

would have done so, had any invitation or guarantee been held out to them by the British general, or Spanish authorities. So far from this being the case, the Afrancesados had no reason to expect the least indulgence on the part of the former, while they were led to anticipate nothing but persecution from the patriotic government, which had till then and long after, designated them as traitors.* Under these embarrassing circumstances, there was no alternative between flight and proscription. It should be added to the honour of the King, that, though all who chose to follow his fortunes, were sure of an asylum and protection in France, he did not require this last painful sacrifice, nor would the fugitives have crossed the Bidasa, had the Cortes and Regency been guided by a more liberal policy.

Having stated a few of the motives which influenced the adherents of King Joseph, and pointed out why they considered themselves as most cruelly dealt with by all parties, it is not my intention to give an opinion on the question at issue between them and their adversaries, nor will it perhaps be decided by contemporary judges. The people of future times, far removed from the prejudices and passions which warp the judgment of

* This harsh epithet was afterwards softened down to *Infi-dentes*, or unfaithful, and subsequently dwindled into *disidentes*, dissenters, but the change of name was not found to have diminished the spirit of persecution.

those who are too near the scene of political action, will no doubt take a more enlarged and dispassionate view of the events to which I have called your attention. Much as posterity may admire the heroic efforts of the independent party, they will probably ask whether, under all the bearings of this subject, it was worth while destroying the resources of a whole people, sinking capital to an immense amount, and converting the cultivated portion of this fertile region into a desert, merely to preserve the throne of Ferdinand VII.? Will not posterity also inquire whether, had Joseph Buonaparte been accepted, it is in the nature of probabilities, the inquisition, convents, church property, and those interminable abuses which followed their restoration in 1814, would have been revived then or at any other period of the new dynasty? Those who succeed the present generation, not less capable of appreciating patriotism and public virtue, than their predecessors, will be taught by experience to judge with more impartiality, and however they may applaud the intentions of the patriots, it remains to be seen whether the sacrifices I have enumerated, will not be considered as rather too great, for the mere sake of legitimacy and catholicism?

In closing this portion of the inquiry concerning the two parties which have unhappily divided so long, and whose ruinous contention ought to serve as a salutary lesson to other nations, it is but an act of justice to say, that both were equally

attached to the interests of Spain previous to the abdication of Charles IV. and Ferdinand, perfectly agreeing on the impossibility of regenerating it, without the suppression of feudal rights and seigniorial privileges; they well knew that while the clergy were allowed to retain a third of the soil, and taxes continued to be levied according to the caprice of a minister, while the revenues of the state and those of the crown remained at the monarch's disposal; that until the corporate bodies were elected by the people and the representative system introduced generally, there could be no hope of freedom or prosperity. Such indeed was the identity of their views when invested with power, that most of the decrees promulgated by the ministers of King Joseph were published with little alteration by the Cortes of Cadiz. However they might have differed in matters of external policy, both saw the necessity of a prompt and radical reform of public abuses. It is for those acquainted with the past and present condition of the Peninsula, and who can at the same time divest themselves of prejudice, to decide, which of these celebrated parties adopted the best mode of attaining the great object of their wishes.

Too deeply imbued with that spirit of party which still continues to prevent the most enlightened men of Europe from uniting for the common good, it was truly unfortunate for the people of this country, that any difference on minor points,

should have prevented a coalition amongst men between whom there existed no motives of personal animosity; and whose union could alone have counteracted the designs of those who had determined to immolate both the legislators of Cadiz and reformers of Bayonne. It is almost superfluous to add, that the actors in this drama were principally composed of grandes, bishops, benefited priests, discarded monks, counsellors of state, together with that tribe of pensioned parasites generated in the court of Charles IV., but who ceased to feed on the vitals of the people on his abdication.

Such were the persons who gained the ascendant on the return of Ferdinand, when a select number, most of whom had sworn fealty to Joseph, having, as before stated, surrounded the King at Valencia, commenced their machinations by calumniating the patriots of Cadiz and Bayonne; the first, because they limited the prerogative, and the second, in order to justify their own apostacy. Finding that all those who had been the companions of Ferdinand's exile possessed kindred minds, there was no difficulty in persuading him that the people would not be satisfied, nor Spain prosperous, unless he consented to govern in the manner of his ancestors!

You have been informed of that article in the treaty of Valençay, which guaranteed the restitution of their confiscated property, rights, and honours, to the followers of King Joseph: also,

of the promises of Ferdinand to receive them as children; and that he had scarcely reached Valencia, before the indifference with which the arrest of Rey and Sotelo* was regarded, fully proved that both treaty and promises were forgotten.

It is the old and never failing characteristic of those persecutions, which have so often sullied the page of modern history, that the authors have invariably attempted to cover their atrocious proceedings with the mask of justice. Although the treatment of the Spanish Liberales affords an exception to this general rule, it was adopted in full towards the Afrancesados. The first decree concerning the adherents of King Joseph was dated May 24th, 1814; it related to those who had quitted their country, and in assuming an appearance of equity, the royal order was in reality intended to exclude them from all share in the government, as well as to mark them out as a distinct and degraded portion of the people.

The avowed object of the circular was explained in the preamble, which stated that the critical circumstances in which the monarchy was placed by the King's absence, and the occupation of Spain by the enemy, having furnished those

* The counsellors of state to King Joseph, alluded to in a former letter: they were arrested by order of Mina, on entering Arragon from France, on the faith of Ferdinand's paternal promises.

who had the honour of serving his Majesty in the various departments of administration, many occasions of showing by their actions and conduct whether they were still worthy of retaining their places, or merited dismissal; the King knew the same heroism could not be expected from all, and that between this virtue and a want of loyalty, there were several intermediate degrees which ought not to be confounded. It was therefore to avoid such a dilemma, that each Secretary of State, conjointly with Don Manuel de Lardizabal and Torre Musquiz, should, without delay, transmit a list of all persons who occupied places of trust before the arrival of Ferdinand, accompanied by detailed observations on their conduct, and divided into classes.

The first class was to comprise those who would receive no employment from the *Usurper*; the second, all who continued to exercise their former functions; the third, those who had received an extraordinary advancement, which rendered it presumable they had served, not by force, or out of necessitous circumstances, but through affection to the *intrusive* government: the fourth and last, those who, not content with having served Joseph, had persuaded others to do so, for the purpose of increasing their party, and persecuting those who remained faithful. Full powers for inquiry and examination into the archives of government were given, and the circular ended with an earnest request that no time might be lost in executing

the King's order, to prevent any delay in recompensing the loyal, pardoning the weak, or punishing the wicked and perverse !

After what has been said of the motives which influenced the Afrancesados, it is needless to enter into an examination of the above documents, or the invidious distinctions it contained. If it was a crime to serve the *Usurper*, as it styled the new King, above two-thirds of the nobility and corporate bodies throughout Spain were guilty, and none more so, than the very men who now surrounded the restored monarch, and even dictated the circular.

Although this specious and hypocritical decree made no allusion to the refugees in France, it was but too well calculated to awaken their fears : these did not, however, prevent the greater part from flattering themselves with the certainty of Ferdinand's adhering to that article in the treaty of Valençay which guaranteed their return. It was imagined by those who were not sufficiently near the court to see how matters proceeded, that though the patriots forming the late government and Cortes, had been arrested and thrown into prison, it did not follow a solemn pledge so recently contracted with themselves, was to be broken : and the least credulous amongst his party, could not for a moment suppose, that the policy of Ferdinand's ministers would be in direct opposition to the apparently amicable spirit of the treaty for restoring the Bourbon dynasty, and settling a ge-

neral peace concluded at Paris. The Afrancesados even anticipated some mediation in their favour on the part of Louis XVIII. His most Christian Majesty could not have been indifferent to the system about to be adopted by the branch of his family reigning here : and he knew that conciliation was no less required to secure popularity in Spain than his own dominions.

To such an extent had their confidence in the good faith of Ferdinand been carried, that the followers of King Joseph residing at Montpellier and other parts of the south of France, celebrated the 30th of May, St. Ferdinand's day, by a solemn church service, in which, thanks were offered up to the Most High for the restoration of the benignant prince, who had promised to confer such happiness on Spain. *Te Deum* was also sung, and a sermon preached in praise of the young king. At Paris, and in several departments of the north, those who possessed the means met at public dinners, to drink a long reign to Ferdinand, their *legitimate* sovereign : for they had by this time been formally absolved from the oath of allegiance to Joseph. While these demonstrations of loyalty and affection were going on, Macanaz and his friends seemed to view the subject in a far different light. So little had their dark purpose changed, that the very day on which both the patriots of Bayonne and Cadiz fully expected a general act of grace, was chosen for the promulgation of a decree, absolutely prohibiting the leaders of the

first named party from entering the Peninsula: only permitting the rest to do so under restrictions which amounted to prohibition; depriving them of the honours they had acquired during the reign of Charles IV.; declaring them incapable of filling any public employments, and even proscribing those innocent women, who, yielding to the sentiments of nature and duty, had followed the fortunes and shared the fate of their husbands, fathers, and children!

It is merely necessary to contrast the fond hopes entertained by the exiled patriots and their conduct towards Ferdinand, with the barbarous tenor of this royal order, to form some conception of their lacerated feelings when it reached the scene of banishment.

Llorente, the historian of the Inquisition, and whose *memoirs form a history of the first Spanish revolution*, contain a minute account of these transactions; observes, in closing his description of the above decree: "I leave it for my readers to conceive in what a state the refugees must have now found themselves. I candidly confess, I cannot find language to pourtray it. Even those who had indulged in sinister prognostics, did not believe in the probability of such an order; their imagination could not figure to itself, as possible, what they now experienced in fact." The same work contains an able commentary on this state paper, replying to each article separately, and

showing the fallacy as well as falsehood of its assertions.

To that part of the decree which commences by saying, "the King has heard that several of those Spaniards who had been partizans and supporters of the *intrusive government*, entertained the design of re-entering Spain;" the commentator asks, how can the government of King Joseph be called intrusive, since Ferdinand himself was amongst the first to recognize its legitimacy, not only by the treaty of May 16th, 1808, and proclamation of the same month, but in his spontaneous letter of April 6th, 1810: in his demand for admission into the new order established by Joseph; that which he made to become the adopted son of Napoleon; and above all in the treaty of Valençay? As a farther proof of Ferdinand's adherence to the new King's government, and devotion to the Emperor of the French, it is asked whether he did not consent to his brother Don Carlos, requesting the command of a division of the troops destined to march against Russia in 1812; and if it was not matter of public notoriety that he ordered his household at Valençay to swear allegiance to Joseph and the Constitution of Bayonne.

In his letter of the 6th of May, Ferdinand gave positive orders to those around him, to obey the injunctions of Charles IV. his father, and to adhere to all the arrangements entered into with, or

directed by, Napoleon; observing that this was the sole mode of saving the country. In his proclamation of the 12th, these orders were not only ratified, but, as an additional proof of Ferdinand's intentions, he absolved the people of Spain from the oath they had taken in his favour after the abdication of the old King.

It is also proved by Llorente, that the government of King Joseph was the only one recognized here, until the insurrection of the 2d of May:* that the whole nation considered him as the legitimate sovereign, swearing allegiance to him in all the churches during the celebration of high mass and before the holy sacraments: that the people swore with all their hearts, sincerely, and without any internal reservations. This was done in every town and village of the Peninsula, except Cadiz, Alicant, and Carthagena, all places distant from the capital, and situated on the sea-coast.

* The most enlightened writers and statesmen amongst the followers of King Joseph still maintain, that had it not been for the events which provoked this insurrection, and the inexcusable policy of Murat in appointing a Military Commission to punish the leaders, with a view, as I have been informed, of terrifying the people into submission, the triumph of the new dynasty would have been inevitable. Numerous facts corroborating the above opinion are cited, particularly the unpopularity of the war, and apathy of the people in various provinces, long after its commencement.

Besides the cessions made at Bayonne, Joseph had also the right of conquest in his favour, and however unjust in its origin, this right was consecrated as soon as the people confirmed it by their oaths of fidelity and submission. This doctrine, adds the writer, is very favourable to Ferdinand VII.; for in the contrary case, if the possession of the crown became the subject of litigation as to the justice and legitimacy of the title, the present King would have very slender means of defence, since his claims are derived from Henry II. bastard son of Alphonso XI. and who murdered his brother Don Pedro, surnamed the cruel, only legitimate son of Alphonso, and real heir to the crown. The nation long harassed by civil wars, was at length induced to acquiesce in the titles of the new King, thus purifying the vices of their origin. Such are the grounds upon which Ferdinand VII. the fourteenth descendant of Henry II. continues to reign.*

* It is a remarkable fact that Henry, previously known as Count Trastamar, was placed on the throne by a French army, under the famous Bertrand de Guesclin. Don Pedro, styled the Nero of Spain, having wandered about the Peninsula without being able to find a single friend in his adversity, fled to our Edward III. whose victories had spread terror in the South of France. Jealous of the newly acquired influence of his rival Charles V., Edward undertook to restore the tyrant of Spain, and owing to the French army's having retired, he found but little difficulty in the task. Henry, flying to his old friends after the defeat, which transferred the crown to the head of Peter, Du Guesclin returned at

It is positively denied by Llorente and others, that any of the refugees in France had the smallest share in bringing about the journey to Bayonne, which has always been regarded as the origin of the war that ensued; had not this taken place, no Spaniard would have acknowledged the new dy-

the head of another army, and defeated Don Pedro at Montiel, in Navarre. The tyrant having failed in his attempt to escape, was brought to the head quarters of Du Guesclin, where Henry arrived soon after, and being confronted with his competitor, the former drew his sword and killed him on the spot. Although historians do not pretend to justify this fratricide, it has not prevented them from honouring Henry with the surname of liberal and generous. It is by no means a flattering coincidence in our history, that we should have been instrumental in restoring two Princes who possessed so few claims to the confidence or esteem of their subjects.

Although Don Pedro has been justly considered as amongst the most inexorable of her feudal tyrants, Spain is not without her obligations to him. His conduct in according an amnesty to those who took an active part against him, during his struggle with Henry, is still spoken of with gratitude; and has been very properly held out as an example which Ferdinand ought to have followed. Seeing that he had not sufficient means of defending Burgos, Pedro retired, leaving the inhabitants at liberty to accept his rival: upon this, they invited Henry to enter the city; and, to prevent the excesses of his soldiery, even swore allegiance, and received their new monarch with acclamations. When the English allies of Pedro enabled him to re-enter the city, no punishment whatever was inflicted either on the inhabitants of Burgos, or any other part of the Peninsula, though the principal cities had opened their gates to Henry in the same way.

nasty. The sole and only promoters of this journey were Infantado, San Carlos, Escoiquiz and Macanaz. Finally, the commentator proves, that Ferdinand himself, aided by the members of his family, most of the grandees, ministers, and members of the old government, were exclusively the cause of King Joseph's establishment; and that their adherence was both spontaneous and sincere till the battle of Baylen, which induced many to change their opinions, concluding, from this event, that there was some chance of successfully opposing the arms of Napoleon.

So decided was the hatred and hostility of the servile faction to the victims comprehended in the above royal order, that the most effectual measures were immediately adopted for putting it into the strictest execution. Non-commissioned officers and privates, also those who had not attained their twentieth year, were the only exceptions made in this decree, which states that even these were to be considered as proofs of special bounty on the part of his Majesty. Amongst the refugees in France, there were above twelve thousand who could not avail themselves of the exemptions, while the number of persons affected by the measure in Spain, was estimated at more than double that number. It will scarcely be credited, that those who expressed their feelings on the publication of this inhuman proscription, were denounced for their temerity, and accused of disaffection to the *paternal* government of Ferdinand

It is needless to follow these martyrs to a cause, which they regarded as inseparable from the best interests of Spain, through that long probation of suffering and poverty they were destined to sustain for several succeeding years. The circumstance of being excluded from their oppressed and unhappy country, after having done their utmost to effect its regeneration and ameliorate the condition of the people, was quite enough, without its being aggravated in a thousand different ways by the agents of their enemies in France. It will ever be a subject of deep regret to the friends of Spain and humanity, that the glorious events of March last, were not also marked by an immediate amnesty in favour of the Afrancesados. In recalling those of their own friends who had been driven from their country subsequently to the return of Ferdinand, the Liberales were bound in justice and honour to extend a similar indulgence to the followers of King Joseph: in omitting to bury the senseless animosities of the past, the men who were brought back to power by the army of La Isla and its immortal chiefs, have lost their surest claim to the applause of contemporaries and admiration of posterity.

The patriots of 1812, must have known that none of the old laws of the monarchy were applicable to the Afrancesados, an important fact fully recognised by the Cortes; * while the former his-

* Augustin Arguelles the present minister of the interior, was

tory of Spain teemed with precedents in favour of unconditional amnesty; nor do they require to be told that conciliation was never more called for by the situation of any country. Upon the whole, and after a most careful examination of the subject, I am truly sorry to be obliged to confess that it has been totally out of my power to discover one rational motive for the policy of the present ministers towards the adherents of Joseph Bonaparte.

If those who come after us, find some difficulty in giving credence to the accumulated atrocities of Ferdinand VII.'s government while he was a despot in the hands of a cruel and sanguinary faction, they will not be easily prevailed on to believe that many months were suffered to elapse after the re-establishment of a constitution founded on the immutable basis of liberty and justice, before the Afrancesados obtained permission even to cross the frontier, much less return to the bosom of their families!

foremost among those who maintained this doctrine in the Cortes of 1812.

LETTER VII.

REIGN OF TERROR.—Conduct of the Allied Powers.—Motives of the Servile Faction.—Plans formed at Valençay.—Policy suggested by the King's Situation: Perfidy of his Advisers.—Breaches of Faith with the Public Creditors.—Restitution of Church Property.—Frauds practised on French Creditors.—Effect of New Measures.—System of Finance and Taxation.—Selfish Conduct of the Priesthood.—Royal Order in their Favour.—Bribery and Corruption at Court, and in the Tribunals.—Facility of Imprisonment.—Denunciations.—Inquisition.—Banditti.—Anecdotes of Melchor's Band.—Treatment of Foreigners, especially of British subjects.—Restrictions on English Commerce.—Commercial Treaties.—Intercourse between the Courts of London and Madrid.—Light in which Spain was regarded by other Nations, and by the Holy Alliance in Particular.—Congress of Vienna.—Abolition of the Slave Trade.—Administration of Pizarro.—United States.—Remarkable Saying of Ferdinand.

Madrid, September, 1820.

REFLECTING on the general state of Europe at the period of Ferdinand's return, and recollecting those impressive lessons which the French revolution, and its war of twenty-five years, had given to sovereigns and their ministers, it is impossible not to attribute to the blindest infatuation, united to the worst intentions, the revival of that system, of which the foregoing account of the persecuted patriots offers but a very feeble illustration.

Perceiving that the diplomatic representatives of the Allied Powers, assembled at Paris in 1814, took no precautions for maintaining the Consti-

tution, or protecting the persons of those who had so mainly contributed to their recent triumph over Napoleon, every sentiment of reason and humanity, no less than a sense of what was due to their own interests, must have suggested a line of policy diametrically opposed to that adopted by the restored Monarch and his advisers. Where the path of duty was so clearly traced, it would be a perversion of justice to show the smallest indulgence towards men, whose crimes were premeditated, and an affectation of candour to ascribe to error or ignorance the pernicious conduct so evidently the result of unprincipled hypocrisy.

Were it not for the plans formed at Valençay, and which were so well seconded by the servile faction and priesthood here, amnesty and conciliation, such as had been proclaimed by Louis XVIII., and guaranteed by Ferdinand in his last treaty with Napoleon, would no doubt have become the basis of his future government. It is really astonishing, how this Prince, with all his weakness and inexperience, could have been prevailed on to pursue a course so widely different, where the motives to act with indulgence and moderation seemed irresistible. I need hardly repeat that kind of treatment which was due to his people; as to the legislators of Cadiz, they had established eternal claims to his gratitude, while those of Bayonne merely acted in obedience to the peremptory injunctions of himself and Charles IV.

In alluding to the events of the last six years, it has been justly observed, that the Genius of evil had taken possession of the land; for, into whatever department of administration you look, the same injustice and prodigality, oppression and improvidence, strike the eye. The examples I am about to adduce, will enable you to judge, whether lawless violence on the one hand, and patient endurance on the other, have not been carried as far in Spain, as under the most galling despotisms of ancient or modern times.

It was well worthy of those who persuaded Ferdinand to govern in the manner of his ancestors, to commence by adopting that principle of expediency familiar to former reigns. When the boundless extravagance of the Court, and its repeated breaches of good faith with the public creditor, had reduced the kingdom to a state bordering on bankruptcy, it is worthy to be remarked, that to remedy the numerous evils arising from the financial embarrassments, one of the first measures of Joseph's government was to suppress the monastic establishments, and appropriate their revenues to paying off the national debt. This salutary decree was afterwards confirmed by the Cortes: a great number of the estates were accordingly sold by public auction; and many had even passed into the hands of a third purchaser. Several creditors were paid in grants of these national domains; and as some holders of stock had lent large sums in the reign

of Charles IX., and even Philip V., they were of course, entitled to the principal and arrears of interest suspended in 1808.

The re-establishment of the sinking fund, dissipated by the old king, Godoy, and the panders of the Court, was amongst the most useful and popular measures of the Cortes of 1812, which had also added the estates of the holy office to those of the convents, already appropriated by the ministers of King Joseph. Such was the confidence inspired by this arrangement, that the *Vales Reales*, almost extinct on the abdication of Charles IV., were at a considerable premium on the restoration of his son. A foundation having been thus laid for the revival of public credit, and a provision made for reimbursing those who had vainly relied on the faith of the former government, Spain enjoyed the novel prospect of future prosperity, when a Royal Order, dated on the 20th of May, 1814, decreed the restitution of all church property, whether belonging to the convents or Inquisition, without making any distinction between the estates which were actually sold, those remaining in the possession of the first purchaser, or that had passed into the hands of a third person. Neither was the purchase-money to be returned, or the smallest compensation made for expences incurred for building and other improvements. It would have been impossible for the prevailing faction to devise a more effectual mode for completely destroying the hopes of the

nation, and counteracting at one blow all the benefits derived from the Cortes and government of King Joseph. But this fatal edict was no less ruinous in a national point of view, than by its operation on individuals; more particularly the Afrancesados, many of whom had made large purchases in church lands. A number of foreigners, who had speculated in these domains, were also defrauded of their property in the same unceremonious way. To prove how perfectly indifferent the ministers of Ferdinand were to public opinion, it is said that the Council of Castile was never consulted on the propriety of issuing such a decree, so that it emanated altogether from the *Camarilla*.

The conduct of the ministry was marked by another breach of faith, if possible more palpable than the above; one that proves there was no degradation to which they could not submit. Amongst the stipulations exacted from France on the re-establishment of the Bourbons, it was agreed that all debts contracted by the French Government and authorities here, should be liquidated with as little delay as possible. Pursuant to this arrangement, several Spanish subjects had actually recovered considerable sums from the ministers of Louis XVIII. When this circumstance was communicated to Macanaz and his friends, a Royal Order appeared, calling upon all those who had monies due from the French Government, to place the vouchers and other papers

authenticating their claims, in the hands of a junta, stated by the Royal Order to have been named for the express purpose of aiding the creditors to recover the amount of their respective debts. No sooner had the Central Junta, as it was styled, commenced its operations, than thousands of the creditors came forward and delivered up their accounts, fully relying on the paternal solicitude expressed for their interests in the Royal Order. As soon as the Central Junta had succeeded in collecting the papers of the various claimants, another Board of Commissioners, entitled *La Junta Real*, or Royal Junta, was appointed to act at Paris, in order, as announced by the official Gazette of Madrid, to receive the different debts and distribute them to the creditors. Thus far matters could not proceed better; the claimants were full of hope, and already thought the money in their possession; their expectations were still farther encouraged by the facility which attended the recovery of those sums claimed previous to the nomination of the Juntas. Having ascertained that the principal part of their debts were paid at Paris, the creditors naturally applied to the *Junta Central* here; but what was their astonishment on being told that there were still various difficulties to surmount, and they must therefore patiently await the result. On another occasion, the wants of the Government were alleged as the cause of withholding the monies thus recovered, but all the parties concerned were assured of final

payment. In this manner were the creditors put off from year to year, till they at length discovered that the whole of the money received at Paris was appropriated to the private uses of persons about the Court: nor have the claimants been ever able to procure a farthing of their property thus flagitiously seized.

As the continued exigencies of the war had reduced all classes of the people to a state of comparative poverty, the immense possessions now restored to the Priesthood and Inquisition, must have produced a twofold effect; first, in depriving those entrusted with the management of the finances, of the only means of sustaining public credit; and in the next place, by destroying all confidence in the restored government.

While thousands of the monks and priests, who had been recently taught to live by their industry or assisted in defending their country, flocked to re-people the convents, and occupy the church livings, the ministers were devising means to supply the deficiency occasioned by the decree of May 20th. Every thing being brought back to correspond with the system of rule pursued previous to 1808, many excellent regulations established by the ministers of Joseph and the Cortes were of course abolished, while a mode of taxation the most unjust and arbitrary supplied their place. In addition to fresh imposts on houses, lands, and articles of consumption, exorbitant duties were laid on the imports of every country

in amity with Spain; and, strange as it may appear, British commerce was more heavily taxed than that of any other nation.

Finding that new taxes only prevented the payment of those already imposed, recourse was had to forced loans, which, though generally unproductive, became indispensable to a government conducted upon such principles. To prove how little the clergy sympathised in the sufferings of the people, or cared for the ministers, it is worthy of remark, that though exempted from the payment of various charges on the tythes and other property decreed by the Cortes*, when now called upon to fill up a loan negotiating by the Government, on the condition that the reimbursement of whatever they advanced should be guaranteed on a very productive tax, the utmost they did towards meeting the wishes of Government, was to

* This most indulgent decree was issued on the 24th of June, 1814, and is couched in the following terms —

“ The esteem and consideration in which I hold the clergy of my kingdoms, and of which they have rendered themselves so worthy by their piety and zeal for the good of the state; the confidence I entertain that they will hasten, as they have always done, to contribute with generosity to the wants of the state, determine me to exempt the property and tythes of the clergy from those imposts and contributions to which they were subjected by the decrees of Jan. 25th, 1811, and June 16th, 1812, issued by the Cortes (self-styled) general and extraordinary. These decrees will therefore be regarded as null and void.”

(Signed)

“ FERDINAND.”

come forward with a tenth part of the sum required, and which had been even offered in the first instance by themselves. Thus much for the gratitude of a body, for whose sake the nation was reduced to this deplorable condition.

The natural result of such disorder in the finances, and poverty amongst the people, was an impossibility, on the part of government, to pay any of its servants with regularity; hence, a system of bribery and corruption unequalled in the most abandoned period of Spanish history. The daily traffic in places even of the highest rank, facility of bribing the Judges and their dependents, not to mention the various other means resorted to for influencing the decrees of the tribunals, is a matter so well known, and of such public notoriety here, that to adduce a few isolated cases might appear invidious; particularly where the whole community seems to have been carried along by the fatal example of those who had usurped all the power of the state. The case of the Prime Minister, Macanaz, already noticed, furnishes a pretty fair illustration of the manner in which the affairs of this country were administered. Each head of a department, every judge and other public functionary, had his train of agents who coalesced with him in the work of corruption. As to the Court, there were no means of obtaining patronage or protection there, except through the influence of money or prostitution of virtue. All the avenues to the royal

presence were occupied by persons ever ready to take a bribe, or abuse the confidence of their master; and although it should also be stated in proof of Ferdinand's disposition to hear the complaints of his subjects, that he was at one time extremely accessible, those around him took good care that none of his good intentions should be put into execution. What was the use, it has been asked, for any one to obtain a promise, when its fulfilment depended on the faith of such men as Alagon, Ostolaza, and Lozano de Torres? With respect to the ministers of state, the practice of offering them bribes through secretaries and other followers, had become so common, that it ceased to excite either indignation or surprise: was a lucrative appointment to be obtained, a contract entered into, or a trading licence procured, the applicant had only to "put money in his purse," wait on the minister's confidential man of business, and he was sure of success, except another had come better provided with the needful. Did any person feel anxious to obtain a favourable decision in the courts of law, he hastened to the judge or fiscal (always accessible to such visitors), told his story, and presented a *douceur*, upon which positive assurances of support were given, even though the termination of the causes might never be contemplated. When favours were to be solicited by those who could not themselves visit the capital, a wife, a sister, or other female relative was deputed to supply their place here;

of the immense numbers who were thus employed during the last six years, I have been confidently informed that very few succeeded in obtaining the object of their solicitude, without sacrifices which none but villains hardened in profligacy and callous to the dictates of virtue would have required*.

If, upon any occasion, a litigant happened to obtain a favourable decree in the courts, his opponent, by paying a sufficient bribe, found no difficulty in procuring a royal order to suspend, or even reverse the judgment. Of the numerous anecdotes in circulation here to illustrate this singular fact, I shall only mention the case of Madame Piedra of Cadiz. Property to the amount of 18,000,000 of reals having been withheld from this lady by the executors of her late husband, she went to law for its recovery, and a verdict was given in her favour by the Supreme Tribunal of Seville and Council of Castile. Notwithstanding the exact uniformity of these two decisions, her adversaries, the holders of the property, suc-

* The antichambers of ministers and court favourites were constantly thronged with females of various ranks and ages, from a duchess down to the peasant's daughter. Some idea of the estimation in which many of these ladies were held, may be formed, when it is added, without fear of contradiction, that the libertines of the capital were in the habit of frequenting these female levees, for the sole purpose of cultivating the good opinion, and forming assignations with the fair suitors!

ceeded in procuring a royal order, through the medium of Lozano de Torres, Minister of Grace and Justice, by which both the above decrees were suspended, nor has she to this day been able to obtain any farther satisfaction.

Referring to the tribunals, every shadow of equity and justice had disappeared in them : the only care of those appointed to administer the laws, seemed to be that of increasing the number of litigants, for they never dreamt of terminating a cause once submitted to their consideration. Such was the facility of throwing any person into prison, and the avidity for victims, that it was only necessary for the accuser to appear before a judge, go through the ceremony of making his declaration, and the object of hatred or revenge, no matter how innocent, whether a relative or friend, was instantly consigned to a dungeon, there to remain for an indefinite period. It ought to be added in order to complete the picture, that of the many thousands thus committed during the reign of terror, and where the parties proved their perfect innocence, there is not an instance on record of any punishment being inflicted on their calumniators.

While the various commissions for the trial of the patriots, were occupied in prosecuting for political opinions, the civil courts did not fail to encourage that system of endless litigation which formed so prominent a feature under the former reign. Nor was the inquisition idle : this

tribunal possessed all the powers with which it had been originally invested ; numerous arrests took place by its mandates, and although the mode of punishing its victims may have been in many instances less cruel than heretofore, the motives of arrest and imprisonment were equally unjust and frivolous.

The inevitable consequences of this corrupt and iniquitous system of rule, were almost coeval with its commencement,—industry and commerce became as it were extinct ; all the public works, projected or begun under the Cortes were abandoned ; the charitable institutions and hospitals were also shamefully neglected, while the prisons of the Peninsula, became one general scene of disease, wretchedness and immorality.

Driven to the last resource of poverty, goaded to madness by their tyrants civil, religious, and political, as well as encouraged by the weakness of the government, numbers of the peasantry left the fields where cultivation held out no hopes of reward, and joining the numerous deserters from the army, formed themselves into banditti, who secured the province, impeding all communication, and spreading terror in every direction. The organization of these marauders, and perfect impunity with which their depredations were continued for several years, was never exceeded, even in a country celebrated for such associations. It would in fact have been impossible for a well disciplined body of regular troops, led on by an

able general, to obtain more complete possession of that portion of Estremadura, through which the high road from Lisbon to Madrid passes, than the well known band of Melchor composed of many hundred individuals, most of whom had served in the Guerilla Corps during the war of independence.*

* The depredations of this band were continued for more than three years; when they did not assassinate, they were in the habit of retaining the captives till ransomed: the sums demanded depended on the rank of the prisoner, and his probable means of payment. Several English travellers were plundered and sacrificed by them. Melchor their chief, was one of the most cool and determined robbers of modern times; but, without a particle of that chivalrous spirit which distinguished his predecessors of the seventeenth century, like those of whom Le Sage and Schiller have converted into such fascinating heroes.

Whenever there happened to be a dearth of travellers on the road, Melchor took post in the neighbourhood of Badajos, Ciudad Rodrigo or some other town in its vicinity; hence letters were dispatched to one or two rich proprietors, desiring they would drive so many head of cattle; deposit certain articles of merchandize, or a sum of money, in a particular spot, on such a day, at the peril of their lives. One of the commission which was at last named to rid the province of this terrific association, and with whom I travelled from Zaragoza to this place, has assured me, he had heard of no single instance, in which these preremptory invitations of Melchor were not scrupulously obeyed. Had it been otherwise, said he, their fate would most assuredly have been decided by a stiletto.

Next to Melchor's band, that which occupied the passes of the Siera Morena, was most dreaded; like the predatory hero of Estremadura, its leader also enjoyed the privilege of impunity,

Such being a specimen of the internal state of Spain from 1814, till the insurrection of La Isla, and the treatment experienced by all classes of the people, it cannot be matter of surprise, that those foreigners who ventured to trust their persons and property in this country, could find no security for either: plunder, indiscriminate plunder, being the great object, as well with the mountain robber, as the minister of state, or underling of office, there was not much distinction made between individuals or the nations to which they belonged. It is, however, a remarkable circumstance, and not unworthy of record, that, whenever an opportunity occurred of plundering a British subject, or exercising acts of wanton tyranny, he was selected in preference to the native of every other country. Considering the nature of our previous alliance with Spain, and the fact of our having virtually placed Ferdinand on the throne, it was hardly to be expected, that his gratitude would have been manifested by laying unprecedented imposts on our manufactures; throwing our merchants into prison, and stripping them of

until the ground occupied by his followers, might be regarded as a conquered territory. To prove that neglect and indifference on the part of the government, was alone the cause of their success, the special commission had not been appointed more than a few months, when it succeeded in dispersing the freebooters, of whom, not less than seventy, with Melchor at their head, were executed.

their property, without any cause in the first instance, or eventually showing the smallest inclination to afford them compensation and address.

While Spain presented this scene of injustice, anarchy and crime, there was no want of that hypocrisy which is also, in other countries, the inseparable attendant on corruption and misgovernment. After what I have stated relative to the general administration of affairs, you will find some difficulty in believing that, in the midst of such unexampled cupidity, and vice emanating directly from those possessed of all the power, various decrees should be promulgated for the encouragement of knowledge and virtue! By a decree issued in 1815, six agricultural schools were established in the chief provincial cities of the Peninsula; according to another royal order, ecclesiastical benefices of a certain class, together with pensions of a particular description, hitherto chargeable on church property, were appropriated to the support of parochial seminaries, houses of industry and hospitals. The preamble of a third was in the following words; his Majesty being thoroughly convinced that ignorance is the parent of every error and crime, to which human nature is liable, and that a solid instruction is the most efficacious mode of combating the one, and destroying the other, has named a junta, which shall be charged with drawing out a plan of general education for all the youth of his kingdom!

At a more recent period of this frightful reign, orders were published and steps taken to introduce the Lancasterian system; but I need not say the object in thus talking of amelioration, was rather with a view of amusing the multitude with false hopes, and drawing their attention from what was passing, than to put a single measure of national utility into execution.

Spain has not only been acted on by that general impulse which had produced so striking a change in public opinion throughout Europe, but there were particular causes which made any attempt to re-establish despotism in the Peninsula peculiarly difficult and unwise. So many superstitions had been torn up by the roots during the French invasion—superstitions alike connected with the old ecclesiastical as well as the civil despotism, that a determination to re-engraft the blind servility of the sixteenth century upon the information—though not indeed very generally diffused—of the nineteenth, was as vain as it was daring. A nobler example of effective strength, growing out of seeming disorganization and weakness, was never presented than that of the resistance of Spain to French aggression; for no calculation, founded upon an honest comparison of the strength of the hostile parties, could have anticipated the final result. That result was brought about by a bold but uncalculating obstinacy. “The enemy is there and must be extirpated!” The Spaniards never contrasted their inefficient means

of defence with the gigantic power against which they had to struggle, but every patriot knew he was *something* in the balance; he brought that something—each did what he could, and all was done.

But in the course of events, a singular change could not but be produced in the public mind. Though the name of the King had become one of the watch-words of the friends of liberty—though his youth, his exile, his imprisonment, had all served as motives of sympathy towards him, and as grounds of abhorrence towards Napoleon and his government, it could not be forgotten that Ferdinand, as an individual, had done nothing for the cause of independence, but, on the contrary, had demeaned himself by the lowest prostrations and the most cringing servility at the feet of the French Emperor. An absolute monarch then was no necessary ally of national independence, and was not quite so closely connected with national glory and reputation as courtiers had represented. On the other hand, the events which broke up the monastic system in Spain, if they served to excite feelings of indignation against the irreligious intruders, and to lead the people to sympathise more deeply with their victims, brought the regular clergy into contact with the nation, and dissipated all the delusions which had been created by a belief of their peculiar sanctity and virtue. Hitherto they had only been seen surrounded by the splendour, and

forming part of the splendour, of a gorgeous and ceremonial religion ; their idle habits, their secret vices, were excluded from general observation—but as they mingled with the mass of mankind, they were found to possess a very sufficient portion of human errors. That personal respect which had been created by fraud working upon folly, began to dissipate where the fraud was unveiled and the folly partly enlightened. The “mighty stream of tendency” cannot be turned backward by idle words, even from the lips of royalty, though modern Canutes will not learn this important lesson.

The arbitrary and systematic restrictions upon commerce have long been one of the chief characteristics and heaviest opprobriums of Spanish policy. Under the government of Ferdinand, these restrictions have been tightened and rendered more numerous ; but commerce thrives in the sunshine of freedom ; it is necessarily chilled and contracted by the gloom of despotism. The hateful spirit, and almost the whole machinery of the old Spanish despotism, was, however, restored by the measures of Ferdinand.

The jealousy against the interests of Britain, which had been implanted by the policy of France, took a deeper root under the calamitous influence of his government. But this beloved King, as he has been often called, would have acted inconsistently if he had not displayed his ingratitude towards the British, who had taken so leading, so essential, so commanding a part,

in the promotion of his deliverance, and in the accomplishment of his restoration, since he had displayed such deep, such signal, such unexampled ingratitude towards many of the most meritorious and energetic of his own countrymen; to so many of those politicians and military officers who had so materially contributed to bring about the same result.

Spain, but a few centuries ago, was one of the most powerful and important countries in the world. How many obeyed, how many opposed, how many dreaded, how many admired her! Of politicians and of historians she was one of the principal themes. By tyranny, by bigotry, and by the hateful operation of the Inquisition; by unnecessary wars, by the excessive size of her foreign possessions, by the establishment of monopolies, and by the impolitic expulsion of a large proportion of the most active and industrious of her inhabitants, she has been extremely weakened, and has become quite a secondary power: but her native energies, her latent capabilities, are still great and extensive. On the altar of freedom her genius may be rekindled, and her political regeneration will, it may be expected, be found to be the commencement of a new era of happiness and prosperity. But scarcely is it to be hoped, that its dawnings will be unclouded by difficulties and disasters.

With respect to Spain and Great Britain, a judicious commercial treaty is one of the greatest desiderata. Spain is one of the most agricul-

turally productive, and Great Britain is one of the most industrious countries in Europe; at the same time that it is super-eminent in skill. If we consider the diversities of climate, of produce, of manufactures, and of capital, in Great Britain and Spain, the proximity of the two countries, and also the circumstance that France is, from its situation, its extensive population, its vast resources, the enterprising genius of its people, the similarity of its productions to each country, decidedly independent of both, no two states in Europe are better calculated for entering into the closest commercial relations than the two former. Each country has many wants which the other can best supply. A long period must elapse before Spain can become a great manufacturing country, in her present scarcity of skill and pecuniary capital, and whilst her population is so scanty, when it is compared with the productiveness of its climate and the fertility of its soil. Spain will be essentially benefitted by the exchange of many of her super-abundant productions for many of our super-abundant manufactures. Our manufactures, if we consider their price and their intrinsic value, do, on the whole, surpass those of every other country; and our merchants have the largest pecuniary means, and, if we except perhaps our descendants, the Anglo-Americans, the boldest spirit of enterprise.

To the British, the wool, the wines, the oil, the fruit, and the barilla, are all very acceptable, and, if her government were wise, they would more

extensively encourage that neglected department of their agricultural economy, the plantation of mulberry trees, with the increase of silk-worms and of silk. It is true, the Spanish wool is become an object of less consequence to the British merchant and manufacturer than it formerly was, because the wool of Germany, under the restricted name of Saxony, has been greatly improved, and has become so acceptable in our manufactories. But, on the other hand, Spain has much less wool to export than she had at the commencement of the present century, because her flocks have been thinned from the effects of the war, and the rapacity of the French, very many of her sheep having been sold, and very many slaughtered.

Never did the statesmen of any country lose more favourable opportunities of promoting the manufactures and commerce of their country, than did the representatives of Great Britain during the epoch of the Congress of Vienna, and during the drawing up of the articles of the treaty of Paris, and at the period of its conclusion. It was a critical and commanding moment, the great advantages of which they ought to have seized. To Spain the same remarks are applicable. How important, how substantial, how splendid had been our services with respect to that country; and, at one time, how great was our influence! The basis of a treaty of commerce, advantageous to both countries, most beneficial to the agriculturists and consumers and finances of Spain, and to the industry

and commerce of Britain; might have been broadly as well as beneficially laid.

The privileges of British subjects have often been violated, and their honourable pursuits and commercial undertakings frequently thwarted under the iron sway of Ferdinand.

What Bourgoing says of his countrymen antecedently to the period of the French revolution, will perhaps be thought applicable with still more force to the British in Spain:—"The privileges of foreigners were not more frequently violated in regard to any other nation than the French, because the latter have more than any other foreigners of that kind of industry which irritates, and of that kind of success which excites jealousy. Governments, like individuals, often vent their spleen upon their best friends, while their civilities are reserved for indifferent powers whom they dread, or to whom they think it their interest to show indulgence."*

A commercial treaty between Spain and the united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, which should reflect credit on the abilities and vigilance of a British diplomatist, would prevent in future such vexatious infringements upon the equitable rights of British merchants resident in Spain.

It is the interest of Spain to cultivate rather the commerce of Great Britain than that of France, because the productions of the climate

* Bourgoing, vol. iii. Chap. VII. p. 176.

and soil of France are not sufficiently distinguished from those of Spain to be valuable to the latter country, and because Great Britain must be acknowledged (even the legislators of France would themselves acknowledge it,) to be decidedly superior in the greater number of her manufactures, if we take jointly into consideration their varieties, their qualities, and their prices.

The loss of her American colonies will make Spain less fond of restrictions, and less prone to indulge a narrow and jealous system. European commerce being become more important, will occupy in her eyes a broader space. The establishment of political freedom will also occasion her to become a more desirable and eligible country, with which trade can be extensively carried on.

The Spanish restrictions on trade have in a great degree defeated their own purpose. They have tended to separate her colonies from the mother country, and contributed to render smuggling triumphant; at the same time that they have assisted in occasioning foreigners to carry on a large part of the commerce of Spain in the principal ports, as well as in those of her colonies. In no country has smuggling, in proportion to the general amount of its trade, been so extensive, nor have smugglers been so numerous, as in Spain. Bourgoing, before alluded to, who was secretary to the French legation at Madrid, in the year 1777, and minister plenipotentiary, in the same court in 1792, has some admirable ob-