

he understood how parliament was composed, and knew how to appreciate the high value which must be set upon certain leading families in the country. His fine tact taught him still earlier the vast weight in English politics which was in store for the house of Wellesley. He called Napoleon's attention in good time to the fact that by an act of respect shewn to this family a certain mastery over British policy might be gained. What Napoleon then declined, Talleyrand took up again after the battle of Waterloo. He made use of the materials of the alliance, and very soon divided the elements which had a natural sympathy for France, from those which in any case must be alien to it. He used England as a shield against Russia, a policy which France was unfortunately too weak to carry out. Talleyrand played away the favour of Louis, who was influenced by personal jealousy towards England, and roused the anger of Alexander, who effected his downfall. After the revolution of July, he resumed his policy where he had been forced to break it off fifteen years before. He took pains to involve English interests in every complicated question, and thus to shew, almost by indirect methods, the advantages of the French alliance. Talleyrand, indeed, might have been thought in London rather an English minister than a French ambassador. While seeming to put France aside he forced England to do all that the French cabinet required, either merely giving his assent, or sharing the responsibility, or even, on occasion, taking the initiative. When England held back on the Polish question, he forced a decision by means which he secretly brought to bear upon parliament; he turned the question of Belgium into an English one by promoting the election of Prince Leopold; in Eastern affairs he stirred up English ambition, and by his representations compelled the government to advance to the front. Talleyrand wishes French foreign policy to be limited only by subscribing to that of England, and the Duke of Broglie, who tried, on his own responsibility, to introduce something like honour and independence into his ministry, was obliged to draw back. The quadruple alliance is said to have been brought about in Madrid by a *coup de main*, and the long delay which ensued as to its publication seems to give credibility to this statement. But this cannot really have been the case, for the state of the peninsula was not such as could have arisen in one night: it was long foreshadowed, and diplomacy must have seen what was coming. The right of intervention which lies at the foundation of this alliance appears, indeed, rather to have shunned the light of day, and that it might be able to give a better account of itself, it assumed the disguise of an intrigue, whereas, in fact, it was nothing but the result of a compact entered into in London. We cannot conclude

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