The Northern Question in 1716

BY the end of 1715 Charles XII had lost possession of all Swedish territory over sea excepting Wismar and some part of Finland. The next object of the powers allied against him was to reduce the Mecklenburg stronghold. It had fallen an easy prey, but that Admiral Taube at the beginning of January was able to throw into it 700 men and supplies for four months. These had been intended for Stralsund, but Taube arrived on the Pomeranian coast only in time to rescue Müllern and his clerks of the chancery from capture by a Danish frigate, in a sad plight after five days' battle with the ice floes.¹

It had been agreed in the autumn that the siege of Wismar should follow immediately upon the fall of Stralsund, and Russian troops had been engaged by Denmark and Prussia to assist. George I pressed upon the Danish court in December the great importance of the undertaking.² He could not avoid in this case contributing to it himself, though to save his Hanoverians he tried ineffectually to hire three of the Russian battalions. Writing to him on 21 January the king of Prussia expressed the hope that he would find no difficulty in providing six battalions of infantry and eight ships of the line as his contingent, himself undertaking with the king of Denmark and the tsar to provide what else was necessary.³ Further demands came in a rescript of 15 February to Bonet, the Prussian minister in London.⁴ Other soldiers and ships were now asked for to secure Denmark from the danger which threatened of a Swedish invasion. And it was pointed out that, though the king of England had gained two valuable duchies, he had given little or no help to the siege of Stralsund, where much Prussian blood and money had been sacrificed. George replied (14 February, old style)⁵ that he himself had long insisted upon the necessity of pressing the war; that he was quite willing

¹ Müllern's account, 8 Jan., Paris, *Aff. Etr.*, Suède 186; also Campredon and Jackson, the French and British ministers at Stockholm, *ibid.*, and Record Office, Sweden.

² Hanover, *Staatsarchiv*, Des. 92, lxxvii. 1, a rescript of 29 Nov., o.s., 1715 to Fuchler, the Hanoverian resident at Copenhagen.

³ *Ibid.* lxxviii. 4 d.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

to send the assistance asked for Wismar; and that he did not doubt that he would come to an accord with the king of Prussia on the subject of further operations upon the terms of their treaty. But to his minister Heusch at Berlin he wrote in a different strain.⁶ He had learnt, he said, from Heusch's despatch of 12 February that not only was artillery also desired of him for Wismar, but sufficient money besides to make the cost to himself one-third of the whole. He begged to be spared the fresh and varying demands constantly made upon him; such conduct, he said, might lead to a quarrel, and made the reports of a Prussian understanding with France the more credible.

Indeed, the relations between the English and Prussian courts were in their customary state of strain. Heusch in his despatch cited enumerated a number of grievances nourished at Berlin, from a claim to diamonds which had belonged to the electress Sophia to the complaint that George desired to profit by the war without contributing anything towards its cost. For the reference to France, it is to be observed that the regent's government was still believed to be unfriendly, and to have had its part in the present venture of the Pretender. And it was a cardinal point of French policy to cultivate the friendship of Prussia in counterpoise to the power of Austria. In fact a defensive treaty between the two was concluded in the autumn of this year, though it did not oblige Prussia to take up arms against the emperor.

But with that other partner in the northern war, with whom he had lately concluded the treaty of Greifswald, and whom he was again endeavouring to bring into alliance with the emperor,⁷ George was just now on cordial terms. Peter the Great also had represented to him that the king of Sweden would infallibly attempt some operation against Denmark, urging that the best way to force him to make peace was to carry the war into Sweden itself. He himself, he had said, would do all he could, and the king of Denmark likewise, but the resources of the latter were completely and his own nearly exhausted. George had suffered little by the war, and had made a splendid gain. He could well supply the king of Denmark with money to enable him to prosecute the campaign with vigour, in order to end the war. He should consider what great good would thereby be done to the common cause, and how gravely that would suffer were Denmark reduced to impotence. The cost would be much less than that of fitting out another squadron, and, to judge

⁶ 17 Feb., o.s., *ibid.*

⁷ Documents on this subject with Weber's despatches, *ibid.* 2 b, including 'Ministerialakten der Londoner Kanzlei betr. die zwischen dem Kaiser und dem Czaaren zu errichtende Allianz.' The main ground upon which the former declined a treaty was that he would be disabled thereby from acting as judge or mediator at a congress for peace in the north (rescript to count von Metsch at Brunswick, 2 Jan. 1716).

from the experience of the previous year, would be of greater use.⁸ George, as Peter was expected shortly in Germany, replied to this communication through Heusch.⁹ He pleaded the large sum paid to Denmark for the duchies, and the great expense imposed upon the British treasury by the Jacobite rebellion. (He could not, of course, confess the truth, that British money was not available to finance operations against Sweden.) He went on to say that as king he was not at war with Sweden, and as elector would perform the engagements of his treaties. More could not be required of him than the eight men-of-war promised. The money wanted must come from the tsar. He agreed that the best way to prevent a Swedish descent on Denmark was to make a counter-invasion. A week later¹⁰ he wrote to Peter in very friendly terms in reference to the treaty of Greifswald, and about the same time to the king of Denmark that more troops must be sent to Wismar, that the tsar must take part in the projected invasion of Sweden, and that he himself was sending a strong squadron to the Baltic to help.¹¹

Of such a nature was the correspondence of the allied monarchs in January and February about the war. But George was conducting at the same time negotiations having a different object. The near success of the Jacobite rebellion had made him very sensible of the insecurity of his throne. The Dutch, in accordance with their treaty, had given him most valuable help; he now bethought himself of obtaining other guarantees.¹² The price to be paid was assistance in return by sea. Overtures to Vienna resulted in the treaty of Westminster, signed on 25 May, old style. To Denmark and Prussia George proposed that they should guarantee the protestant succession and the Dutch Barrier treaty, undertaking to send at their own expense 8,000 and 10,000 men respectively to serve in either country if required. Great Britain and Holland in return would guarantee to them their late acquisitions in Germany, sending to the Baltic to protect them in each year while the war lasted a squadron of sixteen men-of-war.¹³ The king of Denmark's

⁸ This through Weber, who was Hanoverian secretary at St. Petersburg; see his despatch of 27 Jan., *ibid.*, printed by Stoerk, *Das Greifswalder Bündnis*, p. 75.

⁹ Hanover, St.-A., Des. 92, lxviii. 4 d, 14 Feb., o.s.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 7 d, Stoerk, p. 77.

¹¹ *Ibid.* lxvii. 1.

¹² As Townshend wrote to Horatio Walpole at the Hague on 13 March, o.s.; the king approved 'particularly the Memorial you gave in, and what you added by word of mouth to the Deputys for foreign affairs concerning the strengthening the Guaranty of the Protestant Succession by inviting and admitting new Princes and States into it' (Record Office, Foreign Entry Books 85). But Walpole was not successful in persuading the Dutch to join in the proposed treaties.

¹³ Draft of the Danish treaty, dated 20 Jan. 1716, Hanover, St.-A., Des. 92, lxviii. 2 a. Special provisions in this case were that the Danes should blockade Gothenburg and Marstrand, to prevent Swedish privateering, and should set at rest in the general interest the apprehensions entertained of designs on their part against Hamburg and Lübeck.

reply was favourable; he sent orders to Baron Söhlenthal in London to negotiate the treaty.¹⁴ But from Berlin came a brusque refusal. Frederick William had no desire to send his cherished soldiers abroad, and did not want naval protection for Stettin. Besides, his relations with Holland were even more strained than those with his father-in-law. One reason which he gave for his refusal was this: that he could not be expected to guarantee a treaty which infringed, as he said the Barrier treaty did, rights given him by the settlements of Utrecht and Baden in Upper Guelders.¹⁵

The fourth to whom George opened the subject was his new ally the tsar. In the utmost secrecy¹⁶ the Russian ambassador at the Hague, the able, experienced, and courtly prince Kurakin, who had been recalled from London in the previous spring to negotiate the treaty of Greifswald, was invited thither again. By his account Bernstorff on the day that he arrived, 16 March, old style, informed him of the king of Prussia's backwardness, and said that his master was willing to enter instead into closest relations with the tsar upon the principle of mutual defence and guarantee, including a British guarantee of the Russian conquests. The next day Townshend spoke in similar terms, holding out the prospect of a coalition between Great Britain, the States-general, Russia, and Denmark, and expressing the king's intention of sending another squadron to the Baltic, not this time to protect the merchantmen only, but to take such measures as should bring the war to an end. He thought that twelve to fifteen British men-of-war could be provided against the tsar's promise of 8,000 to 10,000 men for the king's defence. The pretext to parliament would be the harm that was being done to British interests in the north. The admiral would send to Charles XII a declaration requiring him to make peace upon such terms as the situation warranted. If an answer were refused, or were not satisfactory, he would be informed that his evil intentions not only towards his neighbours, but towards Great Britain, were known, that it was well understood that he aimed at depriving George of his throne, and that his conduct could not be endured any longer; force would be employed. The English ships would then unite with the Danish and Russian in offensive action.

As a fact the decision to send a squadron to the Baltic again

¹⁴ Puchler, 17 March, *ibid.* lxxvii. 1.

¹⁵ In the rescript to Bonet of 15 Feb., cited. Frederick William's own note on the subject was, as reported by Heusch, 'Man will haben, dass ich den Barriere-Tractat mit garantiren soll, obgleich derselbe mir die helfte von dem mir zustehenden geldern entziehet und wegnimmt' (*ibid.* lxxviii. 6 a, Stoerk, p. 69). Cp. Droysen, *Geschichte der preussischen Politik*, iv. ii. 147-8.

¹⁶ I have not been able to find any reference to Kurakin's visit to England in the records of London or Hanover. I take what follows in regard to it from K. J. Hartman's *Tsar Peters Underhandlingar 1716 om Landgång i Skåne*. A Russian subject, working from Russian records, Hartman naturally puts Peter's conduct in the most favourable light.

this year had already been taken. Memorials from the Eastland and other merchants had early urged the necessity of doing so. At the time of Kurakin's visit the Danish envoy Söhlenthal reported home that Townshend and Sunderland had promised that one should be sent, that it should give active help to the cause, and that they would find excuse to parliament.¹⁷ But naturally it was not revealed to him or to Kurakin that the squadron would go whether concession in return was made or not. It was represented to the latter that its despatch would be dependent upon the conclusion of the commercial treaty which had been in agitation for some years past.¹⁸ Both Townshend and Bernstorff informed the prince, he says, that in view of England's long-standing friendship and the importance of her trade with Sweden a commercial treaty must be concluded with the tsar before the political engagements contemplated could be submitted to the approval of parliament.

But when actual drafts of a commercial and a political treaty were submitted, Kurakin found that the terms of the latter by no means corresponded with the ministers' previous assurances. The guarantees to be given by Peter were fully set forth, but George's undertakings were small. Bernstorff evaded the request for a more categorical explanation of the part to be taken by Great Britain against Sweden by recommending the transference of further negotiation to the Hague. Then he surprised Kurakin by a proposal that he should sign a commercial treaty at once, as in default of that instructions could not be given to the British admiral to attack the Swedes. But the ambassador declined to do anything of the kind without fresh instructions. Then on 4 April, old style, the day before he left London, Bernstorff and Bothmer handed him the draft of a guarantee treaty, intended to serve as a basis for further discussion. It was suggested now that on his arrival at the Hague he should declare to the English ministers there that he could not conclude a commercial treaty unless the British government at the same time took upon itself a guarantee of the tsar's conquests.

The preamble to this proposed treaty¹⁹ set forth that the king of Sweden's conduct obliged the king of England to send a strong squadron to the Baltic to protect commerce, to exercise reprisals, and to prevent the transport of Swedish troops to Germany or elsewhere, a proceeding which might rekindle the flames of war, which it was so earnestly desired to extinguish for the good and the repose of Europe. Being persuaded that the strong representations which he would make to the king of Sweden would have their best effect

¹⁷ Holm, *Studier til den store nordiske Krigshistorie*, p. 50. Söhlenthal wrote that Bernstorff was as eager for the despatch of the squadron as though he had been a minister of Denmark himself.

¹⁸ Cp. Townshend's despatch of 3 Aug., o.s., cited below, p. 701, note 73.

¹⁹ Printed in full by Hartman, p. 153.

were he to enter into engagements with the powers most able and willing to support them, he was prepared to come to an agreement with the tsar as follows. First, to conclude a treaty of commerce. Secondly, in case of an attack upon his throne, the tsar to send to his help, to serve under his orders, 5,000 to 10,000 infantry, transporting them as far as Lübeck at his own expense. Thirdly, if the States-general acceded to the treaty, the tsar to send like help to them for the security of their barrier, and to admit them to the treaty of commerce. Fourthly, the king of England to send to the Baltic a certain number of ships of the line, to prevent the king of Sweden from transporting troops across that sea or troubling the tsar in the territories actually in his possession. And fifthly, in a separate article, the king of England to send each year to the Baltic at his own expense, to protect trade and to ensure the advantages of the commercial treaty, a squadron of men-of-war to act in concert with those of the tsar, until such time as the king of Sweden should revoke his privateer ordinance of February 1715, should give compensation for damage done, and should grant the freedom of commerce in the Baltic so long demanded. With these proposals Kurakin returned to the Hague. The tsar's instructions upon them were not received by him till June.

Peter had left his capital early in February. He stayed more than two months at Danzig, inflicting punishment upon the town, arranging with Augustus of Poland for the pacification of that country, and marrying his niece Catherine to Charles Leopold of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. But his soldiers came on—not only the battalions hired for the siege of Wismar, but the formidable force promised for the further work of the campaign. It was necessary to send them by land, because a Swedish squadron fitted out by the self-sacrificing patriotism of the burghers of Carlskrona and Carlshamn²⁰ held the sea. The first of them arrived before Wismar shortly before the place surrendered.

The presence of this foreign army in Mecklenburg dominated northern politics during the next two years. On the one hand its sustenance was a dreadful burden to the people, on the other it gave the duke of Schwerin the upper hand in the constitutional struggle he had so long waged with them. The rift that was to split up the confederacy, placing Hanover with Denmark, Russia with Prussia, in hostile camps, began to show itself almost at once. Bernstorff, George's first minister, was himself a Mecklenburger, possessor of large estates about Gartow, and a leader of his fellow landowners against the duke. Other influential Mecklenburgers were in the service of Denmark, or refugees at Copenhagen, Hamburg, or Lübeck. The news of Charles Leopold's marriage was bad enough, for it meant that the powerful tsar would support

²⁰ So Jackson, 1 Feb., o.s., Record Office, Sweden.

his cause. But worse, there followed the report that Wismar, when taken, would be handed over to him, or perhaps kept by the tsar for himself.²¹ The idea was insupportable. The events of the past twelve months in Poland had shown the readiness of Peter to quarter his soldiers abroad, and his ability to do so if he pleased. The king of Denmark's assurance that the Russians would pass on directly from Wismar to Copenhagen²² was not regarded as sufficient.

George had written on the matter to Puchler at Copenhagen at as early a date as 6 March, old style.²³ The king of Prussia was named in this despatch as author of the proposal to hand over Wismar to Charles Leopold, the tsar as likely to agree to it. It may be noted that Frederick William had a distant prospect of succession to Mecklenburg-Schwerin, and was known to sympathise with the duke. George warned the Danish court of the consequences, and urged adherence to the clause in the treaty of 1715 which provided for the joint occupation of Wismar by the confederates during the war, and the razing of its fortifications and its establishment as a free city of the empire at the peace. Puchler was ordered, further, to insinuate that if the duke obtained the town he would not hold it for long, but would hand it over to some other power—an ill thing for Denmark. Another rescript on the subject followed on 3 April, old style. It seems doubtful whether George in that 'other power' had not in view the king of Prussia rather than the tsar.

In accordance with these representations, when it was seen that the fall of Wismar was imminent, the Danish general Dewitz was specially sent thither, in order that the keys might be given up to him and not to the Russian Repnin, who would otherwise have claimed to be the senior officer present. And when the surrender took place (18 April) the Russians were denied admission.²⁴ But they stayed on in the neighbourhood, their numbers continually increased, and ever louder grew the cry of the unfortunate land-owners and peasantry who had to feed them.

An altered tone appears already in a letter from George to Peter of 1 May, old style. Writing from Danzig on 25 March, the latter had repeated his former arguments and appeal. He had asked

²¹ Sir Richard Vernon, 29 April, Record Office, Poland 23; *Lettres Historiques*, xlix. 258; Wiesener, *Le Régent, l'Abbe Dubois et les Anglais*, i. 302; Walliszewski, *Pierre le Grand*, p. 373, &c. Count de Croissy wrote from Hamburg on 1 May that, as the king of France was informed, the tsar wished 'que Wismar et Rostock pussent luy servir de lieu d'entrepot pour faire par luy mesme tout le commerce de la Russie' (Paris, Aff. Etr., Suède 135).

²² Hanneken, 9 April, Record Office, Denmark 36.

²³ Hanover, St.-A., Des. 92, lxxvii. 1.

²⁴ Particulars of this affair, Holm, pp. 22 foll., Hartman, pp. 50 foll. The latter entirely denies that it first gave Peter the inclination to make a separate peace with Sweden, as has been alleged.

first for the king of England's proper quota of infantry, artillery, and munitions of war for Wismar; secondly, for a squadron sufficiently strong, when united with the Danish and Russian fleets, to make the projected descent on Scania safe; and thirdly, for money for the king of Denmark: the last the most important. Reference was made, as before, to the gain of the duchies, and to the little that had been done by the British squadron in the previous year.²⁵

With this letter we may take one from the king of Prussia of 14 April,²⁶ and rescripts from him to Bonet of the 4th and 7th,²⁷ urging the pressing need of naval assistance to the king of Denmark in Norway, lest he should be obliged to send thither or into Jutland the soldiers wanted at Wismar; for if, as seemed probable, Charles XII were to complete his conquest of Norway, he would certainly next invade Denmark, with disastrous consequences to the league.

George, when he answered this (20 April, old style), was able to send congratulations upon the fall of Wismar, and to announce that the squadron about to sail would visit the coast of Norway on its way to the Sound.²⁸ In his reply to Peter he acknowledged the services rendered by him in respect of Bremen and Verden, but was not ashamed to plead that those duchies had been left in so exhausted a state as to be of little value. The actual sum paid to Denmark for them, he said, was twice that stipulated. As king he was not at war with Sweden, and had no obligation to take part therein. Nevertheless he had sent a strong squadron in the previous year to the king of Denmark's assistance. Effective action on its part had been indeed delayed until Bremen was actually handed over, but after that it had been taken. Now another squadron was about to sail for the Baltic, and that in spite of the enormous expense incurred in crushing the late rebellion. As to the greater utility of cash, the king of Denmark had particularly asked for a squadron, and had specially sent his privy councillor Von Holtzen to press for its despatch.²⁹ The tsar would see upon reflexion that to ask more was neither possible nor proper. Wismar had fallen, and there was little doubt that the further measures proposed to force the king of Sweden to make peace would be successful. To prevent his regaining ground in Germany the good will of the emperor and empire must be secured. It would not have escaped the tsar's notice what great offence had been given in those quarters by the entry of so large a foreign force into Germany without leave. France might well avail herself of the example to send

²⁵ This letter (Russian original and German translation) and George's reply, Hanover, St.-A., Des. 92, lxviii. 7 d; Stoerk, pp. 78, 82.

²⁶ Hanover, St.-A., Des. 92, lxviii. 4 d.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 2 a.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 4 d.

²⁹ Puchler reported on 31 March the hurried departure of Justizrath 'Holsten' to London for this purpose (*ibid.* lxxvii. 1).

an army in support of Sweden. It was to be hoped that the tsar would, of his good-will and penetration, remove this stone of offence as soon as possible. Again on 11 May, old style,³⁰ George appealed to Peter on behalf of the duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who was complaining bitterly of the exactions of the Russian troops upon himself and his people. What an ill-effect, he said, would such treatment of so prominent a state have upon opinion at Vienna!

Jealousy of the Russian occupation appeared also in correspondence about the razing of Wismar's fortifications. The king of Prussia wrote to George on 23 May urging their immediate demolition, as agreed upon in the treaty.³¹ He was informed in reply that instructions in the matter had been sent to Heusch. They went indeed by the same post.³² Heusch was told that the statement in regard to demolition immediately upon capture was inaccurate; the clause in the Prussian treaty left the matter to be decided by the treaty with Denmark (which was true). The terms used there were only general. The real intention had been to hold Wismar until peace was made, and then to dismantle it and establish it as a free city of the empire. The king of Prussia should reflect whether it would be possible to prevent the tsar making himself master of the place if its fortifications were destroyed. They must wait till Mecklenburg was evacuated by the Russians. After that it might be hoped that an agreement in the matter would be arrived at.

During all this and the next year George fought strenuously against the demolition. He was supported by the emperor, who expressly forbade it. But he could not prevail, for the king of Denmark, in spite of all possible arguments and threats, would not support him. Indeed in the spring of 1716 he agreed in writing with the king of Prussia to the contrary.³³ There was further friction in regard to the artillery and munitions of the place, which Frederick William insisted upon dividing between himself and the king of Denmark, leaving George out. But we need not pursue this matter here.

With the fall of Wismar the task which the king of Prussia had set before himself, expulsion of the Swedes from Germany, was ended. From henceforth he kept his excellent soldiers and guns at home. His share in the operations of the new campaign was confined to hiring out transports to the king of Denmark, making money instead of spending it. His place in the battle was taken by Peter the Great, whose energies had been fully occupied in the previous year by his work in Poland and Finland.

From Danzig Peter went to Stettin, where Frederick William met him. There had been grave subject of complaint between

³⁰ Hanover, St.-A., Des. 92, lxviii. 7 d.

³¹ *Ibid.* 4 d.

³² *Ibid.* 29 May, o.s.

³³ Holm, pp. 36, 42, 53; cp. Droysen, p. 206.

the two,³⁴ but a complete understanding was now arrived at. Heusch had attended the king of Prussia, and on information that the British squadron would do little or nothing to help the cause Peter desired to see him. He expressed his earnest desire for the king of England's friendship, and inquired what the squadron would do. Heusch replied that pretexts were being devised to obtain the assent of the English nation to effective action by it: perhaps the most open confession on the subject that we have.³⁵ The tsar replied that all depended upon the Swedish fleet being driven back to its harbours. When Heusch attacked Ilgen about the injurious information given, the latter told him that it had come from Bonet, to whom the instructions to Admiral Norris had been communicated, whereupon Heusch entered into full explanations with him and also with the Russian ministers.³⁶

A meeting with the king of Denmark had also been long in view, but was not practicable till Peter travelled westwards, as Frederick would not, in the condition of affairs in Norway, go far from home.³⁷ It took place at the end of May in the Hamburg suburb Ham and Horn. The conferences lasted six days. On 3 June a convention was signed agreeing finally to and settling the details of the long-contemplated joint undertaking against the Swedish mainland. This treaty³⁸ stated the necessity, now that the king of Sweden had been dislodged from Germany, of carrying the war into Sweden itself, and this not only by an invasion of Scania, the province across the Sound, but by a separate descent of 20,000 Russians across the Gulf of Bothnia, as soon as the Swedish fleet should be safely shut up in its harbours. But the former was to be the principal undertaking, and the Danes were to furnish for it 10,000 cavalry and twenty battalions of infantry, the Russians 2,000 of the former and forty battalions, perhaps also another 1,000 horse, if sufficient transport could be provided. The king of Denmark, in accordance with the convention made at Stralsund on 6 Sept. 1715, was to maintain fifteen of the tsar's battalions and 1,000 of his horse at his own expense, and further to transport thirty Russian battalions and 1,000 horse from

³⁴ See Droysen, p. 158; Hartman, pp. 55, 56.

³⁵ 'Man auf Mittel bedacht seyn, wie unter plausiblen der Englischen Nation convenablen prætexten die Sache dahin zu richten, damit solche Flotte mit effect gebraucht werden könne, welches Ew. Königl. Majt. nach aller Möglichkeit in der That zu præstiren sich angelegen seyn liessen.'

³⁶ Hanover, St.-A., Des. 92, lxviii. 4 d, 23 May.

³⁷ Holm, pp. 17, 18, 37.

³⁸ It is printed in full by Holm, p. 153. The king of Denmark signed it on 3 June at Altona, where he was lodged. As room could not be found in that town for the tsar and his suite, they were accommodated in the adjoining city or its suburbs, and the meetings took place there. The agreement was spoken of at the time as the convention of Hamburg (so the British ministers Polwarth and Wich, and elsewhere), but it is now commonly known as the convention of Altona.

Rostock into Zealand by the end of June at latest. The remainder of the Russian guards would come in the tsar's own galleys and 'scampavies,' and 1,000 horse with him by land, the king of Denmark providing subsistence for them as soon as they arrived in Holstein. The stores accumulated at Rostock were to be brought over by the king of Denmark as soon as the sea should be clear of the Swedes. As this transport would be very expensive to him, the tsar undertook to make the most pressing instances with the king of Prussia to hand over the vessels used for the landing on Rügen in the previous year, either gratis or at a low price. To form a fleet of strength superior to the Swedes, to cover the descent on Scania, the king of Denmark undertook to provide eighteen of the line, the tsar fourteen. The combined fleet was to keep the sea as long as the operations required and the season allowed. As to the English fleet expected shortly to appear in the Sound and to join in offensive action against that of Sweden, it was agreed that it would be best employed in a blockade of Carlskrona. The army was to stay in Scania or the neighbouring provinces as long as the war lasted, and only to be withdrawn in utmost necessity and by mutual consent. Those provinces were to be restored to Denmark. Pending withdrawal of the army the fortresses were to be garrisoned equally by Danes and Russians, and the tsar was to be allowed to establish magazines in them; afterwards they were to be given up entirely with all their stores and munitions of war to Denmark. Other clauses regulated the command and enjoined the maintenance of strict discipline among the troops while in Zealand. The supreme command was to be held by the two monarchs in alternate weeks, but if one of them should be on board the fleet, he was to be the sole authority there, the other on land. This provision solved in the event an important difficulty. In view of a possible diversion by France or other power in favour of Sweden while the army was in Scania, a positive declaration was to be obtained from the kings of Great Britain and Prussia as to the force which they would put into the field in that event in accordance with the treaties concluded by them with Denmark in the previous year. Particulars of the scheme of invasion were not to be communicated to powers not taking part in it without the consent of both parties. Possession of the provinces, islands, &c., to be occupied or ceded at a future peace was to be guaranteed to Denmark as provided by the treaty of alliance of 1709.

Such was the convention which formed the basis of the year's proceedings. Inquiries as to transport were at once set on foot at Berlin. The agreement arrived at by commissaries appointed to arrange the matter was formally ratified on 27 June. Fifty of the most suitable Prussian vessels, to be chosen by the Danish commis-

sary, were to be fully equipped, if possible, by the middle of July, the king of Denmark to pay for them at the rate of four reichsthalers per last monthly from the day that they were ready, a month's payment in advance.³⁹

In the meantime northern affairs were being actively discussed at the centres of the empire, Vienna and Ratisbon. Memorials, deductions, representations were presented to the diet from Prussia, from Holstein-Gottorp, from Denmark, from Sweden, from Hanover, from Hesse-Cassel, from Mecklenburg-Strelitz. A decree of the imperial commission on northern affairs, of date 17 January, set forth in a supplement of fifty-two documents the course of events from 1706; and the emperor requested advice on what should now be done. A 'large deduction,' with forty-one pieces annexed, argued the justice of the cause of Sweden. It was answered early in May by a recrimination from Hanover, which asserted that the king of England, in what he had done, had only performed his duty as elector and director of his circle to prevent the devastation of Germany by another Thirty Years' War. Swedish answers to this declared that Charles was ready and desirous to treat of a general peace under the joint mediation of the emperor and France, and for affairs within the empire under that of the former alone, that he would send ministers to a congress at Hamburg or Lübeck, but not to that of Brunswick, which could only deal with the particular affairs of Germany, that the king of England had only leagued himself with Denmark in order to obtain possession of Bremen and Verden, and that the emperor ought to take measures, not against the king of Sweden, but against the princes who were endeavouring to overthrow the constitutions of the empire and to gather the whole power into their own hands: arguments which made, says Whitworth, a strong impression.⁴⁰

But neither were the conditions which Charles proposed admissible nor, had they been so, was it possible for the emperor to take up his cause. Grave dangers threatened him from two directions. On the one hand the Turks, at war with Venice, had conquered the Morea and overrun Dalmatia, threatening not only the ancient maritime city but also Hungary, and on the other trouble loomed ahead in Italy. The unsatisfied ambition of Savoy, the predatory designs of Spain, endangered Naples and the Milanese. In March 28,700 imperial troops were detained there,

³⁹ Holm prints this agreement, p. 159. On the difficulties which attended its execution see *ibid.* pp. 60 foll. In the end the transports were only permitted to leave Stettin on a personal undertaking given by the Danish envoy General Meyer that they should be paid for before he left Berlin. Cp. Whitworth, 15 and 25 Aug., Record Office, Prussia 9.

⁴⁰ See Whitworth's despatches, Record Office, German States 173-4.

107,000 in Hungary and Transylvania.⁴¹ The emperor might protest against the aggression of Russian and Dane, he might continue his efforts to make the congress of Brunswick a reality, but he was not likely to despatch a force northwards when he was praying the interested powers, Russia included, for help in the defence of Christendom. So far from allowing him to contemplate a restoration of the settlement of Westphalia, the exigencies of the situation forced him to conclude with Great Britain the treaty of Westminster (25 May, old style), which obliged the parties to maintain each other in possession of, and to defend against attacks by land and sea, their existing kingdoms, provinces, and rights.⁴² The treaty could not, of course, include the new acquisitions of Hanover, not yet confirmed, but these had found an important place in the preliminary discussions, and it was certain enough that, if the emperor took any steps to dispossess George of Bremen and Verden, the latter would find an excuse against sending ships for the defence of Sardinia and Naples.⁴³

Charles VI, indeed, even caused representations to be made to Peter that the protest against the entry of his troops into Mecklenburg should be regarded as a formality, not as a threat. He did this through his minister at Brunswick, count von Metsch, by whom the protest had been delivered. Metsch found the tsar at Pyrmont, whither he had gone to drink the waters. He handed in a project of alliance, which contemplated the case of war with France, and received a counter-project setting forth the tsar's requirements. The two being quite antagonistic, the overtures came to nothing. Thereupon the court of Vienna changed its tone, and determined to regard Peter as an enemy.⁴⁴

The regent of France adhered firmly to his determination of neutrality. Count de Croissy retained, during the first months of 1716, his character of ambassador extraordinary to Sweden, residing at Hamburg. Here he advocated the cause of Charles with all his former enthusiasm. He went so far as to discuss possible conditions of peace with the Prussian minister Kniphausen, and to submit schemes for helping the Pretender in Scotland by Swedish arms and French money. And he committed other diplomatic indiscretions, inditing a letter to Charles in terms of jocular intimacy,⁴⁵ and indulging in a paper war with Ilgen. The

⁴¹ Schaub, 21 March, Record Office, Germany 33.

⁴² The aid to be sent by one party to the other was fixed at 8,000 foot and 4,000 horse, or as many ships of war as would be of equal cost, or one and the other proportionately.

⁴³ See on this subject Michael, *Englische Geschichte im achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, i. 655-678, and Schaub's despatches from Vienna, January 1716, *loc. cit.*

⁴⁴ See for particulars Hartman, pp. 47-50.

⁴⁵ He concluded by congratulating Charles on the death of his grandmother, and the expression of a hope that she had left him a good sum of money. The letter was not, however, allowed to go.

reproofs he received would doubtless have been more severe had not the good-natured regent been his personal friend. But it was firmly explained to him that circumstances, of which he was not informed, rendered any but the most general statements on his part most improper. He was ordered to do his best to maintain the king of Sweden in the good disposition of obtaining peace by ceding something, evinced by him, according to Croissy's report, in the last days at Stralsund. He could not be successful in the war so long as his enemies remained united. Croissy would understand that it was the king of France's interest to reduce their number.

J'ay jusqu'à présent apporté tous mes soins pour y parvenir, et c'est la principale veue que je me suis proposé dans les différentes ouvertures qui ont esté faites de ma part sur ce sujet. Elles auroient eu vraisemblablement plus de succès, si j'avois été instruit des intentions du Roy de Suède, et de ce qu'il veut bien céder à la conjoncture, mais vous sçavez combien il a toujours paru éloigné de vouloir s'expliquer sur ce sujet. . . . Vous devez seulement assurer en général que je désire bien sincèrement de contribuer à la pacification du Nord, mais sans vous expliquer en aucune manière sur les moyens que je croirois propres pour y réussir. . . . Si vous remarquiez que les conférences que le Comte de Rottembourg a eues depuis quelque tems avec les ministres du Roy de Prusse eussent fait naître des soupçons de quelques négociations pour mes intérêts particuliers, vous assurerez qu'il n'est rien passé qui puisse en quelque tems que ce soit préjudicier à aucune des Puissances intéressées dans la guerre du Nord, et vous éviterez surtout avec soin de donner lieu de croire que je prenne aucunes mesures pour diviser les ennemis du Roy de Suède, ny qui puissent aussi être contraires aux intérêts de ce Prince.

If the tsar came so near Hamburg that Croissy could not with decency avoid waiting upon him, he was to assure him that it was the king of France's great desire, as that of his great-grandfather had been, always to maintain the best understanding with a prince whose great qualities had brought him into universal esteem, and to omit no effort to efface the prejudices which, it was known, had been sedulously inculcated to the contrary.⁴⁶

In May Croissy was accorded the permission he had long craved to return to Paris. The royal despatch ran (8 May) :

Une relation aussi incertaine et aussi irrégulière que celle que l'on a présentement avec la Suède ne permet pas de faire un fondement solide sur ce que l'on en apprend souvent trop tard pour en pouvoir faire usage, et d'ailleurs par ces voyes indirectes qui ne peuvent autoriser les démarches dont on pourroit espérer le plus d'utilité si elles estoient faites à propos ; ainsy il est bien nécessaire que l'on puisse prendre sur ce sujet de nouvelles mesures et concerter avec plus de facilité avec le

⁴⁶ The king to Croissy, 21 March.

Roy de Suède les moyens de prévenir par une bonne paix la ruine ou mesme la perte entière de son Royaume.

As soon, therefore, as Croissy could find means to satisfy his creditors—for he had lent large sums of money to meet the pressing necessities of Charles, and had lost certain sources of income by absence from Paris—he left for home, passing the Hague on his way in order to confer with Châteauneuf.⁴⁷

In London the Swedish envoy, Count Gyllenborg, continued his exertions to obtain grace for his country. He denied to Townshend the report that his master was in league with the Pretender. He protested against the arming of ships in the Thames for the tsar's service. He repeated the declaration of Charles that by his measures against trade he only desired to close the prohibited ports, and that he would give satisfaction for damages done contrary to treaties. As was to be expected, memorials in these terms had no effect; but when Gyllenborg opened to Townshend the possibility of the cession of Bremen and Verden to Hanover, if England would help to recover what had been lost elsewhere, a basis for serious discussion was afforded. In the conversations which ensued Townshend declared that the king of England would give proof of his sincere desire for Sweden's welfare upon receipt of a satisfactory answer to the demands made. About Bremen and Verden he could not, as an English minister, speak, but he believed that his master would meet the king of Sweden in the matter. If Gyllenborg would write to the latter on the subject, the despatch should be carried by the fleet about to sail. At a second interview he communicated the instructions given to Admiral Norris, and stated that the king would not give up the duchies. Gyllenborg assured him that Charles had never thought of taking up the Pretender's cause. He asked whether England would be willing to help to drive Russia from the Baltic, to destroy thereby her dangerous power, and to compensate Sweden for her losses in Germany by the recovery of the eastern province. Townshend replied that the only promise he could make was that the good offices of England would be employed to procure for Charles an advantageous peace, provided that he would give up the thought of recovering his German provinces. On a third occasion he declared that England would not allow hostilities to be undertaken against Sweden, if Charles would show himself disposed to peace. No help, he said, was to be expected by him from France or Holland; the latter was 'too Danish.' England was the only power whose help could be reckoned upon.

These discussions assured Gyllenborg that king George was determined to keep what he had got. He saw that the only resource was to set the country against the sovereign. A year

⁴⁷ The preceding account is from Croissy's despatches, Paris, *Aff. Etr.*, Suède 135.

before he had strongly advised some relaxation of the privateer edict. Now he took upon himself to recommend to Charles removal of the prohibition altogether, as far as English vessels were concerned, and even to give satisfaction for the damages inflicted. By so doing England would be deprived of all pretext of quarrel. Nation and court would be divided, and if the former were pacified the latter could do no harm. For the time indeed his relations with the English ministers were distinctly improved. They assured him of the willingness of the king to bring to life again the old good feeling, asserting that Sweden would lose nothing by giving up her German provinces, which had always been a burden. In exchange she would have back Esthonia and Livonia; possibly St. Petersburg besides. It was evident, Gyllenborg reported, that the English were much alarmed at the growing power of the tsar; he considered the situation particularly favourable for gradually bringing them to work for separate terms of peace between Charles and his other enemies, excepting Peter. One of the ministers, he said, had told the Spanish ambassador that there was a general anxiety in the country to avert Sweden's ruin, and that if the king pushed too far his private interests in Germany the government would set itself against him.⁴⁸ But all this was futile, because the demands made on Charles were such as he never would accept. He replied to Gyllenborg that the court of Hanover asked a great deal of positive advantage for itself and its allies, but only gave in return a vague promise to attempt to procure for Sweden an honourable peace. He could not explain himself on so delicate a matter until the king of England had precisely declared what was to be expected from him in return for the proposed concessions.⁴⁹

Preparations for the despatch of the British squadron were begun early in March. Efforts to obtain the concurrence of the Dutch had been in progress since January, the main argument used by Horatio Walpole being the absolute necessity of obtaining naval stores. His exertions were backed by the merchants of Amsterdam, but countered by considerations of expense.⁵⁰ In the end the States-general agreed to supply six ships of the line against sixteen English, but utterly refused to do more. The British government in consequence thought fit to increase the strength of its contingent to twenty-one. Command was again committed to Sir John Norris, who hoisted his flag on his old ship, the 'Cumberland.' Another 80-gun ship was the 'Shrewsbury.' He had also the 'Burford' and 'Essex' of seventy guns, four of sixty, nine

⁴⁸ The above from Gyllenborg's despatches, *Handlingar rörande Skandinaviens Historia*, vol. x., and Hugo Larsson's *Grefve Karl Gyllenborg*, pp. 18 foll.; cp Carlson, *Om Fredsunderhandlingarne åren 1709-1718*, p. 92, note.

⁴⁹ Torpum, 8 June, o.s., 1716, Record Office, Sweden, copy.

⁵⁰ H. Walpole to Townshend, 21 Feb., Record Office, Holland 253.

of fifty, and two of forty; nineteen of the line and the 'Garland' and 'Blandford' frigates. Sail was made from the Nore on 18 May, old style, and the Sound was safely reached on the tenth day, Sunday, 7 June.⁵¹

In the preamble to the instructions given to Norris reference was made to the events and demands of the previous year, and to the refusal of the king of Sweden to give satisfaction upon any point. In the present year, it was said, he appeared to have allied himself with the king of England's enemies, and with that design to have embarked upon the conquest of Norway, 'the most ready way to enable him to cut off entirely the commerce of our subjects to the Baltic, and to afford him greater opportunities of carrying on those projects, which from good grounds we cannot but apprehend he is forming against the peace and safety of our kingdoms.' On coming to the Sound Norris was therefore to demand of him, by a despatch to be delivered into his hands by a special messenger, a duplicate being sent to Jackson at Stockholm for delivery to the chancery there, the following points: (1) reparation for the damages inflicted, revocation of the privateer edict, and security for the future; (2) a solemn promise not to assist the Pretender directly or indirectly, and not to harbour in Sweden Jacobite refugees; (3) the abandonment in the interests of commerce of all design of conquering Norway or any of the Danish islands. If he would give the satisfaction demanded, the king of England would be most ready and desirous to restore his former good understanding with him, and would heartily employ his good offices to procure for him as good a peace as the situation of affairs would allow.

After the despatch of the express Norris was to await an answer, and pending its receipt not to act 'in any respect offensively against Sweden, unless there appears an absolute necessity of joining with

⁵¹ Authorities for the Baltic expedition and negotiations of this year: Norris's despatches, Record Office, Admiralty, Secretary, In-Letters 2, and Home Office, Admiralty 89; his journal and letter book, British Museum, Add. MSS. 28128 and 28145; despatches of Townshend and Stanhope, *ibid.* 28145 and 22510, Record Office, Home Office, Regencies 8 and Secretaries' Letter Book 27, and in *Coxe's Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*; and despatches of Lord Polwarth and General Bothmer from Copenhagen, Record Office, Denmark 86, and Hanover, Staatsarchiv, Des. 24, Denmark 135. The accounts of Bothmer and Norris are very full.

⁵² Kenneth, Lord Duffus, is mentioned by name. The government had heard of his arrival in Sweden with several others in a despatch from Jackson dated 10 March, o.s., and received 4 May, o.s. (Record Office, Sweden 22). Duffus, having married a daughter of Admiral Siöblad, formerly governor of Gothenburg, was known there and recognised on his arrival. A full list of his companions, sent later, was not received till 8 July, o.s. It included the names of four officers, nine other gentlemen, and nine servants. Duffus came on to Stockholm, and being in a starving condition expressed to Jackson his desire to give himself up. Travelling to Hamburg with that object, he was there arrested at Wich's request, and deported to England. For the circumstances attending the arrest see Wich's despatches of July (Record Office, Hamburg 83), and for previous memorials by Jackson against the harbouring of Jacobite rebels in Sweden, Lamberty, ix. 390.

the Danes in order to defend the kingdoms of Norway and Denmark against the attempts of the Swedes.' If in the interval of waiting the tsar and the king of Denmark should offer to undertake a descent on Scania, Norris was in the strongest terms to dissuade them from it. Should they persist in spite of his friendly arguments, he must threaten to leave the Sound with his squadron, and allow the fleet of Sweden to act freely in its own defence. As soon as the answer was received it was to be transmitted to the king, and his instructions awaited. If Norris considered it full and satisfactory, he was to behave towards the king of Denmark in the meantime as above said.⁵³

Besides this, but as a secondary matter, Norris was to take care of the traders, and the instructions given him by the admiralty only touched this point. He was to concert with the Dutch 'the proper methods to protect and secure the trade of both nations in such manner as may best suit with the service on which you are principally sent.'

Consistently with these instructions George employed direct persuasion at Copenhagen to induce Frederick at least to postpone the invasion of Scania.⁵⁴ What Gyllenborg had said as to a cession of Bremen and Verden seems to have been credited, and the hope of an accommodating reply from Charles to have been seriously entertained.

The moment that Norris appeared in the Sound he received an urgent summons through Puchler, the Hanoverian resident at Copenhagen, to bring his squadron on to the Bay of Kjöge or the Möen, to cover from Swedish attack the vessels conveying troops and supplies from the mainland. For the Swedes were actually infesting the coasts of Denmark. Early in May Admiral Wachtmeister had seized a number of vessels carrying timber to Copenhagen. At the beginning of June he looked in on Danzig, and gave a fright to the Russian galleys there, though he could not touch them. In the absence of Admiral Gabel's squadron in Norwegian waters the Danes were not strong enough to meet him. It was understood, said Puchler, that Norris had authority to act as requested, and he could await the king of Sweden's answer as well in the Baltic as in the Sound. He was also asked to send two of his ships to Norway to join Gabel.

⁵³ Droysen (iv. ii. 160) says that the memorial sent in included proposals drafted by Bernstorff for the cession of Norway to Sweden, with compensation for Denmark in Sleswick. Such may have been, as he says, submitted to the court of Copenhagen, and advocated there by Bernstorff's countrymen and cousins, but there is no such thing in Norris's instructions, nor anything more in relation to a peace than the offer of the king of England's good offices. Holm declines to believe this and other statements of Droysen in connexion without authority given for them. See his note, p. 52. He says that there is no trace of such proposals by Bernstorff in the Danish archives.

⁵⁴ Holm, p. 53.

Norris replied that he would himself come to Copenhagen to discuss the matter, and sent off Puchler's letter to Townshend, with a request for instructions. He had sent his memorials to Charles and to Jackson on the day of his arrival, the former by one Stambke,⁵⁵ who was ordered to deliver it into the king's own hands. On 5 June, old style, he wrote again to Townshend, recounting what he had done at Copenhagen and how he had informed the king of Denmark that he was obliged to await in the Sound the king of Sweden's answer and the arrival of the Dutch. Ten days later he learnt from Jackson that the memorial forwarded to him for delivery had been simply sent on to the king.⁵⁶ Of Stambke he heard nothing. Sehestedt, the Danish secretary of state, sent him another appeal to come on, to which he replied, as before, that he could not, adding, however, that if the Swedes attempted anything against the kingdom of Denmark he would very readily do his best in defence of it. Another letter from Puchler obliged him to request Townshend to observe to the king of Denmark 'how much more is desired of me than I can undertake in my present circumstances, which I endeavour to behave in according to my orders.' Still no reply came from Charles, while he received other letters from Puchler of 21 and 24 June, the latter containing the significant phrase—

Vous jugerez aisément . . . à quoi on attribuera icy tout le mal qui leur pourra arriver, et le délai de l'ouverture de la campagne, se persuadants outre cela que par une prompte descente en Scanie le Norwege pourra être secouru suffisamment.

Norris complained loudly of this to Townshend and to Admiral Aylmer, the near relative on whose influence at court he so much relied.⁵⁷ On the 19th, old style, he sent an account of a second visit to court, when the king assured him of his earnest desire to effect the descent as soon as possible.⁵⁸ Norris could only reply civilly

⁵⁵ A man supplied for this service by Gyllenborg. As he left Sweden for Holland at the end of June in company with Goertz, it seems probable that he was the Stambke who became secretary to the latter and was arrested with him in the following February.

⁵⁶ The memorial and reply, Lamberty, ix. 650-2.

⁵⁷ 'So while I am obeying my orders, which I endeavour strictly to observe, I shall be complained against by the Danes and Muscovites, and perhaps the Swedes at last prove so stubborn as not to admit the offers of coming to an accommodation. Thus between Sila and Caribdis I am like to give neither content. . . . I pray, Sir, don't fail often to speak to Lord Townshend and Mr. Berringsdorff to consider of me' (16 June, o.s.) I don't write to Mr. Berringsdorff till I hear he is o' this side the water, and pray you will make him my compliments. Robethon told me we were not to correspond this year, which is the reason I don't write to him, but you will please to make him my compliments that we may stand right with him' (12 June, o.s.)

⁵⁸ But Hanneken, the British secretary at Copenhagen, had already advised Norris (20 June) that such was the backwardness of the preparations that in spite of the peril of Norway the expedition could not be ready before the end of August or the beginning of September. Holm says that even in July it was impossible to fit out a fleet (p. 57).

in the same terms as before, and, unable to satisfy him, went on to see Sehestedt, of whom he inquired whether the descent upon Scania could not be given up in favour of some other method of relieving Norway, in which he could himself join.⁵⁹ The proposal was referred to the king, who replied that earlier something might have been arranged, but that now his word was pledged to the tsar to make the descent as soon as possible; it was the only way to save Norway, and only by force of arms could the king of Sweden be brought to reason. 'It is my opinion,' wrote Norris, 'the government of Denmark put all their hopes in this descent, and that their state is under such difficulties as it must procure them a good or ill peace, because the charge of another year's war will be extremely difficult for them to bear.' No one there thought that the king of Sweden would ever agree to a treaty.

The admiral's difficulties were increased by the impatience of the merchantmen, numbering over a hundred after the arrival of those collected at Newcastle. He thought that as soon as the Dutch came he might have to despatch three of his ships with them as convoy. On 20 June, old style, he wrote of the situation as follows:—

I have further to observe to your lordship, they [the Danes] express themselves not at all obliged by our being only defensive to them; and yet, under the umbrage of our being in these seas, the Suedish fleet may be kept from attempting to disturb the descent, upon a view we may join the Danes; and if the king would not have me do it, I am not instructed to let the Suedes on the other hand know it, to make their use of it in defending themselves. I think his majesty has this in his power, (if the king of Sueden would come to terms) by his commands to me to concert in that case with the Suedes, we might prevent the descent on Schonen; or if the king of Sueden will not by a prefixt time give assurances of peace, then his majesty commanding me to assist in covering the descent would cultivate a good correspondence with the crowns of Denmark and Muscovy, or if we were to withdraw ourselves from these seas, since the descent is to be made by the Danes and Muscovites, it would shew an exact neutrality. But the king of Sueden is reputed to be of a resolution not to listen to terms, and if the descent be not made, he will in time carry Norway, it being more easy to him to strengthen his army with horse and everything as he advances in that country, than it is for the Danes to defend it, who, in all such cases, must do it by transportation from Jutland, which they find too troublesome, and especially in their horse.

A day or two after this Norris received important despatches from Jackson. Wachtmeister's squadron consisted of eleven ships of from 70 to 50 guns. He had been revictualled for six weeks,

⁵⁹ According to Sehestedt, Norris considered it likely that Charles would make acceptable proposals of peace (Holm, p. 54).

and reinforced by six of the large vessels of Sparre's squadron. Another detachment of smaller vessels was on guard towards Finland; a third of ten, with four of 50 guns, lay ready for sea at Gothenburg. Goertz had met Stambke at Wenersborg, and forbidden him to proceed till he should receive a summons from the king. He was likely to remain there for some time. An English ship from Stockholm reported twenty-eight Swedish men-of-war at sea near Bornholm.

There was impatience in England of the absence of any answer from the king of Sweden. Fresh despatches from Townshend of the 12th and 15th, old style, reached Norris on 7 July. The king, he was told, now thought that, as the Dutch were only sending six men-of-war, they would not be strong enough to convoy the traders up the Baltic alone; on the other hand some parts of Norris's instructions forbade him to take the whole fleet on that service, or to send a sufficiently strong detachment. But by taking up a station off Bornholm or elsewhere near Carlskrona he might prevent the Swedish fleet from attacking the traders, thereby enabling the Dutch to proceed in charge of them, and remaining sufficiently near the Sound to execute such orders as he might receive upon arrival of the king of Sweden's answer. He was to concert this affair with the Dutch commander. Norris replied (30 June, old style) that the Swedish fleet, according to his information, had 1,362 guns against his 1,070, with double the proportion of men to each gun. As soon as the Dutch had parted from him it might be expected to attack. Nothing could suit the Danes and Russians better, for whatever the result of the action, both fleets would be disabled, and they be masters of the sea. But if he could have orders to join the Danes he would take with him a squadron of theirs, and after despatching the convoy would cover the transportation of troops to Zealand, and so forward the affairs of Denmark better than in any other way. He reminded Townshend of his instances in favour of a much stronger armament. 'I have not known in my time our sea affairs in that character, as to be in action with the disproportion here stated, with the want of fire ships, &c. &c.'

Two days later the Dutch fleet at length arrived, six men-of-war with upwards of two hundred sail of merchantmen, the whole under the command of Commodore H. Grave. A council of war was at once held, when it appeared that the Dutch commander had orders not to go up the Baltic alone. It was resolved that, seeing that 'by accidents of wind or weather it might happen that the squadron could not keep in a station between Bornholm and Carlskrona during the time the trade shall be in the East sea,' and that the refusal of the Swedes to receive a letter from the States-general, or to allow any one to land at

Helsingborg,⁶⁰ showed their intention to attack, the fleet should remain where it was till further orders.

The purport of Norris's fresh instructions was immediately known at Copenhagen, for Bernstorff had at once imparted it to Söhlenthal.⁶¹ The arrival of the Dutch squadron was the signal for the renewal of importunity. Sehestedt inquired (14 July) how many ships Norris could spare to help blockade the Swedish fleet, and when they would be sent. He recommended prompt action, as delay would only embolden the enemy. Norris reported in reply the resolution of the council of war, and added: 'To prevent mistakes I further acquaint you I have not any orders to act offensively against the Swedes; so that were I in that station [Bornholm], and they neither attempt to disturb our commerce nor to make war upon me, I have no direction to make war upon them.' The king, he said, being now on his journey to Hanover, the king of Denmark could communicate easily with him, after which Sehestedt and himself could concert measures. In forwarding the correspondence to Townshend Norris expressed the opinion that the Dutch, as their trade could not be carried on but in conjunction with other nations, ought readily to join in forcing the Swedes to end the war. The fleet of the latter should be forced into port, the descent be made, and the traders then proceed in safety to their destinations, to return either that year or the next.

George left London for his electorate, like a boy going home for the holidays, on 18 July. The strongest objections had been made by his English schoolmasters to his departure. In particular Townshend urged the difficulty of conducting northern affairs when despatches arriving from the Sound must be forwarded to the king for his perusal and returned. The Baltic expedition, he said, alone secured to the king 'the balance and arbitration of the north,' and its failure might not only expose his German dominions to danger, but give to the malcontents in parliament 'every handle of traducing and making odious his majesty's administration.' This would be the journey's 'most fatal inconvenience.'⁶² George recognised the difficulty, but met it by taking the northern negotiations out of the hands of his ministers in England altogether. Stanhope accompanied him to Hanover, and transmitted his orders directly to Norris and to Lord Polwarth, who arrived at Copenhagen as envoy at the beginning of August. Norris still sent to Townshend

⁶⁰ Charles's orders were so strict, and his people so imbued with the necessity of obeying them literally, that Neugebauer, his envoy at Constantinople, travelling to him with important despatches, was not allowed to land from a Dutch boat. At the second attempt the Dutch sailors threw him into the water, and he clung to a pile for nearly an hour before he was permitted to come ashore (Jackson, 14 July, o.s.)

⁶¹ Holm, p. 65.

⁶² To Bernstorff, 19 May, o.s., 1716, in Coxe's *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, vol. ii.

duplicates of his despatches to Stanhope, but only received in answer assurances of the approval of the prince of Wales, acting as regent, and directions to shape his conduct on orders from Hanover. For the rest, George conducted negotiations with the tsar and with the kings of Denmark and Prussia to a great extent through his German ministers.

Peter the Great was back at Schwerin from Pymont by the end of June. Detachment after detachment of his army had in the meantime been marching into Mecklenburg, and the galleys had brought three regiments of guards from Danzig. But the army could not embark. In the first place no transports were to hand—some which had arrived from Pomerania had been sent straight on to Norway⁶³—and in the second there was no fleet to protect their crossing. Peter himself in his impatience got over to Falster on 14 July in a hoy, and put up at a fisher village with what fare he could get. The galleys arriving next day, he was able to appear at Copenhagen with the troops that they conveyed on the 17th.⁶⁴

On the 29th arrived from Reval seven men-of-war of the line, three frigates, and three schooners. This squadron had left that port three months before, but had been frightened back by the superior fleet of Sweden. Besides these four large ships had sailed from Archangel in September 1715; two of them had reached Copenhagen, two had wintered in Norway. The last and another came in on 10 June with five, three of them newly built, from England and Holland. As one went on to St. Petersburg Admiral Scheltinga, on the arrival of the Reval squadron, found himself in command of a fine fleet of twenty-two.⁶⁵

On 24 July (and Sehestedt⁶⁶ knew it the same day and sent a fresh appeal) Norris received further despatches from Townshend, of date 3 July, old style. The king, he was informed, approved of his strict adherence to his instructions. If the Swedes were again, as was reported, at sea, the six Dutch ships would not be strong enough to escort the traders, and in that case Norris must send a sufficient detachment with them. As it would then be dangerous for him to remain with his weakened force in the Sound, he should go forward and await the king of Sweden's answer in the Bay of Kjöge, or elsewhere thereabouts. If there should be any apprehension of danger from the Swedes, he might join his ships with those

⁶³ Holm, p. 45.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p. 63. Hanneken, the British secretary at Copenhagen, says that there were fourteen battalions of these troops, and that the galleys, thirty-six in number, had hugged the coast to Lübeck (Travemünde, it may be presumed), and crossed to Falster thence. He further says that twelve more galleys arrived at Copenhagen on the 21st. The force amounted to nearly 10,000 men, all in excellent trim (18 and 21 July, Record Office, Denmark 36).

⁶⁵ From Hartman, pp. 66-9. Norris mentions only seven Russian ships as arriving in the Sound on 8 June.

⁶⁶ Advised by Söhlenthal on Bernstorff's authority, as before (Holm, p. 56).

of the Danes. And as the king of Sweden had sent no answer, and probably would not send any, Norris was no longer to 'give any hindrance to the Danes in their descent upon Schonen either by representations or otherwise.'

In a private despatch sent with the above Townshend informed Norris that he had particular commands to acquaint him with advices received from France, to the effect that the Swedish minister in Paris (Eric Sparre) had concluded a treaty with the Jacobites there for taking them into the service of the king of Sweden in the rank and station they had enjoyed under the Pretender. This, it was said, and the seizure of ships bound not for the prohibited ports, but for Stockholm,⁶⁷ gave further proof of the king of Sweden's mind, and it was thought that more vigorous measures should be employed against him, particularly to divert him from his enterprise on Norway. When, therefore, Norris had arranged for the protection of the traders, he was to cover and facilitate the descent on Scania as the best means to that end. And if the Swedish fleet approached to interfere therewith he was to give it battle with the Danes,

his majesty's intentions being that you should observe no measures towards Sweden in any case where the assistance of his fleet shall be necessary to deprive them of any signal advantage, or where your joining the Danes may procure them some signal advantage over Sweden. But without one or the other of these two cases you are not to give the Danes such a degree of assistance as may be interpreted to amount to an open rupture with Sweden.

On receiving this despatch Norris moved on with the whole fleet into the roads of Copenhagen (Sunday, 26 July). The same day he was summoned to a conference with the two monarchs and their ministers. Asked how the transport of troops from Mecklenburg, and afterwards the descent on Scania, could be covered from a Swedish attack, and when he would take measures therefor, he replied that the answers to expresses sent to the States-general and to his master must be awaited; that then, if the whole naval force of Denmark and Russia could be sent with him to a station off Bornholm or Carlskrona, and it were ascertained that the Swedish fleet lay harmlessly in port, the traders might be sent on under a detachment, and the rest of the combined fleet remain for the purposes desired.

On 30 July Norris received further important instructions from Osnabrück, where the king was resting on his way to Hanover.

⁶⁷ The cargoes of some of the vessels seized by the active privateers of Gothenburg were actually the property of Stockholm merchants. But they were nevertheless declared lawful prize, and Charles, in revenge perhaps upon those very merchants who had pleaded inability to raise the supplies he wanted, confirmed the sentence (Jackson, 2 and 22 June and 3 July, o.s.)

They bore date 24 July, ten days later than his last from England, and after it was known that Charles had sent back his memorial unopened.⁶⁸ Norris was now ordered to sail so far eastward in the Baltic as should be necessary to enable the traders to go on with a convoy sufficient to protect them from privateers and frigates, and then with the main body of the joint fleet to observe the motions of the Swedes; and in consequence of the extraordinary contumacy of the king of Sweden to make reprisals, as instructed in that case. For this purpose he was to obtain the strongest Danish squadron he could to sail with him, and in consideration of that service he might help to drive the Swedes back to their ports, and so secure free navigation for the ships of the king of Denmark and his allies. Stanhope wrote also to Polwarth to add his instances to those of Norris, and as the tsar had probably arrived at Copenhagen to solicit him to send his ships also. He wrote to Norris that the request would willingly be granted, and later that the tsar was willing that he should have command.

Meanwhile the treaty negotiations between England and Russia had been proceeding. Prince Kurakin received from the tsar in June instructions upon the drafts delivered to him by Bernstorff, and counter-projects.⁶⁹ But the situation was different from what it had been in April. The Jacobite rebellion was extinct, the treaty of Westminster had been signed, a new system of friendship in the place of enmity between England and France was in conception. A Russian guarantee of the protestant succession was no longer of importance. The new draft of the commercial treaty was submitted to the Board of Trade, and amended in accordance with the merchants' advice.⁷⁰ But what Townshend wrote of as 'the project for a defensive alliance, which his majesty saw and disapproved, as leading him into too extensive engagements,'⁷¹ was reduced to a separate article of the commercial treaty stipulating that a squadron should be sent annually to the Baltic during the continuance of the war. This was delivered by Bernstorff to Horatio Walpole at the Hague, and forwarded by the latter to England on 21 July.⁷² But the regency there substituted another, providing that the squadron should only be sent so long as the privateer edict remained in force. Townshend pointed out—and the argument detracts from his reputation for

⁶⁸ Jackson says that Charles showed great heat, declaring that he knew nothing of Norris, and would receive nothing from him, or otherwise than through the proper channel (8 July, o.s.)

⁶⁹ Dated 21 May, o.s., 1716; printed in full by Hartman, pp. 158 foll.

⁷⁰ Copies of the amended treaty at the Record Office, and with copies of the correspondence in connexion, as sent to Admiral Norris, at the British Museum, Add. MS. 28154.

⁷¹ To Stanhope at Hanover, 8 Aug., o.s., Record Office, Home Office, Secretaries of State's Letter Books 27; cp. to Walpole, same date, Foreign Entry Books 85.

⁷² Townshend to Walpole, acknowledging its receipt, 17 July, o.s., *ibid.*

uprightness—that the altered clause completely met the Russian requirements, because there was not the slightest expectation that the king of Sweden would revoke the edict before peace was made, whereas the one proposed was not in a form which parliament could accept.⁷³ But Kurakin could hold out no hope of the tsar's approval. He saw difficulties in regard to only two of the commercial amendments, permission to British subjects to trade in Kasan and Astrakhan, and the principle of determining the monetary value of dollars.⁷⁴ But he insisted that the commercial treaty and the political treaty must go together, as in the tsar's view inseparable. In the recriminations which took place four years later Stanhope laid the chief blame for the failure of the negotiations upon the tsar's insistence on an article which obliged the king of England to exert all his power and credit to procure for the tsar at the peace the Baltic provinces and Viborg, and to send to his aid, if he were attacked there, fifteen men-of-war to serve under his command and where he pleased. The assertion was probably true, for such an undertaking would have obliged Great Britain to declare war upon her old friend, with results disastrous, in the opinion of the time, to the balance of power in Europe and to the interests of the protestant religion. The English ministers, whether by their own convictions or by their knowledge of the national sentiment, could not face such an eventuality. They could not lay before parliament any scheme of operations against Sweden not referable to the protection or encouragement of commerce. Nothing, therefore, was agreed to at present. When fresh advances were made by Peter in the winter, political developments had nullified their chance of success.

Peter went on board his ship on 30 July. Norris and he exchanged visits and compliments, and the next day there was a general conference, when the admiral formally communicated his new instructions. It was proposed to take action in accordance with them. Two days later Sehestedt sent in inquiries, first, as to the mode of sailing, the number of ships, their division, and the command; secondly, whether Norris would attack at sight, and make

⁷³ 'There is not the least room to imagine from the king of Sweden's temper and behaviour that he will ever revoke the edict, or restore the liberty and security of commerce, till the necessity of his affairs reduces him to seek a general peace, and while that edict remains in force the protection of the British commerce in the Baltick will make it indispensably necessary for the King to send annually a squadron thither, of a force at least equal to what the Czar insists on. So that if a good treaty of commerce with Muscovy can be purchased upon the termes of this article it will be just so much gain'd to His Majesty for an expense which he must have submitted to, whether this compensation had been in view or not' (to Stanhope and Walpole, *loc. cit.*)

⁷⁴ Townshend wrote to Walpole on 21 Aug., o.s., (*loc. cit.*) that 'the trade to Casan and Astracan, and the current price of dollars,' were very essential, and must be insisted on.

dispositions therefore beforehand; thirdly, whether, if the king of Sweden at the last moment offered satisfaction, he would consent to terms. The answer to the second question was affirmative, to the third negative. As to the first, Norris recommended that a line of battle should be formed of six Dutch, nineteen English, eleven Danish, and fourteen Russian men-of-war, the six Dutch to be subsequently detached with five English to convoy the merchantmen. Gabel's squadron should not be waited for; it might follow.

In the account of the conference which Norris sent to Stanhope he reported that the tsar was very willing to sail, but the Danes were not so ready. Moreover they pretended to the command, which, as 'a right the British nation never gave up,' he had declined to concede.⁷⁵ Though the orders sent to the Dutch commodore were very strict against his taking offensive action, yet he could not go up the Baltic before the Swedes were forced into harbour; therefore 'I shall use all the means I am able, if it must come to an action, to do it before the Dutch part from us, that their state may share in the rupture as well as in the safety the action, whenever it occur, will procure to their commerce.'

But Grave on 3 Aug. definitely declared that he could not take a place in the line of battle, although he allowed that unless it were formed the traders would not be able to proceed. In the vehement discussions at the Hague which followed the receipt of his request for further instructions, Horatio Walpole's arguments had been opposed by those of William Buys and his Amsterdam following, now as during the war with France the steady advocates of peace.⁷⁶ These gained the day, and Grave declared accordingly.

Writing again on 4 August Norris stated his belief that the desire of the Danes to wait for Gabel's return was a pretence. Since the Russian troops would be able to come over as soon as the fleet had sailed, the Danes would be put to the expense of keeping them, and this it was desired to avoid till all was ready.

On the previous day Peter had sailed on a two days' excursion to view the character of the coast on which the landing was to be made. On the 8th Gabel arrived with seven men-of-war, and on the 10th a conference was held, at which Norris and Polwarth met the Danish and Russian ministers and admirals. The line of battle was first considered: Norris undertook to supply fourteen ships thereto, sending on his other five with the merchantmen; Admiral Gyldenlöve promised eighteen, Vice-Chancellor Shafirov fourteen. Then came the question of command: Norris declined to be under

⁷⁵ Stanhope wrote in return (to Polwarth) that it was 'pretty extraordinary that the Danes should pretend to have the command; it is a thing His Majesty will never yield to.'

⁷⁶ The discussions reported in Walpole's despatch to Stanhope of 12 Aug., Record Office, Holland 254; cp. Lamberty, ix. 620-1.

the orders of the Danes ; they and the Russians declined to be under him. Norris then proposed to apply the principle already arranged for the conduct of the Russo-Danish army—that is, the monarch present in the field to command in chief, or if both were there they to command alternately. As the tsar was to sail in person he would on this principle command the Danes and Russians, and the English would act with him. If he left the fleet its movements must be concerted at councils of war. The English would form the van, the Danes the centre, the Russians the rear-guard. Then at a council of war on 12 August Norris and Grave arranged that the convoy should go on from Bornholm as soon as it was known that the coast was clear, and should assemble on its return at Danzig. Next day Admirals Gyldenlöve and Sehestedt hoisted their flags, and on Sunday, the 16th, the tsar his standard on the 'Ingria ;' on the 18th the whole expedition quitted Danish waters, a noble fleet of some sixty men-of-war and over 400 merchantmen.

The voyage went on in better harmony than might have been expected from the preliminary discussions. Gyldenlöve indeed complained that Norris did not salute his flag, but the latter justified himself. Bornholm was reached on the 19th. Cruisers were sent out, and reported the Swedish fleet safe in Carlskrona. On the 22nd, therefore, the convoy was sent off, the British portion under command of Captain Lestock, of the 'Weymouth.'⁷⁷ Norris had already issued orders to his captains to carry out reprisals by chasing and seizing any Swedish vessels they should meet with. The convoy gone, Norris proposed to the tsar that a detachment should be sent to Rostock to protect the transport of his troops, and either the rest of the fleet or some cruisers proceed to observe Carlskrona. The latter alternative was decided upon. One Danish ship had to go to Riga (or Königsberg) for cables, so ill-provided was that squadron. It also appeared that Gyldenlöve had orders on no account to proceed further up the Baltic than Oeland Point. The tsar desiring now to quit the fleet, new arrangements had to be made for its direction. He proposed that the British and Danish admirals should lie next each other, so as to be on equal terms and to consult, each nation taking orders from its own flag ; and when Gyldenlöve made difficulties, he told him that, if he would not agree to this, he would take his ships back and have nothing more to do with the operations. The Dane therefore assented, with the modification that one of each side should lie between the flagships. Councils of war were to be held on board the Russian ship the 'Marlborough.'

The tsar gone, next day (26 August) the admirals met. Norris inquiring whether, in case the Swedes followed the traders up the

⁷⁷ His other ships were the 'Falkland' and 'Strafford,' also of fifty guns, the 'Charles' galley and the 'Lynn,' forty, and the 'Blandford' frigate.

Baltic, Gyldenlöve would join him in pursuit of them, the latter replied that he might not go beyond the Point of Oeland. It was agreed that the rendezvous of the fleets should continue to be off Bornholm, and that cruisers, two of each nation, should lie between that island and Carlskrona, and report every four days. This went on, the fleet sailing from point to point, or separating to water, the cruisers continually on the watch, till 20 September, when all were back at Copenhagen. A fresh dispute on ceremonial between Norris and Gyldenlöve was the only incident, and this was happily composed. Meanwhile the Russian troops were coming over from Warnemünde, where 186 transports had been collected by the end of August, and the whole of them were in Zealand by 15 September. They amounted to thirty-seven battalions of infantry and three regiments of dragoons, some 29,000 men, of whom between 3,000 and 4,000 were non-combatants.⁷⁸ The combined army of invasion numbered about 52,000.⁷⁹

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(*To be continued.*)

⁷⁸ Hartman, p. 83. He gives detailed figures from the Russian documents. Forty battalions of infantry is the number elsewhere stated—for instance, by General Bothmer (19 Sept.) He puts the cavalry at six regiments of 1,800 men each.

⁷⁹ Wich reckons the number of the Danish forces at 10,298 horse and 12,599 foot, or nearly 23,000 (18 Sept.); so also Holm, p. 78.