

It is, however, certain, that this opportunity for restoring the civil strength of a long degraded people, by a direct recurrence to first principles, was such as had seldom been granted to a sinking nation. Enthusiasm was aroused without the withering curse of faction; the multitude were ready to follow whoever chose to lead; the weight of ancient authority was, by a violent external shock, thrown off; the ruling power fell from the hands of the few, and was caught by the many, without the latter having thereby incurred the odium of rebellion, or excited the malice of mortified grandeur. There was nothing to deter the cautious, for there was nothing to pull down; the foundation of the social structure was already laid bare, and all the materials were at hand for building a noble monument of human genius and virtue, the architect alone was wanting; no anxiety to ameliorate the moral or physical condition of the people in the Peninsula was evinced by the ruling men of England, and if any existed amongst those of Spain, it evaporated in puerile abstract speculations. Napoleon, indeed, offered the blessing of regeneration in exchange for submission, but in that revolting form, accompanied by the evils of war, it was rejected, and amidst the clamorous pursuit of national independence, the independence of man was trampled under foot. The mass of the Spanish nation, blinded by personal hatred, thought only of revenge; the leaders, arrogant and incapable, neither sought nor wished for any higher motive of action: without unity of design, devoid of arrangement, their policy was mean and personal, their military efforts were abortive, and a rude, unscientific warfare disclosed at once the barbarous violence of the Spanish character, and the utter decay of Spanish institutions.

After Joseph's retreat from Madrid, the insurrection of Spain may be said to have ceased; from that period it became a war between France and the Peninsula; the fate of the latter was intrusted to organized bodies of men, and as the first excitement subsided, and danger seemed to recede, all the meaner passions resumed their empire. Hence the transactions of the memorable period which intervened between the battles of Baylen and Coruña were exceedingly confused, and the history of them must necessarily partake somewhat of that confusion. The establishment of a central Supreme Junta, the caprices of the Spanish generals, and their interminable disputes, the proceedings of the French army before the arrival of the Emperor, the operations of the grand army after his arrival, and the campaign of the British auxiliary force, form so many distinct actions, connected indeed by one great catastrophe, yet each attended by a number of minor circumstances of no great historical importance taken separately, but when combined, show-

ing the extent and complicated nature of the disease which destroyed the energy of Spain. For the advantage of clearness, therefore, it will be necessary to sacrifice chronological order; and as frequent reference must be made to the proceedings of a class of men whose interference had a decided, and in many cases a very disastrous influence upon the affairs of that period, I shall first give a brief account of the English agents, under which denomination both civil and military men were employed, yet the distinction was rather nominal than real, as, generally speaking, each person assumed the right of acting in both capacities.

The envoy, Mr. Charles Stuart, was the chief of the civil agents; the persons subordinate to him were, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Duff, and others, consuls and vice-consuls.

Mr. Stuart sailed with Sir A. Wellesley, and was left at Coruña when that officer touched there, previous to the operations in Portugal.

Mr. Hunter was stationed at Gihon in the Asturias.

Mr. Duff proceeded to Cadiz, and the others in like manner were employed at different ports. They were all empowered to distribute money, arms, succors of clothing and ammunition, and the want of system and forethought in the cabinet was palpable from the injudicious zeal of these inferior agents, each of whom conceived himself competent to direct the whole of the political and military transactions. Mr. Stuart was even put to some trouble in establishing his right to control their proceedings.

The military agents were of two classes—those sent from England by the government, and those employed by the generals abroad.

Sir Thomas Dyer, assisted by Major Roche and Captain Patrick, proceeded to the Asturias. The last officer remained at Oviedo, near the Junta of that province; Major Roche went to the headquarters of Cuesta; Sir Thomas Dyer, after collecting some information, returned to England.

Colonel Charles Doyle, having organized the Spanish prisoners at Portsmouth, sailed with them to Coruña. He was accompanied by Captain Carrol and Captain Kennedy, and during the passage a singular instance of turbulent impatience occurred; the prisoners, who had been released, armed, and clothed by England, and who had been as enthusiastic in their expressions of patriotism as the most sanguine could desire, mutinied, seized the transports, carried them into different ports of the Peninsula, disembarked, and proceeded each to his own home.

Colonel Browne was despatched to Oporto, and Major Green to Catalonia.

Those employed by the generals commanding armies were Captain Whittingham, who was placed by Sir Hew Dalrymple near General Castaños; he accompanied the head-quarters of the Andalusian army until the battle of Tudela put an end to his functions. Major Coxe, appointed also by Sir Hew Dalrymple, remained near the Junta of Seville, where his talents and prudent conduct were of great service; it would have been fortunate if all the persons employed as agents had acted with as much judgment and discretion.

All the above-named gentlemen were in full activity previous to the commencement of the campaign in Portugal; but when the convention of Cintra opened a way for operations in Spain, Sir Hew Dalrymple sent Lord William Bentinck to Madrid, that he might arrange a plan of co-operation with the Spanish generals, and transmit exact intelligence of the state of affairs. Such a mission was become indispensable. Up to the period of Lord William's arrival in Madrid, the military intelligence received was very unsatisfactory. The letters from the armies contained abundance of common-place expressions relative to the enthusiasm and patriotism visible in Spain; vast plans were said to be under consideration, some in progress of execution, and complete success was confidently predicted; but by some fatality, every project proved abortive or disastrous, without lowering the confidence of the prognosticators, or checking the mania for grand operations, which seemed to be the disease of the moment.

The English Ministers confirmed the appointment of Lord William Bentinck, and at the same time reorganized the system of the military agents, by marking out certain districts, and appointing a general officer to superintend each. Thus, Major-General Broderick was sent to Galicia; Major-General Leith, with a large staff, proceeded to the Asturias; Major-General Sontag went to Portugal. At the same time, Sir Robert Wilson, being furnished with arms, ammunition, and clothing for organizing three or four thousand men levied by the Bishop of Oporto, took with him a large regimental staff, and a number of Portuguese refugees, and succeeded in forming a partisan corps, afterwards known as the Lusitanian legion.* Brigadier-General Decken, also a German, being first destined for Spain, was countermanded at sea and directed to Oporto, where he arrived on the 17th of August, and immediately commenced that curious intrigue which has been already mentioned in the campaign of Vimiero. The scope of General Leith's mission was wide; Biscay, Castile, Leon, and even Catalonia, were placed under his superintendence, and he appears to have had instructions

* Sir Hew Dalrymple's Papers, MS.

to prepare the way for the disembarkation of an English army on the coast of Biscay.

When Sir John Moore assumed the command of the army, he sent Colonel Graham to reside at the Spanish head-quarters on the Ebro, and directed Lord William Bentinck to remain at Madrid to forward the arrangement for commencing the campaign. Lord William found in Mr. Stuart an able coadjutor, and in the letters of these two gentlemen, and the correspondence of Major Coxe, then at Seville, is to be found the history of the evils which at this period afflicted unhappy Spain, and ruined her noble cause. But the power of distributing supplies, and the independent nature of their appointments, gave to the military agents immediately employed by the minister an extraordinary influence, which was very injudiciously exercised. They forgot the real objects of their mission, and in many cases took a leading part in affairs with which it was not politic in them to have meddled at all.

Thus, Colonel Doyle having left Captain Kennedy at Coruña, and placed Captain Carrol at the head-quarters of Blake's army, repaired in person to Madrid, where he was received with marked attention, obtained the rank of a general officer in the Spanish service for himself, that of Lieutenant-Colonel for Captains Carrol and Kennedy, and from his letters it would appear that he had a large share in conducting many important measures, such as the arrangement of a general plan of operations, and the formation of a central and supreme government. He seems to have attached himself principally to the Duke of Infantado, a young man of moderate capacity, but with a strong predilection for those pretty intrigues which constituted the policy of the Spanish court.* Captain Whittingham likewise gained the confidence of Castaños to such a degree, that he was employed by him to inspect the different Spanish corps on the Ebro early in September, and to report upon their state of efficiency previous to entering upon the execution of the plan laid down for the campaign.† But notwithstanding the favorable position in which these officers stood, it does not appear that either of them obtained any clear idea of the relative strength of the contending forces; their opinions, invariably and even extravagantly sanguine, were never borne out by the result.

The Spaniards were not slow to perceive the advantages of encouraging the vanity of inexperienced men who had the control of enormous supplies; and while all outward demonstrations of respect and confidence were by them lavished upon subordinate functionaries, especially upon those who had accepted of rank in their

* Sir John Moore's Correspondence, MS.

† Whittingham's Correspondence, MS.

service, the most strenuous exertions of Lord William Bentinck and Mr. Stuart were insufficient to procure the adoption of a single beneficial measure,* or even to establish the ordinary intercourse of official business. The leading Spaniards wished to obtain a medium through which to create a false impression of the state of affairs and thus to secure supplies and succors from England, without being fettered in the application of them; the subordinate agents answered this purpose, and, satisfied with their docility, the generals were far from encouraging the residence of more than one British agent at their head-quarters. Captain Birch, an intelligent engineer officer, writing from Blake's camp, says, "General Broderick is expected here; but I have understood that the appearance of a British general at these head-quarters, to accompany the army, might give jealousy.† General Blake is not communicative, yet Captain Carrol appears to be on the best footing with him and his officers; and Captain Carrol tells me that he informs him of more than he does any of his generals." Soon after this, General Broderick did arrive, and complained, that "General Blake's reserve was such that he could only get answers to the most direct and particular questions, but by no means candid and explicit replies to general inquiries."‡

No object could be more perfectly accomplished; nothing could be more widely different than Spanish affairs, judged of by the tenor of the military agents' reports, and Spanish affairs when brought to the test of battle; yet the fault did not attach so much to the agents as to the ministers who selected them. It was difficult for inexperienced men to avoid the snare. Living with the chiefs of armies actually in the field, being in habits of daily intercourse with them, holding rank in the same service, and dependent upon their politeness for every convenience, the agent was in a manner forced to see as the general saw, and to report as he wished; a simple spy would have been far more efficacious!

Sir John Moore, perceiving the evil tendency of such a system, recalled all those officers who were under his immediate control, and strongly recommended to ministers that only one channel of communication should exist between the Spanish authorities and the British army. He was convinced of the necessity of this measure, by observing that each of the military agents considered the events passing under his own peculiar cognizance as the only occurrences of importance. Some of those officers treated Sir Hew Dalrymple and himself as persons commanding an auxiliary force

* Mr. Stuart's Letters, MS. Lord W. Bentinck's ditto. Appendix 13, § 6

† Sir John Moore's Correspondence, MS.

‡ Letter to Mr. Stuart, MS., Sept. 13.

which was to be moved, divided, and applied at the requisition of every inferior agent, and all the military stores of the British empire as placed at their disposal. Mr. Hunter demanded English cavalry and horse artillery to act with the Spaniards in the Asturian plains, and infantry to garrison their seaport towns. Sir Thomas Dyer was convinced that the horsemen and guns should have been at Rio Seco, in Leon, and that with the aid of two thousand British cavalry and twenty pieces of artillery, the Spaniards would in six weeks have all the French troops "in a state of siege." General Leith says, "Whatever may be the plan of operations and whatever the result, I beg leave, in the strongest manner, to recommend to your consideration the great advantage of ordering all the disposable force, of horse or car artillery, mounted on horses or mules of the country, without a moment's delay, to move on Palencia, where the column or columns will receive such intelligence as may enable them to give the most effectual co-operation."* Captain Whittingham at the same period, after mentioning the wish of General Castaños that some British cavalry should join him, writes, "I cannot quit this subject without once more repeating, that the efforts of the cavalry will decide the fate of the campaign. Should it be possible for your excellency to send one thousand or fifteen hundred horse, the advantages that would result are incalculable." And while these pressing recommendations came the one from Oviedo, the other from Tudela, Colonel Doyle, writing from Madrid, thus expresses himself: "Certain it is, that if your army were here, the French would evacuate Spain before you got within a week's march of them; indeed, even the light cavalry and two thousand light troops sent on cars, to keep up with the cavalry, to show our friends the nature of outpost duty, would, I think, decide the question."—"A respectable corps of British troops, landed in Catalonia, would so impose, that I have no doubt of the good effects." This last proposition relative to Catalonia was a favorite plan of all the leading men at Madrid; so certain were they of success on the Ebro, that, finding no British force was likely to be granted, they withdrew eight or nine thousand men from the army near Tudela, and directed them upon Lerida.

Thus much I have thought it necessary to relate about the agents, and now quitting that subject, I shall narrate

THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPANISH ARMIES IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BATTLE OF BAYLEN.

When that victory caused Joseph to abandon Madrid, the patriotic troops, guided by the caprice of the generals, moved in a

* Sir John Moore's Papers, MS.

variety of directions, without any fixed object in view, and without the slightest concert; all persons seemed to imagine that the war was at an end, and that rejoicing and triumph alone ought to occupy the minds of good Spaniards.

The Murcian and Valencian army separated. General Llamas, with twelve thousand infantry and a few cavalry, took the road to Madrid, and arrived there before any of the other generals. St. Marc, a Fleming by birth, with greater propriety, carried the Valencians to the relief of Zaragoza. On the road he joined his forces with those of the Baron de Versage, and the united troops, amounting to sixteen thousand, entered Zaragoza on the 15th, one day after Verdier and Lefebvre had broken up the siege and retired to Tudela, leaving their heavy guns and many stores behind them; they were pursued by the Valencians and Aragonese, but on the 19th their cavalry turned and defeated the Spanish advanced guard. On the 20th Lefebvre abandoned Tudela, and took a position at Milagro. On the 21st, St. Marc and Versage occupied Tudela, and the peasantry of the valleys, encouraged by the approach of a regular army, and by the successful defence of Zaragoza, assembled on the left flank of the French, and threatened their communications. Meanwhile Palafox gave himself up to festivity and rejoicing, and did not begin to repair the defences of Zaragoza until the end of the month; he also assumed supreme authority, and in various ways discovered inordinate and foolish presumption, decreeing, among other acts, that no Aragonese should be liable to the punishment of death for any crime.*

The army of Andalusia was the most efficient body of men in arms throughout Spain; it contained thirty thousand regular troops, provided with a good train of artillery and flushed with recent victory; yet it was constrained to remain idle by the Junta of Seville, who detained it to secure a supremacy over the other juntas of Andalusia, and even brought back a part to assist at an ostentatious triumph in that city.† It was not until a full month after the capitulation of Dupont, that Castaños made his entry into the capital at the head of a single division of seven thousand men; another of the same force was left at Toledo, and the rest of his army quartered at Puerto del Rey, St. Helena, and Carolina, in the Sierra Morena.‡

Of the Estremaduran army the infantry was at first composed only of new levies, but it was afterwards strengthened by some battalions of the Walloon and Royal Guards, and supplied by Sir

* Cavallero.

† Coxe's Correspondence, MSS.

‡ Whittingham's Correspondence, MSS.

Hew Dalrymple with every needful equipment. Following the terms of a treaty between the Juntas of Badajoz and Seville, the cavalry, four thousand strong, was to be given to Castaños, but, Cuesta excepted, no other general had any horsemen. This cavalry was useless in Estremadura, yet orders and entreaties, and the interference of Sir Hew Dalrymple, alike failed to make Galluzzo send it either to the capital or to Blake; nor would he, as we have seen, desist from his pretended siege of La Lippe, although it delayed the evacuation of Portugal. Meanwhile the Spanish captives, released by the convention of Cintra, were clothed, armed, and sent to Catalonia in British transports, which also carried ten thousand muskets, with ammunition, for the Catalans.*

It has been before stated that one thousand five hundred Spaniards, commanded by the Marquis of Valladeras, co-operated with the Portuguese during the campaign of Vimiero; they never penetrated beyond Guarda, and being destitute of money, were reduced to great distress, for they could not subsist where they were, nor yet march away: Sir Hew, by a timely advance of ten thousand dollars, relieved them, and Valladeras joined Blake, when, after the defeat of Rio Seco, that General had separated from Cuesta and sheltered himself from the pursuit of Bessières in the mountains behind Astorga.† Blake's reserve division had not been engaged in that battle, and the resources of the province, aided by the succors from England, were sufficient to place him again at the head of thirty thousand infantry.‡ Hence, when Bessières retired after the defeat of Baylen, Blake occupied Leon, Astorga, and the pass of Manzanal; and as he dared not enter the plains without cavalry, the Junta of Castile and Leon, then at Ponteferrada, ordered Cuesta, who had one thousand dragoons at Arevalo, to transfer them to the Gallician army. Instead of obeying, the arbitrary old man, exasperated by his defeat and his quarrel with Blake, retired to Salamanca, collected and armed ten thousand peasants, annulled the proceedings of the Junta, and menaced the members with punishment for resisting his authority as Captain-General.§ On the other hand, Blake protected them, and while the generals disputed, three thousand French cavalry, descending the Douro, scoured the plains, and raised contributions in face of both their armies.

Finally, Blake, finding the obstinacy of Cuesta invincible, quitted his cantonments early in September, and skirting the plains on the

* Sir H. Dalrymple's Papers, MSS.

† Ibid.

‡ Doyle's Letters.

§ Mr. Stuart's Correspondence.

north-east, carried his army by forced marches to the Montana St. Ander, a rugged district dividing Biscay from the Asturias. The Junta of the latter province had received enormous and very timely succors from England, but made no exertions answerable to the amount of assistance granted, or to the strength and importance of the district; eighteen thousand men were said to be in arms, but only ten thousand were promised to Blake, and but eight thousand joined his army.*

In Catalonia the war was conducted by both sides without much connection or dependence on the movements of the main armies, and at this period it had little influence on the general plan of campaign. Thus it appears that one month after the capitulation of Dupont, only nineteen thousand infantry, without cavalry, and those under the command of more than one general, were collected at Madrid; that only sixteen thousand men were in line upon the Ebro, and that the remainder of the Spanish armies, exclusive of that in Catalonia, computed at eleven thousand men, were many days' march from the enemy, and from each other; that the chiefs, at discord with their respective juntas, and at variance among themselves, were inactive, or, as in the case of Galluzzo, doing mischief.

These feeble and dilatory operations of the armies were partly owing to the inaptitude of the generals, but the principal causes were the unbounded vanity, arrogance, and selfishness of the local governments, among whom the Juntas of Galicia and Seville were remarkable for their ambition. The time which should have been passed in concerting measures for pushing the victory of Baylen, was spent by them in devising schemes to insure the permanency of their own power, and the money and resources, both of England and Spain, were applied to further this pernicious object; in every part of the country a spirit of interested violence prevailed, the ardor of patriotism was chilled, and the exertions of sensible men were rendered nugatory, or served as a signal for their own destruction.

The argument to be drawn from this state of affairs is conclusive against the policy of Joseph's retreat. Without drafting a man from the garrisons of Pampeluna and St. Sebastian—without interfering with the movable columns employed on the communications of Biscay and Navarre—that monarch drew together about fifty thousand good troops, in twenty days after he had abandoned his capital.* At the head of such a force, or even of two thirds of it, he might have bid defiance to the inactive, half-organized, and scattered Spanish armies; and it was so necessary to have maintained

* Capt. Carrol's Letters.

† Appendix, No. 6.

himself in Madrid, that scarcely any disproportion of numbers should have induced him to abandon it without an effort; but the disaster of Dupont had created in Joseph's mind a respect for Spanish prowess, while from his sagacious brother it only drew the following observation: "*The whole of the Spanish forces are not capable of beating twenty-five thousand French in a reasonable position.*" The error of abandoning the capital would, if the Spaniards had been capable of pursuing any general plan of action, have been fatal; but the stone of Cadmus had been cast among them, and the Juntas, turning upon one another in hate, forgot the common enemy.*

Ferdinand was now again proclaimed King of Spain, and the pomp and rejoicing attendant on this event put an end to all business, except that of intrigue. Castaños assumed the title of Captain-General of Madrid—a step which seems to have been taken by him, partly to forward his being appointed generalissimo, and partly with a view to emancipate himself from the injurious control of the Seville Junta; for, although the authority of the captains-general had been superseded in most of the provinces by the juntas, it was not universally the case. He expected, and with reason, to be appointed generalissimo of the Spanish armies, but he was of an indolent disposition, and it was manifest that until a central and supreme government was established, such a salutary measure would not be adopted. In the mean time, the Council of Castile, although not generally popular with the people, and hated by the juntas, was accepted as the provisional head of the state in the capital; yet its authority was merely nominal, and the necessity of showing some front to the enemy seems to have been the only link of connection between the Spanish armies.

The evil consequences flowing from this want of unity were soon felt. Scarcely had the French quitted Madrid, when the people of Biscay prepared to rise; and such an event, prudently conducted and well supported, would have been of incalculable advantage; but the nicest arrangement and the utmost prudence were necessary to insure success—for the Biscayans had neither arms nor ammunition, the French were close to them, and the nearest Spanish force was the feeble Asturian levy. A previous junction of Blake's army with the latter was indispensable: that once effected and due preparation made, the insurrection of Biscay, protected by forty thousand regular troops and supplied from the seaboard with money and stores, would have forced the French to abandon the Ebro or to fight a battle, which Blake might have risked, provided that the Andalusian, Murcian, Valencian, and Aragonese troops, assembling about Tudela, were prepared to move at the same time

* Appendix, No. 4.

against the left flank of the enemy. In every point of view it was an event pregnant with important consequences, and the impatience of the Biscayans should have been restrained rather than encouraged; yet the Duke of Infantado, Colonel Doyle, and others, at Madrid, made strenuous efforts to hasten the explosion; and the crude manner in which they conducted this serious affair is exposed in the following extracts from Colonel Doyle's despatches:

"I proposed to General Blake that he should send officers to Biscay to stir up the people there, and into the Asturias to beg that, of their 15,000 men, 8,000 might be pushed into Biscay to Bilbao, to assist the people, who were all ready and only waited for arms and ammunition, for both of which I wrote to Mr. Hunter at Gihon, and learned from him that he had sent a large supply of both, and some money to Bilbao, where already 14,000 men had enrolled themselves. The remainder of the Asturians I begged might instantly occupy the passes from Castile into the Asturias and Biscay, that is to say, from Reynosa in the direction of Bilbao." Some days after, he says, "My measures in Biscay and Asturias have perfectly succeeded; the reinforcements of arms, ammunition and men (5,000 stand of arms and ammunition in proportion), have reached Bilbao in safety, and the Asturians have taken possession of the passes I pointed out, so that we are all safe in that part of the world."

In this fancied state of security affairs remained until the 16th of August; Blake was still in the mountains of Galicia, but the English succors arrived in the port of Bilbao, and the explosion took place. General Merlin, with three thousand grenadiers, immediately came down on the unfortunate Biscayans, Bilbao was taken, and, to use the gloomy expression of King Joseph, "the fire of insurrection was quenched with the blood of twelve hundred men." Fortunately the stores were not landed, and the vessels escaped from the river. Thus, at a blow, one of the principal resources which Blake had a right to calculate upon in his future operations was destroyed; and although the number admitted by the Spaniards to have fallen was less than the above quotation implies, the spirit of resistance was severely checked, and the evil was unmixed and deplorable. This unfortunate event, however, created little or no sensation beyond the immediate scene of the catastrophe; triumphs and rejoicings occupied the people of Madrid and Zaragoza, and it is difficult to say how long the war would have been neglected, if Palafox had not been roused by the reappearance of a French corps, which retook Tudela, and pushed on to the vicinity of Zaragoza itself.*

This movement took place immediately after the expedition

* Appendix, No. 8.

against Bilbao; it was intended to suppress the insurrection of the valleys, and to clear the left flank of the French army. Palafox, thus roughly aroused, wrote intemperately to the Council of Castile, ordering that all the troops in the capital should be forwarded to the Ebro, and menacing the members personally for the delay which had already occurred.* Being a young man without any weight of character, and his remonstrances founded only upon his own danger, and not supported by any general plan or clear view of affairs, the presumptuous tone of his letters gave general offence: he chiefly aimed at Castaños, who was not under his command; and, moreover, the Junta of Seville refused to pay, or to subsist the Andalusian army, if it moved beyond the capital before a central government should be established. But the same Junta resorted to every kind of intrigue to retard, if not entirely to prevent the execution of the latter measure. It was, however, necessary to do something, and a council of all the generals commanding armies was held at Madrid on the 5th of September.† Castaños, Llamas, Cuesta, the Duke of Infantado, and some others, assembled. Blake gave his proxy to the Duke; Palafox was represented by a colonel of his own staff.‡ Cuesta proposed that a commander-in-chief should be appointed; the others were too jealous to adopt this proposal, yet they agreed to pursue the following plan of operations:

Llamas, with the Murcians, to occupy Tarazona, Agreda, and Borja. La Peña, with the two divisions of Andalusia already in the capital, to march by Soria, and take possession of Logroño and Najera. The other divisions of that army to follow in due time, and when La Peña should be established in Logroña, Llamas was to advance to Cascante, Corella, and Calahorra.

This united force was to be called the army of the centre, and once securely fixed in its positions, Palafox, under whose command St. Marc's division acted, was to push forward to Sanguessa by the left bank of the Ebro, and thus turn the enemy on the Aragon river. In the mean time it was hoped that Blake would arrive at Palencia, and form his junction with the Asturians, and Cuesta promised to march upon Burgo del Osma, to fill up the space between Blake and the army of the centre. The head of La Peña's column was to be at Soria on the 15th of September, and the Junta confidently expected that this vicious plan, in which every sound military principle was violated, and the enemy's troops considered with regard to position as a fixed immovable mass, would cause the total destruction of the French army; the only fear entertained

* Whittingham's Correspondence, MS.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Mr. Stuart's Letters. Parliamentary Papers.

was, that a hasty flight into France would save it from Spanish vengeance! And Captain Whittingham, echoing the sentiments of the Spanish generals with reference to this plan, writes, "As far as my poor judgment leads me, I am satisfied that if the French persist in maintaining their present position, we shall, in less than six weeks, have a second edition of the battle of Baylen!"

But to enable La Peña and Llamas to march, pecuniary aid was requisite; there was a difficulty in raising money at Madrid, and the maritime provinces intercepted all the English supplies. In this dilemma, Colonel Doyle drew bills upon the English treasury, and upon the government at Seville, making the latter payable out of two millions of dollars just transmitted to the Junta through Mr. Duff.* It is probable that such an unprincipled body would have dishonored the bills, if, just before they were presented, Major Coxe had not remonstrated strongly upon the destitute condition of the army, and his representations, although at first haughtily and evasively received, became effectual when the Junta discovered that a plot against their lives, supposed to have been concocted at Madrid, was on the eve of execution: in fact, they had become hateful from their domineering insolence and selfishness, and the public feeling was strongly against them. Alarmed for the consequences, they sent off 200,000 dollars to Madrid, and published a manifesto, in which they inserted a letter purporting to be from themselves to Castaños, dated on the 8th, and giving him full powers to act as he judged fitting for the public good. Their objects were to pacify the people, and to save their own dignity by appearing to have acted voluntarily; but Castaños published the letter in Madrid with its true date of the 11th, and then it became manifest, that to Major Coxe's remonstrance, and not to any sense of duty, this change of conduct was due.

Doyle's bills having been negotiated, the troops in the capital were put in motion, and 40,000 fresh levies were enrolled, yet the foresight and activity of Napoleon in disarming the country had been so effectual, that only 3,200 firelocks could be procured. A curious expedient then presented itself to the imagination of the Duke of Infantado and other leading persons in Madrid: Colonel Doyle, at their desire, wrote to Sir Hew Dalrymple, in the name of the Supreme Council, to request that *the firelocks of Junot's army, and the arms of the Portuguese people*, might be forwarded to the frontier, and from thence carried by post to the capital. And this novel proposition was made at a time when England had already transmitted to Spain 160,000 muskets, a supply considerably exceeding the whole number of men organized throughout the coun-

* Sir Hew Dalrymple's Correspondence. Doyle's Letters. Coxe's do.

try. Fifty thousand of these arms had been sent to Seville, where the Junta shut them up in the arsenals, and left the armies defenceless; for to neglect or misuse real resources, and to fasten with avidity upon the most extravagant projects, is peculiarly Spanish.* No other people could have thought of asking for a neighboring nation's arms at such a conjecture. No other than Spanish rulers could have imagined the absurdity of supplying their levies, momentarily expecting to fight upon the Ebro, with the arms of a French army still unconquered in Portugal. But this project was only one among many proofs afforded at the time, that Cervantes was as profound an observer as he was a witty reprover of the extravagance of his countrymen.

CHAPTER II.

Internal political transactions—Factions in Galicia, Asturias, Leon, and Castile—Flagitious conduct of the Junta of Seville—Mr. Stuart endeavors to establish a northern Cortes—Activity of the Council of Castile; proposes a supreme government agreeable to the public—Local Juntas become generally odious—Cortes meet at Lugo; declare for a central and supreme government—Deputies appointed—Clamors of the Gallician Junta and Bishop of Orense—Increasing influence of the Council of Castile—Underhanded proceedings of the Junta of Seville, disconcerted by the quickness of the Baily Valdez—Character of Cuesta; he denies the legality of the northern Cortes, abandons the line of military operations, returns to Segovia, arrests the Baily Valdez and other deputies from Lugo—Central and supreme government established at Aranjuez—Popular feeling in favor of the Central Junta; vain and interested proceedings of that body; its timidity, inactivity, and folly; refuses to name a generalissimo—Foreign relations—Mr. Canning leaves Mr. Stuart without any instructions for three months—Mr. Frere appointed envoy extraordinary, &c.

INTERNAL POLITICAL TRANSACTIONS.

WITH the military affairs, thus mismanaged, the civil and political transactions proceeded step by step, and in the same crooked path. Short as the period was between the first breaking forth of the insurrection, and the arrival of Mr. Stuart at Coruña, it was sufficient to create disunion of the worst kind.* The Juntas of Leon, of the Asturias, and of Galicia, were at open discord, and those provinces were again split into parties, hating each other with as much virulence as if they had been of a hundred years' growth. The money and other supplies sent by the English ministers were considered, by the authorities into whose hands they fell, as a pe-

* Parliamentary Papers, 1810.

† Mr. Stuart's Letters. Parliamentary Papers

cular donation to themselves, and appropriated accordingly. The Junta of one province would not assist another with arms when there was a surplus, nor permit their troops to march against the enemy beyond the precincts of the particular province in which they were first organized.* The ruling power was in the hands of the provincial nobility and gentry, men of narrow contracted views, unused to business, proud, arrogant—as extreme ignorance suddenly clothed with authority will always be—and generally disposed to employ their newly acquired power in providing for their relations and dependants at the expense of the common cause, which with them was quite subordinate to the local interests of their own particular province. A jealousy of their neighbors regulated the proceedings of all the Juntas, and the means they resorted to for increasing their own, or depressing a rival government's influence, were equally characterized by absurdity and want of principle.

The Junta of Galicia did their utmost to isolate that province, as if with a view to a final separation from Spain and a connection with Portugal. They complained, as of an injury, that the army of Estremadura had obeyed the orders of the Junta of Seville, yet they formed an independent alliance with the Junta of Oporto, and sent troops, as we have seen, under Valladeras, to aid the war in Portugal;† but, at the same time, they refused to unite in any common measure of defence with the provinces of Castile, until a formal treaty of alliance between them was negotiated, signed, and ratified; and their selfishness and incapacity created so much disgust in their own district, that plots were formed to overthrow their authority. The Bishop of Orense and the Archbishop of St. Jago were their decided enemies. The last-named prelate, an intriguing man, secretly endeavored to draw Blake, with the army, into his views, and even wrote to him to desire that he would lead the troops against the government of Coruña;‡ the Junta having intercepted the letters, arrested the Archbishop, yet their own stability and personal safety were still so insecure, that many persons applied to Mr. Stuart to aid in changing the form of government by force. The Asturians were even worse; they refused to assist Blake when his army was suffering, although the stores required by him, and supplied by England, were rotting in the harbors where they were first landed; money also, sent out in the Pluto frigate for the use of Leon, was detained at Gihon, and Leon itself never raised a single soldier for the cause. Thus, only

* Mr. Stuart's Letters. Parliamentary Papers.

† Mr. Stuart's Letters, MS.

‡ Ibid

two months after the first burst of the insurrection, corruption, intrigue, and faction, even to the verge of civil war, were raging in the northern parts of Spain.

Like passions being at work in the south, the same consequences followed. The Junta of Seville, still less scrupulous than that of Galicia, made no secret of their ambitious views. They stifled all local publications, and even suppressed the public address of Florida Blanca, who, as President of the Murcian Junta, had recommended the formation of a supreme central government; they wasted their time in vain and frivolous disputes, and, neglecting every concern of real importance, sacrificed the general welfare to views of private advantage and interest.* They made promotions in the army without regard to public opinion or merit; they overlaid all real patriotism, and bestowed on their own creatures places of emolument, to the patronage of which they had not a legal right; they even usurped the royal prerogative of appointing canons in the church, and their cupidity equalled their ambition. They intercepted, as I have already related, the pecuniary supplies necessary to enable the army to act, and they complained that La Mancha and Madrid, in whose defence they said "*their* troops were sacrificing themselves," did not subsist and supply the force with Castaños.† Under the pretence of forming a nucleus for disciplining thirty thousand levies as a reserve, they retained five battalions at Seville, and, having by this draft weakened the army in the field, they neglected the rest, and never raised a man. The canonries filled up by them had been vacant for several years, and the salaries attached to those offices had been appropriated to the public service; the Junta now applied the money to their own and their creatures' emolument, and at one period they appeared to have contemplated an open partition of the funds received from England among themselves. Against this flagitious Junta also, the public indignation was rife. A plot was formed to assassinate the members; the municipal authorities remonstrated with them, the Archbishop of Toledo protested against their conduct, the Junta of Granada refused to acknowledge their supremacy;‡ and yet so great was their arrogance, so unprincipled their ambition, that the decided and resolute opposition of Castaños alone prevented them from commencing a civil war, by marching the victorious army of Baylen against the refractory Granadans. Such was the real state of Spain, and such the patriotism of the Juntas, who were at this time filling Europe with the sound of their own praise.

In the northern parts, Mr. Stuart endeavored to reduce the chaos

* Appendix, No. 13, § 5.

† Sir H. Dalrymple's Papers. Coxe's Correspondence

‡ Ibid.

of folly and wickedness to some degree of order, and to produce that unity of design and action, without which it was impossible to resist the mighty adversary that threatened the independence of the Peninsula. He judged that to abate the conflicting passions of the moment, a supreme authority, upon which the influence of Great Britain could be brought to bear with full force, was indispensable; and that to convoke the ancient Cortes of the realm was the most certain and natural method of drawing the strength and energy of the nation into one compact mass; but there Napoleon again interfered for by an able distribution of the French forces, all direct communication between the northern and southern provinces was intercepted. Bessières, Dupont, and Monecy at that time occupied a circle round Madrid, and would have prevented the local governments of the north from uniting with those of the south, if they had been inclined to do so.

A union of deputies from the nearest provinces, to be called the northern Cortes, then suggested itself to Mr. Stuart as a preliminary step, which would insure the convocation of a general assembly when such a measure should become practicable; accordingly he strenuously urged its adoption, but his efforts, at first, produced no good results.* It was in vain that he represented the danger of remaining in a state of anarchy, when so many violent passions were excited, and such an enemy was in the heart of the country. It was in vain that he pointed out the difficulties that the want of a supreme authority fastened on the intercourse with the British Cabinet, which could not enter into separate relations with every provincial junta. The Spaniards, finding that the supplies were not withheld, that their reputation for patriotism was not lowered in England by actions which little merited praise; finding, in short, that the English Cabinet was weak enough to gorge their cupidity, flatter their vanity, and respect their folly, assented to all Mr. Stuart's reasoning, but forwarded none of his propositions, and continued to nourish the disorders that were destroying the common cause.

The jarring interests which agitated the northern provinces were not even subdued by the near approach of danger; the result of the battle of Rio Seco rather inflamed than allayed the violence of party feeling, and if Bessières had not been checked by the disaster of Dupont, he would have encountered few obstacles in establishing Joseph's authority in Galicia and Old Castile. For the enthusiasm of those provinces never rose to a great pitch, and as Bessières was prepared to use address as well as force, he would have found support amongst the factions, and the reinforcements

* Stuart's Correspondence. Parliamentary Papers.

continually arriving from France would have enabled him to maintain his acquisition. The ability of the Emperor's dispositions would then have been apparent; for while Bessières held Galicia, and Dupont hung on the southern frontier of Portugal with twenty-five thousand men, Junot could have securely concentrated his army in the neighborhood of Lisbon, and have rendered an English disembarkation on the coast nearly impracticable.

Napoleon's combinations were overturned by the disgraceful capitulation of Baylen, and when Joseph evacuated Madrid a fresh impulse was given to the spirit of the people; but, unfortunately for Spain, as a wider scope for ambition was obtained, the workings of self-interest increased, fresh parties sprung up, and new follies and greater absurdities stifled the virtue of the country, and produced irremediable confusion, ending in ruin. The fact of Dupont's capitulation was made known to the Council of Castile before King Joseph was informed of it, and the Council, foreseeing all the consequences of such an event, immediately refused, as I have already related, to promulgate officially his accession to the throne. The King permitted this act of disobedience to pass without much notice, for he was naturally averse to violence, and neither he nor his brother Napoleon did at any period of the contest for Spain constrain a Spaniard to accept or retain office under the intrusive government.* Joseph went further. Before he abandoned Madrid, he released his ministers from their voluntary oath of allegiance to himself, leaving them free to choose their party once more. Don Pedro Cevallos and the Marquis of Pinuelo seized the occasion to change with, what appeared to them, changing fortune; the five others remained steadfast, preferring an ameliorated government, under a foreign prince, to what they believed to be a hopeless struggle, but which, if successful, they knew must end in a degrading native despotism; perhaps, also, a little swayed by their dislike to England, and by the impossibility of obtaining that influence among their countrymen, which, under other circumstances, their talents and characters would have insured.

The boldness of the Council of Castile was not publicly chastised by the intruding monarch, yet secretly he punished the members by a dexterous stroke of policy. General Grouchy wrote to Castaños, saying, that as circumstances required the presence of the French troops in another quarter, he invited the Spanish General to take immediate possession of Madrid, for the preservation of public tranquillity. This was construed to mean the entire evacuation of Spain, and a report so congenial to the vanity and indolence of the Spaniards was greedily received; it contributed to the sub-

* Azanza and O'Farril, Memoirs.

sequent supineness of the nation in preparing for its defence, and Joseph, by appealing to Castaños, and affecting to treat the Council of Castile as a body who had lost all influence with the nation, gave a handle to its enemies, which the latter failed not to lay hold of. The Juntas dreaded that the influence of the Council would destroy their own. That of Galicia would not even communicate with them, but affirmed that, individually, the members were attached to the French, and that, collectively, they had been the most active instrument of the usurper's government. The Junta of Seville endeavored not only to destroy the authority of the existing members, but to annul the body as an acknowledged tribunal of the state.* This proscribed Council, however, was not wanting to itself: the individuals composing it did not hesitate to seize the reins of government the moment the French had departed; and the prudence with which they preserved tranquillity in the capital, preventing all re-action, while it proves that they were not without merit, forms a striking contrast to the conduct of the provincial Juntas, under whose savage sway every kind of excess was committed, and even encouraged.

Aware of the hostility they had to encounter, the members of the Council lost no time in forming a party to support themselves. Don Arias Mon y Velarde, dean or president for the time being, wrote a circular letter to the local Juntas, pointing out the necessity of establishing a central and supreme power, and proposing that deputies from each province, or nation, as they were sometimes called, should repair to Madrid, and there concert with the Council the best mode of carrying such a measure into effect. If this proposal had been adopted, all power would inevitably have fallen into the hands of the proposers. Confessedly the first public body in the state, and well acquainted with the forms of business, the Council must necessarily have had a preponderating influence in the assembly of delegates; and it appeared so reasonable that it should take the lead, when an efficient authority was required to direct the violence of the people in a useful channel, before the moment of safety was passed, that all the Juntas trembled at the prospect of losing their misused power. The minor ones submitted, and agreed to send deputies; the stronger and more ambitious felt that subtlety would avail more than open opposition to the project.

The Council followed up this blow by the publication of a manifesto, containing an accurate detail of the events of the revolution, defending the part taken by its members, and claiming a renewal of the confidence formerly reposed in them by the nation. This important state paper was so ably written, that a large party, espe

* Sir Hew Dalrymple's Papers. Coxe's Correspondence.

cially at Valladolid, was immediately formed in favor of its authors, and the Junta of Seville were so sensible of the increasing influence of the Council, that they intercepted a copy of this manifesto, addressed to Sir Hew Dalrymple, and strictly suppressed all writings favorable to the formation of a supreme central authority, nothing they dreaded more.* But it was no longer possible to resist the current, which had set strongly in favor of such a measure; the Juntas, however they might oppose its progress, could not openly deny the propriety of it, and in every province, individuals of talent and consideration called for a change in the Hydra polity which oppressed the country, and was inefficient against the enemy.† Every British functionary, civil or military, in communication with the Spaniards, also urged the necessity of concentrating the executive power.

All the provincial Juntas were become universally odious;‡ some of the generals alone, who had suddenly risen to command under their rule, were favorable to them. Palafox was independent, as a captain-general, whose power was confirmed by success; Castaños openly declared that he would no longer serve under their control; Cuesta was prepared to put them down by force, and to re-establish the royal audiencias and the authority of the captains-general according to the old practice. In this state of affairs, the retreat of Bessières' army having freed the communication with the southern parts, removed all excuse for procrastination, and the Juntas of Galicia, Castile, Leon, and the Asturias, giving way to the unceasing remonstrances of Mr. Stuart, at his instance agreed to meet in cortes, at Lugo; Galicia, however, first insisted upon a formal ratification of that treaty with Castile which has been already mentioned.

When the moment of assembling arrived, the Asturians, without assigning any reason, refused to fulfil the engagement they had entered into, and the three remaining Juntas held the session without them. The Bishop of Orense, and the Junta of Galicia, were prepared to assert the supremacy of that province over the others. But the Bailly Valdez of Castile, an able and disinterested man, being chosen president of the convocation, proposed on the first day of assembly, that deputies should be appointed to represent the three provinces in a Supreme Junta, to be assembled in some central place, for the purpose of convoking the ancient Cortes of the whole kingdom, according to the old forms, and of settling the administration of the interior, and the future succession to the

* Mr. Stuart's Correspondence. Coxe's Correspondence.

† Mr. Stuart's Correspondence.

‡ Ibid.

throne. This proposition was immediately carried by the superior number of the Castilians and Leonese, although the Bishop of Orense protested against it, and the Gallician members strongly opposed an arrangement by which their province was placed on the same footing as others; a glaring injustice, they urged, when the numbers of the Gallician army were taken into consideration, for the local feeling of ambition was uppermost, and the general cause disregarded. The other party answered, with great force, that the Gallician army was paid, armed, and clothed by England, and fed by Castile and Leon.

Meanwhile the influence of the Council of Castile greatly increased, and the Junta of Seville, quickened by fear, took the lead in directing what they could not prevent;* the convocation of the Cortes they knew would be fatal to their own existence. Wherefore, in a public letter, addressed to the Junta of Galicia, dated one day previous to the circular of Don Arias Mon, but evidently written after the receipt of the latter, they opposed the assembling of the Cortes, on the ground that it was "the prerogative of the King to convoke that body; and if it was called together by any other authority, the provinces would not obey;" "there would be no unanimity." The futility of this argument is apparent; the question was not one of form, but of expediency. If the nation was in favor of such a step, and after facts proved that the people were not opposed to it, the same necessity which constituted the right of the Junta to declare war against the French, another prerogative of the monarch, would have sufficed to legalize the convocation of the national assembly. But their sole object was to preserve their own power. They maintained that the juntas, being chosen by the nation, were the only legitimate depositaries of authority, that to members of their own bodies only could any of that authority be delegated; then adopting the suggestion contained in the letter of Arias Mon, they proposed that two deputies from each supreme junta should repair, not to Madrid, but to Ciudad Real, or Almagro, and at the moment of meeting be in fact constituted governors-general of the kingdom, and as such obeyed; nevertheless, the local governments were, with due subordination to the Central Junta, to retain and exercise in their own provinces all the authority with which they had already invested themselves. Thus they had only to choose subservient deputies, and their power would be more firmly fixed than before; and this arrangement would, doubtless, have been adopted by the Junta of Galicia, had not the rapidity with which Valdez carried his proposition prevented that cause of discord from being added to

* Mr. Stuart's Correspondence.

the numerous disputes which already distracted the northern provinces.

Mr. Stuart proceeded to Madrid, and wherever he passed found the same violence of local party feeling, the same disgust at the conduct of the oligarchical governments. Pride, vanity, corruption, and improvidence were everywhere obtrusively visible. The dispute between Blake and Cuesta, which was raging at the period of the battle of Rio Seco, a period when division was most hurtful to the military operations, was now allayed between the generals; yet their political partisans waged war with more bitterness than ever, as if with the intent to do the greatest possible mischief, by continuing the feud among the civil branches of the government, when union was most desirable in that quarter. The seeds of division had taken deep root.* On the one side was the Bailey Valdez, deputy to the Supreme Junta; on the other Cuesta, a man not to be offended with impunity when he had power to punish, for he was haughty and incredibly obstinate. He had been President of the Council of Castile, and he was Captain-General of Castile and Leon when the insurrection first broke out; but disliking all revolutionary movements, although as inimical to a foreign domination as any of his countrymen, he endeavored to repress the public effervescence, and to maintain the tranquillity of the country at the risk of losing his life as a traitor.

Cuesta was an honest man, inasmuch as the Spanish and French interests being put in competition, he would aid the former; yet, between his country's cause and his own passions, he was not honest. He disliked, and with reason, the sway of the local juntas, and, with consistency of opinion, wished to preserve the authority of the captains-general and the royal audiencias, both of which had been overturned by the establishment of those petty governments. But, sullen and ferocious in his temper, he supported his opinion with an authority and severity which had no guide save his own will; and he was prepared, if an opportunity offered, to exercise military influence over the supreme, as well as over the subordinate juntas. He had himself appointed one for Leon and Castile, as a sort of council, subordinate to the authority of the captain-general; yet, after the battle of Rio Seco, the members fled to Ponteferrada, assumed the supreme authority, and, putting themselves under the protection of his enemy Blake, disregarded Cuesta's orders, and commanded him, their superior, to deliver up his cavalry to the former General. Upon this he annulled all their proceedings at Ponteferrada, and now asserting that the election of Valdez and his colleagues was void, as being contrary to the existing laws, directed

* Mr. Stuart's Correspondence.

new juntas to be assembled in a manner more conformable to existing usages, and a fresh election to be made.

His mandates were disregarded; Valdez and the other deputies proceeded in defiance of them towards the place appointed for the assembly of the central and supreme government. Cuesta, in return, without hesitation, abandoned the operations of the campaign, which, in the council of war held at Madrid, he had promised to aid, and falling back to Segovia with twelve thousand men, seized the deputies, and shut up Valdez a close prisoner in the tower of that place, declaring his intention to try him by a military tribunal for disobedience. And such was the disorder of the times, that he was not without plausible arguments to justify this act of stubborn violence, for the original election of members to form the Junta of Castile and Leon had been anything but legal; several districts had been omitted altogether in the representations of those kingdoms, many deputies had been chosen by the city of Leon alone, and Valdez was named president, although neither a native nor a proprietor, and for those reasons ineligible to be a deputy at all: the kingdom of Leon also had appointed representatives for those districts in Castile which were under the domination of the French, and when the enemy retired, the Castilians in vain demanded a more equitable arrangement.

However, amidst all this confusion and violence, the plan of uniting to form a central government gained ground all over the kingdom. Seville, Catalonia, Aragon, Murcia, Valencia, and Asturias appointed their deputies, and although fresh disputes relative to the place of assembly arose, after some time it was agreed to meet at Aranjuez. This royal residence was chosen contrary to the wishes of many, and notably against the opinion of Jovellanos, an eloquent person, and of great reputation for integrity, but of a pertinacious temper, unsuitable to the times: he urged, that the capital was the meetest spot, and he was answered, that the turbulent disposition of the inhabitants of Madrid would impede the formation of a government, and that the same objection would exist against the choice of any other large town. It is extraordinary that such an argument should be held in Spain at a moment when the people were, in all the official and public papers, represented as perfectly enthusiastic and united in one common sacred pursuit, and in the British Parliament were denominated the "universal Spanish nation!"

To seek thus for protection in a corner, instead of manfully and confidently identifying themselves with the people, and courting publicity, augured ill for the intentions of the deputies, nor was the augury belied by the event. The Junta of Seville, who had so

bitterly reviled the Council of Castile, for having partially submitted to the usurper, had, notwithstanding, chosen for their own deputies Don Vincent Hore, a known creature of the Prince of Peace, and the Count de Tilly Guzman, who was under the stigma of a judicial sentence for robbery.* Hore declined the appointment, but Tilly, braving the public disgust, repaired to Aranjuez, and his place as resident with the head-quarters of the Andalusian army was filled up by Miñiano, another member of the Junta, who received an enormous salary for performing the mischievous duties of that office. The instructions given by the different provinces to the deputies were to confine their deliberations and votes to such subjects as they should, from time to time, receive directions from their constituents to treat of, and Seville again took the lead in this fraudulent policy; and when public indignation, and the remonstrances of some right-minded persons, obliged the Juntas of that town and of Valencia to rescind these instructions, both substituted secret orders of the same tenor. In short, the greater part of the deputies were the mere tools of the Juntas, agents watching over the interests of their employers, and, conscious of demerit, anxious to hide themselves from the just indignation of the public until they had consolidated their power; hence the dislike to large towns, and the intrigues for fixing the government at Aranjuez. Count Florida Blanca, a man in the last stage of decrepitude, was chosen first president in rotation for three months, and all idea of forming an independent executive was abandoned; for when Jovellanos proposed to establish a regency selected from their own body, his plan was rejected on the ground that the members were not authorized to delegate their powers even to one another: it was palpable that the Juntas had merely appeared to comply with the public wish for a central government, but were determined not to part with one iota of their own real power.

The first act of authority executed by the assembly, was a necessary assertion of its own dignity, which had been violated in the case of Valdez. Cuesta, who was personally unpopular, and feared by the central, as well as by the provincial Juntas, was summoned to release his captive, and to repair to Aranjuez, that cognizance might be taken of his proceedings; he was at the same time denounced by the Juntas of Castile and Leon as a traitor, and exposed to great danger of popular commotion.† At first, he haughtily repelled the interference of Castaños and Florida Blanca, yet finally he was forced to bend, and after a sharp correspondence with Mr. Stuart, whose influence was usefully employed to strengthen the central government, he released his prisoner, and quitting the

* Coxe's Correspondence.

† Appendix, No. 13, § 6.

command of the army, appeared at Aranjuez.* No formal proceedings were had upon the case, but after much mutual recrimination, Valdez was admitted to the exercise of his functions, and the old General was detained at the seat of government, a kind of state prisoner at large, until, for the misfortune of his country, he was, by subsequent events, once more placed at the head of an army. About this time Lord William Bentinck joined Mr. Stuart at Madrid. Perfectly coinciding in opinions, they labored earnestly to give a favorable turn to affairs, by directing the attention of the Central Junta to the necessity of military preparations, and active exertion for defence; but the picture of discord, folly, and improvidence exhibited in the provinces, was here displayed in more glaring colors. The lesser tribunals being called upon to acknowledge the authority of the assembled deputies, readily obeyed, and the Council of Castile, reluctant to submit, yet too weak to resist, endeavored to make terms, but was forced to an unconditional submission. A good management of the revenue, a single chief for the army, and, above all, the total suppression of the provincial juntas, were the three next objects of public anxiety.† With respect to the army, no doubt was at first entertained that Castaños would be appointed commander-in-chief; his services entitled him to the office, and his general moderation and conciliating manners fitted him for it at a time when so much jealousy was to be soothed, and so many interests to be reconciled. The past expenditure of the money received from England was also a subject of great importance, and it was loudly required that an account of its disbursement should be demanded of the local juntas, and a surrender of the residue instantly enforced.

These just expectations lasted but a short time. Scarcely were the deputies assembled, when every prospect of a vigorous administration was blasted.‡ Dividing themselves into sections, answering in number to the departments of state under the old King, they appointed a secretary not chosen from their own body to each, and declared all and every one of these sections supreme and independent, having equal authority.

Florida Blanca informed Mr. Stuart and Lord William Bentinck that Castaños would be named generalissimo, and the two last named were even directed to confer upon the plan of campaign for the British troops, then marching from Portugal to the assistance of the Spaniards. The necessity of having a single chief at the head of the armies was imperious, and acknowledged by every individual,

* Mr. Stuart's Correspondence. Colonel Graham's ditto.

† Mr. Stuart's Correspondence.

‡ Ibid.

military or civil; yet such was the force of jealousy, and so stubborn were the tools of the different juntas, that in despite of the exertions of Mr. Stuart and Lord William Bentinck, and the influence of the British Cabinet, the generals were all confirmed in their separate and independent commands. The old and miserable system of the Dutch deputies in Marlborough's time, and of the commissaries of the Convention during the French revolution, was partially revived; and the English government were totally disregarded, at a time when it had supplied Spain with two hundred thousand muskets, clothing, ammunition of all kinds, in proportion, and sixteen millions of dollars.* Such ample succors, if rightly managed, ought to have secured unlimited influence; but as the benefits came through one set of persons, and the demands through another, the first were taken as of right, the last unheeded, and thus the resources of Great Britain were wasted without materially improving the condition of Spain. The armies were destitute, the central government was without credit, and notwithstanding the ample subsidies, had contracted a large debt; yet with an insolence of tone appertaining rather to conquerors dictating terms, than to grateful allies demanding further assistance, they required from England an instant gift of ten millions of dollars, and stores to an amount that would have sufficed a well-governed army for many years.

The provisional juntas were still permitted to retain their power within their own districts, and the greatest timidity marked all the proceedings of the central government in relation to those obnoxious bodies. Attentive, however, to their own interests, the members of the Supreme Junta decreed, 1st, that their persons should be inviolable; 2d, that the president should have the title of Highness, with a salary of 25,000 crowns a year; 3d, that each of the deputies, taking the title of Excellency, should have a yearly salary of 5000 crowns; lastly, that the collective body should be addressed by the title of Majesty.† Thinking that they were then sufficiently confirmed in power to venture upon a public entry into Madrid, they made preparations to insure a favorable reception from the populace; that is, they resolved to declare a general amnesty, to lower the duties on tobacco, and to fling large sums among the people during the procession; and in the midst of all this pomp and vanity, the presence of the enemy on the soil was scarcely remembered, and the details of business were totally neglected.‡ This last was a prominent evil, which extended to the lowest branches

* Mr. Canning's Instructions to Mr. Duff, MS. Appendix No. 13, § 6.

† Mr. Stuart's Correspondence. Lord W. Bentinck's ditto.

‡ Lord W. Bentinck's Correspondence.

of administration. Self-interest, indeed, produced abundance of activity, but every department, almost every man, seemed struck with torpor when the public welfare was at stake—and, withal, an astonishing presumption was common to the highest and the lowest.

To supply the place of a generalissimo, a council or board of general officers was projected, on whose reports the Junta proposed to regulate the military operations. Castaños was destined to be president, but some difficulty arising relative to the appointment of the other members, the execution of the plan was deferred, with the characteristic remark, "that when the enemy was driven across the frontier, Castaños would have leisure to take his seat."* The idea of a defeat, the possibility of failure, never entered their minds; the government, evincing neither apprehension, nor activity, nor foresight, were contented if the people believed the daily falsehoods they promulgated relative to the enemy; and the people, equally presumptuous, were content to be so deceived: in fine, all the symptoms of a ruined cause were already visible to discerning eyes. The armies neglected even to nakedness; the soldiers' constancy under privations cruelly abused; disunion, cupidity, incapacity, in the higher orders; the patriotic ardor visibly abating among the lower classes; the rulers grasping, improvident, boasting; the enemy powerful, the people insubordinate, the fighting men without arms or bread; as a whole, and in all its parts, the government unfitted for its task; the system, cumbrous and ostentatious, was, to use the comprehensive words of Mr. Stuart, "neither calculated to inspire courage nor to increase enthusiasm."

The truth of this picture will be recognized by men who are yet living, and whose exertions were as incessant as unavailing to remedy those evils at the time; it will be recognized by the friends of a great man, who fell a victim to the folly and base intrigues of the day; it will be recognized by that general and army who, winning their own unaided way through Spain, found that to trust Spaniards in war was to lean against a broken reed. To others it may appear exaggerated, for without having seen, it is difficult to believe the extent of a disorder that paralyzed the enthusiasm of a whole people.

EXTERNAL POLITICAL RELATIONS OF SPAIN.

At first these were of necessity confined to England, Sicily, and Portugal; the rest of the Old World was either subject to Bonaparte or directly under his influence, but in the New World it was different. The Brazils, after the emigration of the royal family of

* Lord W. Bentinck's Correspondence.

Braganza, became important under every point of view, and relations were established between the Junta and that court, that afterwards, under the Cortes, created considerable interest, and threatened serious embarrassments to the operations of the Duke of Wellington. The ultra-marine possessions of Spain were also, of course, a matter of great anxiety to both sides, and Napoleon's activity balanced the natural preponderance of the mother country. The slowness of the local juntas, or rather their want of capacity to conduct such an affair, gave the enemy a great advantage, and it was only owing to the exertions of Mr. Stuart in the north, and of Sir Hew Dalrymple and Lord Collingwood in the south, that, after the insurrection broke out, vessels were despatched to South America to confirm the colonists in their adherence to Spain, and to arrange the mode of securing the resources of those great possessions for the parent state.* The hold which Spain retained over her colonies was, however, very slight; her harsh restrictive system had long before weakened the attachment of the South Americans, and the expedition of Miranda, although unsuccessful, had kindled a fire which could not be extinguished; it was apparent to all able statesmen, that Spain must relinquish her arbitrary mode of governing, or relinquish the colonies altogether; the insurrection at home only rendered this more certain. Every argument, every public manifesto put forth in Europe, to animate the Spaniards against foreign aggression, told against them in America; yet for a time the latter transmitted the produce of the mines, and many of the natives served in the Spanish armies.

Napoleon, notwithstanding his activity, and the offers which he made of the viceroyalty of Mexico to Cuesta, Castaños, Blake, and probably to others residing in that country, failed to create a French party of any consequence; for the Americans were unwilling to plunge into civil strife for a less object than their own independence. The arrogance and injustice of Old Spain, however, increased, rather than diminished, under the sway of the insurrectional government; and at last, as it is well known, a general rebellion of the South American States established the independence of the fairest portion of the globe, and proved how little the abstract love of freedom influenced the resistance of the old country to Napoleon.

The Spanish intercourse with the English court, which had been hitherto carried on through the medium of the deputies who first arrived in London to claim assistance, was now placed upon a regular footing. The deputies themselves, at the desire of Mr. Canning, were recalled, Admiral Apodaca was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary at St. James's, and Mr. John Hookham Frere was accredited

* Mr. Stuart's Correspondence, MS. Sir Hew Dalrymple.

ited, with the same diplomatic rank, near the Central Junta. Mr. Stuart, whose knowledge of the state of the country, whose acquaintance with the character of the leading persons, and whose able and energetic exertions had so much contributed to the formation of a central government, was superseded by this injudicious appointment; and thus the great political machine, with every wheel in violent action, was, at the most critical moment, left without any controlling power or guiding influence. For Mr. Stuart, who, on his own responsibility, had quitted Coruña, and repaired to Madrid, and had remitted the most exact and important information of what was passing, remained for three months without receiving a single line from Mr. Canning, approving or disapproving of his proceedings, or giving him instructions how to act at this important crisis: a strange remissness, indicating the bewildered state of the ministers, who slowly and with difficulty followed, when they should have been prepared to lead. Their tardy, abortive measures demonstrated how wide the space between a sophist and a statesman, and how dangerous to a nation is that public feeling, which, insatiable of words, disregards the actions of men, esteeming more the interested eloquence and wit of an orator like Demades, than the simple integrity, sound judgment, and great exploits of a general like Phocion.

Such were the preparations made by Spain, in September and October, to meet the exigencies of a period replete with danger and difficulty. It would be instructive to contrast the exertions of the "enthusiastic" Spaniards during these three months of their insurrection, with the efforts of "discontented France" in the hundred days of Napoleon's second reign. The Juntas were, however, not devoid of ambition, for before the battle of Baylen, that of Seville was occupied with a project of annexing the Algarves to Spain, and the treaty of Fontainebleau was far from being considered as a dead letter

CHAPTER III.

Political position of Napoleon; he resolves to crush the Spaniards; his energy and activity; marches his armies from every part of Europe towards Spain; his oration to his soldiers—Conference at Erfurth—Negotiations for peace—Petulant conduct of Mr. Canning—160,000 conscripts enrolled in France—Power of that country—Napoleon's speech to the Senate—He repairs to Bayonne—Remissness of the English Cabinet—Sir John Moore appointed to lead an army into Spain; sends his artillery by the Madrid road, and marches himself by Almeida—the Central Junta impatient for the arrival of the English army—Sir David Baird arrives at Coruña; is refused permission to disembark his troops—Mr. Frere and the Marquis of Romana arrive at Coruña; account of the latter's escape from the Danish Isles—Central Junta resolved not to appoint a generalissimo—Gloomy aspect of affairs.

NAPOLEON, surprised and chagrined at the disgrace which, for the first time, his armies had sustained, was yet nothing dismayed by a resistance which he had early contemplated as not improbable.* With a piercing glance he had observed the efforts of Spain, calculated the power of foreign influence in keeping alive the spirit of resistance, and assigning a just value to the succors which England could afford, foresaw the danger which might accrue, if he suffered an insurrection of peasants, which had already dishonored the glory of his arms, to attain the consistency of regular government, to league with powerful nations, and to become disciplined troops. To defeat the raw levies which the Spaniards had hitherto opposed to his soldiers was an easy matter, but it was necessary to crush them to atoms, that a dread of his invincible power might still pervade the world, and the secret influence of his genius remain unabated. The constitution of Bayonne would, he was aware, weigh heavy in the scale against those chaotic governments, neither monarchical, nor popular, nor aristocratic, nor federal, which the Spanish revolution was throwing up; but before the benefit of that could be felt by the many, before he could draw any advantages from his moral resources, it was necessary to develop all his military strength.

The moment was critical and dangerous. He was surrounded by enemies whose pride he had wounded, but whose means of offence he had not destroyed; if he bent his forces against the Peninsula, England might again excite the continent to arms, and Russia and Austria, once more banding together, might raise Prussia and renew the eternal coalitions. The designs of Austria, although covered by the usual artifices of that cunning, rapacious court, were not so hidden but that, earlier or later, a war with her

* Letter to Murat. Las Casas.

was to be expected as a certain event, and the inhabitants of Prussia, subdued and oppressed, could not be supposed tranquil. The secret societies that, under the name of Tugendbunde, Gymnasiasts, and other denominations, have since been persecuted by those who were then glad to avail themselves of such assistance, were just beginning to disclose their force and plans.* A Baron de Nostitz, Stein the Prussian Councillor of State, Generals Sharnhost and Gneizenau, and Colonel Schill, appear to have been the principal contrivers and patrons of these societies, so characteristic of Germans, who, regular and plodding even to a proverb in their actions, possess the most extravagant imaginations of any people on the face of the earth. But whatever the ulterior views of these associations may have been, at this period they were universally inimical to the French; their intent was to drive the latter over the Rhine, and they were a source of peril to the Emperor, the more to be feared, as the extent of their influence could not be immediately ascertained. Russia, little injured by her losses, was more powerful perhaps from her defeats, because more enlightened as to the cause of them. Napoleon felt that it would tax all his means to repel the hostility of such a great empire, and that, consequently, his Spanish operations must be confined in a manner unsuitable to the fame of his arms. With a long-sighted policy, he had, however, prepared the means of obviating this danger, by what has been called the conference at Erfurth, whither he now repaired to meet the Czar, confiding in the resources of his genius for securing the friendship of that monarch.

At this period, it may be truly said, that Napoleon supported the weight of the world; every movement of his produced a political convulsion; yet so sure, so confident was he of his intellectual superiority, that he sought but to gain one step, and doubted not to overcome all resistance, and preserve his ascendancy; time was to him victory—if he gained the one, the other followed: hence, sudden and prompt in execution, he made one of those gigantic efforts which have stamped this age with the greatness of antiquity. His armies were scattered over Europe; in Italy, in Dalmatia, on the Rhine, the Danube, the Elbe, in Prussia, Denmark, Poland, his legions were to be found; over that vast extent, above five hundred thousand disciplined men maintained the supremacy of France. From those bands he drew the Imperial Guards, the select soldiers of the warlike nation he governed, the terror of the other continental troops; these, and the veterans of Jena, of Austerlitz, of Friedland, reduced in number, but of confirmed hardihood, were marched towards Spain; a host of cavalry, unequalled for enterprise and

* Baron Fain's Campaign, 1813.