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Westminster, January 23.

THIS Day His Majesty came to the House of Peers, and being in His Royal Robes, seated on the Throne with the usual Solemnity, Sir Charles Dalton, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, was sent with a Message from His Majesty to the House of Commons, commanding their Attendance in the House of Peers: The Commons being come thither accordingly, His Majesty was pleased to make the following most gracious Speech.

My Lords and Gentlemen,
THE present Posture of Affairs in Europe is so well known to you all, and the good or bad Consequences, that may arise, and affect us, from the War being extinguished, or being carried on; are so obvious, that I am persuaded you are met together fully prepared and determined to discharge the great Trust reposed in you at this critical Conjunction, in such a Manner, as will best contribute to the Honour and Interest of my Crown and People.

I opened the last Session of the late Parliament by acquainting them, that as I was no ways engaged, but by my good Offices, in the Transactions that were declared to be the principal Causes and Motives of the present War in Europe, it was necessary to use more than ordinary Prudence and Circumspection, and the utmost Precaution, not to determine too hastily upon so critical and important a Conjunction; to examine the Facts alledged on both sides, to wait the Result of the Councils of those Powers, that are more nearly and immediately interested in the Consequences of the War, and particularly to concert with the States General of the United Provinces, who are under the same Engagements with me, such Measures as should be thought most advisable for our common Safety, and for restoring the Peace of Europe.

We have accordingly proceeded in this great Affair with the mutual Confidence which subsists between me and that Republick; and having considered together on one side the pressing Applications made by the Imperial Court, both here and in Holland; for obtaining Succours against the Powers at War with

the Emperor, and the repeated Professions made by the Allies on the other side, of their sincere Disposition to put an End to the present Troubles, upon honourable and solid Terms, I concurred in a Resolution taken by the States General, to employ, without Loss of Time, our joint and earnest Instances to bring Matters to a speedy and happy Accommodation, before we should come to a Determination upon the Succours demanded by the Emperor. These Instances did not at first produce such explicit Answers from the contending Parties, as to enable us to put immediately in Execution our impartial and sincere Desires for that Purpose: Resolved however to pursue so great and salutary a Work, and to prevent our Subjects from being unnecessarily involved in War, we renewed the Offer of our good Offices in so effectual a Manner, as to obtain an Acceptation of them.

In Consequence of this Acceptation, and of our Declaration made thereupon, to the respective Powers engaged in the War, no Time has been lost in taking such Measures, as should be most proper to make the best use of their good Dispositions for re-establishing the Tranquillity of Europe: And I have the Satisfaction to acquaint you, that things are now brought to so great a Forwardness, that I hope in a short time a Plan will be offered to the Consideration of all the Parties engaged in the present War, as a Basis for a General Negotiation of Peace; in which the Honour and Interest of all Parties have been consulted, as far as the Circumstances of Time, and the present Posture of Affairs would permit.

I do not take upon me to answer for the Success of a Negotiation, where so many different Interests are to be considered and reconciled; but when a Proceeding is founded upon Reason, and formed from such Lights as can be had, it had been inexcusable not to have attempted a Work, which may produce infinite Benefits and Advantages, and can be of no Prejudice; if we do not suffer ourselves to be so far amused by Hopes, that may possibly be afterwards disappointed, as to leave ourselves exposed to real Dangers.

I have made use of the Power, which the late Parliament intrusted me with, with great Moderation; and I have concluded a Treaty with the Crown of Denmark, of great Importance