

BRITISH DIPLOMACY
1813-1815

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1813-1815

SELECT DOCUMENTS DEALING
WITH THE RECONSTRUCTION OF
EUROPE

EDITED BY

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TO
M. le COMMANDANT M. H. WELL
IN TOKEN OF
FRIENDSHIP AND ADMIRATION

PRÉFACE.

This book has been produced in response to requests from those interested in the subject with which it is concerned, and in particular from the Board of Studies in Modern History of Cambridge University. Present events have induced many to take a lively interest in the only European settlement which can at all compare in extent and importance with that of our own day. The period is, however, not one which is easily studied. The *Castlereagh Correspondence* and the *Wellington Supplementary Dispatches* contain a large quantity of information, but these works are often inaccessible to students. Moreover, much of their contents is unintelligible without reference to the unpublished material in the Record Office, while the absence of editing makes it difficult to understand their meaning. In many cases, for example, dispatches are wrongly dated, and thus the whole of their intention rendered obscure.

I have attempted, therefore, to make a selection of the most important dispatches and Memoranda of the period from the published or unpublished material available. Perhaps fifty or sixty thousand documents have been consulted for this purpose, and it is obvious that the task of selection was no easy one. My choice was governed mainly by the desire to confine attention to the main picture, and thus I have had rigorously to exclude correspondence on the details of the subordinate questions. There is little in this work, therefore, about the Spanish, Italian, Swedish, or Dutch affairs, except in so far as they influence the broad lines of the settlement. For the same reason I have had to exclude the negotiations with the United States at Ghent, interesting and important as they are, as being outside the principle events of the time.

In order to facilitate reference, each document has been given a number in Roman figures; its source has also been stated. With a view to economising space I have abbreviated many of the documents, where necessary, enclosing in square brackets a short précis of the portion left out. The same process has been applied to the long Memoranda, a knowledge of whose

contents is necessary for the understanding of the diplomacy, but which are often terribly prolix and involved. In this portion of the work I was much assisted by my secretary, Miss E. Kidwell. The dispatches have also been modernised in spelling and punctuation in the manner of those previously printed.

I have endeavoured to confine the notes to the explanation of facts and references which might assist the student to understand the content of the dispatches, but, as about half the book is selected from unpublished documents, I have occasionally allowed myself the luxury of making observations, which I hope may be of some use to scholars who may be interested in the new material which is here printed. Some of it has been known in extract, and, in particular, part of that concerned with the Congress of Vienna was published as an appendix to an article in the Transactions of the Royal Historical Society. I have not thought it necessary to indicate where such well-known writers as Oncken, Fyffe, and Professor Alison Phillips have referred to dispatches here published *in extenso*. My obligations to their works is, of course, immense.

The *Introduction* is intended rather to suggest ideas to the student than to provide him with information. The general history of the period can be studied in the works of the writers mentioned above, while I have myself attempted a survey of the diplomacy of the time in my *Congress of Vienna*, and more particularly with reference to Great Britain, in the forthcoming *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*. It seemed, therefore, superfluous to include a narrative of events in this book.

I have to thank Professor H. W. C. Davis, Professor Holland Rose, Mr. C. R. Cruttwell, and Mr. H. W. V. Temperley for advice on various points, for which I am deeply grateful, and I should like once more to record my appreciation of the kindness of all at the Record Office, particularly Mr. Hall and Mr. Headlam.

I have throughout studiously avoided comparison with the events of our own day. The period does, indeed, contain lessons of the greatest importance to this generation, but it is not the province of the historian, as such, to make the necessary deductions.

CONTENTS

NUMBER	PAGE
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxv
INTRODUCTION	xxvii—xlvii
PART I. THE PREPARATION OF THE ALLIANCE.	
(1) CORRESPONDENCE OF VISCOUNT CATHCART, 1813	1—63
I. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, April 8th, 1813 Forwards Pitt's despatch of January 19th, 1805, and directs him to remind the Tsar of its contents.	1
II. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, April 9th, 1813 Instructs him to press for the consent of Prussia to the incorporation of various territories in Hanover.	2
III. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, April 20th, 1813 Comments on the difficulties raised by the Treaty of Breslau.	3
IV. CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, June 1st, 1813 Reports his offer to Nesselrode of money to bribe Austrian statesmen.	4
V. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, June 30th, 1813 Instructs him to open direct negotiations with Metternich.	5
VI. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, July 5th, 1813 Transmits his views on the Tsar's wish to negotiate. Great Britain will not separate herself from her Allies, but insists on certain conditions.	6
VII. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, July 6th, 1813 Urges care lest a Continental peace is con- cluded, and insists that the Allies must not shrink from reopening hostilities, if their terms are refused.	10
VIII. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, July 13th, 1813 Authorises the acceptance of the Austrian mediation.	12
IX. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, July 13th, 1813 Instructs him to inform the Tsar that Great Britain will surrender Colonial conquests in return for Continental equivalents.	13
X. CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, July 14th, 1813 Instructs him to insist that Maritime questions must be excluded from the peace negotiations, and that no foreign inter- vention can be admitted in the American war.	14

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
XI.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, July 14th, 1813 Points out that the cession of Colonial conquests depends on the nature of the Continental peace.	15
XII.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, August 5th, 1813 Reports that the Tsar considers his mediation in the American war at an end, and sends compliments to the British Government.	15
XIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, August 7th, 1813 Urges that events in Spain require Austria to raise her terms, and emphasises the necessity of Allied unity.	16
XIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Sept. 1st, 1813 Desires him to ascertain the basis of the Alliance between the three Great Powers, and warns him against their secrecy.	18
XV.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Sept. 18th, 1813 Reviews the engagements of the Allies, and instructs him to propose the signature of a Treaty of Alliance, Offensive and Defensive, against France. <i>Encloses, Projet of a Treaty of Alliance.</i>	19
XVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Sept. 18th, 1813 Sketches Secret Articles for the proposed Treaty. <i>Encloses, Projet of Secret Articles.</i>	25
XVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Sept. 18th, 1813 Emphasises the importance and urgency of the Treaty of Alliance.	27
XVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Sept. 21st, 1813 Deprecates the concealment of the acceptance of the Austrian mediation from Metternich and protests against the useless negotiations with Napoleon.	29
XIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Sept. 27th, 1813 Cautions him, after a conversation with Lieven, against allowing either the Maritime question or the American war to be discussed in connection with the Treaty of Alliance.	31
XX.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Oct. 14th, 1813 Urges the necessity of stirring up the national spirit against Napoleon.	34
XXI.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Oct. 30th, 1813 Reports the difficulty of opening the negotiations for the Treaty of Alliance.	35
XXII.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 10th, 1813 Reports the Tsar's views on the overture to St. Aignan.	36
XXIII.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 11th, 1813 States the conditions made by the Tsar for his consent to the Treaty of Alliance, and his own protests.	37

CONTENTS

ix

NUMBER		PAGE
XXIV.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 17th, 1813 Reports that the Tsar is ready to sign a Treaty with reference to Spain, but intends to refer the Treaty of Alliance to London.	39
XXV.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 24th, 1813 Announces the receipt of an answer from Napoleon to the Allied overture.	41
XXVI.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 28th, 1813 Comments on the relations of Metternich with the Tsar and their attitude towards the Treaty of Alliance.	43
XXVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Nov. 30th, 1813 Criticises the Tsar's objections to the Treaty of Alliance and urges its speedy conclusion.	45
XXVIII.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 4th, 1813 Reports the Tsar's readiness to sign the Treaty of Alliance if Metternich agrees, Lord Aberdeen's reserve, and the difficulties with regard to Sir Robert Wilson.	45
XXIX.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 5th, 1813 Announces the Tsar's intention to send Pozzo di Borgo to England to conclude the Treaty of Alliance in spite of Cathcart's protests.	48
XXX.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 9th, 1813 Reports Sir Charles Stewart's indignation at Pozzo di Borgo's mission and his differences with his colleagues.	51
XXXI.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 12th, 1813 Transmits Metternich's reply to Napoleon, and states the objections of the Tsar and Metternich to the Treaty of Alliance.	55
XXXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Dec. 18th, 1813 States his indignation at the Tsar's proposals and his refusal to discuss the Treaty of Alliance with Lieven and Pozzo di Borgo, and defines the nature and extent of the Treaty.	56
XXXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO CATHCART, Dec. 22nd, 1813 Announces the decision of the Cabinet that Castlereagh should proceed to Headquarters.	62
(2) CORRESPONDENCE OF SIR CHARLES STEWART, 1813 . . . 63—93		
XXXIV.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, June 6th, 1813 Announces the signature of an armistice and states the reasons for it.	63
XXXV.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, June 6th, 1813 Comments on the difficulties of the situation.	65
XXXVI.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, June 16th, 1813 Explains Hardenberg's reasons for accepting the armistice, and the Austrian mediation.	66

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
XXXVII.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, June 16th, 1813 Discusses the intentions of Metternich, and the relations between Russia and Prussia.	69
XXXVIII.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, June 22nd, 1813 Reports the discussions between the Allies and Austria, and his own protests.	71
XXXIX.	JACKSON TO STEWART, July 27th, 1813 . Reports the events at Prague and his con- viction that war is almost certain.	72
XL.	JACKSON TO STEWART, August 2nd, 1813 . States the possibility of a Continental peace.	74
XLI.	JACKSON TO STEWART, August 7th, 1813 . Reports the determination of Austria to terminate the negotiations at Prague.	75
XLII.	JACKSON TO STEWART, August 12th, 1813 . Explains how he had been deceived as to the signing of the Treaty of Reichenbach.	76
XLIII.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, August 15th, 1813 Comments on the situation at the close of the armistice.	77
XLIV.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, August 20th, 1813 Reports Hardenberg's explanations as to why the Treaty of Reichenbach was concealed from the British Ambassadors, and a con- versation with Metternich.	77
XLV.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, Sept. 4th, 1813 Reports Allied differences on political and military matters.	80
XLVI.	JACKSON TO STEWART, September 17th, 1813 Reports conversations with the Prussian Ministers concerning the Treaty of Toeplitz (September 9th), which account for its limited scope.	81
XLVII.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, Sept. 21st, 1813 Explains the nature of the Treaty of Toeplitz.	84
XLVIII.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, Sept. 29th, 1813 Reports the desire of the Allies for peace.	85
XLIX.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, Oct. 21st, 1813 Comments on Cathcart's refusal to open the negotiations for the Treaty of Alliance at Leipsig.	86
L.	JACKSON TO STEWART, November 11th, 1813 Reports Hardenberg's objections to the over- ture to St. Aignan, but thinks that the Allied Powers are inclined to peace.	87
LI.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 24th, 1813 States that Prussia is ready to sign the Treaty Alliance.	88

CONTENTS

xi

NUMBER		PAGE
LII.	STEWART TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 28th, 1813 Criticises the overture to St. Aignan which omits Castlereagh's essential conditions.	88
LIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO STEWART, Dec. 17th, 1813 Points out that Stewart has misunderstood the nature of the negotiations with St. Aignan.	92
(3) CORRESPONDENCE OF THE EARL OF ABERDEEN, 1813 . . . 94—120		
LIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, August 6th, 1813 Instructs him generally as to his Mission.	94
LV.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, August 6th, 1813 Instructs him as to the Tyrol and Italy, where Murat's overtures are to be encouraged and Austrian influence supported.	94
LVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, August 6th, 1813 Allows him to agree to Murat retaining his Kingdom, if it is absolutely necessary.	96
LVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Sept. 21st, 1813 Regrets the concealment of Britain's acceptance of Austrian mediation, and directs him to assure Metternich of Castlereagh's support.	97
LVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Sept. 28th, 1813 Comments on the French note of August 18th, and insists on the necessity of not re-opening negotiations with Napoleon until he has accepted the Allied conditions.	98
LIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Oct. 15th, 1813 Approves his action as to Murat, but criticises Metternich, and urges the necessity of rousing the people against Napoleon.	102
LX.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Nov. 5th, 1813 Approves of the Treaty of Toeplitz, but urges the importance of the Treaty of Alliance.	106
LXI.	ABERDEEN TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 8th, 1813 Reports the decision to make an overture to Napoleon through St. Aignan.	107
LXII.	ABERDEEN TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 9th, 1813 Narrates the course of events at the interview with St. Aignan.	109
LXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Nov. 13th(i), 1813 Stresses the necessity of a strong peace and the especial importance of Antwerp to the safety of Great Britain.	111
LXIV.	ABERDEEN TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 28th, 1813 Transmits the French answer to the overture made through St. Aignan, and reports his protest against St. Aignan's insinuations.	112

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
LXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Nov. 30th, 1813 Approves of Aberdeen's conduct in taking part in the negotiations with St. Aignan.	114
LXVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Dec. 7th, 1813 Instructs him to enter a written protest against the French reply to the overture through St. Aignan.	116
LXVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Dec. 7th, 1813 Informs him of the uneasiness of the British Government, and urges the recognition of the Prince of Orange by the Allies.	117
LXVIII.	ABERDEEN TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 9th, 1813 Reports a conversation with Metternich concerning the Treaty of Alliance and the latter's reluctance to sign.	118
LXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO ABERDEEN, Dec. 22nd, 1813 Informs him of his intention to come to the Continent owing to the need of a 'central authority' there.	120
PART II. THE MAKING OF THE ALLIANCE AND THE FIRST PEACE OF PARIS, 1814.		
LXX.	MEMORANDUM OF CABINET, Dec. 26th, 1813 Instructions for Lord Castlereagh on his Mission to the Continent. Includes, <i>Memorandum on the Maritime Peace.</i>	123
LXXI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 30th, 1813 Deprecates encouraging a Bourbon Prince to go to the South of France.	128
LXXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 31st, 1813 Further on the same subject.	130
LXXIII.	CATHCART TO CASTLEREAGH, Jan. 16th, 1814 Transmits the Tsar's wish that Castlereagh will not commit himself before seeing him, and states his views.	131
LXXIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 22nd, 1814 Reports the results of interviews with the Allied Ministers, the difficulties as to the French dynasty, and the disposition of the conquered territories.	133
LXXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 22nd, 1814 States Metternich's views on the Dynastic question.	136
LXXVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 22nd, 1814 Reports a further interview with Metternich on the same subject.	137
LXXVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 29th, 1814 Reports a conversation with the Tsar at Langres on the Dynastic question and other difficult matters.	138

CONTENTS

xiii

NUMBER		PAGE
LXXXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 29th, 1814 Transmits the results of the deliberations of the Allied Ministers at Langres.	141
LXXXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 30th, 1814 Gives details as to the disputes among the Allies and the attitude of the Tsar.	144
LXXX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb. 6th, 1814 Reports discussions with the Allied repre- sentatives at Chatillon as to the proposed terms of peace.	146
LXXXI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb. 16th, 1814 Reports the suspension of the conferences at Chatillon and the subsequent discussions at Troyes, including a stormy interview with the Tsar. Encloses, <i>Castlereagh's Answer to the Austrian Queries.</i>	147
LXXXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb 18th, 1814 Reports the steps taken with regard to the Treaty of Alliance.	157
LXXXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb. 18th, 1814 Comments on a letter from Lieven which purported to transmit the views of the Prince Regent and Prime Minister on the attitude to be adopted towards Napoleon.	157
LXXXIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO METTERNICH, Feb. 18th, 1814. Protests against the Allied offer of an armistice.	158
LXXXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb. 26th, 1814 Reports the serious nature of the Allied disputes and the general desire for peace.	160
LXXXVI.	BATHURST TO CASTLEREAGH, Feb. 27th, 1814 Instructs him to regard the terms offered to Napoleon as a maximum, and suggests the issue of a Declaration.	161
LXXXVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Mar. 3rd, 1814 Reports the firm disposition of the Tsar, the position of Monsieur, and the appearance of Polish statesmen at Headquarters.	163
LXXXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Mar. 5th, 1814 Thanks him for support against Lieven, and reports the improvement of his relations with the Tsar.	164
LXXXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Mar. 10th, 1814 Announces the signature of the Treaty of Alliance at Chaumont.	165
XC.	CASTLEREAGH TO HAMILTON, Mar. 10th, 1814 Comments on the Treaty of Chaumont.	165

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
XCI.	BATHURST TO CASTLEREAGH, Mar. 19th, 1814 Approves the Treaty of Chaumont, but deprecates the prolongation of the negotiations at Chatillon.	166
XCII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Mar. 22nd, 1814 Announces the rupture of the Chaillon conference.	168
XCIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Mar. 22nd, 1814 Reports that the overtures concerning the Bourbons have at last been received from Paris, and the steps taken as a result.	168
XCIV.	BATHURST TO CASTLEREAGH, Mar. 22nd, 1814 Informs him that Bordeaux has declared for the Bourbons and instructs him to break off negotiations with Napoleon.	171
XCV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Mar. 30th, 1814 Reports the progress of the negotiations for the restoration of the Bourbons.	173
XCVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, April 4th, 1814 Reports details on the same subject and the Tsar's actions at Paris.	174
XCVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, April 13th, 1814 Announces his arrival at Paris and explains the necessity of the conclusion of the Treaty of Fontainebleau.	175
XCVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, April 19th, 1814 Outlines the proposed terms of peace.	177
XCIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, April 20th, 1814 Recommends that the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia should be invited to England as well as the Tsar.	178
C.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, May 5th, 1814 Explains the slowness of the negotiations at Paris.	180
CI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, May 5th, 1814 Reports details on the same subject, difficulties with Bentinck and Napoleon's reported desire to live in England.	180
CII.	CASTLEREAGH TO BENTINCK, May 7th, 1814 Urges him to be cautious in dealing with liberal movements in Italy.	181
CIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLESLEY, May 10th, 1814 Comments on Constitutional questions in Spain.	182
CIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, May 19th, 1814 Reports discussions with Talleyrand as to the Treaty of Peace.	183
CV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, May 23rd, 1814 Transmits a rough draft of the Treaty of Peace.	185

CONTENTS

XV

PART III. THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA, 1814-15.

NUMBER		PAGE
CVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, August 7th, 1814 Instructs him to ascertain the views of the French Government on the questions of Poland and Naples.	189
CVII.	WELLINGTON TO CASTLEREAGH, August 18th, 1814 Urges him to visit Paris on his way to Vienna.	190
CVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Sept. 3rd, 1814 Reports the results of his interviews with Talleyrand and Louis XVIII. at Paris.	191
CIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Sept. 24th 1814 Describes the opening meetings of the Four Powers at Vienna and the difficulties which have arisen as to the organisation of the Congress.	193
CX.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, Oct. 1st, 1814 Forwards Prussian Memoranda on the distribution of territory in Germany, and asks for his opinion on the strategic questions involved.	195
CXI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 2nd, 1814 Reports an interview with the Tsar concerning the Polish question.	197
CXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 2nd, 1814 Reports a conversation with Nesselrode on the same subject	199
CXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 9th, 1814 Gives an account of his attempt to get Austria and Prussia to combine in opposing Russia's Polish plans.	201
CXIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 9th, 1814 Reports a meeting of the ministers of the Four Powers and Talleyrand, and announces the postponement of the opening of the Congress.	202
CXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 9th, 1814 Describes an interview with Talleyrand for the purpose of urging him to abandon his factious attitude, and to support Castlereagh on the Polish question.	203
CXVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 14th, 1814 Forwards his correspondence with Hardenberg concerning Saxony and reports another interview with the Tsar on the Polish question Encloses : <i>First Memorandum on the Polish Question.</i>	206
CXVII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Oct. 14th, 1814 Urges that the less Great Britain has to do with the Polish question the better. Encloses : <i>Memorandum respecting Poland.</i>	210

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
CXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 20th, 1814 Reports that Austria's answer to Prussia is still delayed.	211
CXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 24th, 1814 Describes the agreement of Austria and Prussia over Saxony and the attitude of Talleyrand. Encloses: <i>Memorandum on the best method of handling the Polish Question.</i>	212
CXX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 25th, 1814 Announces that no answer has been received from Talleyrand to Britain's offer concerning the abolition of the Slave Trade, and describes his intentions as to that question.	215
CXXI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 25th, 1814 Describes the attitude of Talleyrand on the Saxon question.	216
CXXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, October 25th, 1814 Urges the necessity of France sacrificing Saxony in order to unite the German Powers against Russia.	217
CXXIII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Oct. 28th, 1814 States the opinion of the Cabinet that Great Britain has done enough on the Polish question Encloses: <i>Memorandum by Mr. Vansittart.</i>	219
CXXIV.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 2nd, 1814 Describes the difficulties of the Government.	221
CXXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Nov. 5th, 1814 Reports the receipt of an answer by the Tsar to his Memorandum on Poland, and the necessity of replying to it. Encloses: <i>Russian Memorandum on Poland.</i> <i>Second British Memorandum on the Polish Question.</i>	222
CXXVI.	WELLINGTON TO CASTLEREAGH, November 5th, 1814 Reports an interview with Blacas for the purpose of protesting against Talleyrand's conduct at Vienna.	227
CXXVII.	WELLINGTON TO CASTLEREAGH, November 7th, 1814 Reports the success of his intervention at Paris.	228
CXXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Nov. 11th, 1814 Describes the failure of his efforts on the Polish question and explains the motives of his policy.	229
CXXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Nov. 21st, 1814 On the abolition of the Slave Trade. Encloses: <i>Memorandum as to the mode of conducting the negotiations in Congress for the final abolition of the Slave Trade.</i>	233

CONTENTS

xvii

NUMBER		PAGE
CXXX.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 18th, 1814 Warns him of the strong feeling in England concerning Saxony.	235
CXXXI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Nov. 21st, 1814 Explains the organisation of the Congress.	236
CXXXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Nov. 21st, 1814 Reports the refusal of Prussia to make an official remonstrance on the Polish question.	238
CXXXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Nov. 21st, 1814 Shows the effect of the failure of the Polish negotiations on the question of Saxony.	240
CXXXIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, November 21st, 1814 States that his proceedings at Paris have had a considerable effect on Talleyrand's conduct.	241
CXXXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Nov. 25th, 1814 Defends his conduct as a mediator in the Polish question. Encloses: <i>Second Russian Memorandum on Poland.</i>	242
CXXXVI.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 25th, 1814 States the apprehensions of the Cabinet as to the Polish question and urges the necessity of avoiding a European war.	244
CXXXVII.	LIVERPOOL TO WELLINGTON, Nov. 26th, 1814 On the same subject.	246
CXXXVIII.	BATHURST TO CASTLEREAGH, Nov. 27th, 1814 Approves of his firm attitude at Vienna, but instructs him on no account to involve his country in hostilities.	247
CXXXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 5th, 1814 Reports the complete failure of Hardenberg's attempt to settle the Polish question and the difficult position of Austria in consequence.	248
CXL.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 5th, 1814 Explains the various courses of action possible and suggests that of Armed mediation by Great Britain and France.	251
CXLI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 7th, 1814 Describes an interview with Hardenberg for the purpose of withdrawing his consent to Prussia's claim to Saxony and one with Metternich to urge moderation.	255
CXLII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 17th, 1814 Reports an explosion amongst the three Eastern Powers owing to the revelation of confidential letters.	257
CXLIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 18th, 1814 Describes a scheme for assigning an indemnity to the King of Saxony on the Rhine, and Castlereagh's refusal to mediate in the Saxon question except on conditions.	260

CONTENTS

NUMBER	PAGE
CXLIV. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 18th, 1814	261
Recommends that Murat should be deprived of his Kingdom and be offered a pecuniary indemnity.	
Encloses: <i>Castlereagh's Projet respecting Murat.</i>	
CXLV. LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 22nd, 1814	263
Authorises him to support officially the formation of Russian Poland into a Kingdom with a constitution.	
CXLVI. LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 23rd, 1814	264
Stresses the difficulty of acting against Murat unless absolutely necessary.	
CXLVII. LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Dec. 23rd, 1814	265
Agrees to a <i>rapprochement</i> with France but reserves the decision of the Cabinet on the question of a joint Armed mediation.	
CXLVIII. LIVERPOOL TO WELLINGTON, Dec. 23rd, 1814	267
Authorises him to approach the French Government confidentially with regard to joint action with Great Britain.	
CXLIX. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 24th, 1814	268
Reports a discussion with the Prussian and Russian statesmen in which he refuses to agree to the scheme of transferring the King of Saxony to the Rhine.	
CL. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 25th, 1814	271
Reports attempts at conciliation and the decision to open the Polish question officially.	
CLI. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 25th, 1814	272
Reports better hopes of a settlement.	
CLII. WELLINGTON TO LIVERPOOL, Dec. 25th, 1814	273
Urges the necessity of action against Murat.	
CLIII. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 1st, 1815	274
Reports an interview with the Tsar concerning the Slave Trade.	
CLIV. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 1st, 1815	276
Describes the insistence of Austria and Great Britain that France should be admitted to the formal discussions on Saxony, and the refusal of Prussia and Russia to agree.	
CLV. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 1st, 1815	277
Describes the menacing language of the Prussians, and his resolve in consequence to sign a Treaty of Defensive Alliance with France and Austria.	
CLVI. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 1st, 1815	279
Reports the agreement of Talleyrand and Metternich to his <i>Projet</i> of a Treaty of Defensive Alliance.	
CLVII. CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 2nd, 1815	280
Defends the signing of the Treaty and states his expectation that Prussia will give way.	

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
CLVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 3rd, 1815 Reports that Prussia has given way on the point of admitting France to the discussions on Saxony.	280
CLIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 4th, 1815 Insists that it is impossible for Wellington to replace him at Vienna until the present discussions are closed.	281
CLX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 5th, 1815 Reports an interview with Hardenberg in which Castlereagh again refuses to consent to the transference of the King of Saxony to the Rhine.	282
CLXI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 8th, 1815 Describes a conciliatory interview with the Tsar on the same subject.	283
CLXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 11th, 1815 Reports that he has insisted that the Great Powers shall be the final judges on the Saxon question.	285
CLXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 11th, 1815 Reports his insertion in the Protocol of a Note recommending liberal treatment of the Poles. Encloses: <i>Circular to the Plenipotentiaries of the Conference as to Poland.</i>	287
CLXIV.	LIVERPOOL TO WELLINGTON, Jan. 11th, 1815 Agrees to operations against Murat but objects to Great Britain taking part in them.	288
CLXV.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Jan. 16th, 1815 Urges the necessity of his return to England	290
CLXVI.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Jan. 16th, 1815 Requests him to move a formal protest concerning Polish independence.	290
CLXVII.	BATHURST TO CASTLEREAGH, January 18th, 1815 Approves of the Treaty of January 3rd, 1815.	291
CLXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 22nd, 1815 Describes the steps taken to prevent Austria abusing the advantages of the Treaty.	292
CLXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 29th, 1815 Reports that after further discussion Metternich has given way and that Castlereagh has prepared the way for him in interviews with Hardenberg and the Tsar.	294
CLXX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Jan. 29th, 1815 Reports that Talleyrand has been informed of British views as to Murat but that no action is to be taken until the German question is settled.	298
CLXXI.	CASTLEREAGH TO BATHURST, Jan. 30th, 1815 Explains why he could not leave Vienna and asks him not to give money to the Continental Powers.	299

xix

PAGE

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
CLXXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb. 6th, 1815 Reports that agreement has at last been obtained on all territorial matters North of the Alps, owing to concessions by the Tsar, Holland, and Hanover.	299
CLXXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb. 13th, 1815 Describes the acquisitions of Hanover.	303
CLXXIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Feb. 13th, 1815 Describes his proposal to issue a Declaration specially guaranteeing the arrangements agreed upon at Vienna.	303
CLXXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO ROBERT LISTON, February 14th, 1815 Urging the Porte to take advantage of the Tsar's offer to include the Ottoman Domin- ions in the Guarantee.	305
CLXXVI.	CIRCULAR LETTER TO BRITISH AMBASSADORS, February 13th, 1815 Informs them of the settlement at Vienna and the proposal of Guarantee.	306
CLXXVII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Feb. 20th, 1815 Warns him of the difficulties of acting against Murat.	307
CLXXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, February 28th, 1815 Reports the success of his interview with Louis XVIII. concerning the Italian questions.	308
CLXXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, March 12th, 1815 Urges the Allies to issue a Declaration against Napoleon, and to put the Treaty of Chau- mont into force.	309
CLXXX.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, March 12th, 1815 Instructs him as to the course to take towards any attempt to remove Murat.	310
CLXXXI.	WELLINGTON TO CASTLEREAGH, March 12th, 1815 Describes the military preparations of the Allies.	312
CLXXXII.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, March 16th, 1815 Warns him that Great Britain cannot under- take openly to restore Louis XVIII.	313
CLXXXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, March 24th, 1815 Announces the receipt of an overture from Murat and authorises him to come to an arrangement with him.	314

CONTENTS

xxi

NUMBER		PAGE
CLXXXIV.	WELLINGTON TO CASTLEREAGH, March 25th, 1815	316
	Reports the signature of the Treaty of March 25th, and the urgent need of the Allies for subsidies.	
CLXXXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, March 26th, 1815	317
	Urges him to arrange a system to prevent France from being indiscriminately pillaged by the Allied troops.	
CLXXXVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, March 27th, 1815	318
	Warns him that the Treaty of January 3rd, 1815, is probably known to Napoleon.	
CLXXXVII.	CLANCARTY TO CASTLEREAGH, March 29th, 1815	318
	Encloses: <i>Note of a Communication from the Duke of Wellington as to the state of the negotiations at Vienna.</i>	
CLXXXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, April 8th, 1815	319
	Explains the necessity of the British Government adding a declaration to the Treaty of March 25th, 1815.	
CLXXXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO CLANCARTY, April 8th, 1815	320
	On the same subject.	
CXC.	CLANCARTY TO CASTLEREAGH, April 8th, 1815	321
	Explains his reasons for not acting on Castlereagh's instructions as to Murat.	
CXCI.	CASTLEREAGH TO CLANCARTY, April 12th, 1815	322
	Explains the rights of the young Napoleon under the Treaty of Fontainebleau, and the necessity of attributing their forfeiture to the return of Napoleon.	
CXCII.	CLANCARTY TO CASTLEREAGH, April 15th, 1815	324
	Defends his objections to the new Declaration against Napoleon.	
CXCIII.	CLANCARTY TO CASTLEREAGH, April 15th, 1815	325
	Reports further details on the same subject, and an interview with the Tsar, who showed himself very hostile to the Bourbons.	
CXCIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO WELLINGTON, April 16th, 1815	330
	Explains that the British Government cannot support Louis XVIII. officially but prefers him to the Duke of Orleans.	

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
CXCV.	CLANCARTY TO CASTLEREAGH, May 6th, 1815 Reports the attitude of the Allied Powers towards the future Government of France.	331
CXCVI.	CLANCARTY TO CASTLEREAGH, May 13th, 1815 Explains his refusal to agree to the Tsar's proposal concerning the young Napoleon.	332
CXCVII.	CLANCARTY TO CASTLEREAGH, May 19th, 1815 Further on the same subject.	334
PART IV. THE SECOND PEACE OF PARIS.		
CXCVIII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, June 30th, 1815 A Memorandum of Instructions as to his procedure in France.	339
CXCIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 8th, 1815 Reports his action towards the Tsar, and his difficulties with the Prussians.	341
CC.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 12th, 1815 Explains the situation at Paris and the prob- ability that Great Britain will have to act as Napoleon's gaoler.	341
CCI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 14th, 1815 Reports the necessity of restraining the Allied soldiers and the intention of the Allies to exact big indemnities from France.	342
CCII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 14th, 1815 Explains the difficulty of punishing the 'traitors.'	344
CCIII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, July 15th, 1815 Agrees to keep Napoleon in custody, but deprecates any interference by the other Powers.	344
CCIV.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, July 15th, 1815 Urges severity towards France and stipulates for the temporary occupation of the Northern and Eastern frontiers.	345
CCV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 17th, 1815 Explains the difficulty of dealing with the 'traitors' and urges the necessity of a per- manent Treaty on the lines of that of March 25th, 1815.	347
CCVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 17th, 1815 States that the Allies wish Great Britain to guard Napoleon.	350
CCVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 24th, 1815 Describes the diversity of opinion amongst the Allies, and the tendency of the French Government to take advantage of it.	350
CCVIII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, July 28th, 1815 Advocates the policy of temporary occupation and urges the necessity of security against France.	351

CONTENTS

xxiii

NUMBER		PAGE
CCIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, July 29th, 1815 Forwards a Russian Memorandum prepared in conjunction with the British Ministers.	353
CCX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Aug. 3rd, 1815 Criticises the Austrian and Prussian Memoranda and forwards Wellington's views on the extent of the occupation.	354
CCXI.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 3rd, 1815 Encloses : <i>Observations on a Russian Paper mentioned by Lord Castlereagh.</i>	355
CCXII.	WELLINGTON TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 11th, 1815 States his views on the obligations and interests of the Allies and advocates temporary occupation.	357
CCXIII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 11th, 1815 Doubts the wisdom of forbearance towards France.	359
CCXIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Aug. 12th, 1815 Reports his endeavours to convince the Allies of the necessity of reducing France to the limits of 1790, and of the policy of temporary occupation. Encloses : <i>Memorandum of Lord Castlereagh.</i>	360
CCXV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Aug. 17th, 1815 Sums up the discussions and urges the wisdom of the policy of temporary occupation and reasonable indemnities.	362
CCXVI.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 18th, 1815 Criticises the Prussian demands but advises the acceptance of those of Austria.	367
CCXVII.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 23rd, 1815 Intimates the acquiescence of the Cabinet in his policy.	368
CCXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Aug. 24th, 1815 Urges the necessity of not asking the Allies to contribute to the expenses of Napoleon's captivity.	370
CCXIX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Aug. 24th, 1815 Demands the consent of the Cabinet to his proposals.	370
CCXX.	BATHURST TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 25th, 1815 Points out that the new fortresses must be paid for by France and not by Great Britain.	371
CCXXI.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 28th, 1815 Promises the full support of the Cabinet for his policy.	372
CCXXII.	WELLINGTON TO CASTLEREAGH, Aug. 31st, 1815 Memorandum on the question of temporary occupation.	374
CCXXIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Sept. 4th, 1815 Comments on the extravagant demands of some of the Powers, and analyses their motives.	375

CONTENTS

NUMBER		PAGE
CCXXIV.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Sept. 11th, 1815 Reports the dangers to France from the <i>Ultra</i> party.	376
CCXXV.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Sept. 15th, 1815 States that the Government has no control over the press in England.	377
CCXXVI.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Sept. 21st, 1815 Reports that Prussia has been induced to reduce her financial demands by territorial cessions.	378
CCXXVII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Sept. 25th, 1815 Reports the difficulties experienced owing to the change of Government in France, and an interview with Louis XVIII. on the Allied demands.	379
CCXXVIII.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Sept. 28th, 1815 Announces the scheme of the Holy Alliance and recommends that the Prince Regent should sign it.	382
CCXXIX.	LIVERPOOL TO CASTLEREAGH, Oct. 3rd, 1815 Explains why the Prince Regent cannot sign. Enclosure: <i>Draft letter from the Prince Regent.</i>	385
CCXXX.	CASTLEREAGH TO LIVERPOOL, Oct. 15th, 1815 Forwards the Russian and British Projects for the renewal of the Treaty of Chaumont and urges the necessity of the Treaty.	386

APPENDICES

- I. Official Communication made to the Russian
Ambassador at London, on the 19th Janu-
ary, 1805, explanatory of the views which
His Majesty and the Emperor of Russia
formed for the deliverance and security
of Europe 389

- II. (i) Extracts from a Speech of Castlereagh in
the House of Commons, March 20th, 1815 395
- (ii) Extracts from a Speech of Sir James
Mackintosh on the Transfer of Genoa,
April 27th, 1815 404

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

USED IN IDENTIFYING THE DOCUMENTS

The abbreviations in *Italics* in square brackets immediately after the number in Roman figures are as follows :

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The letters *F.O.* followed by the Country or Series in question,
e.g. *F.O. Russia* 83.

F.O. Cont. and *F.O. Cont. Arch.* refer to the two series of papers connected with the special missions of Castlereagh, Wellington, etc. The first contains the papers received in London and the drafts of those sent to the Continent, the second the papers received on the Continent and the drafts of those sent to London. The two series are largely, but by no means entirely, duplicate of one another.

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Gurwood—The Despatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, edited by Lieut.-Colonel Gurwood, London 1838.

W.S.D.—Supplementary Despatches, Correspondence and Memoranda of the Duke of Wellington edited by his son, Vols. VIII, IX, X, XI. London 1861-4.

