communis vniuersitatis causa consumpserim. Verebar enim et vehementer formidabam ne, cum ceteris rebus, tot excellentissimi libri, tot summorum sudores atque vigilie perirent.[1] Conati autem sumus quantum in nobis fuit cetera omnia volumina que ille hic habuerit cogere; que autem in Hybernia sunt nostre potestati haud subiecta existunt. Ceterum cum hec fecissem, parum desiderio meo satisfecisse videbar nisi pariter prouiderem vti libri quibus istud studium donauerit tute vniuersitatis nuntio cum vestris optatis, tum vel maxime ista animi in perquirenda scientia affectione, credantur. Precantes Dominum optimum maximumque vt vberes inde diuturnosque fructus capiatis. Valeat vniuersitas vestra feliciter. Cursim ex domo nostra iuxta Westmonasterium quintodecimo kalendas Decembris.

Totus vester
G. Eboracensis.

Wellington at Verona

IT has been taken for granted by many writers on the period of the congress of Verona that the failure of English diplomacy at that meeting could be ascribed to the incapacity of the English representative, Wellington. To the charge of incapacity Lord Acton,[2] Martin,[3] and Lamartine[4] have added that of disloyalty to Canning, and an ingeniously modified form of this charge has been put forward by Mr. J. E. S. Green in a paper read before the Royal Historical Society in November 1917,[5] and in a more recent article.[6] Mr. Green's theory is briefly this: that Wellington was, during November 1822, gradually won over by Metternich to a policy of supporting Austria, that during the latter part of the congress he worked hand in glove with Metternich, disregarding both his written instructions and Canning's known wishes, and that this disloyalty towards his official superior was justified in his own eyes by George IV's strong desire that England should continue to act with the alliance, and by his own distrust of Canning's policy and fear of its probable results. There are, however, difficulties in the way of accepting this theory of Wellington's conduct, and the most serious difficulty is not that dealt with in Mr. Green's article in this Review. To begin with there is the fact that Wellington had played a considerable part in putting Canning in office.[7] By no process of quibbling could he have persuaded himself that it was fair to add to the already con-

[1] The Rylands copy inserts *parte*.
[2] *Ante*, iii. 800; review of J. F. Bright, *History of England*.
[3] Martin, *Histoire de France depuis 1789*, iv. 308.
[4] Lamartine, *Histoire de la Restauration*, vii. 106.
[5] *Royal Hist. Soc. Transactions*, 3rd Ser., xi, 1917, p. 59.
[6] pp. 200 f. above.
[7] See the letter of George IV to Wellington, 5 September 1822 (*Wellington Dispatches*, sec. II, i. 273); and Wellington to George IV, 7 September 1822 (*ibid.* 274–6).

siderable difficulties of the new secretary during his first few months of office. If he did deceive Canning—and it can be called nothing less than deceit, in view of the studied silence of his dispatches and letters to Canning as to the slightest change in English policy at the congress—he could not under the circumstances have reconciled his action with any strict code of honour. And in view of his known character and his military standard of obedience to his superiors, the evidence must be decisive before we judge Wellington guilty of dishonourable conduct.

In this case the evidence is very far from being decisive. The major part of the case against Wellington rests on Bois-le-Comte's witness, though Mr. Green admits that Bois-le-Comte's own theory as to the reasons for Wellington's conduct is fallacious. But can Bois-le-Comte be regarded as an altogether satisfactory authority? He was not even in as good a position for obtaining information as Chateaubriand during the first part of the congress, and we know that, until Montmorency left Verona, Chateaubriand was able to learn comparatively little. Much of his information was probably obtained from his official superior, La Ferronays, who, being ambassador to Russia, was on more or less intimate terms with the Emperor Alexander. That in itself supplies the reason for the necessity of obtaining confirmation of his reports from other sources. La Ferronays was not admitted into the most important conferences,[1] and though it is probably true that the chief personages at Verona discussed their important schemes and expedients privately before producing them in formal conference, they are hardly likely to have discussed them in front of minor men at the congress. Most of them were probably brought forward in private interviews such as the one at which Wellington mooted the idea of a neutral nation's 'good offices' to Montmorency as a means of enabling France to withdraw from her rather embarrassing position in relation to Spain without being involved in war.[2] The secrecy which was supposed to envelop all proceedings at the important conferences may be measured by Montmorency's dismay at finding that Chateaubriand was aware of something that had passed at one of these meetings,[3] and though probably Chateaubriand was not the only diplomatist to be informed of secrets that he was not supposed to know, still it is obvious that any one outside the charmed circle could only get information at second or third hand. Bois-le-Comte's evidence cannot then be allowed to outweigh that of the men who dealt directly with Wellington. And the evidence we have

[1] See Gabriac in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, cxliii, p. 563.
[2] Letter of Montmorency of 28 October (Villèle, *Mémoires*, iii. 164).
[3] Letter of Montmorency of 13 November (*ibid.* 210–11).

from them is in contradiction with that of Bois-le-Comte. In the first place Chateaubriand as well as La Ferronays was on confidential terms with the tsar. During the latter part of the congress, after Montmorency left to make his unsuccessful attempt to win over the authorities at Paris to the Veronese plan of joint diplomatic action in Spain, Chateaubriand established a considerable intimacy with Alexander.[1] They certainly discussed the Spanish question,[2] and Chateaubriand must therefore have been at least as well supplied as Bois-le-Comte with any information Alexander could give on the subject, whilst he was also, as chargé d'affaires of the French mission, in close communication with Wellington himself. Yet his contemporary letters represent Wellington as violently opposed to anything the allies suggest in connexion with the Spanish problem.[3]

Moreover, had Wellington during the congress shown any disposition to fall in with Metternich's views, it would be safe to suppose that there would be some reflexion of the fact in Metternich's own correspondence. To that consummate but exceedingly vain diplomatist, agreement with his own opinions was the proof of wisdom, whilst stupidity meant action contrary to his views. But as late as 2 December he wrote to Neumann, the Austrian representative at the court of St. James, that Wellington had not a diplomatist's most indispensable qualities, that he had of course never expected 'des nuances délicates et recherchées' from the duke, but that he had been quite unprepared for the inefficiency with which the said duke had conducted affairs at Verona, and, most suggestive of all, he instructed Neumann to find out if the 'ligne plus acerbe' taken by England at Verona were to be ascribed to Wellington's instructions, or—which he evidently expected to be the case—to Wellington's own attitude.[4] It is obvious from this that Metternich considered that the cajolery which he speaks of in another letter[5] had been in this case thrown away, and it is further obvious that he had not met with as much success in sounding Wellington as has been suggested. Now, 2 December is late in the history of Verona. Had Wellington shown any signs of coming into line with Austria during November Metternich would probably have given some intimation of the fact in this letter to London of

[1] *Congrès de Vérone*, c. xxxiii. 109; Hyde de Neuville, *Mémoires et Correspondance*, iii. 18.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 106, 108.

[3] See his letter of 28 November (Villèle, iii. 248). It must be remembered that anything in the *Congrès de Vérone* which seems at variance with, or is not supported by, the author's contemporary correspondence must be looked on with suspicion, owing to the fact that it was written many years after the event and the author's imagination led him astray.

[4] See Metternich's letter to Neumann in the Staats-Archiv, Vienna. I have gratefully to acknowledge Mr. C. K. Webster's kindness in allowing me to use his transcripts from the Vienna archives.

[5] See below, p. 580.

2 December. But of Wellington's supposed change of attitude there is not the smallest trace. All the evidence points the other way, and Metternich's language suggests rather a man who feels that he has not met with proper support in a quarter where he expected it, than a man speaking of a diplomatic ally or of a diplomatic tool. If Lord Acton's accusation that Wellington during the congress was urging the Frenchmen on to war with Spain were true, it would supply a ground for Metternich's attitude, since the latter disliked the idea of a Franco-Spanish war almost, if not quite, as much as Canning. But in view of the complete silence of Montmorency and Chateaubriand on this subject, the accusation must be held to be not proven. The loss of Montmorency's account of Verona is doubtless irreparable, but it is noteworthy that the historian who had the advantage of using it affords no support to the theory that Wellington was leading a double life at Verona.[1] Finally Gentz, who as secretary to the congress was well acquainted with the course of events, gives exactly the same picture of Wellington's behaviour as the two French ambassadors, and his tone in speaking of the duke does not seem to imply that the latter had at all fallen in with Austrian views.[2]

If, then, it is not true that Wellington contributed to the failure of English diplomacy at Verona by his disloyalty, what is the truth about his attitude and work at this last of the great congresses? The difficulties in his way were enormous, and his path was not smoothed by his own unfortunate action in allowing himself to be drawn into discussions on the military side of the affair, an action that was unfortunate because it produced an entirely erroneous impression on his hearers' minds. In spite of this mistake, however, he was by no means so inefficient a diplomatist as Metternich thought him. It is worthy of note that at least one good judge of men and their abilities rated him high,[3] and in view of the absolute determination of Alexander, Montmorency, and Metternich to intervene in some way in the Peninsula (though they differed as to the method),

[1] Nettement, *Histoire de la Restauration*, vi. 273, tells us that Wellington kept scrupulously within the limits of his instructions, and gives us a picture of the duke (in a foot-note quoting Montmorency) 'feuilletant sans cesse ses instructions' during sittings of the congress and 'y revenant imperturbablement quand on croyait lui avoir fait faire quelques pas en avant'.

[2] e.g. 'Was nun vollends in England beschlossen werden wird — etwas Gutes sicher nicht — das weiss nur der—Gott sei bei uns—Teufel, der dies Gouvernement jetzt allein regiert. Ich habe Grund zu glauben dass sogar Canning, der zwischen Gott und dem Teufel mitten inne steht, endlich aber doch wohl diesem anheim fallen wird, noch gar nicht mit sich einig ist: und Wellington ist wahrhaftig nicht der Mann der ihm irgend einen gescheidten Rath . . . geben könnte' (quoted from Gentz's journal in Schmidt-Weissenfels, *Gentz*, ii. 229). This, written in the latter part of November, also seems to show that the inner circle of the congress was still far from being completely reassured as to England's future course of conduct.

[3] Gallatin, *A Great Peacemaker*, p. 104.

it is difficult to see how even a Castlereagh could have prevented them doing so. What Wellington could do he did: as far as intervention in Spain was concerned, his function at the congress was to be 'an objection and an obstacle',[1] and Metternich's outburst to Neumann is a measure of how well he played the part. He was doomed to defeat from the beginning, but he could, and did, hamper the proceedings of his opponents at every stage.

It has been suggested[2] that he made a bad mistake in taking Montmorency's 'simple dire' of 20 October at more than its literal meaning and answering it as though it embodied an aggressive policy. Metternich and the Prussian representative, it has been pointed out, who were as anxious as Wellington to avert war, were scrupulously careful to treat the paper as what it pretended to be, purely defensive. But it must be remembered that their ultimate aims were very different from those of Wellington, that he wanted to avert action of any kind, while they looked upon the 'simple dire' as a good opportunity to put forward their views as to joint diplomatic intervention at Madrid. Further, the answers of Austria and Prussia rested entirely on the supposition that France might be forced into hostilities against Spain by the action of the Spanish revolutionaries, while if Wellington admitted this supposition as being in the least likely, he largely weakened his own repeated assertions that the Spanish revolution was not dangerous.[3] In the extraordinarily complicated state of the Spanish question[4] it may well have been not the least advisable course to force the Austrian and French ministers into the open and make them deal with facts as they were instead of with a purely hypothetical position such as that presumed by Montmorency in his 'simple dire'. It is true that Wellington failed in all his efforts to avert intervention in Spain; his task was perhaps too big for him. But his resistance to the powers' proposals impressed most of his contemporaries so strongly that it has been seriously suggested that his raising of the question of the Spanish colonies was a cunning piece of diplomacy meant as a counterblast to the unacceptable decision of the congress to withdraw the allied ambassadors from Madrid.[5] This was not the case, but it adds another item to the mass of evidence which goes to prove that, though he made some mistakes,[6]

[1] Nettement, vi. 273.

[2] Green in *Transactions of the Royal Hist. Soc.*, 1918, p. 69.

[3] Memoir on the Observations of the French Minister respecting Spain (Wellington, *Supplementary Dispatches*, sec. II, i. 501; also below, Metternich to Neumann).

[4] See Wellington's dispatch of 29 October 1822 (Wellington, *Supplementary Dispatches*, sec. II, i. 460).

[5] Letter of Chateaubriand of 28 November 1822 (Villèle, iii. 248; also *vide* Treitschke, *Geschichte Deutschlands*, i. 491).

[6] E.g. the information given to a Spanish agent at Verona, which leaked back to Montmorency via Madrid and Paris (*ante*, p. 205 n.). This, however, was almost

Wellington acted honourably at Verona, and that the failure was not due to disloyalty to his official chief.

H. M. LACKLAND.

I

Staats-Archiv, Vienna. 21 September 1822.

NEUMANN TO METTERNICH

Les auspices sous lesquelles [Canning] est entré au Ministère ne sont pas faites pour flatter son amour-propre. Il avait voulu d'abord faire le fier, mais le Duc de Wellington a adouci ses scrupules et ses amis lui ont conseillé d'accepter, vu que l'occasion ne se representeroit peut-être plus : il a donc cédé, et a promis tout ce qu'on exigoit de lui, c'est-à-dire, de suivre en tout le système de la présente administration. Le Roi en lui remettant les sceaux lui a dit devant ses ministres que ce n'était qu'à condition qu'il marcheroit sur la même ligne que son prédécesseur, qu'il les lui confiait. On dit que le Roi a montré beaucoup de dignité dans cette occasion, mais il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'il a été forcé et que Mr. Canning sent qu'il est l'homme de la nécessité et non celui du choix de sa Majesté. . . . Mr. Canning tiendra-t-il la promesse qu'il a donnée de ne s'écarter en rien de la conduite de ses collègues ? C'est ce qu'il faut espérer, mais ce que d'après les antécédents on ne pourra croire que lorsqu'on l'aura vu. Il n'est pas bon à faire comme les autres, . . . et je doute qu'il se laisse influencer longtemps par Ld. Liverpool, il cherchera à lui gajer la main, et comment espérer que le Roi avec toutes les meilleures intentions puisse résister à son Ministère s'il n'a pu refuser à Ld. Liverpool et empêcher l'admission d'un homme, qu'il hait du fond de son âme ? Ld. Londonderry et le Roi avoient un même système qu'ils ont soutenu au travers des plus grands obstacles et des plus grands dangers.

Dans le dernier et mémorable entrevu de ce ministre avec le Roi, il lui dit : ' Sire, il faut dire adieu à l'Europe, vous et moi seuls, nous le connoissons et l'avons sauvé. Personne après moi ne connoit plus les affaires du continent.' [1] Il continua à faire de grands éloges au Roi pour la perspicacité avec laquelle il avoit jugé l'état critique des affaires et la persévérance qu'il avoit mise dans la poursuite de ses desseins. Le Roi en fut frappé, d'autant plus qu'il y avait dans le ton et les manières de cet homme incomparable un air de prédiction qui annonçoit l'affreuse catastrophe que le Roi n'avait trop appréhendé. Ld. Londonderry, sachant qu'il avait pour soutien son auguste Maître, suivait avec énergie un système souvent contrarié par la timidité de ses collègues. Le Roi, de son côté, était affermi dans ses idées par la manière dont son ministre les défendait au conseil et au parlement, il y avoit identité de vues ou de principes, une confiance et garantie réciproques.

Tout cela vient à cesser et le Roi est isolé, non seulement défiant de ses ministres, mais les haïssant tous plus ou moins, sans en excepter

certainly not known on 8 November, when the French diplomatists had a violent argument as to whether England would intervene or not (Gabriac, quoted in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, cxliii. 565). It is possible that Wellington gave this information to the Spanish agent in the hope that the knowledge that England would not help them would make the Spanish more conciliatory towards France.

[1] This need not be taken literally. It is quite likely that Londonderry said it, but it does not follow that he believed it.

Ld. Liverpool. Le Chancellier et Mr. Peel sont les seuls qu'il distingue. Je ne parle pas du Duc de Wellington, il est sur une ligne à part : le Roi le regarde dans ce moment comme le seul ami qu'il ait et comme son sauveur.

La position du Roi vis-à-vis de son Ministère offre donc une des combinaisons les plus singulières, pour ne pas dire les plus malheureuses.

Au milieu de tout cela nous n'avons que deux individus qui nous soient décidément favorables : c'est le Roi lui-même et le Duc de Wellington, qui tous deux ont une véritable vénération pour l'auguste personne de notre souverain, et un attachement réel pour V.A. C'est donc vers ces deux objets que nous devons nous diriger, c'est à soutenir le Duc vis-à-vis de ses collègues, vis-à-vis du monde, et je dirais de lui-même (car il se laisse quelques fois entraîner par sa bonté), qu'il faut nous appliquer. Il faut le placer sur un piédestal si élevé que Mr. Canning ni personne ne puisse l'atteindre : il faut mettre tous nos soins à cimenter cette harmonie qui existe si heureusement entre le Roi et le Duc, celui-ci a dans ce moment l'avantage sur M. Canning qui est tellement novice dans les affaires étrangères qu'il faut le gagner de vitesse dans ce qu'il va se faire à Vienne : ce noviciat du reste ne peut pas durer longtemps. . . . [Wellington] a une amitié toute particulière pour V.A., c'est lui qui devra remplacer dans les conseils du Roi la perte irréparable que vous avez faite, mon Prince, en Lord Londonderry.

II

Staats-Archiv, Vienna. 2 Decembre 1822.
Vérone. Particulière.

METTERNICH TO NEUMANN

. . . Le Duc nous quitte mécontent de nous tous. Je trouve sa tête si une [*sic*] affaiblie, pour le moins extrêmement irritable, comme une suite assez naturelle de la grave maladie qu'il vient de faire. Sa position est d'un autre côté d'une grande difficulté : elle eût été telle pour tout ministre : elle a dû l'être plus encore pour un homme qui n'a pas les qualités les plus indispensables pour un diplomate. Aussi le Duc est-il allé chercher dans les autres ce qu'il avait dû ne chercher qu'en lui-même. Le temps et la réflexion lui feraient voir plus juste et c'est à cela que personne ne peut travailler. Quand je vous parle de l'humeur du Duc, je ne l'étends toutefois que sur ses relations d'affaires, car toutes celles personnelles ont été bonnes et surtout avec moi. Vous le connaissez et vous savez par conséquent qu'il est fort accessible à la cajolerie. Celle-ci ne lui a point été épargnée. On a eu pour lui le soin de créer des distinctions particulières. Il a été traité à Vienne et ici comme Maréchal. Il a dîné seul avec sa Majesté Impériale : il aura trouvé à son passage à Milan des soins auxquels nous ne sommes pas toujours habitués : aussi ce qui a dû se faire s'est fait, mais ce qui n'a point été possible, n'a point pu se faire, et ce qui plus que tout eût été impossible, c'eût été de le satisfaire sur le point de vue politique des Cours dans la seule affaire importante pour lui. Il dit que tout le monde a tort. Il est possible que tel puisse être le cas, mais il ne s'est donné aucune peine de nous tracer le chemin de la raison. Dire que la révolution de l'Espagne n'exerce aucune influence sur l'Europe . . . ce n'est pas dire une raison, mais c'est exprimer un sentiment que contredit le sentiment général et en particulier celui de la France entière.