

the throne of Spain; and it is neither your own interest, nor that of the country, that you should reign in it. Take heed how you kindle a fire which will unavoidably cause your complete ruin, and the degradation of Spain! I am King by the right derived from my forefathers; my abdication was the result of force; I have nothing to receive from you; nor can I consent to the convocation of the Cortes . . . an additional absurdity, suggested by the inexperienced persons who attend you. I have reigned for the happiness of my subjects, and I do not wish to bequeath them civil war, mutiny, popular Juntas, and revolution. Every thing ought to be done for the people, and nothing by the people: to forget this maxim, were to become an accomplice in all the crimes that must follow its neglect. I have sacrificed the whole of my life to my people; and in the advanced age to which I have arrived, I shall do nothing in opposition to their religion, their tranquillity, and their happiness. I have reigned for them; I will constantly occupy myself for their sakes; I will forget all my sacrifices; and when at last I shall be convinced that the religion of Spain, the integrity of her provinces, her independence, and her privileges are preserved, I shall descend to the tomb, forgiving those who have embittered the last years of my life."

However suspicious were the circumstances under which the decree of abdication appeared, the probabilities that that decree was obtained by compulsion were not in the slightest degree strengthened by the testimony of Charles at Bayonne, where he was in far stricter duress, and far greater danger, than at Aranjuez. But, in every line of this letter, the language of Buonaparte may be recognized: his dread and hatred of popular assemblies . . . the tone and manner of his philosophy . . . his perpetual reference to force, as that to which all things must bow; and there is one of those direct, plain, palpable, demonstrable

CHAP.
IV.

1808.

May.

CHAP. falsehoods, of which no other man, who ever affected greatness,
 IV. so often and so impudently availed himself. If Ferdinand
 1808. originally intended to supplant his father, it was by the help of
 May. France that he hoped to effect it. The only act of conspiracy
 proved against him and his party was, that they had attempted
 to form such an alliance. For this very act, Buonaparte, in his
 letter to Vittoria, had censured him; and yet, one reason here
 assigned for depriving him of the crown, is his hatred of France.

May 4.
 Ferdi-
 nand's
 reply.

Ferdinand's answer to this extraordinary paper was, like
 his former letter, honourable to himself and his advisers. He
 calmly reminded his father of the inconsistencies in the charges
 thus adduced against him. Concerning the affair of the Escorial,
 he said, eleven counsellors, chosen by the King himself, had
 unanimously declared their opinion, that there was no ground for
 the accusation; nor could such an opinion have been obtained by
 undue means, wholly without influence as he was at that time,
 and virtually a prisoner. The King spoke of the distrust occa-
 sioned by the entrance of so great a foreign force into Spain: . .
 might he be told, that no alarm need have been given by troops
 entering as friends and allies? He said, that his own troops were
 collected at Aranjuez to support the glory of the throne: . . might
 he be reminded, that he had given orders for a journey to Seville,
 and the troops were intended to keep open that road? Every
 person believed there was an intention of emigrating to America,
 manifest as it was that the royal family were going to the coast
 of Andalusia; and it was this universal belief which occasioned
 the tumults at Aranjuez. In those tumults, the King knew that
 his son had taken no other part than by his own command, to
 protect from the people the object of their hatred, who was
 believed to be the proposer of the journey. The Emperor, in
 a letter to Ferdinand, had said, his motive was to induce the
 King to make certain reforms, and separate from his person the

Prince of the Peace, whose influence was the cause of every calamity. The universal joy which his arrest produced throughout the whole nation, evidently proved that this was indeed the case. As to the rest, Charles himself was the best witness that, in the tumults at Aranjuez, not a word was whispered against him, nor against any one of the royal family : . . on the contrary, he was applauded with the greatest demonstrations of joy, and heard the loudest professions of fidelity to his august person. On this account, the abdication surprised every one, and no person more than Ferdinand himself. No one expected, or would have solicited it. . . “Your Majesty,” said Ferdinand, “yourself communicated your abdication to your ministers, enjoining them to acknowledge me as their natural lord and sovereign. You communicated it verbally to the diplomatic body, professing that your determination proceeded from your own will, and that you had before determined upon it. You yourself told it to your beloved brother, adding, at the same time, that the signature which your Majesty had put to the act of abdication was the happiest transaction of your life; and, finally, your Majesty told me personally, three days afterwards, I should pay no attention to any assertion that the abdication had not been voluntary, inasmuch as it was in every respect free and self-originating.”

He proceeded to comment upon the charge of his hatred towards France. Wherein had it appeared? Were not the various letters which, immediately after the abdication, he addressed to the Emperor, so many proofs that his principles, with respect to the relations of friendship and strict alliance happily subsisting between the two countries, were those that the King had impressed upon him? Had he not shown his unbounded confidence in the Emperor, by going to Madrid the day after the Grand Duke of Berg had entered that city with a great part of

CHAP.
IV.
1808.
May.

CHAP.

IV.

1808.

May.

his army, and garrisoned it; so that, in fact, to go there, was to deliver himself into his hands? Had he not, in conformity to the principles of alliance, and to his father's wish, written to request a princess of the house of Buonaparte in marriage? Had he not sent a deputation to Bayonne to compliment the Emperor in his name? then persuaded his brother the Infante Don Carlos to set off, that he might pay his respects to him on the frontier? lastly, had he not left Madrid for the same purpose himself, on the faith of the assurances given him by the French ambassador, by the Grand Duke, and by General Savary, who had just arrived from France, and who solicited an audience, to tell him that the Emperor only expected he should follow the same system towards France which his father had adopted, in which case he was to be acknowledged as King of Spain, and all the rest would be forgotten? How any of his letters, proving an enmity towards France, should have come into the Emperor's hands, he could not comprehend, knowing, as he did, that he had never written any.

*Terms upon
which he
offers to
restore the
crown.*

Ferdinand then referred to his former proposals. “I signified,” said he, “my willingness to renounce the crown in your favour, when the Cortes should be convened; and if not convened, when the council and deputies of the kingdom should be assembled; not because I thought this was necessary to give effect to the renunciation, but because I judged it convenient to avoid injurious novelties, which frequently occasion divisions and contentions, and wished every thing might be attended to which concerned your dignity, my own honour, and the tranquillity of the realm. If your Majesty should not choose to reign in person, I will govern in your royal name, or in my own; for no one but myself can represent your person, possessing, as I do, in my favour, the decision of the laws, and the will of the people; nor can any other person have so much interest in their prosperity.

I repeat again, that, in such circumstances, and under such conditions, I am ready to accompany your Majesty to Spain, there to make my abdication in the form expressed. But in respect to what you have said of not wishing to return to Spain, with tears in my eyes, I implore you, by all that is most sacred in heaven and earth, that in case you do not choose to re-ascend the throne, you will not leave a country so long known to you, in which you may choose a situation best suited to your injured health, and where you may enjoy greater comforts and tranquillity of mind than in any other.

“ Finally, I beg your Majesty most affectionately, that you will seriously consider your situation, and that you will reflect on the evil of excluding our dynasty for ever from the throne of Spain, and substituting in its room the imperial family of France. It is a step which we cannot take without the express consent of all the individuals who have, or may have, a right to the crown; much less without an equally-expressed consent of the Spanish people, assembled in Cortes in a place of security; and besides, being now in a foreign country, it would be impossible for us to persuade any one that we acted freely; and this consideration alone would annul whatever we might do, and might produce the most fatal consequences. Before I conclude, your Majesty will permit me to say, that the counsellors whom you call perfidious, have never advised me to derogate from the love, respect, and honour, which I have always professed to your Majesty, whose valuable life I pray God to preserve to a happy and good old age.”

On the day after this letter was written, Buonaparte had an hour's conference with Charles; at the conclusion of which, Ferdinand was called in by his father, to hear, in the presence of this tyrant, and of the Queen, expressions, says Cevallos, so

CHAP.
IV.

1808.

May.

May 5.
*Interview
between
Charles and
Ferdinand
in presence
of Buona-
parte.*

CHAP. disgusting* and humiliating, that I do not dare to record them.
 IV. While all the rest were seated, he was kept standing, and his
 1808. father ordered him to make an absolute renunciation of the
 May. crown, under pain of being treated as an usurper, and a con-
 spirator against the lives of his parents. His household also
 were threatened to be proceeded against as men guilty of treason.
 Overcome by the sense of their danger, and of his own, the poor
 pitiable Prince submitted, and delivered in a renunciation,
 couched in such terms as at once to imply compulsion, and
 reserve the condition of his father's return to Spain. "His
 former renunciation," he said, "he had believed himself bound
 to modify with such conditions as were equally required by the
 respect due to the King, the tranquillity of his dominions, and
 the preservation of his own honour. These modifications, to
 his great astonishment, had excited indignation in the King,
 who, without any other grounds, had thought proper, in the
 presence of Buonaparte and of his mother, to revile him with

May 6.
 Ferdinand's re-
 nunciation.

* These bitter expressions of the father have never transpired, and this very concealment seems to confirm what all other circumstances render probable, that his abdication at Aranjuez was produced by fear and compulsion. The Queen is said (with an effrontery scarcely credible even when the greatest criminality derives boldness from the highest rank) to have told her son in the presence of the King her husband that he had no right to the crown, for that Charles was not his father. Buonaparte, in his letter to Ferdinand, had indirectly told him he was the child of an adulterous intercourse: and it is more probable that this story of the Queen's avowal should have been invented and promulgated by him or his agents, for the sake of blackening the royal family, and weakening the popularity of Ferdinand, by destroying his hereditary right, than that so flagitious a declaration should really have been made. I know not whether there be likeness enough of family features to disprove the aspersion of his spurious birth, but I am sure, that in conduct and temper Ferdinand has sufficiently proved himself a Spanish Bourbon.

the most humiliating appellations, and to require from him an unconditional renunciation, on pain of being treated, with all those of his council, like a traitor. "Under these circumstances," said he, "I make the renunciation which your Majesty commands, that you may return to the government of Spain in the same state as when you made your voluntary abdication in my favour."

CHAP.
IV.

1808.

May.

Ferdinand was not aware, when he executed this form of renunciation, that his father was no longer qualified to receive it. The tyrant had not waited for this preliminary to conclude his mock negotiations with Charles. This wretched puppet addressed an edict on the 4th to the supreme Junta at Madrid, nominating Murat lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and in that quality, president of the government: the reason assigned was, that one same direction might be given to all the forces of Spain, in order to maintain the security of property and public tranquillity against enemies, as well exterior as interior. All persons, therefore, were enjoined to obey the Grand Duke's orders. A proclamation to the people accompanied this edict. They were told that their King was occupied in concerting with his ally the Emperor whatever concerned their welfare, and they were warned against listening to perfidious men, who sought to arm them against the French, and the French against them. All those who spoke against France were said to be men who thirsted for the blood of the Spaniards, enemies of that nation, or agents of England, whose intrigues would involve the loss of the colonies, the separation of provinces, and a series of years of calamity for the country. "Trust to my experience," said this poor mouthpiece of a perfidious and remorseless tyrant; "and obey that authority which I hold from God and my fathers! Follow my example, and think that, in your present situation, there is no prosperity or safety for the Spaniards, but in the friendship of the great Emperor, our ally." On the same day,

Proclamation of Charles to the Spaniards.

CHAP. Charles addressed a letter to the supreme council of Castille and
 IV. the council of Inquisition, informing them, that having resolved,
 1808. in the present extraordinary circumstances, to give a new proof
 of affection towards his beloved subjects, he had abdicated all
 claims upon the Spanish kingdoms, in favour of his friend and
 ally, the Emperor of the French. The treaty of resignation, he
 said, stipulated for the integrity and independence of those king-
 doms, and the preservation of the Catholic faith, not only as the
 predominant, but as the sole and exclusive religion in Spain.
 The councils were ordered to make every exertion in support of
 the Emperor, and, above all, with their utmost care to preserve
 the country from insurrections and tumults.

May 5.
 Charles
 cedes his
 rights to
 Buonaparte

The preamble to the treaty of resignation stated, that the
 object of the two contracting princes was to save Spain from the
 convulsions of civil and foreign war, and to place it in the only
 position, which, under its present extraordinary circumstances,
 could maintain its integrity, guarantee its colonies, and enable
 it to unite all its means to those of France, for the purpose of
 obtaining a maritime peace. By the first article, Charles ceded
 all his rights to the throne of Spain and the Indies, having only
 had in view, he said, during his whole life, the happiness of his
 subjects, and constantly adhering to the principle, that all the
 acts of the sovereign ought to be directed to that object solely.
 This cession was represented as the only means which could re-
 establish order; and it was covenanted, 1. that it took place
 only on condition that the integrity of the Spanish kingdom
 should be maintained; that the prince whom it might please the
 Emperor to place on the throne should be independent; and
 that the limits of Spain were to undergo no alteration: 2. that
 the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, should be the only
 one in Spain; no reformed religion should be tolerated, still
 less should infidelity: these things were to be prevented or

punished according to the established usage. 3. All property confiscated since the revolution at Aranjuez should be restored; and all decrees which had been passed against the friends of Charles were declared null and void. 4. Charles having thus secured the prosperity, the integrity, and the independence of his kingdom, (such was the monstrous language of this convention!) the Emperor engaged to grant an asylum in his states to him, the Queen, the Prince of the Peace, and such of their servants as might choose to follow them, who should enjoy in France a rank equivalent to that which they possessed in Spain. 5, 6, 7, 8. The palace of Compeigne, with its parks and forests, should be at the disposal of King Charles during his life, and a civil list of 80,000,000 *reales* should be paid him in monthly payments: after his death the Queen should have a revenue of 2,000,000 for her dowry. An annual rent of 400,000 *livres* should be granted to each of the Infantes, in perpetuity, reverting from one branch to another, in case of the extinction of one, according to the civil law, and to the crown of France, in case of the extinction of all the branches. It was to be understood that this civil list and these rents were to be looked for exclusively from the treasury of France. The Infantes were, however, by a subsequent article, to continue to enjoy the revenues of their commanderies in Spain. 9, 10. The Castle of Chambord, with its parks, forests, and farms, was given by the Emperor to King Charles, in full property, being in exchange for all the allodial and particular property appertaining to the crown of Spain, but possessed personally. . . This convention was signed by General Duroc, grand master of the palace, on the part of Buonaparte, and on the part of Charles by Godoy, under his titles, Spanish and Portuguese, of Prince de la Paz, and Count of Evora-monte. Thus did this man, the last and worst of that

CHAP.

IV.

1808.

May.

CHAP.

IV.

1808.

May.

succession of favourites who have been the curse of Spain, consummate his own crimes, and, as far as in him lay, the total degradation of his country; rejoicing probably in the vengeance which he was taking upon a nation by whom he was so righteously abhorred. Having done his work, he passed on into France, to live out the remainder of his days, neglected and despised, and to leave behind him a name more infamous than any in Spanish history. One proclamation more was issued in the name of Charles, calling upon all his former subjects to concur in carrying into effect the dispositions of his "dear friend the Emperor Napoleon," and exhorting them to avoid popular commotions, the effect of which could only be havoc, the destruction of families, and the ruin of all.

*Ferdinand
threatened
by Buona-
parte.*

Ferdinand had hitherto renounced his right in reference to his father only. A farther renunciation was demanded from him: it was not tamely yielded; and in his last conference with him upon the subject, Buonaparte bade him choose between cession and death. He was informed that he might return to Spain, and that a convoy of French soldiers should escort him to any part of the Peninsula which he might choose. But he was also told, that France would immediately make war upon him, and never suffer him to reign; for it was the duty of the Emperor to maintain the rights of his crown, and those which had been ceded to him by Charles, and to destroy the projects of the partizans of England.

*His act of
renuncia-
tion.*

That Ferdinand should at length have yielded, is not to be severely condemned; it is rather to be admired that he should have resisted so long. Even had he been of a more heroic frame, than his family and education were likely to produce, imprisonment, and death, by some dark agency, were all he could expect from farther opposition. Thus intimidated, he authorized