



# Edinburgh Gazette.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

FROM FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, to TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29 1807.

FOREIGN-OFFICE, DECEMBER 19, 1807.

A dispatch, of which the following is a copy, has been this day received from Lord Viscount Strangford, his Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Lisbon, by the Right Honourable George Canning, his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

*His Majesty's Ship Hibernia, off the Tagus,  
November 29, 1807.*

SIR,  
I have the honour of announcing to you, that the Prince Regent of Portugal has effected the wise and magnanimous purpose of retiring from a kingdom which he could no longer retain, except as the vassal of France; and that his Royal Highness and family, accompanied by most of his ships of war, and by a multitude of his faithful subjects and adherents, have this day departed from Lisbon, and are now on their way to the Brazils, under the escort of a British fleet.

This grand and memorable event is not to be attributed only to the sudden alarm excited by the appearance of a French army within the frontiers of Portugal. It has been the genuine result of the system of persevering confidence and moderation adopted by his Majesty towards that country; for the ultimate success of which I had in a manner rendered myself responsible; and which, in obedience to your instructions, I had uniformly continued to support, even under appearances of the most discouraging nature.

I had frequently and distinctly stated to the Cabinet of Lisbon, that in agreeing not to resent the exclusion of British commerce from the ports of Portugal, his Majesty had exhausted the means of forbearance; that in making that concession to the peculiar circumstances of the Prince Regent's situation, his Majesty had done all that friendship and the remembrance of ancient alliance could justly require; but that a single step beyond the line of modified hostility;

thus most reluctantly consented to, must necessarily led to the extremity of actual war.

The Prince Regent, however, suffered himself for a moment to forget that, in the present state of Europe, no country could be permitted to be an enemy to England with impunity, and that however much his Majesty might be disposed to make allowance for the deficiency of the means possessed by Portugal of resistance to the power of France, neither his own dignity nor the interests of his people, would permit his Majesty to accept that excuse for a compliance with the full extent of her unprincipled demands. On the 8th instant, his Royal Highness was induced to sign an order for the detention of the few British subjects, and of the inconsiderable portion of British property, which yet remained at Lisbon. On the publication of this order, I caused the arms of England to be removed from the gates of my residence, demanded my passports, presented a final remonstrance against the recent conduct of the court of Lisbon, and proceeded to the squadron commanded by Sir Sidney Smith, which arrived off the coast of Portugal some days after I had received my passports, and which I joined on the 17th instant.

I immediately suggested to Sir Sidney Smith the expediency of establishing the most rigorous blockade at the mouth of the Tagus; and I had the high satisfaction of afterwards finding that I had thus anticipated the intentions of his Majesty; your dispatches (which I received by the messenger Sylvester on the 23d) directing me to authorize that measure, in case the Portuguese Government should pass the bounds which his Majesty had thought fit to set to his forbearance, and attempt to take farther any steps injurious to the honour or interests of Great Britain.

Those dispatches were drawn up under the idea that I was still resident at Lisbon; and

though I did not receive them until I had actually taken my departure from that Court, still, upon a careful consideration of the tenor of your instructions, I thought that it would be right to act as if the case had not occurred. I resolved, therefore, to proceed forthwith to ascertain the effect produced by the blockade of Lisbon, and to propose to the Portuguese Government, as the only condition upon which that blockade could cease, the alternative (stated by you) either of surrendering the fleet to his Majesty, or of immediately employing it to remove the Prince Regent and his family to the Brazils. I took upon myself this responsibility in renewing negotiations after my public functions had actually ceased; convinced that although it was the fixed determination of his Majesty not to suffer the fleet of Portugal to fall into the possession of his enemies, still his Majesty's first object continued to be the application of that fleet to the original purpose, of saving the Royal Family of Braganza from the tyranny of France.

I accordingly requested an audience of the Prince Regent, together with due assurances of protection and security; and upon receiving his Royal Highness's answer, I proceeded to Lisbon on the 27th, in his Majesty's ship *Confiance*, bearing a flag of truce. I had immediately most interesting communications with the court of Lisbon, the particulars of which shall be fully detailed in a future dispatch. It suffices to mention in this place, that the Prince Regent wisely directed all his apprehensions to a French army, and all his hopes to an English fleet; that he received the most explicit assurances from me that his Majesty would graciously overlook those acts of unwilling and momentary hostility to which his Royal Highness's consent had been extorted; and that I promised to his Royal Highness, on the faith of my Sovereign,

Price Sixpence.

