

essentially pacific, Allowances would have been made for the Situation in which a new Government must be placed after so dreadful and extensive a Convulsion as that which has been produced by the *French* Revolution. But His Majesty has unfortunately had too much Reason to observe, and to lament, that the System of Violence, Aggression, and Aggrandisement, which characterised the Proceedings of the different Governments of *France* during the War, has been continued with as little Disguise since its Termination. They have continued to keep a *French* Army in *Holland* against the Will and in Defence of the Remonstrances of the *Batavian* Government, and in Repugnance of the Letter of Three Solemn Treaties. They have, in a Period of Peace, invaded the Territory, and violated the Independence of the Swiss Nation, in Defence of the Treaty of *Lunewille*, which had stipulated the Independence of their Territory, and the Right of the Inhabitants to chuse their own Form of Government. They have annexed to the Dominions of *France*, *Piedmont*, *Parma*, and *Placentia*, and the Island of *Elba*, without allotting any Provision to the King of *Sardinia*, whom they have despoiled of the most valuable Part of his Territory, though they were bound, by a solemn Engagement to the Emperor of *Russia*, to attend to his Interests and to provide for his Establishment. It may, indeed, with Truth be asserted, that the Period which has elapsed since the Conclusion of the Definitive Treaty, has been marked with one continued Series of Aggression, Violence, and Insult on the Part of the *French* Government.

In the Month of *October* last, His Majesty was induced, in consequence of the earnest Solicitation of the *Swiss* Nation, to make an Effort, by a Representation to the *French* Government, to avert the Evils which were then impending over that Country. This Representation was couched in the most temperate Terms; and Measures were taken by His Majesty for ascertaining, under the Circumstances which then existed, the real Situation and Wishes of the *Swiss* Cantons, as well as the Sentiments of the other Cabinets of *Europe*. His Majesty learned, however, with the utmost Regret, that no Disposition to counteract these repeated Infractions of Treaties and Acts of Violence was manifested by any of the Powers most immediately interested in preventing them; and His Majesty therefore felt that, with respect to these Objects, His single Efforts could not be expected to produce any considerable Advantage to those in whose Favor they might be exerted.

It was about this Time that the *French* Government first distinctly advanced the Principle, that His Majesty had no Right to complain of the Conduct, or to interfere with the Proceedings of *France*, on any Point which did not form a Part of the Stipulations of the Treaty of *Amiens*. That Treaty was unquestionably founded upon the same Principle as every other antecedent Treaty or Convention, on the Assumption of the State of Possession and of Engagements subsisting at the Time of its Conclusion; and if that State of Possession and of Engagements is materially affected by the voluntary Act of any of the Parties, so as to prejudice the Condition on which the other Party has entered into the Contract, the Change so made may be considered as operating virtually as a Breach of the

Treaty itself, and as giving the Party aggrieved a Right to demand Satisfaction or Compensation for any substantial Difference which such Acts may have effected in their relative Situations; but whatever may be the Principle on which the Treaty is to be considered as founded, there is indisputably a *General Law of Nations*, which, though liable to be limited, explained, or restrained by *Conventional Law*, is antecedent to it, and is that Law or Rule of Conduct to which all Sovereigns and States have been accustomed to appeal, where *Conventional Law* is admitted to have been silent. The Treaty of *Amiens*, and every other Treaty, in providing for the Objects to which it is particularly directed, does not therefore assume or imply an Indifference to all other Objects which are not specified in its Stipulations; much less does it adjudge them to be of a Nature to be left to the Will and Caprice of the Violent and the Powerful. The Justice of the Cause alone is a sufficient Ground to warrant the Interposition of any of the Powers of *Europe* in the Differences which may arise between other States; and the Application and Extent of that just Interposition is to be determined solely by Considerations of Prudence. These Principles can admit of no Dispute; but if the new and extraordinary Pretension advanced by the *French* Government to exclude His Majesty from any Right to interfere with respect to the Concerns of other Powers, unless they made a specific Part of the Stipulations of the Treaty of *Amiens*, was that which it was possible to maintain, those Powers would have a Right, at least, to claim the Benefit of this Principle in every Case of Difference between the Two Countries. The Indignation of all *Europe* must surely then be excited by the Declarations of the *French* Government, that, in the Event of Hostilities, these very Powers, who were no Parties to the Treaty of *Amiens*, and who were not allowed to derive any Advantage from the Remonstrances of His Majesty in their Behalf, are nevertheless to be made the Victims of a War which is alleged to arise out of the same Treaty, and are to be sacrificed in a Contest which they not only have not occasioned, but which they have had no Means whatever of preventing.

His Majesty judged it most expedient, under the Circumstances which then affected *Europe*, to abstain from a Recurrence to Hostilities on Account of the Views of Ambition and Acts of Aggression manifested by *France* on the Continent; yet an Experience of the Character and Dispositions of the *French* Government could not fail to impress His Majesty with a Sense of the Necessity of increased Vigilance in guarding the Rights and Dignity of His Crown, and in protecting the Interests of His People.

Whilst His Majesty was actuated by these Sentiments, He was called upon by the *French* Government to evacuate the Island of *Malta*. His Majesty had manifested, from the Moment of the Signature of the Definitive Treaty, an anxious Disposition to carry into full Effect the Stipulations of the Treaty of *Amiens* relative to that Island. As soon as he was informed that an Election of a Grand Master had taken place, under the Auspices of the Emperor of *Russia*, and that it had been agreed by the different Priorities assembled at *St. Peterburgh* to acknowledge the Person whom the