

ment of the pecuniary claims of this country upon the Court of Vienna.

His Majesty has directed that a copy of this Convention shall be laid before you, and He relies on your assistance for the execution of some of its provisions.

Anxiously as His Majesty deprecated the commencement of the war in Spain, He is every day more satisfied that in the strict neutrality which He determined to observe in that contest (and which you so cordially approved), He best consulted the true interests of His people.

With respect to the provinces of America which have declared their separation from Spain, His Majesty's conduct has been open and consistent; and His opinions have been at all times frankly avowed to Spain and to other Powers.

His Majesty has appointed Consuls to reside at the principal ports and places of those provinces, for the protection of the trade of His subjects.

As to any further measures, His Majesty has reserved to Himself an unfettered discretion, to be exercised as the circumstances of those countries, and the interests of His own people, may appear to His Majesty to require.

*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

His Majesty has directed us to inform you that the estimates for the year are prepared and shall be forthwith laid before you.

The numerous points at which, under present circumstances, His Majesty's naval force is necessarily distributed, and the occasion which has arisen for strengthening His garrisons in the West Indies, have rendered unavoidable some augmentation of His establishments by sea and land.

His Majesty has, however, the gratification of believing, that notwithstanding the increase of expence incident to these augmentations, it will still be in your power, after providing for the services of the year, to make arrangements in some parts of our system of taxation, which may afford relief to certain important branches of the national industry.

*My Lords and Gentlemen,*

His Majesty has commanded us to acquaint you, that He has not been inattentive to the desire expressed by the House of Commons in the last Session of Parliament, that means should be devised for ameliorating the condition of the negro slaves in the West Indies.

His Majesty has directed the necessary information relating to this subject to be laid before you.

His Majesty is confident that you will afford your best attention and assistance to any proposition which may be submitted to you for promoting the moral improvement of the negroes, by an extended plan of religious instruction, and by such other measures as may gradually conduce to the same end.

But His Majesty earnestly recommends to you to treat this whole subject with the calmness and the discretion which it demands.

It is a subject perplexed with difficulties which no sudden effort can disentangle.

To excite exaggerated expectations in those who are the objects of your benevolence would be as fatal to their welfare as to that of their employers: and His Majesty assures Himself you will bear in mind, that in the correction of a long-standing and complicated system, in which the fortunes and the safety of large classes of His Majesty's subjects are involved, that course of proceeding is alone likely to attain practical good, and to avoid aggravation of evil, in which due regard shall be paid to considerations of justice, and in which caution shall temper zeal.

*Whitehall, February 4, 1824.*

The King has been pleased to order a *congé d'elire* to the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Lichfield, empowering them to elect a Bishop of the See of Lichfield and Coventry, now void by the death of James Earl Cornwallis, late Bishop thereof; and His Majesty has also been pleased to recommend to the said Dean and Chapter the Right Reverend Father in God Doctor Henry Ryder, Lord Bishop of Gloucester, to be by them elected Bishop of the said See of Lichfield and Coventry.

*Whitehall, February 4, 1824.*

The King has been pleased to constitute and appoint the Right Honourable Robert Viscount Melville, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle; Sir William Johnstone Hope, Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, and Vice-Admiral of the Blue Squadron of His Majesty's Fleet; Sir George Cockburn, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, and Vice-Admiral of the Blue Squadron of His Majesty's Fleet; Sir George Clerk, Bart.; and William Robert Keith Douglas, Esq. to be His Majesty's Commissioners for executing the office of High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dominions, islands, and territories thereunto belonging.