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beginning so glorious, and facilitate the ruin of Spain. This they were endeavouring to guard against, protesting, before God and man, that they wrote nothing but what was dictated by the love of their country, being ready to hear the opinions of other provinces, and to amend their own errors, whenever it should be shown that they had committed any. The chief care should be to avoid whatever might serve to sow disunion: of this nature were all discussions concerning the royal house, and the order of succession in the different families which derived a right from it. The laws upon this point were well known; but are we, said they, in a situation to talk of this? Long live King Ferdinand VII. and his august brothers, heirs of the crown after his attested decease! Why anticipate inquiries which could only be necessary in default of them?

The second question which agitated the people was of a different nature: . . . Was there a necessity for creating a supreme government, which should unite the sovereign authority of all the provinces, till the restitution of Ferdinand to his throne? From the beginning they had been persuaded such a government was by all means necessary. Many Juntas and many military commanders had expressed their conviction of this truth, . . . a conviction arising from the necessity in every nation of a civil government, to which the military may be subordinate. Spain, deriving wisdom from history, had never thought of appointing a dictator. Her generals (and the fact was most honourable to the Spanish name) had been the first to acknowledge a system of things as ancient in Spain as the monarchy itself. The confidence of the people in the Supreme Juntas, the abundance with which pecuniary resources had been placed at their disposal, the heroic loyalty wherewith the army had obeyed them, and the happy issue, thus far, of their civil administration, and of the military enterprises which they had directed, placed in the most

CHAP. conspicuous light, and established, beyond all doubt, this funda-
 XII. mental truth, and most essential political principle. But who
 1808. was to create this supreme civil government? Who were to
 compose it? Where should be its place of residence? What
 the extent of its authority? How might it be established, with-
 out producing disunion among the different provinces? These
 were the important questions to be examined.

It had been said that the Cortes ought to assemble, that the Council of Castille should convoke them, and the whole proceedings be executed under the authority of that tribunal. But the Council of Castille never possessed the right of convoking the Cortes, . . . why then should they give it that authority? Was it because it had lent the whole weight of its influence to the usurpation? Because it had acted in opposition to those fundamental laws which it was established to preserve and defend? Because it had afforded the enemy every facility to usurp the sovereignty of Spain, to destroy the hereditary succession of the crown, and the dynasty legally in possession? Because it had recognized and seated on the throne a foreigner, destitute even of the shadow of a title to it? What confidence could the Spanish nation place in a government convoked by an authority incompetent, illegal, and guilty of acts which might justly be ranked with the most atrocious crimes against their country? But the Council of Castille being thus excluded from all consideration, who was to convoke the Cortes? It was the peculiar and exclusive prerogative of the King to summon them; the provinces would not submit to any other authority; they would not unite: thus, therefore, there would be no Cortes, or, if a few deputies were to assemble, that very circumstance would occasion divisions, the very evil which all were anxious to avoid. The kingdom found itself suddenly without a king and without a government, . . . a situation unknown in its history, and to its laws.

The people legally resumed the power of appointing a government. They created Juntas without any regard to the cities which had votes in the Cortes. The legitimate power was therefore deposited with the Juntas: in virtue of that power they had governed, and still were governing, and had been, and still were, universally acknowledged and obeyed. Their situation had not changed; the danger still existed; no new authority had supervened: the lawful authority resided entire in the Juntas to which the people had confided it. It was therefore incontestable that the sole and exclusive right of electing those who were to compose the supreme government was vested in the supreme Juntas. And whom should they elect? Most certainly individuals of their own body; for they alone derived their power from the people, and in them the nation had reposed entire confidence. Hence, if there were any province in which the military power subsisted alone, it was absolutely necessary that a supreme Junta should be constituted there, by which the people might act; this being indispensable, in order to concentrate the legitimate power of the people; for, under present circumstances, the government could not be legitimate, unless it originated in their free consent.

The Junta of Seville was therefore of opinion that the supreme Juntas, meeting on the same day, should each elect, from its own members, two deputies; and the persons so elected, from that moment, be acknowledged as governors-general of the kingdom. The supreme Juntas ought nevertheless to be continued till the termination of the present state of things, being invested with the internal management of their respective provinces, but under due subordination to the general government. They ought to give instructions to their deputies constituting that government, and it would be the duty of those deputies to observe them, and to represent and support the claims of their provinces, as far as was consistent with the public weal. If there were one

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 XII. vernment, he, and no other, ought to be appointed to that
 1808. office; but if there were no person of the royal blood, then it
 must elect a president from its own body; and, to obviate all
 danger, the presidency should be only for such limited time as
 might seem best. The Juntas would appoint a place for the
 seat of government, which the government might afterwards
 change, if it should see cause. It ought to be at a distance from
 the dangers of war, and to possess other local advantages. Seville
 possessed those advantages, but had no anxiety to be selected,
 and willingly sacrificed her claims. The Junta of that city
 would, however, frankly state, that, in their opinion, La Mancha
 was most convenient for the seat of government, and, especially,
 either the city of Ciudad-Real, or Almagro. But this point was
 to be decided by the free choice of the supreme Juntas. The
 paper concluded with a brief and dignified recapitulation of what
 the Junta of Seville had done for their country, disclaiming, on
 their part, any affectation or desire of superiority, and declaring,
 that whatever they had done was no more than their indispensable
 duty.

*The Pro-
 vincial
 Juntas as-
 sent to it.*

The general opinion was undoubtedly in favour of the plan
 of government thus recommended; and it is no light proof of
 its fitness, that schemes the same in principle and effect should
 have been suggested by persons who had no communication with
 each other, and whose views were in other respects so different.
 There were many in England who thought it would have been
 better to have at once convoked the Cortes, in the supposition
 that there was more resemblance between the Cortes and the
 English parliament than had ever really existed, and in the ge-
 neros but mistaken hope that vigorous measures might be ex-
 pected from a free legislative assembly. The best and wisest of
 the Spaniards wished also for a Cortes, and looked to it for such

judicious reforms as were conformable to the constitutional principles of the monarchy, and suited to the habits and feelings of the nation. But they saw that many points must be determined before the manner of assembling the Cortes could be adjusted, and that the necessity of forming a central government was immediate and urgent. The plan therefore which the Junta of Seville proposed was assented to without opposition. Still it was a great object with many of the provincial Juntas to retain their power. That of Valencia drew up secret rules for its deputies, declaring that they were to follow the direction of their constituents, remain subject and obedient to them, communicate regularly with them, and in no instance depart from their instructions; and they reserved to themselves the power of displacing their deputies at pleasure. This paper was made public; and it was known that other Juntas, that of Seville in particular, had pursued the same mischievous course.

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The Junta of Seville, however, did worse than this. In electing its deputies it chose two persons so notoriously unworthy of such a trust, that the only motives which could be assigned for the choice were a desire of being rid of them, or an opinion that they would submit to any terms for the sake of the appointment. D. Vicente Hore was the one; he had been a creature of Godoy's, and was so sensible of the estimation in which he was held, that he declined the charge, knowing his life would be in danger if he appeared in Madrid, where it was of course expected that the Central Junta would assemble. D. Juan de Vera y Delgado, titular Archbishop of Laodicea, and coadjutor of Seville, was then chosen in his place; and this was an unexceptionable choice. It was hoped and expected that Tilly, the other member, would follow Hore's example, in declining an appointment for which he was equally disqualified; but Tilly was of a bolder stamp. A blasted character had not prevented him from obtaining great popularity at Seville; and being utterly regardless

*Unworthy
choice of
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of the means by which he brought about his ends, he was ready to venture for the highest stake in the game of revolution. Foul facts had been proved against him, and fouler were, upon no light grounds, imputed. He had found it necessary to fly from Madrid before the troubles, because he was implicated in the robbery of a jeweller. The murder of the Conde de Aguila was attributed to him, because it was certain that he might have saved the Count by the slightest interference in his behalf. A wretch who was notoriously his creature had been one of the most active instruments in Solano's death; and Reding would have been made away with by his means before the battle of Baylen, if the intention had not been disclosed to Castaños, and by him prevented.

*The other
members
unexceptionable.*

This appointment was not perhaps what Tilly would have chosen; for it was believed that he had no inclination to show himself at Madrid; but he trusted to his talents for intrigue, obtained a monthly allowance of 500 dollars, and looked for those opportunities which revolutionary times offer to insane and desperate ambition. It is to the honour of the Spaniards, that this was the only exceptionable person elected for the central Junta: perhaps in no country could an equal number of men, under similar circumstances, have been chosen more worthy of the trust reposed in them. To be elected to a situation of so great responsibility, in a time of unexampled difficulties, was no object of desire; in no instance was the appointment solicited, and in most it was reluctantly accepted. The persons deputed were thirty-five* in number; of whom Florida-Blanca and

* LIST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL JUNTA.

For Aragon.. D. Francisco Rebolledo de Palafox y Melzi, Gentleman of the Bed-chamber, and Brigadier in the army; D. Lorenzo Calvo de Rozas, Intendant of the army and kingdom of Aragon.

Jovellanos were the most remarkable, for the offices which they had formerly filled, and the rank which they held in public opinion. Both were scholars as well as statesmen, both men of

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Asturias.. D. Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Knight of the Order of Alcantara, of the Royal Council of State, and formerly Minister of Grace and Justice; Marques de Campo-Sagrado, Lieutenant-General of the army, and Inspector-general of the troops of Asturias.

The Canaries.. Marques de Villanueva del Prado.

Old Castille.. D. Lorenzo Bonifaz y Quintano, Prior of the holy Church of Zamora; D. Francisco Xavier Caro, Professor of Laws at Salamanca.

Catalonia.. Marques de Villel, Conde de Darnius, a Grandee, and Gentleman of the Bed-chamber; Baron de Sabasona.

Cordoba.. Marques de la Puebla de los Infantes, a Grandee; D. Juan de Dios Gutierrez Rabé.

Extremadura.. D. Martin de Garay, Intendant of Extremadura, and Honorary Minister of the Council of War; D. Felix Ovalle, Treasurer of the army of Extremadura.

Gallicia.. Conde de Gimonde; D. Antonio Aballe.

Granada.. D. Rodrigo Riquelme, Regent of the Chancery of Granada; D. Luiz Funes y Salido, Canon of the holy Church of Santiago.

Jaen.. D. Francisco Castanedo, Canon of the holy Church of Jaen, Provisor and Vicar-general of that diocese; D. Sebastian de Jocano, of his Majesty's council, in the *Tribunal de Contaduria Mayor*, and *Contador* of the province of Jaen.

Leon.. Frey D. Antonio Valdes, Bailey and Grand Cross of the Order of S. Juan, Knight of the Golden Fleece, Gentleman of the Bed-chamber, Captain-General of the Fleet, Counsellor of State, formerly Minister of the Marine, and acting Minister of the Indies; the Vizconde de Quintanilla.

Madrid.. Conde de Altamira, Marques de Astorga, a Grandee, Knight of the Golden Fleece, Grand Cross of the Order of Charles III., First Equerry, and Gentleman of the Bed-chamber; D. Pedro de Silva, Patriarch of the Indies, Grand Cross of the Order of Charles III., and formerly Camp-Marshal of the Royal Armies.

Majorca.. D. Tomas de Veri, Knight of the Order of S. Juan, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Palma Volunteers; Conde de Ayamans, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Palma Militia.

CHAP. business, both high-minded and honourable Spaniards. Florida-
 XII. Blanca had more of the spirit of his country, Jovellanos was
 1808. more influenced by that of the age. The former had been an
 ambitious politician; the latter was always a philosopher, in the
 true and virtuous meaning of that polluted word. As the des-
 potic minister of an absolute king, Florida-Blanca had used
 his power vigorously to uphold the dignity of the kingdom, and
 improve its internal condition; most of his measures were wise,
 and all were well-intended; but if he had ever conceived a wish
 to correct the abuses of the state, it had never appeared in his
 actions: Jovellanos had unwillingly accepted office, because it
 placed him in a sphere uncongenial to his modest habits and
 better mind, and withdrew him from the task to which he had
 devoted himself, of improving his native province. Jovellanos's
 desire was to meliorate the government and the nation by recur-
 ring to the free principles of the old constitution; Florida-Blanca
 thought that if governments were administered as they ought
 to be, the strongest must be the best. Both, without hesitation*,

Murcia.. Conde de Florida-Blanca, Knight of the Golden Fleece, Grand Cross of the
 Order of Charles III., Gentleman of the Bed-chamber, and formerly First
 Secretary of State, and acting Minister of Grace and Justice; Marques del
 Villar.

Navarre.. D. Miguel de Balanza; D. Carlos de Amatria, Members of the Deputation
 of the kingdom of Navarre.

Seville.. D. Juan de Vera y Delgado, Archbishop of Laodicea and Coadjutor of
 Seville; Conde de Tilly.

Toledo.. D. Pedro de Ribero, Canon of the holy Church of Toledo; D. José Garcia
 de la Torre, Advocate of the Royal Councils.

Valencia.. Conde de Contamina, a Grandee, Gentleman of the Bed-chamber; Prin-
 cipe Pio, a Grandee, Colonel of Militia.

* Llorente, under his name of Nellerto, (vol. i. 155,) asserts, that when Florida-
 Blanca was summoned to the central Junta he left a writing, addressed to the munici-

obeyed the call of their country, though Florida-Blanca, who was in extreme old age, would more willingly have passed the short remainder of his days in preparing and waiting for death; and Jovellanos, broken down, more by the infirmities which an unjust and cruel imprisonment had aggravated or induced, than by the weight of sixty-five years, desired for himself nothing in this world but tranquillity. The former brought with him little more than a venerable name; but Jovellanos was in full possession of his intellectual powers.

Every effort had been made by Azanza, O'Farril, Urquijo, Mazarredo, and Cabarrus, to engage this excellent man in the Intruder's service. He had lived in habits of friendship with all these persons, more especially with the two last. Knowing how inaccessible he would be to all unworthy inducements, they endeavoured to deceive him, as they would fain have deceived themselves, by representing that theirs was the only course which could secure the welfare of Spain; and that by no other means could the calamities with which it was threatened be averted; for they thought it absurd to imagine any effectual resistance could be opposed to the determined ambition of Buonaparte. His reply was, that if the cause of their country were as desperate as they supposed it to be, still it was the cause of honour and loyalty, and that which a good Spaniard ought to follow at all

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*Jovellanos
refuses all
offers of the
Intrusive
Government*

pality of the city of Murcia, protesting that he acted under fear and compulsion, and in the full knowledge that his country was going to destruction; and adding, that he made this solemn declaration lest King Joseph should one day treat him as a criminal. This infamous calumny, which by its own absurdity confutes itself, is advanced by the ex-secretary of the Inquisition upon no better authority than that of a Madrid journal, published under the Intruder's government. It is so palpably calumnious, that I should not have thought it worthy of contradiction, if it had not been doubtfully repeated by Col. Jones in his very able Account of the War.