

every man read in the manner and countenance of others an apprehension and a feeling of indignation like his own. Murat appeared in the streets at noon, and was received with hisses and outcries. Evening came, and the courier was not arrived. The French garrison were under arms all that night, and their commanders, "cool spectators of these things," according to their own relation, saw the crisis approaching, and saw it with pleasure. The following morning had been fixed for the departure of the Queen of Etruria and the Infante D. Francisco de Paula, and many persons, chiefly women, collected before the Palace to see them set off. Among the many rumours, true and false, with which the city was filled, it was reported that the Infante D. Antonio had been ordered by Murat to join his brother and nephew at Bayonne, and leave him to act as regent during his absence; that the Infante had refused to obey, and that in consequence of his refusal Murat had recalled some troops to Madrid which had been ordered to a different station, intending to seize the Infante, and assume the government. Enough had transpired to make this report probable: one of the carriages which drove up to the gate was said to be for D. Antonio; and some of the populace, being determined that the last of the royal family should not be taken from them without resistance, and that one especially who had been left to represent the King, cut the traces, and forced it back into the yard. Being however assured that D. Antonio was not to leave Madrid, they permitted it again to be yoked and brought out. This occasioned so much stir that Murat sent an aide-de-camp to inquire into the cause; the people were disposed to treat him roughly, but some Spanish officers interfered and rescued him from their hands. The carriages, with the Queen of Etruria and her children, and her brother D. Francisco, then set out; the latter, a lad of fourteen, is said to have wept bitterly, and to have manifested the fear

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May 2.  
Departure  
of the  
Queen and  
the Infante.

CHAP. and reluctance with which he undertook the journey. Men are  
 V. never so easily provoked to anger as when their compassion is  
 1808. excited. Just at this time, while their hearts were full, the aide-  
 May. de-camp whom they had maltreated returned with a party of  
 soldiers, and a scene of bloodshed presently began, . . . in what  
 manner never will be known.

*Insurrec-  
 tion of the  
 people.*

The indignation and hatred of the Spaniards, which had so long been repressed, now broke forth. As fast as the alarm spread, every man of the lower ranks who could arm himself with any kind of weapon, ran to attack the French. There is no other instance upon record of an attempt so brave and so utterly hopeless, when all the circumstances are considered. The Spanish troops were locked up in their barracks, and prevented from assisting their countrymen. Many of the French were massacred before they could collect and bring their force to act: but what could the people effect against so great a military force, prepared for such an insurrection, and eager, the leaders from political, the men from personal feelings, to strike a blow which should overawe the Spaniards and make themselves be respected? The French poured into the city from all sides, their flying artillery was brought up, in some places the cavalry charged the populace, in others the streets were cleared by repeated discharges of grape-shot. The great street of Alcala, the Puerta del Sol, and the great square, were the chief scenes of slaughter. In the latter the people withstood several charges, and the officer who commanded the French had two horses killed under him: General Grouchy also had a horse wounded. The infantry fired volleys into every cross street as they passed, and fired also at the windows and balconies. The people, when they felt the superiority of the French, fled into the houses; the doors were broken open by command of the generals of brigade, Guillot and Daubrai, and all within who were found with arms were

bayoneted; and parties of cavalry were stationed at the different outlets of Madrid to pursue and cut down those who were flying from the town. A part of the mob, seeking an unworthy revenge for their defeat, attacked the French hospital; and some of the Spaniards who were employed within, encouraged at their approach, fell upon the sick and upon their medical attendants. But these base assailants were soon put to flight.

At the commencement of the conflict Murat ordered a detachment of 200 men to take possession of the arsenal\*. Two officers happened to be upon guard there, by name Daoiz and Velarde, the former about thirty years of age; the latter, some five years younger, was the person who had been sent to compliment Murat on his arrival in Spain. Little could they have foreseen, when they went that morning to their post, the fate which awaited them, and the renown which was to be its reward! Having got together about twenty soldiers of their corps, and a few countrymen who were willing to stand by them, they brought out a twenty-four pounder in front of the arsenal, to bear upon the straight and narrow street by which the enemy must approach, and planted two others in like manner to command two avenues which led into the street of the arsenal. They had received no instructions, they had no authority for acting thus, and if they escaped in the action, their own government would without doubt either pass or sanction a sentence of death against them for their conduct; never therefore did any men act with more perfect self-devotion. Having loaded with grape, they

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*Defence of  
the arsenal  
by Daoiz  
and Ve-  
larde.*

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\* This building had been the residence of the British ambassador, Sir Benjamin Keene, in the middle of the last century; there he died, and there he was interred; for there is no burial-place for protestants at Madrid, and the body of a heretic could not be suffered to pollute a Catholic church!

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waited till the discharge would take full effect, and such havoc did it make, that the French instantly turned back. The possession of the arsenal was of so much importance at this time, that two columns were presently ordered to secure it: they attempted it at the cost of many lives, and the Spaniards fired above twenty times before the enemy could break into the neighbouring houses, and fire upon them from the windows. Velarde was killed by a musket-ball. Daoiz had his thigh broken; he continued to give orders sitting, till he received three other wounds, the last of which put an end to his life. Then the person to whom he left the command offered to surrender: while they were making terms a messenger arrived bearing a white flag, and crying out that the tumult was appeased. About two o'clock the firing had ceased every where, through the personal interference of the Junta, the council of Castille and other tribunals, who paraded the streets with many of the nobles, and with an escort of Spanish soldiers and imperial guards intermixed. It might then have been hoped that the carnage of this dreadful day was ended; the slaughter among the Spaniards\* had been very great; this however did not

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\* The *Moniteur* stated the French loss at twenty-five killed, and from forty-five to fifty wounded, that of the Spaniards at "*plusieurs milliers des plus mauvais sujets du pays.*" On the other hand, D. Alvaro Florez Estrada, on the alleged authority of a return sent by Murat to Berthier, states the loss of the French at 7100, and that of his own countrymen, according, he says, to an account afterwards taken by the government, as not exceeding 200. Both statements are palpably false: in Estrada's there may probably have been a mistake, (not of the printer, for the numbers are written in words), copied from some misprinted document; because there are accounts which reckon the French loss at 1700. Azanza and O'Farrill quote the Council of Castille as authority for affirming, that of the people 104 were killed, 54 wounded, and 35 missing. This is probably much below the truth; the Council at that time was acting under the fear of Murat, and Azanza and O'Farrill endeavour to pass as lightly as

satisfy Murat; conformably to the system of his master, the work of death was to be continued in cool blood. A military tribunal under General Grouchy was formed, and the Spaniards who were brought before it were sent away to be slaughtered with little inquiry whether they had taken \* part in the struggle or

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Executions  
by sentence  
of a mili-  
tary tri-  
bunal.

they can over the atrocities committed by that party which they afterwards served to the utmost of their power. Baron Larrey, in his *Memoires de Chirurgie Militaire*, (t. iii. 139.) says, that the wounded of both nations were carried to the French military hospital, and that before night they had received there about 300 patients, 70 of whom belonged to the Imperial Guards. It may be suspected that there were very few Spaniards in this number, . . . some of the wounded, we know, having been sent to the military tribunal, and delivered over not to the surgeons, but to the executioners: and it is certain, that in a contest of this kind, where, on the one part, stabbing instruments were almost the only weapons used, there would, on the other, be more persons killed than wounded. Wherever the French were found in small parties, they were massacred. An Englishman who was in the midst of this dreadful scene, told me the carnage was very great, and that he believed the French lost more than the Spaniards. This gentleman happened to be lodging with the same persons with whom I had lodged in the year 1796. Two women were killed in the house. The mistress (an Irish Catholic) dressed up a stool as an altar, with a crucifix in the middle, St. Antonio on one side, and St. I know not who on the other, and before these idols she and her husband and the whole family were kneeling and praying while the firing continued. This poor woman actually died of fear.—In the *Memoires d'un Soldat* the Mamalukes are said to have made a great slaughter that day. One of them breaking into a house from which a musket had been fired, was run through with a sword by a very beautiful girl, who was immediately cut down by his companions. A man who got his livelihood by the chase, and was an unerring shot, expended eight and twenty cartridges upon the French, bringing down a man with each; when his ammunition was spent, he armed himself with a dagger, and rushing against a body of the enemy, fought till the last gasp.

\* A party of poor Catalan traders (who are privileged to carry arms) were seized and led to execution. They were met in time by O'Farrill, who, with the French general Harispe, was endeavouring to quiet the city, and Harispe being made by his companion to understand the circumstances of the case, obtained their release. This general distinguished himself greatly during the war by his military talents, and it is an act of justice to relate in what manner he was employed during the dreadful scenes of the 2d of May.

CHAP. V. 1808. *May.* not. Three groupes of forty each were successively shot in the Prado, . . the great public walk of Madrid. Others, in like manner, were put to \* death near the Puerta del Sol, and the Puerta del S. Vicente, and by the Church of N. Señora de la Soledad, one of the most sacred places in the city. In this manner was the evening of that second of May employed by the French at Madrid. The inhabitants were ordered to illuminate their houses, a necessary means of safety for their invaders, in a city not otherwise lighted; and through the whole night the dead and the dying might be seen distinctly as in broad noon-day, lying upon the bloody pavement. When morning came the same mockery of justice was continued, and fresh murders were committed deliberately with the forms of military execution during several succeeding days.

*The Infante D. Antonio sent to Bayonne.*

On the night of the third, the Comte de Laforest, and M. Freville, had a private conference with the Infante D. Antonio; and the Infante, whether inveigled by their persuasions, or influenced by his own fears after the dreadful scenes which had been exhibited, informed the Junta in the course of that night, that he should set off at daybreak for Bayonne, to share the fate of his family. They represented to him, that his presence in Spain would be infinitely more useful to the interest of the Bourbons, than it could possibly be in Bayonne; but he replied that his word was given, and his resolution fixed, and accordingly at daybreak he departed. Murat had shown some little degree of respect toward this personage; as soon as he was gone, he informed the Junta that he should think proper to assist at their

*Murat claims a place in the Junta.*

\* D. Alvaro Florez Estrada says, that care was not taken to dispatch these victims of an atrocious system, . . that their groans were heard through the night, and that to strike the more terror, permission was not given to remove the bodies for interment till after they had lain there two days.

deliberations in future. O'Farrill and Azanza protested against his intrusion, and would have retired from the nominal authority which they held; they soon however assented to the will of the majority, pleading in excuse for their assent an unwillingness to appear as if they consulted their own interests alone, and a fear lest others should imitate the example of resignation, and then the capital of the kingdom would be left at the discretion of a hostile power, without any native authorities to protect it; .. a poor apology this, when they were mere instruments of that power.

Murat now affected to soothe and conciliate the people. He told them in his proclamations that thenceforth their tranquillity would be undisturbed, a blessing which they would owe to the loyalty of their character, and which would be assured to them by the confidence that the laws inspire; for in obedience to the dictates of humanity, he said, the military commission was suppressed. From this time every inhabitant, whatsoever his rank, who might have given cause for being seized by the French troops, provided\* he had not borne arms against them, should be immediately delivered over to his proper judges, and tried by them: even in the excepted case, a judge nominated by the competent tribunal of the land should assist in regulating the process against the accused, till sentence was pronounced. No countrymen, or strangers, or ecclesiastics, should be molested on account of their dress. This alluded to an order which had been issued, prohibiting the cloak, lest arms should be concealed under it; but the cloak is so universally worn by the Spaniards,

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\* It appears therefore that men who had not borne arms had been delivered over to Grouchy's bloody tribunal; and that though the commission was suppressed, the French reserved to themselves the power of trying and punishing the Spaniards who had taken part in the insurrection.

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*Edicts for  
preserving  
peace in the  
capital.*  
May 5.



CHAP. that the prohibition was thus modified on the third day after  
 V. it had been issued, and repealed altogether on the following.  
 1808. Carriers, it was said, who were employed in bringing provisions  
 May. to the town, should from that time be subjected to no vexation,  
 neither should their carriages and beasts be detained; and only  
 half the cattle of the muleteers should be put in requisition even  
 in the most urgent necessity, and then they should be paid for  
 at the regulated price, and not detained longer than three or  
 four days. At those gates where carriers had suffered arbitrary  
 detention in order to be searched and stript of their arms, in-  
 structions should be given to prevent abuse: but it was neces-  
 sary, the edict said, to repeat the injunction against introducing  
 fire-arms or other prohibited weapons; these were to be depo-  
 sited at the gate.

*Circular  
 letter of the  
 Inquisition.*

May 6.

The Holy Office, as that execrable tribunal impiously styled  
 itself, which has been the disgrace and the bane of every country  
 wherein it was established, lent its last aid toward the degrada-  
 tion of Spain. Four days after the insurrection, a circular letter  
 was addressed by the Inquisitor-general, in the name of the  
 Supreme Council, to all its subordinate tribunals. That in-  
 surrection, the anniversary of which, hopelessly as it began, and  
 disastrously as it terminated, will be celebrated in after ages by  
 the Spaniards as a day of proud and pious commemoration, . .  
 one of the most solemn in their calendar, . . was called by the  
 Inquisition a disgraceful tumult, occasioned by the evil intentions  
 or the ignorance of thoughtless men, who under the mask of  
 patriotism and loyalty were preparing the way for revolutionary  
 disorders. The melancholy consequences which had already  
 occurred, rendered, it was said, the utmost vigilance necessary  
 on the part of all the magistracies and respectable bodies, to  
 prevent the renewal of such excesses, and to preserve tranqui-  
 lity; the nation being indeed bound to this good behaviour,



not only by its own interests, but by the laws of hospitality toward a friendly army which injured no one, and which had given the greatest proofs of good order and discipline. It became therefore the duty of the well-informed to enlighten the people, . . . to deliver them from their dangerous error, and to show them, that tumultuary proceedings could only serve to throw the country into confusion, by breaking those bonds of subordination upon which the peace of the community depends, . . . by destroying the feelings of humanity, and by annihilating all confidence in government, from which alone the direction and impulse of patriotic feeling ought to proceed. "These most important truths," said the address, "can by no persons be impressed upon the minds and hearts of the people with more effect, than by the ministers of the religion of Jesus Christ, which breathes nothing but peace and brotherly love among men, and subjection, honour, and obedience to all that are in authority: and as the Holy College ought to be, and always has been, the first to give an example to the ministers of peace, it accords with our duty and office to address this letter to you, that you may co-operate in the preservation of the public tranquillity. You are required to notify the same to all the subordinate officers of your respective courts, and also to the commissioners of districts, that all and each of you may with all possible zeal, vigilance, and prudence, co-operate in the attainment of so important an object."

On the 7th the decree arrived from Bayonne, by which Charles announced the reassumption of his authority, and appointed Murat lieutenant-general of the kingdom. A proclamation came with it, exhorting the Spaniards to trust in the experience of their old King, to obey the authority which he had received from God and his ancestors, to imitate his example, and to believe that there could be no prosperity or salvation for

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*The Junta discharged from their authority by Charles's re-assumption.*