

themselves, in which, unhappily for Spain, and more unhappily for Spanish America, they were but too successful. Alburquerque became the marked object of their dislike, because he had recognised the regency at a moment when, if he had hesitated, they would have struggled to get the whole power of government into their own hands. That spirit, which had never condescended to conceal its indignant contempt for Godoy, could not stoop to court the favour of a Junta of mercantile monopolists. Not that he despised them as such; his mind was too full of noble enterprises to bestow a thought upon them, otherwise than as men who were called upon to do their duty while he did his.

His first business had been to complete the unfinished works of defence, especially the *cortadura*, or cut across the isthmus, where the battery of St. Fernando was erected; and lest any attempt should be made to pass beside it at low water, the iron gratings from the windows of the public buildings were removed, and placed on the beach as a *chevaux-de-frise*. While these things were going on, the people of Cadiz manifested a disgraceful indolence; they assembled in crowds on the ramparts, wrapt in their long cloaks, and there stood gazing silently for hours, while the English were employed in blowing up the forts round the bay; appearing, says an eye-witness, indifferent spectators of the events around them, rather than the persons for whose security these exertions were made. Meantime the troops, whose rapid march had placed these idlers out of fear, were neglected in a manner not less cruel to the individuals than it was detrimental to the public service. The points to be protected were so many, that the numbers of this little army did not suffice to guard them, without exhausting the men by double duty. Alburquerque requested that the regiments might be filled from the numberless idle inhabitants of the isle and of Cadiz, who,

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*February.**The troops  
neglected.*

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while they were idle, were at such a time worse than useless. Unless this were done, he said, it was not only impossible for his men to undertake any offensive operations, or even to improve themselves in discipline, but they must be wasted away with fatigue and consequent infirmities. These representations were in vain; neither was he more successful in requiring their pay, a supply of clothing, of which they stood evidently in need, and those common comforts in their quarters, which were as requisite for health as for decency. The Junta of Cadiz had seven hundred pieces of cloth in their possession, yet more than a month elapsed, and nothing was done toward clothing the almost naked troops. Alburquerque asserts, as a fact within his own positive knowledge, that the reason was, because the Junta were at that time contending with the Regency, to get the management of the public money into their own hands, and meant, if they had failed, to sell this cloth to the government, and make a profit upon it, as merchants, of eight reales *per vara*!

*Alburquerque applies to the Regency in their behalf.*

It is not to be supposed that the Junta were idle at this time; they had many and urgent duties to attend to; but no duty could be more urgent than that of supplying the wants and increasing the force of the army. The Duke applied to them in vain for six weeks, during which time he discovered that the Junta looked as much to their private interest as to the public weal; for from the beginning, he says, their aim was to get the management of the public expenditure, not merely for the sake of the influence which accompanies it, but that they might repay themselves the sums which they had lent, and make their own advantage by trading with the public money. At length he applied to the Regency. The regents, feeling how little influence they possessed over the Junta, advised the Duke to publish the memorial which he had presented to them, thinking that it would excite the feelings of the people. In this they were not deceived;...

the people, now for the first time called upon to relieve the wants of the soldiers, exerted themselves liberally, and there was not a family in which some contribution was not made for the defenders of the country. But the Junta were exasperated to the last degree by this measure, which their own culpable neglect had rendered necessary. Alburquerque's memorial contained no complaint against them; it only stated the wants of the soldiers, and requested that, unless those wants were supplied, he might be relieved from a command, the duties of which, under such circumstances, it was not possible for him to perform. Though he was persuaded of their selfish views, he had no design of exposing an evil which there was no means of remedying; and when he understood how violently they were offended, he addressed a letter to them, disclaiming any intention of inculpating them, in terms which nothing but his earnest desire of avoiding all dissensions that might prove injurious to the country could either dictate or justify. This did not prevent the Junta from publishing an attack upon him, in reply, of the most virulent nature. They reproached him with having exposed the wants and weakness of the army; entered into details as frivolous in themselves as they were false in their application, to show that they had done every thing for the soldiers; declared, with an impudence of ingratitude which it is not possible to reprobate in severer terms than it deserves, that his cavalry had retreated too precipitately, and ought to have brought in grain with them; and concluded by a menacing intimation, that the people of Cadiz were ready to support them against any persons who should attempt to impeach their proceedings. If the Junta of Cadiz had no other sins to answer for, this paper alone would be sufficient to render their name odious in history; so unprovoked was it in its temper, so false in its details, so detestable for its ingratitude. Had Albur-

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*February.**The Junta  
attack Al-  
burquerque.*

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 XXVIII. hand, . . . and he needed not to have undertaken an arduous march  
 1810. of 260 miles in the face of a superior enemy, and in direct disobedience of the orders of his government. If the cavalry which saved Cadiz, and which they thus wantonly accused of retreating too precipitately, had been even a quarter of an hour later, it could not have entered the Isle of Leon. "This," said the indignant Duke, "is the patriotism of the Junta of Cadiz; the enemy is at the gates, and they throw out a defiance to the general and the army who protect them!"

*He resigns  
 the com-  
 mand.*

But Albuquerque was too sincere a lover of his country to expose it to the slightest danger, even for the sake of his own honour. He could not resent this infamous attack without exciting a perilous struggle; and without resenting it he felt it impossible to remain at the head of the army. Having thus been publicly insulted, a reparation as public was necessary to his honour, and that reparation, for the sake of Spain, he delayed to demand. The Regency would have had him continue in the command; he however persisted in resigning. No injustice which could be done him, he said, would ever have made him cease to present himself in the front of danger, had he not been compelled to withdraw for fear of the fatal consequences of internal discord. Accordingly, he who should have been leading, and who would have led, the men who loved him to victory, came over to England as ambassador, with a wounded spirit and a broken heart.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

ATTEMPTS TO DELIVER FERDINAND. OVERTURES FOR A NEGOTIATION MADE THROUGH HOLLAND. PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT CONCERNING PORTUGAL. REFORM OF THE PORTUGUEZE ARMY.

THE regency was acknowledged without hesitation in those 1810. provinces which were not yet overrun by the enemy, and every where by those Spaniards who resisted the usurpation; yet with the authority which they derived from the Supreme Junta a portion of its unpopularity had descended upon them. The necessity of their appointment was perceived, and the selection of the members was not disapproved: in fact, public opinion had in a great degree directed the choice; nevertheless when they were chosen, a feeling seemed to prevail that the men upon whom that unfortunate body had devolved their power could not be worthy of the national confidence. Like their predecessors, they were in fact surrounded by the same system of sycophancy and intrigue which had subsisted under the monarchy. The same swarm was about them: it was a state plague with which Spain had been afflicted from the age of the Philips. Hence it came to pass that the national force, instead of being invigorated by the concentration of legitimate power, was sometimes paralysed by it. For if a fairer prospect appeared to open in the provinces where the people had been left to themselves and to chiefs of their own choosing, too often when a communication

*The Regency.*

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was opened with the seat of government, this unwholesome influence was felt in the appointment of some inefficient general, who was perhaps a stranger to the province which he was sent to command.

A central government was, however, indispensable, as a means of communication first with England, and eventually with other states, but more especially as keeping together the whole body of the monarchy both in Europe and in America. The Spanish nation was not more sensible of this than the British ministry. The French, and they who, like the French, reasoning upon the principles of a philosophy as false as it is degrading, believe that neither states nor individuals are ever directed in their conduct by the disinterested sense of honour and of duty, supposed that the continuance of these temporary administrations must be conformable to the wishes of the British cabinet, whose influence would be in proportion to the weakness and precarious tenure of those who held the government in Spain. But that cabinet had no covert designs; they acted upon the principle of a plain, upright, open policy, which deserves, and will obtain, the approbation of just posterity; and so far were they from pursuing any system of selfish and low-minded cunning, that at this time, when the regency was formed, they were taking measures for effecting the deliverance of Ferdinand from captivity.

*Schemes for  
delivering  
Ferdinand.*

Montijo, before his hostility to the Junta was openly declared, had proposed a scheme to them for this purpose; but he was too well known to be trusted, and when he required as a preliminary measure that 50,000 dollars should be given him, Calvo, who was the member appointed to hear what he might propose, plainly told him that his object was to employ that sum in raising a sedition against the government; upon which Montijo told him that he had a good scent, and thus the matter

ended. A similar proposal was made by some adventurer in Catalonia; the provincial government was disposed to listen to it, but they referred it to General Doyle, and he soon ascertained that the projector only wanted to get money and decamp with it. Meantime the British ministers had formed a well-concerted plan, but dependent upon some fearful contingencies, . . . the fidelity of every one to whom in its course of performance it must necessarily be communicated, and the disposition of Ferdinand to put his life upon the hazard in the hope of recovering his liberty and his throne. The Baron de Kolli, who was the person chosen for this perilous service, was one who in other secret missions had proved himself worthy of confidence. He took with him for credentials the letter in which Ferdinand's marriage in the year 1802 had been announced by Charles IV. to the King of England, and also letters in Latin and in French from the King, communicating to the prisoner the state of affairs in Spain, and saying how important it was that he should escape from captivity, and show himself in the midst of his faithful people. A squadron, commanded by Sir George Cockburn, landed Kolli in Quiberon Bay, and to that part of the coast Ferdinand was to have directed his flight, for which every needful and possible provision had been made, measures having also been devised for sending the pursuers upon a wrong scent. The scheme had been well laid, and with such apparent probability of success, that it is said the Duke of Kent requested permission to take upon himself the danger of the attempt. The squadron was provided with every thing which could conduce to the convenience and comfort of Ferdinand and his brother; with this view a Roman catholic priest had been embarked, with a regular set of ornaments and consecrated plate for the Romish service.

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*Baron de  
Kolli's at-  
tempt.*

*Kolli's Me-  
moirs, 39.*

Kolli made his way to Paris, completed his arrangements,

CHAP. and was arrested at Vincennes within a fortnight from the day  
 XXIX. whereon he landed. He had been betrayed by a pretended  
 1810. royalist in the pay of the British government, and by the Sieur  
March. Richard, whom he had trusted because he had served bravely  
 under the unfortunate Prince de Talmont in La Vendée. His  
 credentials and his other papers were seized; and when he  
 was examined by Fouché, who was then minister of police,  
 he had the mortification of being told that the character of the  
 person for whose service he had thus exposed himself had been  
 entirely mistaken, for that no credentials would induce Fer-  
 dinand to hazard such an attempt. It was afterwards proposed to  
 him, that as his life and the fortune of his children were at stake,  
 he should proceed to Valençay, and execute his commission, to  
 the end that he might hear from Ferdinand's own lips his dis-  
 avowal of any connexion with England, . . or that if that prince  
 really entertained a wish to escape, an opportunity might be  
 given him of which the French government might make such  
 use as it deemed best. Kolli rejected this with becoming  
 spirit; and the purpose of the police was just as well answered  
 by sending Richard to personate him. But Ferdinand no sooner  
 understood the ostensible object of his visitor, than he informed  
 the governor of Valençay that an English emissary was in the  
 castle.

It is very possible that Ferdinand may have perceived some-  
 thing in Richard's manner more likely to excite suspicion than  
 to win confidence; for the man was not a proficient in villany,  
 and not having engaged in it voluntarily, may have felt some  
 compunction concerning the business whereon he was sent. His  
 instructions were, if he should succeed in entrapping Ferdinand,  
 to bring him straight to Vincennes, there probably to have been  
 placed in close confinement: the supposition that a tragedy like  
 that of the Duc d'Enghein was intended cannot be admitted



without supposing in Buonaparte far greater respect for the personal character of his victim than he could possibly have entertained. An official report was published, containing a letter in Ferdinand's name, wherein the project for his escape was called scandalous and infernal, and a hope expressed that the authors and accomplices of it might be punished as they deserved. Other papers were published at the same time, with the same obvious design of exposing Ferdinand to the indignation or contempt of his countrymen and of his allies. There was a letter of congratulation to the Emperor Napoleon upon his victories in Austria; an expression of gratitude for his protection, and of implicit obedience to his wishes and commands; details of a fête which he had given just before this occurrence in honour of the Emperor's marriage with the Archduchess Maria Louisa; and a letter requesting an interview with the governor of Valençay upon a subject of the greatest moment to himself, being his wish to become the adopted son of the Emperor, an adoption which, the writer said, would constitute the happiness of his life, and of which he conceived himself worthy by his perfect love and attachment to the sacred person of his majesty, and entire submission to his intentions and desires. But it was so notoriously the system of Buonaparte's government to publish any falsehoods which might serve a present purpose, that these letters, whether genuine or fabricated, obtained no credit\*.

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\* The account of Kolli's examination had in one part been palpably falsified. He was represented as saying that it was the Duke of Kent's wish to send Ferdinand to Gibraltar; but that he would not have assisted in this plan, because it would have been in fact sending him to prison! The whole of these documents are printed in Louis Goldsmith's *Recueil de Decrets, Ordonnances, &c.* t. iv. pp. 302-14; and by Llorente, in his *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Revolution d'Espagne*, t. ii. pp. 306-342. This unworthy Spaniard expresses there a decided opinion that Kolli himself was the person who went to Valençay, as the official report stated. The

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April.

As soon as the official report appeared in the English newspapers, Mr. Whitbread asked in the House of Commons whether the letter purporting to be written by his Majesty to Ferdinand VII. was to be looked upon as a document which had any pretensions to the character of authenticity? a question which Mr. Perceval declined answering. Of course this afforded a topic for exultation and insult to the opponents of the government. The Spaniards felt very differently upon the occasion. Whether those who were desirous of forming a new constitution for Spain, or even of correcting the inveterate abuses of the old system, thought it desirable to see Ferdinand in possession of the throne, before their object was effected, may well be doubted; but whatever their opinions might be upon that point, the attempt at delivering him excited no other feelings than those of gratitude and admiration towards Great Britain. “With what pleasure,” said the best and wisest of their writers, “does the good man who observes the mazes of political events, behold one transaction of which humanity alone was the end and aim! With what interest does he contemplate an expedition intended, not for speculations of commerce, nor for objects of ambition, but for the deliverance of a captive King, in the hope of restoring him to his throne and to his people!”

*Español,*  
*t. i. 120.*

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Baron, however, has published his own story, and it is confirmed by the declarations of Richard and Fouché, authentically made after the restoration of the Bourbons.

One curious fact appears in the Baron de Kollî's Memoirs. Diamonds to the amount of 200,000 francs were taken from him by the police when he was seized. After the restoration he reclaimed them. The result of his application was a royal ordonnance, in which the King decided, that the other effects belonging to the claimant should be restored to him, but that the diamonds seized at Paris are, and remain, confiscated, as having been given to the Sieur de Kollî by a government then at war with France. And his renewed applications were answered by a repetition of this ordonnance!

The British cabinet was sounded to see whether it would offer such compensations and exchange of prisoners as might extricate Kolli from his perilous situation. This curious proposal was connected with some insidious overtures for peace made then, partly for the purpose of deceiving the French people into a belief that the continuance of the war was owing alone to the inveterate feeling of hostility in England ; but more with the design of preparing the Dutch for the annexation of their country to the French empire, an intention which was first avowed in these overtures. Louis Buonaparte was drawn into this transaction by a solemn assurance that no such intention was really entertained ; but that it was held forth merely as a feint, in the hope of alarming the British government, and inducing it to make peace, for the sake of averting a political union, which of all measures must be most dangerous to England. The overture was properly rejected upon the ground, that it would be useless, or worse than useless, to open a negotiation when it was certain that insurmountable difficulties must occur in its first stage. A few weeks only elapsed before the purpose which had been solemnly disavowed by Buonaparte's ministers to Louis was carried into effect, by a compulsory treaty, in which that poor king ceded to France the provinces of Zealand and Dutch Brabant, the territory between the Maas and the Waal, including Nimeguen, together with the Bommelwaard and the territory of Altena, inasmuch as it had been adopted for a constitutional principle in France that the *thalweg* or stream of the Rhine formed the boundary of the French empire. About two months after this act of insolent and wanton power an army was ordered into Holland to complete the usurpation, and Louis, giving the only proof of integrity and courage which was possible in his unhappy circumstances, abdicated the throne, and retired into the Austrian dominions, leaving behind him a letter to the Dutch

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Overtures  
for peace.