

CHAP. Spain, save in the friendship of her ally the great Napoleon.

V. The next courier brought Ferdinand's act of resignation to the
 1808. Father-king, and dispatches whereby the Junta were discharged
 May. from their allegiance to him, and instructed to obey the orders
 of Charles IV. They were thus relieved from a situation in
 which, if it would have been difficult for any men to have acted
 well, it was scarcely possible to have acted worse: for they
 had never been ignorant of Ferdinand's real situation, and they
 had received from him discretionary powers which would have
 authorized the most patriotic and determined measures.

*Means of
 resistance
 authorized
 by Fer-
 dinand.*

A day or two after the reassumption of the Father-king had
 been announced in Madrid, there arrived Ferdinand's answer
 to the preposterous questions which the Junta had proposed.
 However great the previous and the subsequent errors of this
 unhappy Prince, he was not wanting on this occasion to himself
 or to his country. He told the Junta that he was not in a state
 of freedom, and being therefore incapable himself of taking
 measures either for his own preservation or that of the monarchy,
 he invested them with full power to remove whithersoever they
 might deem most advisable, and exercise all the functions of
 sovereignty in his name, as representatives of his person. He
 instructed them to commence hostilities as soon as they should
 know that he was proceeding into the interior of France, which
 he would not do unless he were compelled; and he enjoined
 them to prevent in the best manner they could the introduction
 of more French troops into the Peninsula. This was the sub-
 stance of one decree. A second, which accompanied it, was
 directed to the Junta, and as they had suggested, to any chancery
 or audience of the kingdom, in case they should not be in a
 situation to act when it arrived. In this Ferdinand declared it
 to be his royal will that the Cortes should be assembled in what-
 ever place might be deemed most convenient; that they should

occupy themselves exclusively at first in attending to the levies and subsidies necessary for the defence of the kingdom, and that their sittings should be permanent.

These decrees were dated on the 5th, a few hours only before Ferdinand was confronted with his parents, and exposed to those outrages and threats which extorted from him his renunciation. The messenger took a circuitous route, and travelled on foot, for the sake of security; he did not reach Madrid therefore till after Charles's re-assumption of the crown had been officially announced there; and the Junta gladly perceived that the instructions which enjoined them to obey the orders of the father, discharged them from the duty of obeying the son in this instance, Ferdinand being no longer King, and they no longer his servants. By proposing the questions they had gained time for events to take their course, and relieve them, as they vainly hoped, from responsibility and danger. Other hope or motive in proposing them they could have none: and having so far succeeded, they concealed the dispatches for a time, and afterwards destroyed them. To have acted upon them now, they alleged, would have endangered Ferdinand* as well as themselves.

* Azanza and O'Farrill say that they were confirmed in this opinion by the arrival of Perez de Castro, a day or two afterwards, from Bayonne, who assured them that Ferdinand and his friends had been in the greatest alarm lest the Junta should have begun to act upon these instructions, or lest they should by any means have fallen into the Emperor's hands. (*Memoria*, sec. 85.) This is very possible, after the renunciation had been made, and they had submitted to their fate. But when the apology proceeds to say how well and bravely the instructions would have been acted upon had they arrived in time, the writers give themselves credit for a higher degree of virtue than was evinced either by their conduct then or afterwards. (*Id.* sec. 90, 91.) Among the *inconveniences* of resisting the French, they represent the necessity of putting the

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The Junta resolve that they have no longer authority to obey these instructions

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*Address
from Fer-
dinand and
the Infante,
exhorting
the people
to submis-
sion.*

The abdications both of the son and father had now been made public, and the people of Madrid, the blood of their townsmen still fresh in their streets, and the yoke upon their necks, read the address by which their late sovereign enjoined them to submit to the will of the Emperor Napoleon. That no colour of authority for the intended usurpation might be wanting, the names of Ferdinand, his brother Don Carlos, and the Infante Don Antonio, were affixed to a proclamation from Bourdeaux, condemning the spirit of resistance which had shown itself, absolving the people from all duties towards them, and exhorting them to obedience to France. In this address, the Infantes were made to say, that, "being deeply sensible of the attachment displayed towards them by the Spaniards, with the utmost grief they beheld them on the point of being plunged into anarchy, and threatened with all the dreadful calamities consequent thereupon. Aware that these might proceed from the ignorance in which the people were, both as to the principles of the conduct pursued by their highnesses, and the plans formed for the benefit of their country, they found themselves under the necessity of making an effort to open their eyes, by salutary counsel, in order to prevent any obstruction to the execution of those plans; and thus to give them the dearest proof of their affection. The circumstances under which the Prince assumed the government; the occupation of several provinces, and of all the frontier fortresses, by French troops; the actual presence of more than 60,000 of that nation in the capital and its environs;

English in possession of certain maritime posts, and the probability that England would have retained those posts for herself, to be another reproach to the Spaniards like Gibraltar! (*Id.* sec. 89.)

and many other circumstances known only to themselves, convinced them that, surrounded by difficulties, they had only chosen, among various expedients, that which was likely to produce the least evil; and, as such, they resolved upon the journey to Bayonne. On their arrival, the Prince, then King, was unexpectedly apprised that his father had protested against his act of abdication. Having accepted the crown only under the impression that the abdication was voluntary, he was no sooner informed of such a protest, than his filial duty instantly determined him to give back the throne. But a short time after, the King his father abdicated it in his own name, and that of his whole race, in favour of the Emperor of the French, in order that the Emperor, consulting the good of the nation, should determine the person and race which should hereafter occupy it. In this state of things, considering that any attempt of the Spaniards for the maintenance of their rights could tend only to make streams of blood flow, and to render certain the loss of at least a great part of her provinces, and all her colonies: . . . being further convinced, that the most effectual means of preventing these evils, was that their royal highnesses, for themselves, and all connected with them, should assent to the renunciation; taking also into consideration, that the Emperor engaged, in this case, to maintain the independence and integrity of the Spanish monarchy, and its colonies, without retaining the smallest of its dominions for himself, or separating any part from the whole; that he engaged to maintain the unity of the Catholic religion, the security of property, and the continuance of the existing laws and usages which have for so long a time preserved the power and honour of the Spanish nation. . . they conceived that they were affording the most undoubted proof of their affection towards it, by sacrificing their individual and personal interests for the benefit of that nation, and by this

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CHAP. instrument assenting, as they already had assented in a particular
 V. treaty, to the renunciation of all their rights to the throne...

1808. They accordingly released the Spaniards from all their duties
 May. in this respect, and exhorted them to consult the interest of
 their country, by conducting themselves peaceably, and by
 looking for their happiness to the power and wise arrangements
 of the Emperor Napoleon. . . The Spaniards might assure them-
 selves, that, by their zeal to conform to those arrangements, they
 would give their Prince and the two Infantes the strongest proof
 of loyalty, in like manner as their royal highnesses gave them
 the greatest example of paternal affection, by renouncing their
 rights, and sacrificing their own interests for the happiness of
 the Spaniards, the sole object of their wishes."

*Joseph Bu-
 onaparte
 chosen by
 his brother
 for King of
 Spain.*

When the Emperor Napoleon had resolved upon dethroning
 the Spanish Bourbons, it was his wish to have made Lucien
 Buonaparte King of Spain, the ablest of his brethren, and the
 only one who was unprovided with a kingdom. His first eleva-
 tion to the consulship, which was the passage of the Rubicon in
 his career, had been chiefly brought about by Lucien's intre-
 pidity and talents. But Lucien, who fancied himself the abler,
 as in some respects he was indeed the wiser man, had not ob-
 tained that ascendancy in his brother's councils to which he
 thought himself in many ways entitled; as a lover of consti-
 tutional freedom, he heartily disapproved the system which
 Napoleon pursued, and was therefore in some degree estranged
 from him, though the bond of fraternal feeling had not been
 broken. Having in his diplomatic employments found means
 to amass a princely fortune, he was then residing at Rome, happy
 in his family and in his pursuits, collecting pictures, and busy
 in the composition of a long and elaborate poem. This con-
 dition of honourable and enviable privacy Buonaparte hoped
 he might be induced to relinquish for the throne of Spain and

of the Spanish Indies. But Lucien knew something of Spain and of the Spaniards, whereas the Emperor had neither taken into consideration the nature of the country nor the character of the people; and even if the injustice and odium of the usurpation had not determined his refusal, the insecurity of such a throne might have decided him, and the certainty that he who accepted it must submit to be the mere instrument of Napoleon's ambition. The choice therefore then fell upon his brother Joseph, who was reigning not without some popularity at Naples, over a kingdom which had long been grievously misgoverned, and which had submitted in fair war to the right of conquest. He too, by Lucien's earnest advice, declined the odious elevation; but while he pursued his journey to Bayonne, whither he had been summoned, intending to persist in his refusal, the Emperor, who would take no denial from him, proceeded in his arrangements, well knowing that he would submit to that ascendancy which so few were capable of resisting.

Murat, who was the person intended to succeed at Naples, intimated to the Spanish Junta whom they were to expect for their new King, and procured from them an address upon that subject to the Emperor. Convinced, they said, that the condition of Spain required the closest connexion with the political system of the empire, which he governed with so much glory, they considered the resignation of the Bourbons as the greatest proof of kindness to the Spanish nation which their sovereign had ever given. "Oh! that there were no Pyrenees!" exclaimed these sycophants and slaves. "This was the constant wish of good Spaniards; because there could be no Pyrenees, whenever the wants of both countries should be the same, when confidence should be restored, and each of the two nations have received, in the same degree, the respect due to its independence

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*Addresses
from the
Junta and
the council
of Castille
to Buona-
parte.*

May 13.

CHAP. and worth. The interval which yet separates us from this happy
 V. moment cannot now be long. Your Imperial Majesty, who
 1808. foresees all things, and executes them still more swiftly, has
May. chosen for the provisional government of Spain, a Prince
 educated for the art of government in your own great school.
 He has succeeded in stilling the boldest storms, by the modera-
 tion and wisdom of his measures. What have we not, therefore,
 to hope, now that all Spaniards unite in devoting to him that
 admiration to which he has so many claims! The Spanish
 monarchy will resume the rank which belongs to it among the
 powers of Europe, as soon as it is united by a new family com-
 pact to its natural ally. Whoever the Prince may be whom you
 destine for us, chosen from among your illustrious family, he
 will bring that security which we need so much. The Spanish
 throne rises to a greater height. The consequences resulting
 from its relation to France, are of an importance commensurate
 with the extent of its possessions. It seems, therefore, that the
 throne itself calls for your Majesty's eldest brother to govern it.
 Surely it is a happy presage, that this arrangement, which nature
 has confirmed, so well corresponds with the sentiments of re-
 verence and admiration, with which the actions of this Prince,
 and the wisdom of his government, had inspired us." The Coun-
 cil of Castille were implicated in the shame of this address. Their
 wisdom, it was said, obliged them to give all their support to
 these principles, and they united in the expression of the wish of
 the Supreme Junta.

*Address
 from the
 city of
 Madrid.*

May 15.

An address was also framed in the name of the city of
 Madrid, to Murat, as "Lieutenant-general of the kingdom of
 Spain." "That city," it said, "thinking it certain that the
 Emperor of the French intended to place the crown upon the
 head of his illustrious brother Joseph Napoleon, King of Naples;

and being distinguished for its love of its sovereigns and its obedience to them, could not omit joining its homage to that of the Supreme Junta and of the Council, and requested his Highness would notify the same to the Emperor. The city also availed itself of that opportunity to assure him of its respect and submission." Graves could hardly yet have been dug for those who were massacred, and the places of execution were still covered with flakes of blood, when the existing authorities thus fawned upon Murat, and praised his moderation: and this address was presented in the name of the city, where mothers, widows, and orphans, were cursing him and the tyrant his master in every street, and well nigh in every house! A letter was also obtained from the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, the last of the Bourbons who remained in Spain. "The resignation of Charles," he said, "and the confirmation of that act, by the Prince and the Infantes, imposed upon him, according to God's will, the pleasing duty of laying at the Emperor's feet the assurance of his homage, fidelity, and reverence. May your Imperial and Royal Majesty (he added) be graciously pleased to look upon me as one of your most dutiful subjects, and instruct me concerning your high purposes, that I may be furnished with the means of manifesting my unfeigned and zealous submission."

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May 22.

The next demand of Murat was that the Council of Castille should send a deputation of its members to repeat what their address had expressed, and renew their petition that the Emperor would deign to nominate the King of Naples, Joseph Napoleon, to the throne of Spain. This also was obeyed, the Council, like the Junta of Government, being now in a state of habitual submission to his supreme commands. An Assembly of Notables was then, first by a circular decree from Murat, and

*Assembly of
Notables
convoked at
Bayonne.*

May 25.

CHAP. afterwards by Buonaparte himself, in virtue of the right which
 V. had been ceded to him, convoked to meet at Bayonne on the
 1808. 15th of June, charged with the wishes, the demands, and wants
 May. and complaints of those whom they represented, that they might
 fix the bases of the new constitution by which the monarchy was
 thenceforth to be governed. Till that should be effected Murat
 was to continue in the exercise of his power as Lieutenant-general
 of the kingdom; the course of justice was to proceed as usual,
 and the existing ministers, the council of Castille, and all other
 authorities, religious, civil, and military, were confirmed for
 as long a time as might be necessary. This edict was accom-
 panied by a proclamation in that peculiar style which Bu-
 onaparte affected: "To all who shall see these presents, health!
 Spaniards, after a long agony your nation was perishing. I saw
 your evils. I am about to remedy them. Your greatness, your
 power, are part of mine. Your Princes have ceded to me all
 their rights to the crown of the Spains. I will not reign over
 your provinces, but I will acquire an eternal title to the love
 and gratitude of your posterity. Your monarchy is old; my
 mission is to rejuvenize it. I will improve all your institutions,
 and I will make you enjoy, if you will second me, the benefits
 of a reformation without destruction, without disorder, without
 convulsions. Spaniards, I have convoked a general assembly
 of deputies from your provinces and towns. I myself well know
 your wishes and your wants. Then I will lay down all my rights,
 and will place your glorious crown upon the head of one who is
 my other self, guaranteeing to you a constitution which con-
 ciliates the sacred and salutary authority of the Sovereign, with
 the liberties and the privileges of the people. Spaniards, re-
 member what your fathers were; behold what you yourselves
 are become! The fault is not yours, but that of the bad ad-

*Proclama-
 tion of
 Buonaparte
 to the Spa-
 niards.*

ministration which has governed you. Be full of hope and of confidence in the existing circumstances, for it is my wish that your latest descendants shall preserve my memory, and say of me, he was the regenerator of our country."

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But these vain promises and hypocritical professions were too late.

GENERAL INSTRUCTION. PROCEEDINGS IN ASTURIAS AND GALICIA. JUNTA FORMED IN THE PROVINCES. JUNTA OF SEVILLE. MURDER OF SOLANO AT CADIX; CAPTURE OF THE FRENCH SQUADRON IN THAT HARBOUR. MASSACRE OF THE FRENCH AT VALENCIA. PROCLAMATIONS OF THE PATRIOTS. MOVEMENTS OF THE FRENCH AGAINST THEM.

The seizure of the fortresses, and the advance of the French troops, had roused the spirit of the Spaniards; their hopes had been excited to the highest pitch by the downfall of Godoy and the elevation of Ferdinand; and in that state of public feeling, the slaughter of Madrid, and the transactions at Bayonne, were no sooner known, than the people, as if by an instantaneous impulse over the whole kingdom, manifested a determination to resist the insolent usurpation. Abandoned as they were by one part of the Royal Family, deprived of the rest; forsaken too by those nobles and statesmen, whose names carried authority; and on whose talents and patriotism they had hitherto relied; . . . betrayed by their government, and now exhorted to submission by all the constituted authorities civil and religious which they had been accustomed to revere and to obey; . . . their strong places and frontier passes in possession of the enemy; the flower of their own troops some in Italy, others in the north of Europe; and a numerous army of the French, accustomed to victory, and now flushed with Spanish slaughter, in their capital and in the heart of the country; under these complicated disadvantages and

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