

answer be given to each of the questions aforesaid, which will enable your Royal Highness to see the state of these transactions.

"But admitting that it be convenient to pay at this time the debts of the *Junta de Viveres*, it would be almost superfluous to propose the question, whether it be more important to pay those debts, or to pay the army which has to defend your Royal Highness's kingdom and Government; and, to protect the honour and property of your Royal Highness's subjects, and everything most dear to them in life; without which, nothing could escape destruction. This army will neither be able nor willing to fight, if it be not paid.

"Another measure which I have lately recommended, as a remedy capable of putting the Government in a condition to pay the army of operations for some time, in the same manner and to the same period to which their comrades in the British army are paid, is, that there be taken out of the hands of all the collectors of the revenue of the State the balances which they may owe to the royal Treasury.

"My attention was called to this subject by a communication made to me by a military officer in the province of Trás-os-Montes, relating to a large sum of money in the hands of the collector of the revenue at Braganza, at the time when the enemy made movements towards the Escla; and having inquired into this matter, I found that, according to the manner in which the Treasury manages its transactions, every one of the collectors of the revenue of the State has always in his possession the amount of the revenue he has received in the space of a month.

"I recommended that the collectors should be obliged to deliver in, every fifteen days, whatever they had received; but I have not been able to accomplish it.

"Your Royal Highness has frequently deigned to make known to the Governors of the kingdom your royal desire that they should attend to my advice, and they have as frequently assured your Royal Highness that they give it every attention.

"I can assure your Royal Highness, that when I devote myself to the labour of taking into consideration the affairs of the State, and giving my opinion upon them to the Governors of the kingdom, I have no object in doing so, excepting the interest I feel in the good of the nation, and the honour and prosperity of your Royal Highness; and I am not in any degree induced to do so from objects of personal interest, for none can I have relatively to Portugal; nor can I have any with regard to individuals, for not having any relations, and being almost unacquainted with those who direct, or would wish to direct, the affairs of your Royal Highness.