has given M. de Metternich more grief in three months than he has had in all his life, was accompanied by the verbal consent of Austria and England to the provisional occupation of Saxony; and, to complete the misfortune, it was interpreted immediately by Prussia (in spite of all the conditions and restrictions which had been attached to it as an absolute and definite consent.

Prussia having fulfilled none of the conditions which

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Austria had attached to her eventual consent to the acquisition of Saxony, the Cabinet of Vienna would have had, without any doubt, the right of rejecting any ulterior negotiation on Prussia's favourite design. But once the provisionary occupation of Saxony granted to this Power, there could be no hope of their being dislodged from this country by simple representations; and, on the other hand, it was always hoped that she would employ at least some of her influence with the Emperor of Russia to persuade him to concession in Poland. Thus, although bitterness was already in every heart, the outward appearance of friendliness was preserved, and, instead of retracting altogether, Prussia was allowed to understand that there would be no objection to a part of Saxony being given up to her. At

this time the dispatches from London announcing the angry feeling that the news of the Prussian projects, supported by the English Ambassador, had produced, and the formidable attacks on Parliament from the Opposition relative to this question, warned Lord Castlereagh that he had gone too far, and although he did not entirely change his system, these despatches and the anger that he felt towards the Prussian Ministers on account of the equivocal part they had played in the affair of Poland, determined him to modify his course, and to abandon, once for all, the idea of consenting to the total incorporation of Saxony with the Prussian monarchy.

It was under these circumstances that Prince Metternich addressed his memorandum of December 10 (No. 193). This document shows both the resolution already taken at this epoch to regard the question of Poland as lost, and the repugnance of Austria to give up opposition to that of Saxony. To understand thoroughly the sense of this note, you must know

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that in the programme which is annexed to it Prussia is offered, besides all that she has gained in Westphalia and on the Rhine, nearly 430,000 souls of the population of Saxony, in giving up to her Basse-Lusace, more than half Haute-Lusace, and the province of Wittenberg on both sides of the Elbe. The terms of the note were extremely moderate and conciliatory, and, if one can find a fault in this document, it is that of too great a compliance with a court whom Austria cannot, without perfect blindness, consider as her friend and ally.

The surprise was, therefore, so much the greater when it was known that the Prussian cabinet looked on the note of December 10 as an insult, and as an evident proof of hostile intentions on the part of Austria. This cabinet was so familiarised with the idea of absorbing Saxony entirely, that the proposal to content herself with 430,000 subjects in that country, and to re-establish the King of Saxony, who it believed deposed for ever, could only alarm and embitter her. All the Prussians and all their partisans cried murder. The text of the memorandum was only known to a few persons; only the bare proposals were divulged, accompanied by the most perfidious commentaries. The Emperor of Russia joined in the chorus with the Prussians. On the other side the friends of Austria, the French, the Bavarians, and, one may add, all the honest and sensible men in Germany, took fire against the outrageous pretensions of Prussia. The storm which rose was such that for a fortnight, and up to the end of the year 1814, those who were behind the scenes regarded war as inevitable. Energetic preparations were made in all parts. Troops were concentrated everywhere; nothing was spoken of but the speedy dissolution of the congress. The Emperor Alexander denounced M. de Metternich to his

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sovereign and amongst all classes in Vienna as the disturber of public peace in Europe. Prussia would not even answer the note of December 10, finding the proposals which it contained beneath her dignity. This deluge of injustice and extravagance was at last put an end to by the calm and intrepid bearing shown by the Emperor Francis and Prince Metternich, by the firmness of Austria and Bavaria, by the wise reflections and cutting sarcasms of M. de Talleyrand, who brought all thinkers and mockers to his side, and by the peaceful exhortations of Lord Castlereagh; and last, by the perceptible fall of the authors of this chicanery in the opinion of the world. It is to this time of agitation that the letter of December 19 of M. de Talleyrand to Prince Metternich relates, which is found amongst the annexes of this report (No. 194), a document extremely remarkable from more than one point of view, written with as much fire as force and nobleness, and containing grand truths and the most striking insight. It will interest you so much the more that it is the only formal and official document which the plenipotentiaries of France have sent during the whole duration of the Congress. Everything that the gazettes have written about other pretended French memoranda belongs to fiction.

The conferences, which began on December 29, and of which I have spoken before, opened in the midst of the outbreak of all these passions. But several days afterwards the storm abated. The Emperor of Russia had made some serious reflections. He looked forward to the moment when England, in spite of all her moderation, irritated and excited by the obstinacy of Prussia and Russia, would open]y take action against these Powers. Already a project was talked of for future agreement between Austria, France, England, Bavaria,

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and Hanover, and this rumour, which was not without foundation, caused the Emperor Alexander to tremble, and made him lower his tone prodigiously in a few days. He promised even to do his best to persuade Prussia to content herself with the half of Saxony.

Chancellor Hardenberg, sincerely devoted to peace, and an enemy of all exaggerated projects, profited by this opportunity to gain ground against the party who, under the standard of Baron de Stein (the real disturber of the public peace in Germany and Europe), laboured without intermission to draw the King into a fresh war. The conferences took up a fixed position; each Power, consulting together in good faith, discovered that it did not wish for war; peace was again the order of the day.

In the project for reconstitution sent by Prussia to the Conference on January 19, she still demanded the whole of Saxony; she avowed at the same time that with the countries which she claimed on the Rhine she would have 680,000 more subjects than at the epoch of her greatest splendour. But this scheme did not alarm anyone; as it was certain that Prussia could be brought down very much in her demands. Austria and England laboured for a fortnight at another project. This period, without being comparable to that of the last fortnight of the month of December, was still extremely agitated, and sometimes very

stormy. The impatience of the Prussians was extreme. Their movements and their military measures, which they did not discontinue, still caused offence to the cabinets and great uneasiness to the public. On the other side, Austria and England were no less agreed about the definite proposals to be made. Lord Castlereagh only aiming at peace and at what he called (often very gra-

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tuitously) a just division of forces, little sensible to the powerful objections of the Cabinet of Vienna, to the disproportionate aggrandisement of Prussia, and completely indifferent to the fate of the King of Saxony, adopted grounds which Austria, and with her France and Bavaria, could not admit.

There were, besides, enormous difficulties on the subject of the important place Torgau, to the cession of which Austria was most strongly opposed, whilst Lord Castlereagh treated it as a bagatelle. The military chiefs in Austria, judging quite differently, embittered and excited besides by the conduct of Russia and Prussia, began to demand war, and it required all the skill of M. de Metternich to prevent the Emperor himself from being drawn into their opinions. At last, after the most painful discussions, of which those alone who were actors or witnesses can form an idea, the counter-project was sent in on January 29. Prussia was offered 800,000 subjects in Saxony and 1,400,000 on the Rhine. Her population was thus increased to above 10,000,000 souls.

Although this most moderate counter-project was supported by England and France. Prussia made fresh objections and fresh demands. She admitted tacitly the principle of the division of Saxony, although she had never agreed to it in all its forms, but she found her share below her expectations. She insisted, amongst other things, on the acquisition of the town of Leipsic; the other Powers had decided not to cede this point. This difference would not have been settled at the time it was-it would perhaps have required a month or more of negotiations-if a particular and unforeseen circumstance had not brought it suddenly to a conclusion. This circumstance was the recall of Lord Castlereagh to

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London. This minister, not wishing to lose the results of his hard labour, and to leave Vienna without having arranged the Saxony affair, made some last attempts to accomplish his aim. He showed extraordinary activity and perseverance; he worked day and night, now with the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia, now with Prince Metternich and Prince Hardenberg, and he succeeded at last, on February 6, in coming to a definite understanding with the latter minister about the arrangement which terminated this great question. According to this arrangement, Saxony will be divided into two parts nearly equal, of which the one remaining to the King of Saxony is the most populous, that which falls to the lot of Prussia the largest in area. The King of Saxony keeps about 1,200,000 subjects, with Dresden, Leipsic, Bautzen, and all the frontier along Bohemia.

To console Prussia for Leipsic, which she has fought for with such ardour, the Emperor of Russia will give her Thorn with its environs, which in consequence will not be a free city like Cracow.

You will observe in all these arrangements there is no longer question of the King of Saxony, who would appear indispensable for the legitimate cession of so large a portion of his States. But the conduct maintained towards this unfortunate Sovereign is a blot on the history of the Congress.

It might have been predicted that Prussia and Russia, in consequence of their system of spoliation, would persist in treating the King of Saxony as a dethroned prince and a prisoner, and his kingdom as a conquered country. But that the English Government, adopting nearly the same manner of seeing and acting, only recognised in the discussions about Saxony a simple difference between Austria and Prussia, and declared

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the consent of the King superfluous to sanction the result of a negotiation to which he remained an absolute stranger,-this was a circumstance that would have been more difficult to predict, but which nevertheless occurred. Austria and France have for a long time supported the opposite principle, the only true and just one, and have never formally abandoned it; they have, however, ended by not insisting on it. It is therefore understood now that the King of Saxony is bound by the common decision of the great Powers, that he will be brought out of his state of captivity to be informed of the position which has been prepared for him and to propose to him to enter into possession of the states which remain, and in case he should not wish to agree to this arrangement, there will be a provisional government of the part of Saxony which belongs to him, reserving the ulterior disposition of it to his family. According to all the ideas which we have gathered up to the present time, we might believe that he will refuse everything, but those who know him best are secretly of opinion that he will accept; his best friends even advise him to take this line, and to await some event which the present state of things may lead to only too soon, to regain all his possessions or lose the rest.

My intention was only to give you a faithful history of the Congress. I abstain from any reflections which the dénouement of the affair might suggest, with the exception of presenting you with my general ideas on the relative situation in which the Congress of Vienna is about to leave the principal Powers of Europe. The only observation which I cannot help making is that the division of Saxony, entailing necessarily the ruin and despair of that country, will produce a painful

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sensation in Europe, and will be, as a political transaction, perhaps more badly thought of than the terrible partition of Poland was in its time.

The second object of territorial arrangement in Germany is that which relates to Bavaria.

Without being as important as the one I have just been considering, it is still not without difficulty or complication. Bavaria ought to give up to Austria (according to the treaty of Ried, concluded at the time when this Power acceded to the coalition) all that she had gained in the wars of 1805 and 1809, obtaining for this satisfactory indemnities.

One part of this engagement is fulfilled. Bavaria has restored Tyrol and the Vorarlberg, and has received, as an equivalent, the former Grand Duchy of Wurzburg, and the greater part of that of Frankfort. She is still in possession of two provinces of Upper Austria and of the Principality of Salzburg. The provinces of Upper Austria are fertile and productive, the revenue of which, under Bavarian administration, more severe, but much better organised than the Austrian, yields nearly 3,000,000 florins.

She demands now as indemnity for these countries 670,000 subjects to be taken from the possessions of the King of Wurtemberg, the Grand Duke of Baden, the Grand Duke and the Elector of Hesse, these princes to be indemnified by other arrangements on the banks of the Rhine. This difficulty would be still to overcome. But there is another, much more serious, arising from the promise that Austria has made, to procure for her the Town of Mayence in exchange for Salzburg, independently of any other indemnity. Prussia and all the rest of Germany, specially excited against Bavaria, unanimously opposed this arrangement. At first Prussia

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wished to keep Mayence (occupied by a mixed garrison of Austrians and Prussians) for herself, and demanded it with much arrogance. They have, however, withdrawn this pretension, and they are now satisfied that Mayence should be declared to belong to the German federation, as formerly did the fortresses of the empire (Philippsbourg, Brisach, &c.). But, on the one hand, this federation is still only a vague project, and no one knows when, and in what condition it will be realised; and, on the other, what is more serious, Bavaria, notwithstanding her present intimate union with Austria, persists in not giving up Salzburg (a place which the Austrian Kingdom can no longer do without) unless Mayence is assured to her.

The formal debates on this thorny question will commence as soon as the affair of Saxony is definitely terminated. There will be great storms yet.

The discussions on the Federal Constitution of Germany were broached at the beginning of the Congress. The Plenipotentiaries of Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Hanover, and Wurtemberg, formed the private Committee who dealt with it. But the numerous claims of the other Princes of Germany, and above all, the great tension which the affair of Saxony has established between Austria and Prussia, have interrupted this work, and since the 16th November it has been entirely suspended. It is proposed to resume it forthwith.

Affairs of Italy.

After the union of Genoa to Piedmont, the fate of Upper Italy is decided, except one single point, which regards the possession of the Duchies of Parma and Placentia. The right of the Empress Marie Louise to the possession of these two countries is clear and

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incontestable; they revert to her by virtue of the famous treaty of the 11th April 1814, which the allied Powers signed with Napoleon, and which has been since sanctioned by the Royal Government of France. On the other hand, the Queen of Tuscany and her son, deprived by the despotism of Napoleon of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, which had been given to their family in compensation for Parma and Placentia, have doubtless some indemnity to claim. Spain defends her rights with much zeal, often even with a haughtiness which little agrees with her extreme feebleness. To France, the second in this affair, the re-establishment of one more branch of the Bourbons in Italy is a subject of great interest. They had at first cast their eyes on a part of the Legations, of which they might dispose without scruple; the predecessor of the present Pope having formally ceded them by the Treaty of Tolentino. But the difficulties which were foreseen on the part of the Pope and the solemn protestation of the Queen of Tuscany,--a very devout Princess, who will not touch territory belonging to the Church;--probably also, the secret influence of France, who likes to see this branch of the Bourbons better at Parma than at Ravenna, seem to have made them abandon that project. The Empress is now offered a pecuniary revenue, double or triple that which Parma and Placentia yield her; she has even been offered the Ionian Islands; but this is evidently only a pretence, for they know quite well that England, in possession of these Islands, and guarding them under pretence of preserving them as an indemnity for the King of Sicily, will never yield.

Up to the present time the affair of Parma has not been regularly in train, the discussions with Russia and Prussia having absorbed all the time of the Ministers

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Her turn will soon come. Opinions, even at the Court of Vienna, are divided on this affair. Some, and I am of the number, maintain that it will be inconvenient to deprive the Emperor's daughter of that possession, and dangerous for the future to give it to a Princess who will be under the immediate protection of the Bourbons. Others maintain that with the exception of Placentia, - a military station of the first importance for the defence of our Italian provinces, - Austria might let these provinces go, and that a considerable appanage would be more convenient to the Empress, and especially to the future condition of her son, who, after having seemed destined to govern the half of Europe, would be happier as a rich private individual, than to be reduced to the slender inheritance of a small State of 280,000 souls. Nevertheless, everyone is agreed that we cannot do without Placentia.

The boundaries of the Pope's territory are still subject to many uncertainties. For, on the one hand, they dispute about a part of the Legations, Austria considering the possession of Ferrara as indispensable for the safety of her frontiers, and having offered to the Queen of Tuscany only a part of the same Legations; on the side of Naples, the Pope is for ever deprived of that which is called the Marches, a country which contains a population of 400,000 souls, and one of the first places of Italy, Ancona, the key of the Adriatic. This occupation of the Marches is directly connected with a subject, on which I must enter more fully.

Among the questions which relate to Italy, the most problematical, the most difficult in general, and the most critical for Austria in particular, is without contradiction the question of Naples. This question will bring in a short time great disputes and great collisions

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between the Powers; and if we are not delivered by some unforeseen accident, I fear that this alone will render the last part of the Congress still more painful and more stormy than even the first part has been.

Austria signed on April 10, 1814, a treaty of friendship and alliance with the King of Naples, by which she solemnly promised him help against all his enemies. The relations established by this treaty have guided Austria up to the present time in all her proceedings with the Government; and the Emperor himself has declared and confirmed on all occasions that he would never abandon the King of Naples. All the allies of Austria, at the time she formed these engagements, knew of and approved them; the ministers of England even made corrections in the Act of the treaty, and, in signing on the same basis an indefinite armistice with the King of Naples, declared that peculiar circumstances alone prevented them from signing the peace in due form. The French Government itself, by comprehending in the Treaty of Paris 'the allies of Austria,' without excepting the King of Naples, or without ever making mention of him in any of the negotiations of that time, appeared tacitly to recognise him.

By a secret article of the Treaty of January 11, 1814, an article specially approved by the English ministers, there was stipulated in favour of the King of Naples an increase of territory amounting to four hundred thousand souls in population, to be taken from the possessions of the Pope. In virtue of this stipulation, the King of Naples, after having evacuated and restored to the Pope all the rest of his States, continued to occupy the Marches. Nevertheless, shortly before the Congress, the Pope had opened a negotiation with this sovereign with a view to the restitution of the

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Marches; and the King, advised by Austria to arrange the best possible terms with the Pope, was on the point of yielding, reserving only to himself the military occupation of Ancona up to the end of the Congress, when all at once the Pope, directed by the Bourbon party, declared to him that he could not recognise him as a King before being informed of the intention of the other Powers.

The Congress had hardly assembled, when the plenipotentiaries of France and Spain expressed themselves very forcibly on the necessity of restoring the throne of Naples to the legitimate sovereign of that country. The question of knowing whether the plenipotentiaries of King Joachim would be admitted to the Congress or not was rather eluded than decided; means were found of escaping from this question, by admitting without distinction all the full powers presented at the Congress, and not joining the commission which was to judge of the legality of these full powers. The question of Naples was never directly approached; when anyone touched upon it by chance in the Conferences, M. de Metternich contented himself with declaring that Austria having concluded a treaty with King Joachim, he could not discuss that question. Lord Castlereagh, every time it was presented to him, seemed to be walking on hot coals; he would not declare for or against, fearing to commit himself in either case; and he departed from Vienna without ever giving a decided opinion on the subject.

Now that the great questions of Poland and Saxony are decided, we can foresee that the Ministers of France and Spain will attack the subject of Naples with much vigour.....

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