

By a decree passed the first of October, all the monasteries of religious orders, comprehending the Benedictines of Arragon and Catalonia, the convents and colleges of the military orders of St. James, Calatrava, Alcantara, and Monteju, with those of St. John of Jerusalem, and St. John of God, were finally dissolved. An exception was made in favour of eight convents, to be designated by government, which had acquired peculiar veneration from their antiquity, or from other causes. The monks ordained *in sacris*, who had not attained their fiftieth year, were to have a pension of three hundred ducats; those between fifty and sixty, to be allowed a pension of four hundred; those above sixty, six hundred. Other professed persons were to receive one hundred ducats when under fifty years of age, and two hundred if above. They were qualified for employment in all civil departments, and subjected to the same charges as the laity. The government promised to protect, with every means in their power, the secularization of the regular clergy. The nuns were to be allowed a pension of an hundred ducats. The revenues of these establishments were to be devoted to the payment of the national debt. It was calculated, that the number of religious houses to be suppressed, in consequence of this decree, amounted to two hundred and twenty-five.

By a decree of October the 20th, it was ordered, that, previous to the application of this property to the debt, annual rents, of eighty thousand reals each, should be secured upon it to Generals Quiroga and Riego, and their descendants; and, in like manner, a revenue of forty thousand reals to Generals Lopez, Bannos, Aguero, O'Daly, and Espinosa.

A law was also passed for the regulation of clubs, and other meetings of that nature; which were forbidden to assemble, unless by permission, and under the eye of the magistrate.

The finances of Spain afford, perhaps, the most embarrassing department of the public economy of that kingdom. From the report made to the cortes by the committee of finance, it appears that the national debt amounts to a sum of not less than 14,220,572,391 reals, or nearly 160,000,000

pounds sterling. Various funds were applied by order of the cortes to the liquidation of the capital and interest of this debt; among others, as we have already mentioned, the confiscated revenues of the Inquisition, and of the religious orders. In order to meet the more pressing demands, a loan of 200,000,000 reals was negotiated with the house of Lafitte, at Paris.

Considerable reductions were ordered in various departments of the public expenditure. The civil list of the royal family was settled at 45,090,000 reals, in English money not quite 500,000 pounds sterling. The charges on account of the ministry for foreign affairs were reduced one third; that of justice, one half: 20,000,000 were cut off from the hundred demanded for the navy. The regular army was limited to a peace-establishment of 66,828 men. The whole charge on the treasury for the service of the year, including the interest of the debt, amounted to 702,802,304 reals, (about 7,600,000 pounds.) To meet this, the ways and means afforded a supply of 530,394,271 reals, leaving a deficit of 172,408,033 reals, or about 1,865,000 pounds, which was to be covered by the loan to which we have just alluded.

Since the period of the triumph of the revolution, the king had remained perfectly passive, and had sanctioned, apparently without resistance or remonstrance, every act of the cortes, however manifestly tending to destroy what little yet remained to him of his former authority. To the decree for the abolition of the regular clergy, however, he seemed to feel a peculiar repugnance: it was not till after the hesitation of a month, that he was induced to affix to it his sanction; and on the same day, October 25th, he departed for the Escorial. The measure itself was not universally popular: in some provinces, indeed, particularly in Valencia and Catalonia, the people had endeavoured to anticipate the regular execution of the decree; and it was necessary to send troops to protect the convents from the pillage of the peasantry. The archbishop of Valencia, who had published a violent charge against the projected confiscation of ecclesiastical property, was nearly at the point of falling a victim to the indignation of the populace, and

compelled to embark for Barcelona; but in other quarters, a different feeling seems to have prevailed. In Andalusia and Galicia, the country was kept in agitation by the assemblage of masses of royalist peasants, or brigands, as it was now their turn to be called. In Estremadura, one Morales collected a body of partisans in the neighbourhood of Avila, and endeavoured to rally the discontented in an open attack upon the new government: the attempt, however, was disconcerted by the vigilance chiefly of the Count de Abisbal, who succeeded in securing a considerable number of the band. Morales himself fled into Portugal. The insurrection does not appear to have been of a very formidable nature; but it was sufficient to alarm the Liberals at Madrid, or, at least, to give them an opportunity for pretending alarm. In a secret sitting of the cortes, on the 7th of November, the Ultra-Liberals, if we may so call them, violently attacked the equivocal system acted upon by the ministers: they particularly inveighed against the suppression which had been authorized of the popular clubs and meetings, which they contended were necessary to foster in the people the spirit of resistance and watchfulness. The ministers admitted the expediency of resorting to measures of a more decisive character; and an address was unanimously voted to the king, expressive of the feelings which had been avowed by all parties in the course of discussion.

On the 9th of November, the session of the cortes was closed, when a speech from the king was read by his ministers, his majesty himself being stated to be confined in his bed at the Escorial by a violent cold. The royal discourse was couched in the following terms.—

“GENTLEMEN DEPUTIES,—I have the satisfaction to manifest to the cortes the pleasure I derive from the result of the first period of their sittings. During their continuance, I have frequently experienced sentiments of regard, inspired by the zeal and wisdom with which the congress has laboured to consolidate the public felicity, and the lustre of the throne, which is inseparable from that of the nation. I myself have promoted the prorogation of the sittings, as prescribed by our fundamental laws, sensible

that the establishment of our political system, at the beginning, requires more time and greater labours, and also well convinced of the advantages of this prorogation, as regards the progress of the important business of the anterior months. I feel thankful for the generosity with which the cortes have provided for the wants and decorum of my house, and those of the royal family; and I cannot but applaud the frankness and justice with which, in solemnly acknowledging the obligations and charges of the state, they have approved the indispensable means of discharging them, thus laying the foundation of our national credit and future felicity. These wise measures—with others intended suitably to organize the land and sea forces, to facilitate the circulation of our territorial riches, to remove all opposing obstacles, to establish a plan of finance, such as may reconcile the interests of the state with those of the people—have been objects of incessant application and continued exertions of the cortes, and rendered them deserving of the universal estimation of Europe, and the just gratitude of the kingdom. At the same time, I cannot but assure you, that my heart has been filled with gladness on beholding the measures of prudent generosity and indulgence with which the cortes have endeavoured to heal the wounds of the nation, and efface the remembrance of the evils by which it has been rent; opening the door of reconciliation to error and obstinacy, and, at the same time, still leaving alive the sweet hope that you will henceforward continue animated by the same noble sentiments, in order to cement the constitutional system on the basis of the fraternity and reciprocal love of all Spaniards. By this means, the solid power of the nation, and of the monarchical authority by which it is directed, go on increasing; and at the same time that improvements in our internal situation are preparing, we acquire a well-founded right to the consideration of foreign governments, all of whom continue to give me proofs of their friendly disposition. Every day I congratulate myself more and more, on governing a people so worthy and generous. I have co-operated in the glorious enterprise of their regeneration, and in the laudable efforts of the cortes, through the proper means of the royal pre-

rogative. I have dictated the measures suitable for the execution of the laws; and I do not doubt that time will give great force and vigour to our institutions, and that those advantages which already begin to be realized will progressively increase. Confirmed by the lessons of experience, I thus hope to be enabled to express myself to the representatives of the nation, when, after resting from their labours and fatigue, they again assemble, in the ensuing session, in order to continue the undertakings they have left pending, and, as hitherto, successfully to promote the public prosperity.—*San Lorenzo, November 7th, 1820.*—FERDINAND.”

Upon the conclusion of the king's speech, the president declared that the session was closed; and the meeting broke up amid the loud and applauding acclamations of the people, who thronged every avenue of the hall. On the day previous to the prorogation, it had been unanimously determined, that no deputy should leave Madrid, during the recess, without the express permission of the permanent deputation of the cortes, and that the leaves of absence thus accorded should not extend to more than a fourth of the whole.

Nothing could be more strikingly indicative of the mistrust which prevailed respecting the disposition of the king, than the adoption of a precaution of this nature. Both the cortes and the people appear now to have reposed a perfect confidence in the intentions of the ministers; but it was generally supposed that his majesty's ecclesiastical counsellors had operated on the royal mind in counteraction of the counsels of his more legitimate advisers; and the residence at the Escorial was conceived to have afforded a peculiar opportunity for an interference of that nature.

I have already mentioned the request preferred by the army of the Isle of Leon, that it should not be separated until after the meeting of the cortes, and the acquiescence of the government in that demand. Quiroga was elected one of the deputies to that assembly, and was in consequence obliged to resign the command to Riego. It was soon after judged necessary to dissolve the army; and the general was compensated for the loss of his command by the nomi-

nation to the captain-generalship of Galicia. Riego, however, remonstrated violently against the measure. Early in September, he came in person to Madrid, where he was for some time the great object of popular idolatry; and his proceedings at length assumed a character of such violence, that it was deemed necessary to take measures to put a stop to them. It was on this occasion, that the measure for the putting down of the seditious clubs, to which we have before alluded, was proposed and carried in the cortes. Riego was deprived of his command in Galicia, and sent into quarters in his native town, Oviedo: a similar punishment was extended to several of his partisans. The execution of these measures was attended with some symptoms of tumult and agitation among the populace of the capital; but the firmness of the government, supported as it was by the decidedly expressed opinion of the cortes, prevailed, and Riego, on the 6th of September, was fain to set out for the place of his exile. Scenes somewhat of a similar nature occurred shortly after the prorogation.

The public mind was already sore on the subject of the king's prolonged absence from his capital, when a circumstance occurred that contributed still further to inflame the general discontent. On the 16th of November, the captain-general of New Castile, Vigodet, received a despatch in the king's handwriting, by which he was ordered to give up the military command of the province to General Carvajal, he himself being named counsellor of state. Rubianez, political chief of Madrid, was also removed from his office, and on a similar pretext. At the same time, Carvajal received an order, appointing him to his new command, which was signed by the king, but without the counter-sign of a responsible minister, in the manner ordained by the Constitution. When these circumstances had transpired at Madrid, the people were loud in their reprobation of the change: Vigodet promised to retain the command, until he should hear further from the king. The permanent deputation of the cortes assembled, and called upon the ministers to give an account of the transaction; and, in the result, a respectful remonstrance was transmitted to the sovereign,

observing upon the informality of the nomination of General Carvajal, and representing the expediency of his majesty's speedy return to the capital. This address was accompanied by a proffer of resignation on the part of all the ministers. On the 17th, an answer was received from the Escorial, in which the king simply stated that he would not accept the resignation of the ministers, and added, that he would take into consideration the representations of the deputation. When the purport of this reply became known, the popular fermentation was such, that apprehensions were entertained that it would break out into open tumult. The garrison was put under arms, and several orators addressed the people in different parts, endeavouring to tranquillize their minds, and to impress them with feelings of respect for the authority of government. In the mean while, new representations were made to the king, on the part of his ministers, and of the permanent deputation; and, at length, on the 18th, the king's second answer was published, in which he stated his intention to return to Madrid as soon as good order was established within its walls: he added, that he had removed from his person his confessor, and the mayor of the palace. His majesty allowed that he felt the pain of this sacrifice: he protested, that neither of these persons had ever interfered to advise him on subjects not connected with their proper functions; but he was anxious, he said, to give every satisfaction to his faithful people.

On the 21st, the king, accompanied by the royal family, returned to Madrid. The nominations which shortly after took place, to several of the most important offices of the kingdom, seem to indicate, that the king had now abandoned all further idea of resisting, or even qualifying, the completion of the revolution: Riego was recalled from his exile, and made captain-general of Arragon; General Velasco, who had been exiled with him, on account of his conduct at Madrid in September preceding, was appointed to the same command in Estremadura; Espinosa, the leader of the Gallician insurrection, was named captain-general of Old Castile, and General O'Donoju of the province of Madrid; the Duke del Infantado, and Generals Bassecourt and St. Marc, were sent into provincial quarters; the Archbishop of Valencia

was banished from the kingdom, and his goods confiscated; and all possible activity was employed in the execution of the laws lately decreed by the cortes, particularly in hastening the dissolution of the convents, and the sale of the confiscated property.

These measures were of a nature to tranquillize any reasonable apprehensions that could exist, as to the constitutional spirit of the course pursued by government, and they were confirmed by a series of appointments, by which the whole administration of the kingdom seemed effectively to be placed in the hands of the most marked and determined of the revolutionary party: Moreno Doaiz was made captain-general of Andalusia; Mina was transferred to the command of Galicia, and was succeeded in Navarre by Don Miguel Lopez Banos; and Don Philip Arco Arguero was appointed commandant-general of the province of Tuy.

Notwithstanding these popular measures, pretexts were soon found for exasperating the passions, and awaking the suspicions, of the populace. A pamphlet, entitled, 'The Cry of a True Spaniard,' had been privately distributed in the streets of Madrid, the object of which was evidently to excite a counter-revolutionary movement among the people. But, judging from some of its expressions, it would not appear that it had in view the restoration of the old government, with its detestable abuses: "We desire," it was said, "neither despotism nor anarchy. Let us have no Camarilla, but let us have no factious cortes: let us have a free national government, founded upon our ancient institutions, and our holy religion!" This paper, it appears, had produced a considerable impression on the people, and the municipal police made every exertion to discover the quarter from whence it came. At length, on the 28th of January, 1821, a body of alguazils suddenly entered a printing-office in the street of Bano, where they found several forms set up with the paper in question. The printer confessed, that it had been given to them by Don Matthias Vinuesa, lately curate of Tamajan, and now archdeacon of Tarragona, and honorary chaplain to the king. Vinuesa was immediately arrested, and the manuscript of the pamphlet was found in his chamber, wrapped in a hair shirt. When the circumstance

of this discovery became public, considerable agitation was manifested in the capital. At the Fontana de Oro, the place of meeting for the more violent partisans, speeches were made, pointing out the danger there was that the culprit should be suffered to escape; and a multitude was soon collected round the hotel of the magistracy, demanding that measures should be taken to prevent such an evasion of public justice. The magistrates immediately doubled the guards of the prison in which the unhappy chaplain had been deposited, and, moreover, proceeded to address a letter to the king, praying that the delinquent might be speedily brought to justice. A passage of this paper will shew the spirit in which it was drawn up: "That," said the municipality, "which we predicted to your majesty, has been too soon confirmed. It is in your palace, in your own household, that the people believe these disorders to originate: the plots which disturb the peace of the citizens, proceed from one source which remains secure—they come from a handful of profligate men, who continue to raise the cry of tyranny and arbitrary power."

It was not through the municipality alone, that the rabble succeeded in making its opinion and wishes known to the king: the prince could scarcely take an airing, without being assailed by the cries of the people, invoking the execution of justice upon Vinuesa, and the dismissal of such of the persons about him as had incurred their displeasure or dislike. This system of personal insult and menace was carried so far, that Ferdinand was at length, on the 4th of February, obliged to complain of it to the municipality. That body published an address, enjoining a more quiet demeanour to the people; though, by the admission which it contained of the justice of their demands, it was rather calculated to inflame than restrain their passions: a body of police was also sent to patrol round the palace. On the following day, the king went out at his usual hour; but the same insulting cries were immediately renewed by the populace: at this instant, a portion of the life-guards issued out, and dispersed the assemblage sword in hand. Several persons were wounded in the affray: the people, however, soon returned in force, and the guards were compelled to retreat to their

barracks. The city of Madrid continued in considerable agitation throughout the night. The municipality assembled, and sent a request to the king that the guards might immediately be disbanded. This demand, somewhat extraordinary, was acceded to: the council of state answered, indeed, that the cortes alone could decide on the disbanding of a corps, but they determined that the regiment in question should provisionally cease from its service about the king's person, that the members of it should be disarmed, and that individuals concerned in the late attack on the people should be imprisoned preparatory to their being brought to trial.

The king took an early opportunity of expressing the sense which he entertained of the danger of his position, and of the inefficacy of the measures taken by his ministers to sustain that portion of prerogative or dignity which had been assigned to him under the new Constitution. The cortes opened the session on the 1st of March, when his majesty addressed them in the following speech.—

“GENTLEMEN DEPUTIES,—On seeing myself surrounded a second time by the worthy representatives of this heroic nation, which has given so many proofs of love and attachment to my royal person, my heart, moved with gratitude, cannot refrain from returning thanks to the Almighty, who hath restored me to the throne of my ancestors by the valour and perseverance of my faithful subjects, and who hath vouchsafed to consolidate it by founding it upon the Constitution sanctioned by the extraordinary cortes, and which, conformably to the will of the nation, I have, of my own accord, sworn to maintain. The happiness of the people whom Divine Providence hath committed to my care, which is, and ever shall be, the object of my most ardent wishes, alone determined me to adopt a system which the nation desired, and which, besides, the progress of knowledge and the peculiarity of the times imperiously demanded. Indeed, every thing answered my expectations; and I beheld, with the greatest satisfaction, the people surrounding the throne, and every where displaying the most unequivocal manifestations of loyalty to their sovereign, and their adherence to the new institutions, which, in founding their grandeur and prosperity, are, at the same time, the firmest support of my

throne, and constitute the splendour of my crown. The measures adopted by the cortes in the former legislature, to regenerate a nation on the point of dissolution, in consequence of the sacrifices made to relieve the people from the enormous burdens imposed upon them, with a view to revive credit and make industry flourish, and, finally, to infuse vigour into the different branches of the administration—all these dispositions, united to exemplary economy, which reigned in all our councils, and to the proofs of respect and attachment given by such worthy representatives for my person, have filled my heart with the most lively gratitude.—I am aware, that, in spite of our best endeavours, the wounds of the nation can be healed only by time. The confusion, and the general disorganization, produced by the war—the consequent embarrassments, the destruction of immense capitals—the confusion occasioned by the divers usages and customs in the provinces, the want of a general standard, the corrupt system of administration, and the necessity of meeting without delay the expenses of the state—have not yet permitted, as I could have wished, the establishment of an uniform system of finance, suitable to the reformed government now in practice. I confidently hope that the cortes, in the present session, will direct their peculiar attention to an object so essential. The accomplishment of such a system must be the work of time; and, in order to carry it into effect, the cortes may rely upon my inviolable resolution, as I confide in their co-operation.”.....

“But we ought not to dissemble the fact, that, while we exult in the contemplation of such benefits as the constitutional form of government cannot fail to produce—while we contemplate the general content of the nation, and its determination to defend it—the attempts of some evil-disposed persons, seduced by the illusions of those who in all times indulge chimerical and criminal hopes, have succeeded in disturbing, for a moment, the tranquillity of some of the provinces, as well as of the capital, which has produced in my heart the most pungent grief. I trust, that the cortes, in the discharge of their important duties, will feel the necessity of taking prompt measures to check the audacity of those, who, encouraged rather than restrained by the moderation

of the government, dare to disturb the public tranquillity anew; and they will confide, at the same time, to the discretion of government, a power commensurate to the exigencies of the case, and without which it will be impossible to heal the wounds which have afflicted the country for several generations."....."I have intentionally deferred speaking of my own person to the last moment, to prevent any one supposing that I cherished myself more than the welfare of the people whom Divine Providence has confided to my care. It is my duty, however it may distress me, to inform this wise assembly, that I cannot but observe there are some evil-disposed persons, who seduce some of my inexperienced subjects, by persuading them I entertain secret views opposed to the present system: their aim is to create distrust as to the purity of my motives, and the loyalty of my conduct. I have sworn to the Constitution, and I have always endeavoured to observe it in every thing that can relate to my actions. Would to heaven that every one did the same! It is public, that all manner of outrages have been committed upon my dignity and my honour, and against the respect that is due to me as your constitutional king. I am under no apprehensions for my own life, for God, who reads my heart, will watch both over it, and over the sound part of the nation. But I ought not to be silent in the presence of this assembly, charged as I am to maintain the inviolability which ought to be observed towards your constitutional king. These insults would not have been repeated, if the executive power had displayed that energy and vigour which the Constitution requires, and the cortes wish for. The want of activity among many of the authorities has given rise to these guilty excesses; and, without proper vigilance, we must not be astonished to see the Spanish nation plunged into an abyss of evils and calamities. But I am confident this will not be the case, if the cortes, as I have reason to expect, are attached to their constitutional king, and if they employ themselves without delay in remedying these abuses, and counteracting the machinations of the evil-disposed, who wish for nothing but anarchy and discord. Let there then be a strong cooperation between the cortes and myself; and I swear, in

the face of the nation, to consolidate the system which it has formed, and which it has obtained, for its complete welfare and felicity.—FERDINAND.”

The king pronounced the latter part of this speech in a tone firm and dignified, but strongly expressive of emotion. It came altogether unexpectedly upon the audience, and particularly so to the ministers, all of whom, after the sitting, sent in their resignations. Their names were Don Evariste Perez de Castro, minister for foreign affairs; Don Garcia Herreras, for justice; Canga Arguelles, for finance; his brother, Augustin Arguelles, for the interior; Don E. Giron, Marquis of Amarillas, minister for war; and Don Juan Jabat, for the marine. This last was the only one who provisionally retained his office: and, on the 3d of March, he was ordered to communicate to the cortes a message from the king, in which his majesty desired that the cortes would present to him a list of such individuals as they thought were worthy of the confidence of the nation, to compose a new administration. The king stated it to be his wish, to give, by this appeal to the wisdom of the cortes, an undeniable proof of the sincerity and rectitude of his intentions.

This message was made the subject of animated discussion, or rather animadversion, in the chamber; for all the members who spoke seem to have agreed in approving the conduct of the late ministers, and in deciding that the cortes could not interfere in the mode alluded to. A message was accordingly addressed to his majesty, stating that the principles of the Constitution did not allow the cortes to take any part in the nomination of ministers. At the close of this sitting, Don Juan Jabat* also gave in his resignation.

The king was now compelled to resort to the mode pointed out by the Constitution for the renewal of the cabinet. He desired the council of state to present him with a list of candidates; that is, three for each department. From these, his majesty chose the following names, which were announced to the cortes on the 5th: Don Eusebio

* This individual is now (1823) ambassador from the constitutional government of Spain to the court of Great Britain.