

seems that the general opinion there was strongly against a war, provoked solely for the aggrandizement of the Buonaparte family. M. Champagny addressed a note to the prefect of the Gironde, informing him, that the Emperor had just received advices from his brother the King of Holland, saying the King of England was dead, and that the first act of George IV. had been to make a total change of ministers. This was not given as a report, but as an authenticated fact, officially communicated: "and may this event," it was added, "be the presage of a general peace, . . . the object of the Emperor's wishes, to the want of which Europe is so sensible, and which would be so advantageous to the commerce of Bourdeaux in particular!" The same falsehood was repeated in that number of the Madrid \* Gazette which contained Buonaparte's proclamation of Joseph as King of Spain and the Indies. Buonaparte endeavoured also to keep his allies as well as his subjects ignorant of the real state of things. The Russian Ambassador at Madrid could find no means of communicating to his court an account of what was passing in Spain, all his letters being intercepted in France, till at the end of August, when some British officers were in Madrid, an opportunity was afforded him of sending his dispatches through England; he then confided to the honour of a hostile power what could no longer be trusted to an unprincipled ally.

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June 8.

It was not till two months after the capture of the ships at Cadiz, and five weeks after the flight of the Intruder from Madrid, that any account of the affairs of Spain appeared in the French papers, except assurances that all was well. A long narrative was then published, written with the usual falsehood

Statement  
of the  
French  
government

Sept. 6.

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\* June 14. *Se sabe de oficio que ha muerto el 26 de Mayo el Rey de Inglaterra; y que su successor ha mudado todo el ministerio, eligiendo sugetos decididos por la paz.*

CHAP. of the French government, but not with its usual skill. The  
XIII. insurrection was ascribed entirely to the artifices and bribes of  
1808. England, assisted by the monks and the Inquisition, . . . the In-  
September. quisation, which had lent its whole authority to the usurpation!  
Great stress was laid upon the excesses which the patriots had  
committed; whereas the list of persons who were here claimed  
as martyrs in the Intruder's cause did not equal in number the  
victims of one *noyade* in the Loire, scarcely exceeded that of  
one day's allowance for the guillotine in Paris. The military  
detail, which was called a correct abstract of the events of the  
campaign, was composed with studied and inextricable con-  
fusion; all order of time and place was inverted and involved,  
and facts, exhibited thus piecemeal, were still farther disguised  
by suppression, exaggeration, and falsehood. At Valencia, it  
was said, French intrepidity overcame every obstacle: twenty  
pieces of artillery were taken; the suburbs were carried, and  
the streets strewed with dead bodies: . . . this indeed was true;  
but they were the bodies of the French. At Zaragoza, fourteen  
cloisters, which had been fortified, three-fourths of the city, the  
arsenal, and all the magazines were in their possession. That  
unfortunate city was almost ruined by fire, the bombardment,  
and the explosion of mines. Not a hint was given of the event  
of that memorable siege. The loss of the fleet was not men-  
tioned. Dupont was so spoken of, as to make it evident, that,  
if he returned to France, his life would atone for his failure.  
After a series of events which could not be described, because  
they ought to be a subject of judicial inquiry, he had committed  
the triple fault of suffering his communication with Madrid to  
be cut off, of letting himself be separated from two-thirds of his  
army, and then giving battle in a disadvantageous position, after  
a forced night-march; and, manifesting an equal deficiency of  
political as of military talent, he had allowed himself to be

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deceived in negotiations. This unexpected event, the numerous descents of the English upon the coast of Galicia, (where no English had landed, except a few officers,) and the excessive heat of the season, had induced the King to assemble his troops, and place them in a cooler climate than that of New Castille, and in a situation possessing a milder atmosphere, and better water: therefore, he left Madrid, and the army went into cooler cantonments. The bodies of insurgents scarcely deserved to be mentioned: they defended themselves behind a wall or a house; but a single squadron of cavalry, or a battalion of infantry, was sufficient to put many thousands of them to the route. "All that the English papers have published," said Buonaparte's gazetteer, "is unfounded and false. England knows well the part that she is acting; she also knows well what she is to expect from all her efforts. Her only object is to involve Spain in confusion, that she may thereby make herself mistress of such of its possessions as best suit her purposes."

At the same time, two reports from the minister of foreign affairs were laid before the French senate. The first of these bore date from Bayonne, so far back as the 24th of April. Hitherto the modern powers of Europe had always thought it necessary to hold forth some decent pretext for engaging in hostilities, however iniquitous might be the latent motives. . . but the semblance of moral decorum was now contemptuously laid aside; and in this state-paper Buonaparte was advised to seize upon Spain, for the purpose of carrying on the war against England more effectually, every thing being legitimate which led to that end. No state in Europe was more necessarily connected with France than Spain: she must be either a useful friend, or a dangerous enemy; . . an intimate alliance must unite the two nations, or an implacable enmity separate them. Such an enmity had in old times become habitual: . . the wars of the

*Report of  
M. Cham-  
pagny.*

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XIII. as of the sovereigns: the troubles of the League and the Fronde  
1808. had been excited and fomented by Spain; and the power of  
September. Louis XIV. did not begin to rise, till, having conquered Spain,  
he had formed that alliance with the royal family which ultimately placed his grandson on the throne. That act of provident policy gave to the two countries an age of peace, after three ages of war: but the French revolution broke this bond of union; and the Spanish Bourbons must always, through their affection, their recollections, and their fear, be the secret and perfidious enemies of France. It was for the interest of Spain, as well as of France, that a firm hand should re-establish order in her affairs, now when a feeble administration had led her to the brink of ruin. A king, the friend of France, having nothing to fear from her, and not being an object of distrust to her, would appropriate all the resources of Spain to her interest, and to the success of that common cause which united Spain to France and to the continent. Thus would the work of Louis XIV. be re-established. What policy suggests, said the report, justice authorises. The increase of the Spanish army before the battle of Jena, was really a declaration of war: the laws of the customs were directed against French commerce: French merchants were aggrieved, while the ports were open to the contraband trade of England, and English merchandize was spread through Spain into the rest of Europe: Spain, therefore, was actually in a state of war with the Emperor.

Even M. Champagny, however, had not the effrontery to press this conclusion. Exclusive of this, he said, existing circumstances did not permit the Emperor to refrain from interfering in the affairs of Spain. He was called upon to judge between the father and the son. Which part would he take? Would he sacrifice the cause of sovereigns, and sanction an

outrage against the majesty of the throne? Would he leave on the throne a prince who could not withdraw himself from the yoke of England? In that case, France must constantly keep a powerful army on foot in Spain. Would he reinstate Charles IV.? This could not be effected without overcoming a great resistance, and shedding French blood. And should that blood, of which France was prodigal for her own interests, be shed for a foreign king, whose fate was of no consequence to her? Lastly, would he abandon the Spanish nation to themselves, and while England was sowing the seeds of trouble and of anarchy, leave this new prey for England to devour? This was not to be thought of. The Emperor, therefore, occupied, of necessity, with the regeneration of Spain, in a manner useful to that kingdom and to France, ought neither to re-establish the dethroned king, nor to leave his son upon the throne; for in either case it would be delivering her to the English. Policy advised, and justice authorized him to provide for the security of the empire, and to save Spain from the influence of England.

Thus was the principle, that whatever is profitable is right, openly proclaimed by the French government, . . . a principle which the very thief, on his career to the gallows, dares not avow to himself. The other report from the same minister was of four months later date, though the former had plainly not been written till it was thought expedient to publish it: for the Tyrant needed no adviser in his conduct at Bayonne; and if his usurpation had been passively submitted to by the Spaniards, Spain would have been represented as the brave and faithful ally of France, and the new dynasty exhibited as the reward of her loyalty, which was now to be the means of curbing her hostile disposition. This second report began by proposing to the Emperor that he should communicate to the Senate the treaties which had placed the crown of Spain in his hands, and the constitution, which,

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*Second report.*

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under his auspices, and enlightened by his advice, the Junta at Bayonne, after free and mature deliberation, had adopted, for the glory of the Spanish name, and the prosperity of Spain and its colonies. He had interfered with Spain, it said, as a mediator; but his persuasive means, and his measures of wise and humane policy, had not been successful. Individual interests, foreign intrigues, and the influence of foreign corruption had prevailed. The disturbances in Spain were occasioned by English gold. Would, then, his Majesty permit England to say, "Spain is one of my provinces! My flag, driven from the Baltic, the North sea, the Levant, and even from the shores of Persia, rules in the ports of France?" No, never! To prevent so much disgrace and misfortune, two millions of brave men were ready to scale the Pyrenees, and chase the English from the peninsula. If the French fought for the liberty of the seas, they must begin by wresting Spain from the influence of the tyrant of the ocean. If they fought for peace, they could not obtain it till they had driven the enemies of peace from Spain. If they fought for honour, they must promptly inflict vengeance for the outrages committed against the French name in Spain. The probability of meeting the English at last, of fighting them man to man, of making them feel the evils of war themselves, . . . evils of which they were ignorant, having only caused them by their gold, was represented as no small advantage. They will be beaten, said M. Champagny, destroyed, dispersed, or, at least, they will make haste to fly, as they did at Toulon, at the Helder, at Dunkirk, in Sweden, . . . wherever the French armies have been able to find them! But their expulsion from Spain would be the ruin of their cause; it would exhaust their means, and annihilate their last hope. In this contest the wishes of all Europe would be with France!

*Report of  
the war-  
minister.*

These reports, with the two mock treaties of Bayonne, were

laid before the Senate, and, at the same time, a report of the war-minister was presented. France, it was said, had never possessed more numerous or better appointed armies, neither were they ever better kept up, or better provisioned. Nevertheless, the events which had taken place in Spain had occasioned a pretty considerable loss, in consequence of an operation, not less inconceivable than painful, of the division under General Dupont. His Majesty had notified his resolution of assembling more than 200,000 men beyond the Pyrenees, without weakening either the armies in Germany or that in Dalmatia. A levy of 80,000 was therefore indispensable, and these could only be taken from the four classes of the conscription of the years 1806, 7, 8, and 9, which, exclusive of the men who had married within those years, might furnish 600,000. In levying 80,000, only one conscript out of seven would be called out, and the vacancies in the armies would thus be filled up with soldiers of 21, 22, and 23 years of age, that is, with men fit to undergo the fatigues of war. "It is true, Sire," said the war minister, "that the custom observed of late years might, to a certain degree, induce a part of your subjects to consider themselves released from the duty of the conscription, as soon as they had furnished the contingent required for the year; and, under this point of view, what I propose might appear to require from your people a sacrifice. But, Sire, there is no one but knows, that, by the words of the law, your Majesty would be authorised to call to your standard the whole of the conscription, not only of the last four years, but even of the antecedent years: and even were there question of a real sacrifice, what sacrifice is it that your Majesty has not a right to expect from the love of your subjects? Who among us is ignorant that your Majesty wholly sacrifices yourself for the happiness of France, and that upon the speedy accomplishment of your high designs depend the repose of the

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world, the future safety, and the re-establishment of a maritime peace, without which France can never enjoy tranquillity? In proposing to your Majesty to declare, that henceforth no retrospective call shall take an antecedent conscription, I only participate, Sire, in your paternal wishes. I think it expedient, at the same time, to propose to your Majesty to order out the conscription of the year 1810, determining the amount of it, from the present instant, at 80,000 men . . . to furnish the means, as occasion may require, of forming camps of reserve, and of protecting the coast in the spring time. This conscription would be raised only under the apprehension of a war with other powers, nor would it be called out before the month of January next."

Thus, then, it appeared that those persons who had escaped from the conscriptions of four years were again to stand the hazard of this dreadful lottery, and that of the unmarried men, between the ages of 21 and 23, one in seven was to be sent to the armies! . . . and this draught upon the morality, the happiness, the vital strength, the flesh and blood of the French people . . . was required, because their Corsican master had thought proper to appoint his brother to be king of Spain! The promise that no retrospective conscription should again be called for, shows plainly what the feelings of the nation were at such a measure, when Buonaparte thought it necessary to soothe them, by declaring, that it was not to be repeated. This was not all: one year's conscription had already been anticipated, another year was to be levied in advance, and 80,000 men, whose services, by these baleful laws, were not due till 1810, were now to be called forth. This was necessary, the report said, because England and Austria were increasing their armies; and it was an evil inseparable from the present state of Europe, that France must increase hers in the same proportion. A suspicion of the in-

*Suspicion  
of the views  
of Austria.*



tentions of Austria was now intimated. Its armaments, the war minister declared, had often excited his solicitude. He had been told by the minister for foreign affairs, that the best understanding prevailed with the court of Vienna; but though it did not belong to his department to dive into the views and interests of states, and explore the tortuous labyrinths of politics, it was his duty to neglect nothing for preserving to the French armies, at all points, that just superiority which they ought to possess. The plan which he had proposed would give the army of Spain 200,000 men, without weakening the other armies; and the conscription of 1810 would increase the armies of Germany, of the North, and of Italy, by more than 80,000. From such a force what could be expected but the speedy re-establishment of tranquillity in Spain, of a maritime peace, and of that general tranquillity which was the object of the Emperor's wishes? Much blood would be spared, because so great a number of men would be ready to shed it. . . Here the tyrant's principle is right: and grievously was that parsimony of strength on the part of his mightiest enemy to be lamented, which, by never sending a force sufficient to insure its object, so often wasted what it sent.

A message from Buonaparte accompanied these reports, when they were laid before the Senate. He mentioned his firm alliance with Russia, and said, that he had no doubts of the peace of the continent, but that he ought not to rely upon the false calculations and errors of other courts; and since his neighbours increased their armies, it was a duty incumbent upon him to increase his: he therefore imposed fresh sacrifices upon his people, which were necessary to secure them from heavier, and to lead them to the grand result of a general peace. "I am determined," said he, "to carry on the war with Spain with the utmost activity, and to destroy the

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*Message  
from Bu-  
naparte to  
the Senate.  
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*The Senate  
approve his  
measures.*

In the first of Buonaparte's three constitutions for France, the affectation of Roman titles, and the false taste with which they were applied to offices essentially different, were equally to be remarked. The name of Senate, however, was well retained under his imperial government, just such a Senate having existed during those disgraceful ages of the Roman empire, when a despotism, similar to that which he had established in France, was degrading their country, and preparing the way for the universal barbarism and misery which ensued. The baseness of those wretches who sanctioned the iniquities and cruelties of Tiberius and Caligula was equalled by the obsequious senators of Buonaparte. On the day after his message had been presented, they voted an address, echoing the gross and palpable falsehoods of his assertions, applauding his measures, and appropriating to themselves, and, as far as the crimes of a government can be imputed to the people, to the French nation also, the guilt of his conduct towards Spain. "Your Majesty," said they, "desires to defend solemn and voluntarily concluded treaties; to maintain a constitution freely discussed, adopted, and sworn to by a national junta; to suppress a barbarous anarchy, which now covers Spain with blood and mourning, and threatens our frontier; to rescue the true Spaniards from a shameful yoke, by which they are oppressed; to assure to them the happiness of being governed by a brother of your Majesty; to annihilate