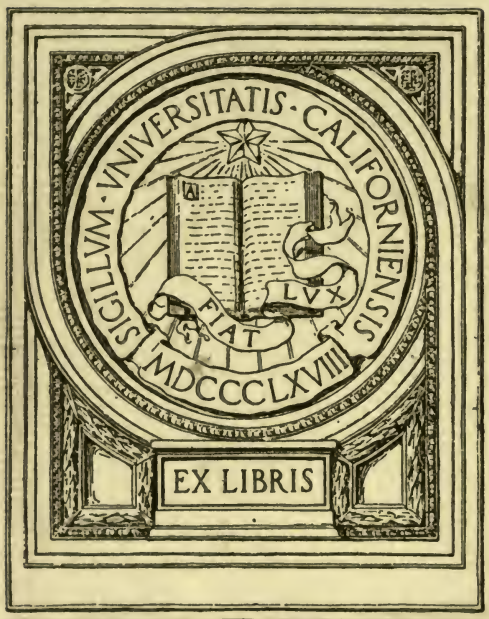
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WM A·CREERY

AN EXPOSÉ

ON THE

Dissentions of Spanish America,

CONTAINING,

An account of the origin and progress of those fatal differences, which have bathed that country, in blood and anarchy. An explanation, of the social footing of the Spanish Americans. The degradation of the colonial system of Spain. The redress sought, and denied by the Cortes. Defects of the Spanish Constitution. Horrors of the Spanish soldiery in Spanish America. Dreadful consequences to the British islands, from arming the negroes in Caracas. Mutual murder of prisoners there. A death war declared. Conciliation, the only means of putting an end to these horrors. How England ought to establish her claims of a free trade, with Spanish America. This even advantageous to Spain. Great resources of that country. Only way of establishing a permanent government there, &c. &c. &c.

INTENDED AS A MEANS TO INDUCE THE

Mediatory Interference of Great Britain,

IN ORDER TO PUT AN END TO A DESTRUCTIVE CIVIL WAR,

AND TO

ESTABLISH PERMANENT QUIET AND PROSPERITY,

On a basis consistent with the Dignity of Spain, and the Interests of the World.

RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE

REGENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,

&c. &c. &c.

BY WILLIAM WALTON.

London;

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1814.

W. Glindon, Printer, Rupert-
Street, Haymarket.

PREFACE.

THE pages, I have now the honour to lay before the public, were, originally, written for the exclusive object of inducing the British government to ponder on the melancholy situation of Spanish America; and under a hope of explaining the nature of those unfortunate dissentions between European and American Spain, which had generated into an unnatural and destructive civil war. More than a year ago, they were placed, in a more condensed shape, in a channel, from which some relief was expected; yet, still, the same apathy seemed to reign with regard to this most interesting subject; and the murders of unoffending thousands were heard, without the corresponding sympathy

so usual to Britons. In the midst of so much languor, and surrounded by misrepresentations, we seemed perfectly insensible to the nature of that war, which had already inundated the Western hemisphere with blood; nay so much had our policy changed, that we now behold those struggles with contempt, which, lately, we had encouraged and promoted; and though a road was open to bring relief, consistently with honour, and even with the new engagements England had contracted with Spain, as well as of adding essential resources to that momentous cause, in which we were embarked, we still kept aloof, and feared to interfere in a matter, we seemed not to understand.

A resolve was made to print them, when the indiscriminate massacres in New Spain, had risen to such a height, that they could not be read without the keenest emotion; when a *death*-war had been declared in Caracas, and when every thing there announced the mutual butchery of prisoners, which afterwards took place. They were sent to press, when, in Venezuela, the slaves had been armed for the murder and pillage of their masters, when the horrors of St. Domingo were there renewed; and, when the danger pressed heavy on all holders of British property, in the West Indies. They were sent to press, when the chief sections of Spanish

Columbia, had been wrapped in a wide and universal state of civil war and desolation, when a million and a half of its inhabitants had been immolated on the altars of vengeance; when odium was accumulating on the British name; and when, by our coldness, there was every reason to believe, we were about to lose, for ever, our hold on a rich and extensive country, that, otherwise, opened to us the most brilliant prospects. They were printed, in short, when the mass of injustice and the enormities, committed against an unoffending people, were such, as the feeling mind, could, no longer, behold with calmness and self-controul; and when it became the first duty of humanity, as well as of society, to explain them to a public, both interested and implicated in their fatal consequences, and who never before had an opportunity of judging for itself, or even of fully comprehending the nature of a dispute, which had, already, filled the New World with scenes of horror that outrivalled its conquest.

During their publication, two great political events have occurred, viz. the fall of Buonaparte; and the return of king Ferdinand, to his throne, after the dispersion of the new Cortes. The first event has, certainly, occasioned some material change in the tenour of my arguments. The rising influence the French were fast gaining in Spanish

America, and the manner in which they were supplanting us in the affections of the people, ceased to be a subject of alarm. Yet, things had been so organised, that the sailing of three frigates to three isolated points, which it was out of our power to watch, with twenty thousand stand of arms each, would not only have broken, for ever, the Spanish sceptre, in the Western hemisphere, and destroyed our own influence, but would have given the French that same ascendency they acquired, by aiding the revolutionary struggle of the United States.

The second event, as far as it relates to the duration of the constitution, was perfectly foreseen; as will be evinced by the strictures on that singular speculation of law, which were both written and printed, long before the late revolution in Madrid, took place. Not that it could be anticipated, that Ferdinand, or rather his counsellors, would reek their vengeance on the New Cortes, which, if at all founded, ought to have fallen on the old ones. Had their conduct to Spanish America, been one of the motives alleged for this harsh treatment, the world would not have been so much astonished, or those who wish well to Spain, so much scandalized. And, yet, even the old Cortes, though they have rendered Spanish America, the seat of anarchy, bloodshed, and destruction, had, nevertheless, sav-

ed one half of the monarchy to its rightful possessor, and had acted as a shield against the most pressing dangers. This event has, more than ever, confirmed me in the opinion, that nothing but the mediatory interference of Great Britain, under such a general clash of interests, such a prevalence of irritated feelings, and under such systems as those likely again to prevail in Spain, can ever restore peace to the ultramarine provinces, in a manner consistent with reason and justice; or establish permanent harmony, on the basis of general good. If so, and since every month's delay, is the murder of thousands, ought one moment to be lost, in relieving universal affliction and distress?

If I have any thing to add to the explanation of my views in publishing this exposé, it is, to implore the benevolent exertions of my fellow-citizens, to urge relief for suffering humanity; and, in order, that the brightest prospects that ever opened on our mercantile enterprize, may not be marred. The memorials sending up from the manufacturing towns, respecting a retention of trade to Spanish America, sufficiently, indicate the public interest felt upon this occasion; yet, what can be our prospects of trade, in a country desolated by civil war? Let us not appear selfish, humanity is the spring on which we are to act. Let all, with a

firm and decided voice, express the necessity under which England stands, of giving peace to Spanish America; and after aiding to extend the olive branch over the old world, to pronounce it as her sacred duty, to see that its benign effects are equally diffused to the new one. Peace must be the precursor of all definitive arrangements, let its basis only be liberal, and it will not only be advantageous to all parties; but will, eventually, confer the most lasting benefits on the world at large.

London, June 8, 1814.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS,

THE

PRINCE REGENT

Of the United Kingdoms,

&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

WHEN a private individual presumes to address one, of the exalted rank of your Royal Highness in these United Kingdoms, the subject-matter, he proposes to discuss, ought not only to be of a transcendent and national interest, but the language of his appeal, ought to be, besides, respectful, and divested of every spirit of party and fallacious reasoning. If he anticipates a favourable result from what he has got to disclose, correct details ought to form the basis of his exposé, and impartial truth, ought to be preeminently conspicuous in his display of facts.

These essential requisites, will, I hope, be found in the pages I have now the honour to submit to your Royal Highness; nor will it, perhaps, be deemed presumptive, if I call your attention to a subject, not of temporary, but of lasting and genuine importance to us, as a maritime and commercial people; and of vital interest to us, during our present expensive war-system, and the great continental combination formed against our resources. At a

period, then, when our increased sacrifices press heavy on the revenue of the country, and whilst a fearful and an eventful tragedy is acting on the grand theatre of Europe, may I be allowed to lay before your Royal Highness, the following considerations, dictated by the most pure and unbiased interest for our national welfare; and which have for object, to stop the ravages of war, and to quench the flames of civil feuds in the great continent of Spanish America; to turn its lost resources against the common enemy; to open new sources of intercourse and vent for our stagnant trade; to promote the influx of precious metals, and the entry of manufacturing raw materials; to connect us by indissoluble ties, by the double ones of gratitude and interest, with a population larger than our own; in short, to add greatly to our wealth and prosperity, and by thus contributing largely to our own strength and resources, to establish a lasting and powerful check on the views of our enemies.

Great and comprehensive as are the subjects to be discussed in the following sheets, I will, nevertheless, endeavour to unfold them, in as brief and plain a manner as their complexity will admit; I will do it with a correctness and solemnity suited to the importance of the matter in view, and the present momentous crisis of human events; well aware, that in appealing to your Royal Highness's judgment and feelings, I not only present a fair, an interesting opportunity, of following the dictates of humanity, of exercising those manly and benign principles and virtues, which have ever formed the characteristics of your Royal Highness's illustrious house; but I, also, afford the means of promoting the national welfare of that empire, over

which you so worthily preside; besides extending the blessings of peace, prosperity, and regeneration, to an extensive and valuable range of country, that will, at no distant period, remunerate us for all our exertions in its favour.

To one, who like yourself, holds in his hands the reins of a government, so much concerned in the political welfare of every nation of the globe, but particularly so, when interest, sympathy, and political engagements add to the bond; of a government, in short, that has sacrificed so much for the freedom and independence of the States of Europe, and has ever been foremost in the cause of reason, justice, and humanity, it cannot be an unseasonable theme, to dwell on those national interests we have now at stake—to advert to that fund of odium accumulating on our name, and those dangers we, at the same time, incur, by an entire dereliction from our plighted faith, and reiterated and solemn promises: neither can it be irrelevant here to pourtray the oppression, calamities, and destruction of one entire quarter of the globe, with whose natives we have so long sympathized, and to whose interests we are so closely connected; when, at the same time, a safe and consistent remedy is within our reach; a remedy not only in perfect unison with our national honour, and founded on sound and lasting policy, but, moreover, by no means opposed to those very engagements, under which we stand bound to the third party concerned.

The object of my present address, is to call the attention of your Royal Highness to the long neglected and melancholy situation of the great continent of Spanish America, where a destructive civil war has been waging for more than four years: a deadly war, that like a

spreading cancer threatens to overrun, and soon to destroy that fair portion of the habitable globe, if the necessary remedies are not speedily applied. It is, at the same time, to point out the immense resources there uselessly wasting, and the oceans of blood spilling in every section; and, in a full manner, to explain the origin, nature, and progress of that complicated and aggravated dispute, which has so long desolated Spanish Columbia, rent asunder the ties of blood and nature, and filled it with unheard of scenes of horror and devastation. In short, the pages I have now the honour to inscribe to your Royal Highness, are intended to throw light on a subject that has been but partially understood in this country; whence have originated delusive theories, and erroneous conceptions of the actual state of the great question here alluded to; and I am the more solicitous to undertake this essential task, from the general ignorance in which the public has been kept, of all the transactions carried on in that unfortunate country, owing to its distance, and the confined use of the language, in which they have been detailed; as well as from the misconceptions and prejudices diffused amongst us, in consequence of the partial and incorrect statements, copied into our public prints, from those of Cadiz.

This is, perhaps, the only great political question that has not hitherto met with the attention of the British public, or called forth the discussions of our statesmen or writers of the day; yet, to us, as the allies of the Spanish monarchy, anxious to give every efficiency to that alliance, and acting on the broad principle of justice and equity, it cannot be deemed of trifling importance; much less so, when we view it connected with our present and future prospects of trade, and

linked with our most interesting maritime relations. Commerce, has ever been considered as the main sinew of our political existence, and we have now in view, the great and gigantic efforts of the enemy, if not to paralyze, at least to corrode this pillar of the British empire, and to diminish its energy and extent. Some of our greatest and most enlightened statesmen of the age, have, moreovor, established as a political axiom, that considering our insular situation, the nature of our defence, and the circumstances of the enemy, it behooved us, in a particular manner, to extend our influence, our connections, and our consumption of merchandise, in those regions which are beyond his reach, and consequently not subject to his control, his systems, or to the fortunes of war, he may threaten to wage against them. This safe and fundamental principle, founded on our naval preponderance, and so intimately connected with our political economy (that real basis of our strength and grandeur) has been verified by the experience of the last twenty years, by successive events, and by the failure of our past energies on the continent, as well as by the depressed state to which we now stand reduced.

In conformity to this principle, and considering also the present condition of Europe, not only in consequence of the influence of France, but also owing to a continental policy existing even amongst our oldest allies, to trade as little with us as they possibly can; Great Britain is particularly called upon, at this moment, to enquire, if in any other quarter of the world, a barrier can be found to resist the general combination formed against her mercantile interests, and to open new channels, in lieu of those closed against her. In this

important enquiry, the political economist naturally casts his eyes towards the great continent of Spanish America, a country far surpassing the whole of Europe in extent, in fertility, and in rich productions, though hitherto debarred from the intercourse of foreign nations. A position, therefore, unparalleled on the face of the globe, for the union of commercial advantages; an extended range of country, varied in soil and productions; rich in every thing necessary to minister to the wants and luxuries of man; one that in its late degraded state, annually coined forty-two millions of dollars, in gold and silver; consumed fifty-nine and a half ditto in European imports, circulated thirty-eight and a half ditto in choicest exports,* besides being inhabited by a large and increasing population, certainly presents a scene worthy of the contemplation of the first magistrate of so enterprizing a nation as ours; yet fair as is this prospect, considerable as is this produce and consumption of Spanish America, the timely adoption of better systems, and a newly diffused regeneration (as will hereafter be fully proved) would long since have doubled both. And, yet, in addition to this scope for commercial enterprize, in addition to this flattering but correct picture of the resources of Spanish America, and these considerations of national expediency, political motives of a still more sacred nature, have long called upon us to look with anxious concern to the fate of the Western continent, and to prevent its entire destruction.

The increase and protection of trade, undoubtedly, becomes the paramount duty of the heads of government;

* Vide Humboldt's Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain, vol. 4, book 5, chap. 12.

and any elucidations on so interesting a subject, cannot, therefore, by your Royal Highness, be deemed ill-placed or offensive. Every thing relating to Spanish America, that we have undertaken for many years past, proves how little we were acquainted with the dispositions, sentiments, and resources of those distant regions, notwithstanding the expences government has incurred to obtain information; and how much we have been puzzled to fix on an enlightened and accordant policy, in our new alliance with Spain, results from many facts that will hereafter be adduced. I am, for this reason, the more encouraged in my present attempt, as well as from a conviction that my sources of information are not only extensive, but also correct, and in most cases, official. And whilst I deplore that want of influence we have never obtained over the councils of Spain, whilst I regret our complete failure to infuse liberal principles in her members of government, and to awaken an enlightened policy in the nation at large, respecting its vital interests with Spanish America, (the grand cause of most of the evils with which we have now to contend, in our relations with the Spanish monarchy of both hemispheres) though late, I still hope something useful may be deduced; and at all events, it may be of service to delineate those results which would have been produced by a different line of conduct on our part, and to point out where we erred, in our new and delicate connection with European and American Spain.

Important, however, as might have been the consequences of keeping the two halves of the Spanish monarchy strong and united; offensive both to justice and humanity as has been that cruel, desultory, and unnatural war which has so long been waging between them; im-

mense as has been the waste of property, and lamentable and afflicting, as has been this impolitic dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy, not less dangerous to the future existence of Spain, than subversive of the prosperity of Spanish America, and prejudicial to the real interests of England; still, as the sincere friends and allies of both parties, we have hitherto devised no effective remedy; nay, our statesmen in their views of national policy, and national welfare, appear studiously to have avoided the contemplation and discussion of a question, in which so much was at issue, and in which we were so materially implicated. They appear never to have pondered on the future consequences of that blind obstinacy, which first caused the dissentions here alluded to; and which, by neither being prevented or remedied, have not only cut off from Spain half her strength, but have, also, deprived her of the greatest part of those resources she might have brought into active operation against the common enemy; and have, further, converted the fairest portion of the Spanish monarchy (whose integrity, and consequently preservation we have guaranteed) into one wide extended waste of anarchy and ruin, and are, besides, fast driving it into the interests of the French. That increase of private wealth and public revenue, which might otherwise have flowed into Spain to our benefit, that accession of physical and moral strength which might have been secured to her, and that closer union which might have been cemented between all parties, seems to be a subject completely overlooked and disregarded; nor is there a measure of a public nature, in which we seem to have been so much embarrassed, as in our conduct to our Peninsular ally.

Spanish America, in the mean time, has been bleeding at every pore, in vain have its natives appealed to our justice and generosity, and in vain have they reminded us of our old promises and offers. We have calmly beheld them put to the sword, for seeking that just redress and requisite regeneration, such as the whole world pronounced to be their due; and for endeavouring to establish those rights they had inherited from their forefathers, but which their trampled laws could no longer secure to them. Unheeded, we have beheld their fruitful plains laid waste, and their ravaged cities levelled with the dust. Without an effective effort in their favour, we have seen their peaceful country become a prey to anarchy and devastation, nor is there a record of a public nature existing to prove, that we have felt for them the common sympathies of men, or at least, that we have been really sensible of the injustice committed against them. Instead of, seriously, applying remedies to the increasing gangrene, that has been so long preying on the political existence of the Spanish monarchy in both hemispheres; we have suffered it to rankle and to inflame, till at last, we not only behold it verging to an alarming state of dissolution; thus counteracting the object of that very treaty which bound us to its welfare, but, we are, moreover, ourselves fast losing the affections of the inhabitants of each of its divisions, perhaps, for ever.

It is, therefore, here intended to trace the different stages of this unfortunate dispute, as a means of bringing it in a full shape before your Royal Highness, and the public; for which purpose, it may be extremely proper, to examine it in principle, and to develope its results.—It may, at the same time, be useful, to review the policy and conduct of the British cabinet in its relations with

Spanish America, as constituting part of that same nation to whom we are allied; and, also, to enumerate the means by which the evils hereafter detailed, might have been prevented or remedied. In prosecution of my subject, it will, moreover, be highly illustrative, to take a view of those unparalleled advantages which would have resulted to the world at large, but particularly to the patriotic cause of Spain, from the redress and regeneration of Spanish America, in that just and consistent manner that might have been fixed upon, when the era of liberty first dawned upon both. The contemplation of this interesting scene, is not, indeed, novel to the British cabinet, for it once formed the unceasing and favourite study of that great and lamented statesman, whose views and plans have served as a beacon to all his successors; and have, perhaps, under the guidance of the Almighty, effected the great and momentous changes of the day. Other more fair and equitable means to realize his contemplated results, have, indeed, since occurred; and certainly had he been living, they would not have been unimproved. In Spanish America, Mr. Pitt beheld a wide prospect of national advantage, and a plentiful source of benefits, not of an uncertain and transitory nature, but such as can no longer appear dubious and fleeting, after the voyages of a Humboldt, the gleanings of a Depons, and the labours of Molina and Azara; and, most assuredly, under such a propitious an alliance as ours with Spain, he would have gloried in calling them forth, against the common enemy.

Though entirely unknown to your Royal Highness, I am not devoid of hope, that the particulars on which I am about to enter, will meet with every attention their magnitude deserves, it is under these impressions alone, I presume to ask it. These are not indeed details of

universal notoriety, because they have not come within the reach of many, but they are well known to those, who like myself, have closely followed up the course of events, who have viewed the occurrences as they have passed, and who, for the last five years, have taken a lively interest in the fate and misfortunes of Spanish America. The following pages, constitute the result of a long and favoured residence in the Spanish dominions of both hemispheres; nor do I foresee that any of my allegations, will be found devoid of their adequate and respective testimony.

It having been my lot, early in life, to visit the regions to which I allude, I used every effort to become informed of their situation, how their prosperity and happiness might be promoted, and how these might redound to the advantage of my own country. It is the result of this research, I now submit to your Royal Highness, on whom, in great measure, the happiness or misery of Spanish America depends. My only object is to be useful, for after the sacrifices I have already made for the furtherance of these views, I should conceive myself wanting in my duty to the nation of which I am a member, and to the interests of that country, whose amelioration I have greatly at heart, and whose misfortunes I sincerely deplore, were I to hesitate to step forward, on an occasion like the present, and fail to place my observations in that channel, in which they may produce their desired effect.

Impressed with these sentiments, I again solicit your Royal Highness's indulgence, under the assurance, that mine is not a project to bring burthensome consequences on the nation, or intended to make us swerve from the faith of treaties; but it is, perhaps, under existing circumstances, the only means of giving efficiency to our

alliance with European and American Spain; it is the only one that can adequately relieve and augment our trade, besides, retrieve our past losses; objects which cannot but strongly interest every member of society, at the present moment, and press, with peculiar force, on those who are charged with His Majesty's government. It is not, now, a question of prudence and deliberation, but an absolute command of imperious justice and humanity, to stop the torrents of blood flowing in every section of Spanish America, and deluging its ravaged plains.

The eyes of its unhappy natives, have long been cast upon England; and on the judgment of your Royal Highness, now rests the well-being of seventeen millions of people. And, whilst the nations of Europe bless the benign and strenuous exertions with which your Royal Highness watched over their welfare, and prepared the means of their liberation; whilst Spain, in an especial manner, has witnessed the profuse sacrifices, and generous assurances of both the British government and people, is no sympathy due to the unredressed natives of Spanish America, with whom we are equally allied, but to whose sufferings we have been so long estranged? The substantial glory and true virtue of the British nation, could never shine forth with more effulgency, than by becoming the effective mediator and sincere umpire, between the alienated provinces of Spanish America, and Spain; and by promoting the return of harmony between them, on principles just and equitable to both. This is a beneficent enterprise, still within the reach of your Royal Highness, if moments the most precious are only improved. It was at first difficult, because we did not fully understand it; it has afterwards become ar-

duous, from being too long neglected. The assembling of the new Cortes in Madrid, is an occurrence the most propitious, and for the sake of humanity, and the name and future interests of the British empire, it is to be hoped, it will not be disregarded.

With regard to myself, if I can, in any way, be the humble instrument, by the following details, that through your Royal Highness's means, may bring alleviation to the ills and sufferings of Spanish America, and explain to my fellow citizens, a subject in which they and their posterity are so much interested; if the following details which I have thrown together with great pains and labour, can only fix the attention of your Royal Highness to the contemplation of this important subject, I shall not only consider myself superlatively happy, but I shall be gratified, in having complied with one of the first duties of a social being. The chief contents of the following sheets, were originally thrown together, in order to solicit and implore the attention of his Majesty's ministers, to the melancholy situation of the country therein alluded to; but recent services, connected with Spanish America, and researches to enlighten our policy, and to open new sources of enterprize, are no longer deserving of notice or encouragement, though so much has been formerly expended in revolutionary speculations, and on inconsistent plans.

Before, however, I enter into the principal and particular points relating to ourselves, as the allies and friends of the entire Spanish nation; it becomes essentially necessary to establish, fully, what was, and yet is, according to their laws and charters, the relative situation of the Spanish provinces of America, with regard to Spain; and

to explain the nature of the colonial policy therein established, at the time our alliance commenced. These elucidations, will aid to a more perfect comprehension of the causes of complaint, the redress sought, the consequences of its denial, and what have been the real features and results, of all the differences and insurrections which have taken place up to the present period; and I am the more induced to enter into this previous digression, from my extreme anxiety, that the subject should be perfectly understood, by your Royal Highness, in all its parts and relations, and because the same has been egregiously mistated and prejudged amongst us.

§ The discovery of that immense range of country, extending from California, on the one side, and the Missisippi on the other, as far as Cape Horn; washed by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and generally denominated Spanish North and South America, was due to the great Columbus, and its principal conquest and settlement, to Cortes and Pizarro. Both the discovery and conquest thereof, were effected in conformity with a solemn and special contract, made by the kings of Spain, with Columbus and his enterprizing companions, *on whose account and risk* every thing was to be performed. It was also, afterwards, the policy of Spain, *for no discoveries or settlements to be made at the expence of the state.** It was further agreed, that in consideration of the services performed, the discoverers and conquerors *were to remain lords of the country, the principal ones with the titles of marquis, &c.*† The *Indigénes,* were also to be established

* Vide Herrera, and, also, Recopilacion de las Leyes de Indias. ley 17, tit. 1, lib. 4.

† Ibid, ley 23, tit. 3, Lib. 4.

on the basis of feudal vassalage, under the plan of *encomiendas* (or distributions) on consideration *that they were taught the Christian religion, to live in society, and succoured and defended from harm and injury.* In conformity to these stipulations, the first establishments both in Hispañola and the Main, were on the plan of *encomiendas*, or a distribution of lands and Indians, in proportion to the rank of the discoverers and settlers. Herrera, also, expressly says, that all these conquests were performed at the expence of the conquerors, and not of the government; and the whole history of the conquest of the new world, proves, that the first proceeds of treasure obtained, were appropriated to refund that part of the expences the crown had advanced, by way of loan and encouragement.

The high dominion of these new settlements, "*discovered and to be discovered*" was retained by the king, "*on condition that he did not alienate or separate them from the crown of Castile, to which they were incorporated, either wholly or in part; in no case, or in favour of any one. And considering*" (concludes the Emperor Charles V.) "*the fidelity of our vassals, and the pains which the discoverers and settlers experienced in their discoveries and settlements, and in order that they may possess more certainty and confidence of these always remaining united to our Royal crown, we promise, and pledge our faith and royal word, in behalf of ourselves and the kings our successors, for ever and ever, that their cities and settlements, on no account or reason, or in favour of any person whatever, shall be alienated or separated, wholly or in part; and that if we or any of our successors should make any gift or alienation thereof, contrary to this express declaration, the same*

shall be held as null and void."* Such was the social compact, or magna charta under which the first settlements in Spanish America were established, and such was the tenure by which they were held. Such was the solemn oath and pledge, by which Charles V. bound himself and his successors; how it has been observed, the reader will hereafter be able to judge.

§ That great persecution and desolation which befel the whole of the new settlements, coming immediately after the horrors of a conquest, whose contemplation makes humanity shudder, and has for ever darkened the annals of Cortes and Pizarro, rapidly brought the Indians to an alarming state of diminution, and owing to the distance of the court, and the depraved conduct of the first chiefs and settlers, every species of crime was committed with impunity. The Indian population of the Antilles had already disappeared, some had been carried as slaves to the Peninsula, others were put to work in the mines and pearl fisheries, and others applied to carry burdens, or to till the ground, under imperious and cruel task masters.† Roused by such scenes of impiety

* Ibid, ley 1. tit. 1. lib. 3. Charles IV. in a flagrant manner infringed this solemn pledge, by the cession of Louisiana and the Spanish part of St. Domingo, to the French.

† Robertson, (vol. I. book 3,) describes the conduct of the Spaniards to the conquered Indians, in the following words: "If the simplicity and innocence of the Indians, had inspired the Spaniards with humanity, had softened the pride of superiority into compassion, and had induced them to improve the inhabitants of the new world, instead of oppressing them, some sudden acts of violence, like the too rigorous chastisements of impatient instructors, might have been related without horror. But, unfortunately, this consciousness of superiority, operated in a different manner. The Spaniards were so far

and injustice, some venerable ecclesiastics, amongst whom the name of Las Casas stands pre-eminent, remonstrated with the king, and by every means in their power, sought the relief of the oppressed *aborigines*. Inspectors, *corregedors*, and *audiencias*, or high courts of justice, were sent over to serve as mounds, to the torrent of disorders that had overran the country; and a supreme council, called of the Indies, was established at home, to watch over the fulfillment of the laws enacted, and the royal orders transmitted to the other side of the Atlantic,* but especially to protect the Indians. By these establishments, and by the new enactions of Charles V. (exclusively emanating from the humane exertions of the benevolent Las Casas,) the situation of the Indians was bettered; but they still retained the principal appendages of feudal vassalage, rendered doubly galling by the avarice of their masters, and doubly grievous by the distance of the fountain of redress. The latter circumstance, also, was the cause of many of the projected ameliorations and

far advanced beyond the natives of America in improvement of every kind, that they viewed them with contempt. They conceived the Americans to be beings of an inferior nature, who were not entitled to the rights and privileges of men. In peace, they subjected them to servitude: in war, they paid no regard to those laws, which, by a tacit convention between contending nations, regulate hostility, and set some bounds to its rage. They considered them, not as men fighting in defence of their liberty, but as slaves, who had revolted against their masters. Their caciques when taken, were condemned, like the leaders of banditti, to the most cruel and ignominious punishments, and all their subjects, without regarding the distinction of ranks established amongst them, were reduced to the same state of abject slavery."---Alas, and are not the scenes of the first conquests, renewed in the horrors of the present insurrections?

* Vide Revol. Mexico, tom. ii. lib. 14.

modifications of the kings of Spain, being scarcely ever carried into effect.*

§ Gradually, the *encomiendas* and *repartimientos* of Indians, excepting in the working of mines, were abolished; and in lieu of these primitive grants and privileges, the settlers and their posterity received, as compensation, others; amongst which were, their being entitled to a preference of offices and trusts in their own country; † their being declared nobles of the kingdoms of Castile according to the privileges, laws, and customs of Spain, &c.&c.‡ According to Solórzano, the kings of Spain also entered into specific agreements with the primitive bishops, purporting, that the Creoles, or descendants of the conquerors and settlers, should have the right of holding the chief ecclesiastical dignities, &c. &c. ‖ The same stipulations were afterwards confirmed, in theory at least, by various successive *cedulas*, or royal decrees, still extant in the laws of the Indies; nor were they in any way unreasonable, when it is remembered, that the new world was discovered, conquered, and settled at the expence, and with the blood and exertions of the first adventurers; who, besides, defrayed the charges of the primitive churches, and afterwards maintained the ministers of the altar, with the tythes of their property; the king being debited only with a third part of the expences of the first cathedrals, and of

* The *Breve Relacion*, &c. of Las Casas, (lately reprinted in London gives the most lamentable account that can be imagined, of the sufferings of the primitive Indians: for which reason it was prohibited by the government of Spain.

† Ibid. ley 3 and 5, tit. 6. lib. 4.

‡ Ibid, lib. 6.

‖ Ibid, ley 32, tit. 2, lib. 2, and ley. 29, tit. 6, lib. 1. Solórzano Polit. Ind. lib. 3. cap. 14.

some parish churches.* This principle of preference in favour of the Creoles, was still carried further; so much so, that all foreigners, amongst whom are enumerated, such as are not naturalized in Castile, viz. Aragonese, Catalans, Valencians, &c. though allowed to go over to reside or traffic there, were not eligible to any ecclesiastical benefice in Spanish America, not even when named by the king himself.† Thus it was, that to empower the Navarrans, naturalized in Castile, for the above purposes, an express law of the Indies became necessary. ‡

With regard to temporal dignities and offices, the laws are not less explicit. Many royal decrees contained amongst the laws of the Indies, expressly declare, "*that in all cases of government, justice, administration of finance, commissions, encomiendas of Indians, &c. the first discoverers, then the pacificators, and lastly the settlers, and those born in the said provinces*" (of America) "*are to be preferred.*" Nor are these, and many others that might be named, vain and pompous privileges, granted at the instance of flattery, extorted in any undue manner, or obtained without the surrendry of good equivalents and consideration. On the contrary, they form the basis of the social compact, instituted between the kings of Spain and the first conquerors and settlers, on behalf of themselves and their posterity; who thus ceded up to the crown of Castile, those regions they had discovered by their enterprize, won by their blood, and settled with their own fortunes, on condition that they, the said kings, *kept the compacts and agreements contained in the laws of the Indies,*

* Ibid, ley 2, tit. 2, lib. 1. et alibi.

† Ibid, ley 31, tit. 6, lib. 1.

‡ Ibid, ley 32, tit. 6, lib. 1

wherein they are termed *privileges*; the basis of which has been just quoted.*

§ Even the Indians, in accepting the dominion of Spain, came under certain stipulations, called in the laws, *capitulations*; by which their rights were defined, and their relative situation, as social beings, was established. Charles V. after the consultation held with Las Casas, at Valladolid, in 1545, declared, that the wars waged against them were unjust and tyrannical; and even prior to that period, in 1537, it had been decreed, that those of their laws and customs, which were not opposed to the spirit of the Christian religion, should be observed with equal force, as if they had been specially decreed by the king. An acknowledgment was made of their classes and nobility; these were exempted from tribute, as were also their caciques, lords, magistrates, and governors, who were, besides, allowed the right of addressing the king in person. The compacts formed with the Indians of Tlaxcala and others, in consideration of their auxiliary aid, are, also, seen in the respective accounts of the Mexican and Peruvian conquests. After the establishment of Spanish power, when any insurrections amongst the Indians occurred, the kings always ordered new privileges, grants, and exemptions to be offered to them, as a means of pacification; and every thing, in theory at least, tended to inspire them with confidence, in the solemn pledges and promises made to them.† Remesal observes, that the laws and compacts made in favour of the Indians, are, in substance, mere conclusions, drawn from the writings of Las Casas, in which,

* Vide, La Revolucion de Mexico, tom. 2, lib. 14, lately printed in London, wherein this point is treated at full length and with great erudition.

† Ibid, ley 9, tit. 4, lib. 4.

having proved the injustice and horrors of the conquests, he argued that the kings of Spain, as the protectors of the gospel (the only title by which the new world was at first held*)were rigorously bound in justice, not to injure them in their natural rights, property, or persons.† In numberless other royal orders and decrees, it is further commanded, to "*treat the Indians well*; *as free men, and vassals of the crown of Castile, as in fact they are.*" Thus by the laws themselves, the legislative power over the Indians, is not left absolute and arbitrary in the hands of the monarch himself, much less so, in those of the self created governments of Spain.

Even the social footing of the negroes in Spanish America, was established by a solemn compact, made between Bayano their king, and the Marquis de Cañete, viceroy of Peru, in 1557. According to Garcilasso,‡ they then agreed to lay down their arms, on condition that they were allowed to settle as natives of the country, and had the privilege of freeing themselves, when ever they were possessed of the requisite funds.|| Their free descendants of colour, are consequently entitled to the rights of their forefathers, yet, as will hereafter be seen, the Cortes themselves have not only deprived them of the right of citizenship, but have even excluded them from the general census.

§ Thus does it appear, that from the time of queen Isa-

* Vide Alonzo de jedas address to the Indians, in Robertson's History of America, vol. 1, note 23, page 269; also Pope Alexander sixth's Grant, and queen Isabella's will.

† Revolucion de Mexico, tom. 2, lib. 14.

‡ Cement del Peru, part 2, lib. 3, cap. 3.

|| The price for freeing a prime negro, fixed by law, is 300 dollars, which not being left to the will of the master, as in our colonies and those of the French, greatly promotes emancipation.

bella, the Spanish settlements were inseparably united and incorporated with the crown of Castile; and as before noticed, Charles V. took a solemn oath, for himself and his successors, never to alienate or disunite them. They were united, even on more favourable terms than Andalusia and Galicia had been, for they retained their own rights and privileges, whereas the constitutions of the latter, were absorbed in that of Castile. Aragon, Portugal, Italy, and Flanders, were, at one period of the Spanish monarchy, on a similar footing with the Indies, and had in Spain their respective supreme councils, similar to that destined to govern the American provinces.* It was ordered also to erase from the laws of the Indies, all title, name, or idea of conquest; and as before stated, the Indians were not only declared free, but also subjects of the king, the same as the Castilians.†

§ The kings themselves, never addressed their American provinces, by the name of *colonies*, but always gave them the title of *kingdoms*; nor is the former denomination to be met with in the laws of the Indies. The appellation of *kingdoms* was even enacted by an express law. Charles V. was, at that time, also emperor of Flanders and of Italy, but on his coins was alone engraved, *Emperor of Spain and of the Indies*, and in some of the Royal decrees of Philip II. he styles himself *Emperor of the Indies*, only. As the governing system of the American provinces improved, viceroys, not factories, were sent over to govern them, with the full representation of *alter*

* Revolucion de Mexico, tom. 2, lib. 14.

† The incorporation of Spanish America was decreed by Charles V. in Barcelona, 14th of Sept. 1519, confirmed by Donna Juana in Valladolid, 9th of July, 1520; in Pamplona, 22nd of Oct. 1523; in Monzon, 7th of Dec. 1547, by Philip II.; in Madrid, July 18, 1563, and Charles II.---

ego, a denomination not even given to some of the viceroys of provinces, in the Peninsula itself.* Chanceries and *Audiencias,* or high courts of justice, were established, with the same privileges and pre-eminence as those of Spain; also, universities, on the same footing as that of Salamanca, and municipalities, as in the Peninsula. The archbishops and bishops were made independent of Spain, and of even each other. The Spanish American provinces, were, moreover, allowed to hold their Cortes of the deputies of the cities and towns; and in New Spain, the capital of Mexico held the first place, as Burgos did in the Cortes of Castile. In the Cortes of the south division of America, Cusco, from being the ancient seat of the Incas of Peru, was entitled to the first place.† Nor ought it be forgotten, this is a privilege which even the province of Galicia in Spain, never obtained.

This right, was, indeed, never exercised in America, but it never was revoked. It was decreed, by Charles V, in 1530, and the privilege of Tlaxcala having the second seat, immediately after Mexico, in the Cortes of New Spain, was granted by Charles I. on March 13, 1535, and confirmed by Phillip II. on July 16, 1563. Even in Spain, during the reign of Charles V, the usage of assembling Cortes ceased; for the regent Cisneros, overturning the barriers which had been placed by the people, to check the arbitrary conduct of their sovereigns, by means

* The viceroy of Navarre alone, had a similar denomination, because this kingdom, like those of America, was dependent only on the king; nor was any law promulgated in Spain, binding therein, unless accepted by its own Cortes. Vide Revolucion de Mexico, tom. 2, lib. 14, et alibi.

† Vide, Recop. Leyes Ind. by 2, tit. 8, lib. 4; also, Real Cedula de 25 de Marzo, 1535; also Ibid, lib. 4, tit. 8, lib. 4, et alibi.

of the armed force he had at his command, excluded the grandees and prelates from the Cortes in 1538; thereby reducing this popular representation solely to the deputies of the towns and cities, from whom he stood in need of subsidies for the public service. From that time, the Cortes declined, in such a way, as to become a mere ceremony, to swear in a new king; and in fact, the general Cortes were never since assembled for public business, till lately in La Isla de Leon.

§ The whole of Spanish America, as before stated, was governed by a supreme council, called of the Indies, equal in honours and in power with that of Castile, and so independent of it, and of all other branches of government, that no law premulgated in Spain, nor even a bull of the Pope, was legal or valid on the other side of the Atlantic, unless authorized by the seal of the said council of the Indies. Like that of Castile, it was further empowered to enact laws relating to America, in concurrence with the king. A code of particular laws, was also given to the American provinces, but the monarchical constitution, was declared equally extending to them.

§ Such were the rights, privileges, and equality granted and sanctioned by the respective sovereigns of Spain, to the discoverers and settlers of the new world; such as they are yet found in their own legislative code, and in the primitive grants, charters, and compacts, on which their possession of these countries, was founded. From these faithful sources, it is, as well as from the ancient histories of the conquest, that the above grounds have been extracted. Hence may it fairly be deduced, that the relative situation of the ultramarine provinces to Spain, originally, was not that of dependent colonies on

a parent state; but that they were, by their own prerogatives, and by the laws themselves, made equal with Castile, and were even placed on a more eligible footing than their sister provinces of the Peninsula, which, like themselves, had been successively added to the said crown of Castile. It further results, that the king was their chief, if not, only and immediate bond of union.

Humboldt, who was not only theoretically conversant with the legislation of Spanish America, but also confessedly, the most accurate and enlightened observer who has visited those long secluded regions, expressly says, " that the Kings of Spain, by taking the title of Kings of the Indies, have considered these distant possessions, rather as integral parts of the Spanish monarchy, as provinces dependent on the crown of Castile, than as colonies in the sense attached to this word, since the sixteenth century, by the commercial nations of Europe.* In another part of the same work, he adds, " According to old Spanish laws, each viceroyalty is not governed as a domain of the crown, but as an insulated province, separated from the mother country. All the institutions, that together form an European government, are to be found in the Spanish colonies, which we might compare to a system of confederated states, were the colonists not deprived of several important rights in their commercial relations with the old world.† Solórzano, one of the compilers of the laws of the Indies, and besides, one of the most learned of the Spanish jurisconsults of his time, confesses, " that the Indies were incorporated to the crown of Castile, as feudatory king-

* Essai Politique, chap. 12, lib.5.

† Ibid, chap. 6, liv. 13.

doms, or as the *municipia* of the Romans, without losing any of their rights, forms, privileges, &c.*

In strict accord with the laws of the Indies, and conformably to the records of the discovery, conquest, and settlement of the great continent of Spanish America, it plainly results, that its constitution was founded on mutual compacts made with the first conquerors and the *indigenes*, guaranteed by the faith of kings; and afterwards modeled on such laws and charters as were successively emitted, according to circumstances, and the relative situation in which the conquerors and settlers stood, whilst their rights and privileges were yet fresh and undisputed. No part of these same rights, was ever surrendered up by the original settlers or their descendants; and the present natives of Spanish America, as their direct and lawful heirs, of course, have inherited every prerogative thereby solemnly pledged to their forefathers, and sanctioned by the most solemn governmental faith.

§ Experience had, indeed, proved, that these laws, rights, charters and privileges, had long been trampled upon, and that, in their stead, had been substituted a practical colonial policy, undoubtedly adapted to insure control, as far as ignorance and abjection could depress the mind, so as to take from its energy, and make servitude habitual. But, as the ultramarine provinces, have, already been proved, equal in their ancient constitution with those of Spain, independent of her councils and tribunals, and equal in rights, as well by virtue of their subsequent laws, as by their primitive social compact, this abuse became not only unjust, but also unwarrantable; and the natives are now fully authorized to sue

* Polit. Ind. lib. 2. cap. 27.

for its removal. If such, moreover, were their rights, privileges, and prerogatives; if such was the social compact originally and solemnly instituted in favour of the first settlers, and if these agreements have not been fulfilled to their children, the present generation, as their rightful inheritors, are justifiable in claiming, and in recovering them by every means in their power; and their being any longer withheld, is an act of tyranny on the part of the Spanish government. Nay, by their long forbearance, they are doubly entitled to insist on the due performance of a convention, strengthened by as explicit and binding acts of the legislature, as sagacity could frame, and language express.

§ By the force of habit, and the pressure of despotism, as well as by the exclusion from the perusal of every thing liberal and enlightened, gradually the Spanish Americans, instead of equal subjects, had become dependent vassals, and their rights and privileges, were scarcely to be found, but in their Statute books. Were these, however, to be examined carefully, and the primitive history of the ultramarine provinces to be attentively perused, it would not only appear, that their sole bond of political union with the mother country, was the person of the king; but, that, from being in their constitution independent of every branch of government, not immediately and directly emanating from him, when this bond became dissolved, they naturally re-assumed all their political and social rights, as free men. The powerful confraternity which united the Spanish inhabitants of both hemispheres, and their reciprocal and social connections, naturally prescribed the propriety and necessity of preserving this union; yet, it is, at the same time, certain, that prior to the unjustifiable abuse

into which this colonial policy had sunk, no other measure of government had been employed, to secure this union and to give it effect, than that of annexing and incorporating the new world to the Spanish crown, under the title of kingdoms, nor had long and abject submission, effaced the only title, by which the kings always addressed their distant provinces.

The heading of the royal decree, published in the year 1524, for the creation of the supreme council of the Indies, makes use of no other term. It is as follows. " And considering the great benefits and favours, which, from the Almighty we have received, and are daily receiving from the increase and extension of the *kingdoms* (reynos) and lordships of our Indies; and sensible of the great obligations and duties thereby imposed upon us; and anxious on our part to establish the proper means that the said *kingdoms* and lordships may be governed in due manner, &c. &c. we hereby order and decree, that a supreme council of the Indies be created," &c. &c.* Such is not only the general, but, also, the exclusive appellation given by the kings of Spain to their provinces on the other side of the Atlantic, nor is the term colonies to be met with in their laws, or in the royal orders successively transmitted to them.

§ The inhabitants thereof, are, consequently, in right, and in the eye of the law, no more colonial vassals, than are those of the provinces of Spain conquered from the Moors,† nor were the authorities, had they only kept

* Rocop. de Leyes Ind, ley 1. tit. 2. lib. 2.

† Seville, according to Mariana (Hist. Gener. de España. tit. 1. lib. 13. cap. 9.) was conquered from the Moorish King Axataje, by St. Ferdinand, who annexed it to the crown of Castile and peopled it, Nor was this long before the discovery of America, which, ac-

within their original bounds, constituted in any other manner, than those which administered the duties of government in the Peninsula. So explicit was the ancient legislation of Spain, in this particular, that the whole of the rights and privileges of the Creoles, stand coeval with the mutual compacts made between the monarch and the first conquerors; and as before stated, the whole were consigned to the very code that was to govern them. The American provinces, consequently, were not manors conferred by the sovereign on the kingdoms of Spain; they were not given in fealty to any class of inhabitants in the Peninsula, nor to any individual or intermediate corporation between the crown and themselves; yet, tantamount would have become their political footing, if every thing pretended by the late government of Spain, and the monopolists of Cadiz, was carried into full effect. No, they are yet, and ever were, in point of right, justice, and reason, considered as incorporated, and consequently equal dominions, nor had they ever acknowledged any link of the feudal chain, now attempted to be imposed upon them. Their bond of union was the same, as that by which the successors of Ferdinand the Catholic, held the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile.

§ In another point of view, it would be unjust to consider the Spanish American provinces, as held in colonial dependence by Spain, under the pretext that Spaniards

cordingly, was placed on, at least, an equally eligible footing, yet in the late revolution, Seville becomes the seat of government, and its Junta dictates laws to the whole of the Spanish monarchy. Granada, Murcia, and Jaen, were dependent on the crown of Castile, but independent of each other, so that their relative situation greatly resembled that of Spanish America.

and Spanish property, were employed in their conquest and settlement. The discoverers and conquerors were all volunteers, their pay and reward were in the country to which they were bound; and instead of returning home, they remained and settled on the land they had gained by their enterprize and personal sacrifices; and the fruits of their labour, with all the prerogatives thereby acquired, have naturally descended to their rightful succession. With regard to the funds laid out by the crown, and certainly Isabella pledged some of her jewels for the expedition of Columbus, so great was the poverty of the Peninsula prior to the conquest of America, Herrera, as before noticed, expressly asserts, that all these advances were refunded, and that the conquerors, alone, bore the expence. Robertson also observes, that "though the name of Ferdinand appeared, conjointly, with that of Isabella, in the compact signed with Columbus, as king of Arragon, he bore none of the expence."* Diego Velasquez, his friends, and Cortes, payed for the Cuba equipment, which gave to the Spanish crown the empire of New Spain; and the outfits of Pizarro, for the conquest of Peru, were borne by himself, Diego Almagro, and Hernando Lugue, canon of Panamá, who all agreed to share the profits obtained, according to the substance of the original contract, found in Herrera, Dec. 3. lib. 6. cap. 13. Nay, it seems, that the commissions and authorities for the discoveries and conquests, were all the sovereigns contributed; and it would be hard if the grant of a Pope, had more force than the specific services and expended property of the first adventurers.

But even supposing that some of the crown funds had remained uncovered in the beginning, (a circum-

* Hist. Amer. vol. 1. book 2.

stance impossible, when we consider the slender outfits, and the quantity of funds successively remitted from Hispañola and the main, as soon as they were conquered) it cannot be denied, that they have long since been refunded with incalculable interest; since the Spanish American continent alone, by Humboldt, is calculated to have afforded to the world, and principally to Spain, the enormous sum of £1,223,231,434 sterl., or 5,706,700,000 dollars, in gold and silver,* besides rich productions; and this within a period of 311 years, viz. from 1492 to 1803.

§ Neither, therefore, can the plea of the conquest being performed by Spaniards, nor that of the primitive funds expended, belonging to the crown, even if this were the case, amount to any right or excuse for the King of Spain himself, much less the provisional governments which have, since his seizure, governed in his name, to hold the Spanish American provinces in absolute dependence and abject subjection; since force, and not the consent of the latter, had produced a departure from their original compacts. Neither are the inhabitants of the trans-atlantic states, to be blamed or punished for the abuses into which the Madrid government had gradually fallen, or for the decline, instead of the rise, which might have been expected from such valuable acquisitions. If Spain has squandered away the resources, the former has so long and so abundantly poured into her lap, she alone is answerable for her own mismanagement and profusion; but to be divested of the common feelings of gratitude to her American brethren, is a charge for which she is answerable to the whole world.

* Vide Humboldt Pol. Essai, &c. chap. 11.

If Spain has not profited by this great accession of wealth and strength, she owed to the enterprize of the great and immortal Columbus, it has been owing to the weakness of her past governments; and if she now treats the American provinces unjustly, it is only the second part of her ingratitude to their venerable discoverer. If she had arrived at the degraded state in which she stood, when her patriotic cause broke out, it was in consequence of the efforts of her government, and of its agents, to destroy every germ of industry, liberality, and useful knowledge on the other side of the Atlantic; by which means, the little she herself possessed, has been directly undermined, and she has thus gradually fallen into a worse state, than that she attempted to bring upon the American provinces.

Neglecting her own resources at home, Spain was inflated with the magnitude and splendour of treasures, which passed from her as soon as received, and which she afterwards was unable to find, but on her custom-house books of entry. She considered herself rich, without possessing more than the shadow; and powerful, without being sensible of her own weakness; till at last, debilitated on every side, she fell into a system of jealousy and distrust, which became the more sensible in the ultramarine provinces, from the distance of the fountain of power and redress. If, however, by the sacrifices one part of the monarchy has made for the other, the present rights of the Americans are to be measured, what has Spain to throw into the scale against 300 years of slavery, not only in its essence illegal, but in its form unnatural; during which period of time, the great resources of America, (with the exception of the mines, the only object which has absorbed the attention of Spain, to the incalculable sacrifice of Indian lives) have been rendered useless, by

not being called forth; during which, an illiberal and destructive system of government has prevailed, the arts and sciences have been precluded, and in short, religion itself has been degraded, in order to support despotism, by its influence. What adequate compensation, then, can the present *regenerated* government of the Peninsula, make to Spanish America, for all these privations and sacrifices, and for so long and flagrant an invasion of sacred rights, which the former governments had so solemnly guaranteed? And, yet, if Spanish America has been able, in some measure, to rise superior to all these clogs; if under such shackles, the minds of her inhabitants, as Humboldt himself observes, have been able to expand to an astonishing and unexpected degree: this is not to be attributed to the condescension of their oppressors, but to the nature and genius of the natives themselves, aided by the influence of climate, and in consequence of their ardour in searching after books, notwithstanding the prohibitions of government. If, they have been able to overcome obstacles laid in their way by the hand of despotism, from motives of jealousy and distrust, the merit is due to themselves alone, and they are entitled to claim all its consequent benefits. Neither are the advances made in literature, in civilization, and in social relations, in which the Americans, have proportionably surpassed their European brethren, now to be urged against them, as further motives for persecution, or, as a plea to bring them back to that state of abject degradation, which the arms of the Spanish despots, intend to entail upon them.

§ Every one, conversant with history, is aware of the great difference, between the relative and political situation of colonies, amongst the Greeks and Romans, contrasted with those of the modern mercantile nations of

Europe. Our own historian, Gibbon, observes,* that the colonies of Rome, in their "manners and internal policy, formed a perfect representation of their great parent, and they were soon endeared to the natives, by the ties of friendship and alliance; they effectually diffused a reverence for the Roman name, and a desire which was seldom disappointed, of sharing, in due time, its honours and advantages. The municipal cities, insensibly equalled the rank and splendour of the colonies; and in the reign of Hadrian, it was disputed, which was the preferable condition, of those societies which had insued from, or those which had been received into the bosom of Rome." Thus, the name of colonies, far from being dishonourable or disadvantageous, was a privilege, owing to their good system, which was sought even by allies; and far from excluding them from metropolitan rights, it even conferred them on the conquered, much more so, where previous compacts existed.

"The restless and suspicious policy of the nations of Europe," says Humboldt, "and the legislation and colonial policy of the moderns, which bear very little resemblance to those of the Phenicians and Greeks, have thrown insurmountable obstacles in the way of such settlements, as might secure to those distant possessions a degree of prosperity, and an existence independent of the mother country. Such principles as prescribe the rooting up of the vine and olive (exactly those of Spain) are not calculated to favour manufactures. A colony has, for ages, been only considered as useful to the parent state, in so far as it supplied a great number of raw materials, and consumed a number of the commodities, carried there, by the ships of the mother country."†

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, chap 2. Art. Colonies.

† Essai Polit. &c. liv. 5. hap. 12.

Our own Western colonies, were chiefly founded on these principles, and the basis of their political establishment, grew out of the commercial compact, formed between them and the government at home. They were planted at the instance of the latter, and their trade, was afterwards fostered by legislative acts. Their civil institutions, even originally, amounted to no more than a reciprocal monopoly, and an exclusive interchange; we consumed their sugar and tobacco, and they our manufactures; and this was not only founded on custom, but, also, sanctioned by law. At first, they were, however, only small in extent, established on desert and depopulated tracts; whereas the settlements of the Spaniards, were immense, and fixed in the centre of regions, in which had been discovered, formidable and civilized empires, whose population, besides having social rights, became partly blended with the settlers, or was left in its primitive and independent state. The ones, built new towns for themselves, but the others, settled in the ancient and magnificent cities of the Indians, as they stood at the time of their discovery. The one, was a governmental and commercial agreement, for certain individuals, to go out and cultivate productions, suited to the wants or luxuries of the mother country, in order that she might not have to purchase them in a foreign market; and protection was conformably offered, on condition, that home products and manufactures, should exclusively be consumed in the colonies; who, in return, had the privileged supply of sugar and tobacco in the parent state; but the other, was a species of naval and military crusade. The object of British and French colonies, has been to promote agriculture; that of the Spaniards, if the parallel is applicable, to extend their empire and to dig the mines. The governments of the first, encou-

raged their subjects to go out, as peaceable tillers of the earth; but the latter embarked as conquerors, possessed of an insatiate lust for gain; and fired with the martial spirit of the age and of their country, bent rather on plunder, than disposed to follow the humble pursuits of the hoe and ploughshare. The ones, went out as special colonists, carrying with them all the liberality, and all the free rights of the civilized countries to which they belonged; and from the beginning, adequate systems of government were modelled for them, on the plan of those to which they had been accustomed; whence they became miniatures, of the parent states, from which they derived their origin. The others, entered on their daring enterprize, in order to establish themselves by force; and as well from the earliness of the period, as the despotic state in which Spain at that time stood, were unprepared to establish a governing system, suited to the more enlightened state of the present times. The ones, went to insulated points, whereas the others, settled on an extended and varied continent, which at the time of its discovery, contained, and yet contains, double the population of the country that still pretends, to hold them in colonial dependence.* The ones, in short, emigrated with the rights only of colonists, the others went out, free and unschackled military despots, who would have shrunk from the idea of being included in the calculations of trade and economical expediency.*

*In consequence of the ravages on the present population of Spain, it cannot now be esteemed at more than eight millions and a half. That of Spanish America, from accurate data, rises as high as seventeen, which added to that of the Philipine Islands, viz. three ditto, makes the ultramarine population of Spain, twenty millions.

† Till within the last forty years, the profession of a merchant was held as degrading, particularly by the nobles, but even grandees, had no objection, now and then, to handle a little contraband.

The colonial policy of the one, was to bind the affections of their distant fellow citizens, to the country from whence they issued, by equitable and useful laws, by habits, manners, and by an enlightened equipoise of interests; that of the other, to insure control and dependence, by force, and by means of an undue sacrifice, in favour of metropolitan ambition and gain. The ones, in surrendering up certain rights, gained others as equivalents; whereas the others, to use a Creole simily, where as *a cow, they themselves had to feed, but which the Spaniards milked, for their own exclusive use.*

§ I have been, thus far, diffuse in explaining the nature of the first discoveries and settlements, made by the Spaniards on the continent of America, as well as in examining the primitive charters and prerogatives, on which the political and social rights of its inhabitants, were founded; from a conviction of the necessity of establishing, in the fullest manner possible, this material point, on which chiefly hinges, the great question now at issue. It has been the object of all the late governments of Spain, to hold the transatlantic provinces in colonial dependence; and from the conduct of that of Great Britain, it would almost appear, that her ministers, also, have not dared to consider them in any other light. Nay, both seemed resolved to prolong a slavery, unjust in the eye of the law, unnatural in its essence, and particularly unreasonable, when it was not only attempted to save European Spain from the yoke of a foreign enemy, but, also, to regenerate her inhabitants. It is, now, high time to delineate the late policy of Spain, established in her distant provinces; which from its degraded nature, had acquired the term of colonial; an elucidation, essentially necessary, to form a just idea of the grounds of complaint on the part of the Creoles, such as

they will be described, in the more advanced stages of this production.

In consequence of the imperfection and frailty of human nature, as well as from the natural tendency of man, to follow the impulse of his own inordinate passions, even under the best institutions, transgressions, both of law and of justice, will sometimes occur. In order, however, to render such deviations from right, as rare as possible, it becomes the object of every good system of policy, as well as the duty of the sovereign or legislative body, by means of precaution and animadversion, not only to enact adequate laws, but, also, to watch carefully over their execution. The wishes and intentions of the first monarchs of Spain, with regard to their distant dominions, were undoubtedly good, and their zeal for justice and equity, sincere and praiseworthy; but what availed it to the Americans, to know that their laws were, at least in theory, good, if they never saw them executed* ? In the distant settlements of every nation, instances of corrupt and arbitrary conduct are on record; but we judge of the excellency of their establishments and regulations, more from their tendency to prevent a recurrence, than from the theoretical and pompous manner in which the rights of the subject are defined; in like manner, as we appreciate the real merits of a first magistrate, by the uprightness of his conduct, and by the impartial and equitable manner, in which he administers justice, more than by his brilliancy of talents.

Necker, in his introduction to the Administration of Finance, observes "that it is necessary to give with reserve, and promise with circumspection; but when once the faith of the prince is pledged, its object ought to be

* The Americans confess many of their laws on paper, to be good, if a law could only be enacted, to make them observed.

punctually fulfilled. Thus, is it ordained by the policy of credit, and by the rules of justice." Enough having been, already adduced, to prove the rights of the Spanish American provinces, in the eye of the law, to be very different from their existing civil and political situation, as described by every author who has written on the subject, it would be both useless and tedious, to trace the gradual stages of those infractions of their laws and rights, which the despotism of the kings of Spain, and the corruption of their ministers, had successively committed. When the minister of France, was penning the above words, it would almost seem, as if he had in view, the promises of the Spanish government, ever ready to offer but backward to fulfil. Though, individual wrong, could seldom penetrate to the foot of the distant throne, general abuses, did, sometimes, arrest the attention, and bias the mind of the feeling or politic prince, or his minister, and royal orders were sent out to correct the defect complained of. These royal orders and sovereign resolutions, were placed on record, and under formal injunctions, remitted to America; but far from being fulfiiled, by those who ought to have been foremost to give the example of obedience and submission to the king, they laughed at them, and in the term of the country, called them *unconsecrated hosts** Hence, originated numerous consequences, not only fatal to the country, but also injurious to the sovereign, who had placed the constituted authorities there, for no other purpose, than to watch over the happiness of his far-removed subjects, and to fulfil his special orders, relating to them. From this inobservance of the laws and royal orders, it resulted to Spanish America;

* *Hostias sin consagrar*, that is, from being unhallowed, not deserving of notice.

1st. That, arbitrariness, despotism, and terror, were the devices of the Spanish rulers, and, that, the above, were their springs of action.

2nd. That, being the first to infringe the law, they were, also, the first to deserve the punishments prescribed for similar crimes; and, that, their bad example, in this deviation from equity, and from the will of the sovereign, if it did not authorize it, at least, shewed to the American subjects, the road to separate themselves, from a dominion, unjust, rash, odious, and tyrannical.

3d. That, dubious, whether redress had been obtained, and often judging that just remonstrances had been treated with disdain, the part of the community interested, attributed to the despotism of the minister, or of government, what was, alone, arbitrary, on the part of its agents abroad.

4th. That, in individual cases, money, humiliations, and often-times meanness, were the only means to obtain justice, and even to see the laws executed; and that, though the Americans were sensible of, and deplored the aggravations under which they laboured, they had no local redress, nor scarcely a distant one, since the minister, who patronized his transatlantic bashaw, was the medium between the king, and the complainant.

5th. That, these mandataries, often became the tools of a corrupt minister, who, in mutual concert, sported with the distress and sufferings of the Spanish Americans, thereby, inducing them to conclude, that promises, and not works, were all that fell to their lot.

6th. That, the colonial chiefs, being Europeans, and biassed by provincial predilections, reserved every thing for their own; and that, it was an usual policy, in order

to secure their power, to encourage divisions between the former and the natives of the country.

7th. That, these chiefs, thereby, became the absolute interpreters of the law, and that they were practically subordinate to no one, since, to no one, had they to render an account.

8th. That, a system of distrust and jealousy, had pervaded every act of the viceregal governments, whose agents, by commanding the armed force, and rendering civil justice subservient to their own will and caprice, had caused despotism to supplant the liberality of the laws, and to frustrate the intentions of the king, even, when they were benign.

From general premises and deductions, like the above, it would, however, be impossible to form an adequate idea of the principles of the system, by which Spain has been so long governing her American provinces; which, as before remarked, by its extreme degradation, had at last, even amongst other more liberal nations, acquired the term *colonial*; it will, therefore, be requisite to descend to more minute particulars, and to enumerate, with a degree of correctness, the privations, insults, and invasions of right and law, under which the transatlantic natives, have so long laboured. This picture, in which each corresponding shade will appear in lively and distinct colours, will, at the same time, render the preceding delineation of primitive rights, together with their infraction, more glowing and forcible; and, by thus exhibiting the viceregal despotism, to be more injurious, and more tyrannical, than even the defects of old institutions, in the hands of unprincipled power; the reader will be enabled to judge, correctly, of the situation of the Spanish Americans, at the period, when their Peninsular brethren, heroically rose in arms, for the double purpose

of resisting the insidious invasion of the French, and in order to better their own political and social condition.

§ The various sections of the great continent of Spanish America, were divided into nine, distinct, and isolated governments, independent of each other, and acting only in concert with the king, and his supreme council of the Indies, with whom their communication was direct. They were given in charge to viceroys and captain generals, named as the representatives of the king; and their command, owing to defects in original institutions, distance, and the various reasons above detailed, was rendered illiberal, oppressive, and improvident. Holding the supreme authority, and concentrating, within themselves, the civil, military, and administrative commands, without any local check to keep them in awe or control, they not only tyrannized over the individual, but the whole of the country under their jurisdiction, was forced to contribute to their emoluments, in order to enable them, when their command had expired,† to return home, with sufficient treasure to gild over their wrongs, and to place them beyond the reach of justice. The laws of the Indies, had, indeed, originally, placed many restrictions, on the chief transatlantic agents, for the purpose of promoting the better administration of government; but it was easy to elude them, and even their public infraction, was treated with impunity. The picture of colonial chiefs, as

* The viceroyalties, are, New Spain, Peru, Buenos Ayres, and Santa Fe de Bogatá. The captain-generalships, are, Guatemala, Caracas, Puerto Rico, Havanah, Chili, and Yucatan, in a military point of view. The Philipine islands in Asia, also constitute a captain-generalship.

* According to the laws, the period fixed for the command of a viceroy, or captain-general, was five yea

drawn by Say, is perfectly applicable to those of Spain. Enumerating the defects of colonial systems, he observes, "that as the colonial chiefs, do not consider the countries wherein they govern, as those in which they are to live the whole of their lives; they feel no interest in making them happy and prosperous; but, on the contrary, all their views are directed to enrich themselves; because they are aware, that, on their return home, the consideration they are about to receive, will be in proportion to the property they have amassed, and not according to the conduct they may have observed, during their government. If, to this is added, the arbitrary power, it is necessary to grant to those, who go to govern remote countries, we shall there find all the elements, which, in general, compose the worst of governments."* And if in our own distant establishments, where local checks existed, where comparative liberality and equity reigned, and where redress was attainable, chiefs have, sometimes, infringed the rights of the subject, and have been arbitrary and oppressive; we need not to be astonished, that this was the case, in the Spanish ultramarine provinces.

The assumed, as well as the delegated power of the said viceroys,† in its own nature, that is, comprising the executive, legislative, and military attributes, and, also, owing to the arrogant manner in which it was exercised, had, at length, not, only, become repugnant to every feeling of liberty and justice, but, had amounted to a motley despotism, the most scandalous that can be conceived. Besides being possessed of the absolute command, and,

* Economie politique, lib. 1. chap. 23.

† Their exorbitant power, is emphatically expressed, in one of their own sayings: Dios esta mui alto, el Rey en Madrid, y yo en Mexico. Meaning, that they are out of the reach of control.

against which, it was impossible to appeal; they were allowed to make generals and admirals, whom it was treason to disobey; so that, supported by Gothic tribunals, presided by European judges, with the faculty of interpreting the laws, and of judging of both the evidence and the fact, every one was subservient to their will, and trembled at their displeasure. It was under the unlimited authority of these Audiencias, or high courts of justice, that frequently were seen, clandestine decisions, nocturnal and arbitrary arrests, domiciliary visits, banishments without previous trial, besides numerous other vexations, practised by them, and their inferior satellites. How often, has the friend of humanity, shuddered to behold, and how often has the impartial and conversant writer of every nation revolted, as he penned the corrupt and debased manner in which the judicial proceedings of Spanish America, were conducted; and how many have been the victims constantly sacrificed to partiality, corruption, or revenge?* Scarcely is there a solitary instance on record, of the frequent violations of private right and public justice, at length, meeting with condign punishment; for it was the custom of the court, to uphold its agents in their crimes, under a maxim of national policy, that it was necessary to support the distant authorities, as the most efficient means to insure subjection.

* A Spanish American friend of distinguished family, and great liberality, after seeing the world, assured me, that he often shuddered at what he remembered of his youth. At the age of sixteen, he inherited the right of regidor, or member of the cabildo, or municipality; and in that capacity, and at the above age, he sat as judge on trials for death, it being to this court, that such cases were referred in the first instance. The office of regidor, corresponding to ours of alderman, was inheritable and purchaseable, in all Spanish America.

Thus, thoughout had been established, a practical colonial policy, calculated to depress and paralyze every effort of rising genius and labour; to rivet the poverty of the lower classes, and to blunt every charm of rational nature, and every feeling of social existence. The government of Spain, improvident and illiberal in itself, and sensible of its own wrongs and consequent insecurity, had, thence, become jealous, irritable and oppressive; till at last, little difference could be perceived, between the civil state of the Spanish Americans, and that of the peasant vassals, in the most oppressed of the feudal countries of our continent, as they lately stood, and as they are even yet to be found, in Russia.

Tributes generally, besides destructive *mitas*, in some sections, were exacted from the miserable aborigenes; the whole of whom, were constituted into the most unwarrantable and eternal pupilage and minority, and debarred from the means of acquiring property.* They were often forced to work, gratis, on the farms of the governors and *alcaldes*, and often their little earnings, by various means, were unjustly extorted from them. Humboldt says, that the legislation of Isabella and Charles V. had deprived the Indians of the most important rights enjoyed by the other citizens.† The venerable bishop of Mechoacan, also quoted by the above author, represented to the king, that in the present state of things, the moral perfection of the Indians was impossible, and that they were held in a state of extreme humiliation and misery; that they have no other means of existing, than by becoming

* The laws forbid an Indian to contract a debt exceeding twenty-five dollars, so that they were unable to earn a livelihood, as traders or farmers; servitude being alone open to them.

† Essai Pol. &c. vol. 1. chap. 4.

servants of the rich, whence results a clashing of interests, mutual envy, discord and hatred, which are rendered more terrible, by no intermediate state existing between them and the whites.* But monstrous and impolitic as were the regulations instituted for their regimen, and calculated to keep them in a state of eternal ignorance and misery, the personal cruelties and exactions they suffered from the European chiefs, were, still, of a more galling nature. They were, indeed, aware, that this habitual oppression, was not only opposed to the spirit of the law, but, also, in direct contradiction to the intentions and wishes of the king: but, yet it existed, and of what avail were the good intentions of the latter, when those who were to execute them, were the first to contravene?

All those, who, in the remotest manner, derived any origin from African blood, by the laws and by custom, were branded with perpetual infamy, and excluded from all society. In pursuance of an adopted principle of policy, that it was necessary to keep each class of the coloured natives, distinct and divided; the most cruel and unheard of punishments, prohibited their union and cohabitation.† Numerous specimens of the impolicy of the laws, as well as of systems founded on jealousy and distrust, which, particularly in the latter times, actuated the conduct of the cabinet of Madrid, might be quoted, if I feared not to exceed the limits of a letter like this. Both the Indians and descendants from African blood,

* Informe del Obispo de Valladolid de Mechoacan,&c. 1799.

† The words of the law are, "que para adelante, ningun negro ni negra se pudiese servir de Indio, ni India, so pena, que al negro que se serviese de India, se le cortasen los genitales, y si se sirviese de Indio, cien azotes para la primera vez." &c. &c. Vide Herrera, Dec. 8. lib. 6. cap. 12.

all of whom are denominated casts, in Spanish America, have experienced the miseries of a long degraded vassalage, so much had that inherent and habitual propensity to tyrannize, added to an injurious spirit of monopoly, broken down every barrier, erected by reason and justice, and prescribed by sound and enlightened policy.

Notwithstanding the original compacts made with the first settlers, the Creoles were gradually shut out from all participation in the local commands and dignities; in such manner, that on examining authentic records, it results: that from the period of the first settlement, up to the year 1810, out of 166 viceroys, and 588 Captain-Generals, Governors and Presidents, who have governed in Spanish America, in all 754; only 18 have been Creoles, and these few, merely, in consequence of their having been educated in Spain. Even the curacies, prebendaries, and in short, nearly every other civil, ecclesiastical, and military employment, were bestowed on Europeans, not according to merit, but often, as the reward of flattery, intrigue and court favour.* These unjust and

* It would be useless to carry back the reader, to a contemplation of the corrupt state of the Court of Madrid, under Charles IV. and Maria Louisa. The fact is, that almost every office, in America, had its fixed price, the same as a loaf of bread, and in general, all were disposed of, under the rose. The prices current, were as follow, Oidor, or Judge, in Mexico, or Lima, 12,000 dollars, in the other sections, 8000 do, collectorship of customs, 10,000 dollars, and so on, in proportion to the revenue of the office. Another means of obtaining a nomination, was, by marrying one of the maids of honour, who had, perhaps, been little else, than a pander to the pleasures and intrigues of the queen. Even the servants of ministers, were often invested with offices, and I could, from my personal knowledge, quote an instance, of a baker being sent out by even Galvez, as one of the colonial treasurers. And yet the natives of Spanish America, are commanded to bear all these insults and degradation, without repining.

impolitic privations, were so glaring to Spaniards themselves, that Dn. Malchor Macanaz, in his celebrated memorial, presented to Philip V. uses the following words. "As the natives of those, your Majesty's dominions, are equally deserving of filling the principal offices of their own country, it appears reasonable, that they should not be divested of all management in their own homes. I am fully persuaded, that in those countries, there are many discontented persons, not because they are under the control of Spain; but because they are cast down, and tyrannized by the very persons, who are sent over to exercise the duties of the judicature. Let your Majesty give these offices to subjects of that country, and by this means, disturbances will be avoided."* Other similar sentiments and avowals, from many enlightened Spaniards, might be quoted.

Thus, from the time of Phillip V, does it appear, that rapacious, and often, immoral Peninsulars, held every office of profit and distinction, and little else was left to the excluded natives, but ill treatment, continued insults and outrages, to such an extreme, that even, lately, the Mexico Consulado, or Board of Trade, composed of European members, in its solemn deliberations, manifested to the Cortes, *that the Americans were a race of monkies, filled with vice and ignorance, and antomata, unworthy* of *representing, or being represented.* The debates which took place in the Cortes, on the receipt of this singular communication, are to be found in its proceedings for Sept. 1811; yet similar, if not greater insults, might be quoted from the Cadiz prints.

Bribery and corruption were the springs by which

* Semanario Erudito, tom. 7.

every thing was moved; monopolies of various kinds, and in the most essential articles, absorbed the industry of the lower classes; and restrictions of trade and prohibitory systems, rendered every thing stagnant, and left the choicest productions of no value. Besides the onerous monopolies, which existed in favour of the crown, and of individuals, the liberty of the press was unknown, the planting of the vine, and olive, was forbidden in most sections,* generally the distilling of spirits, and also the growing of hemp and flax. It was unlawful to whale, or fish for cod, as well as to trade between the respective provinces,† not only in articles brought from Spain, but even in those of their own growth. Coasting trade was not allowed, intercourse with foreigners, was pronounced a capital crime, and punished as such.

Estrada observes, that the Spanish government, in order to hold the Americans in greater subjection to its own dominion, conceived that the best means, was not to permit them to manufacture any thing made in Spain, nor to grow, on their soil, any of her productions.‡ Hence they were forbidden to rival the wine, brandies, oil, rai-

* "Quedando expresamente prohibido para la Nueva España, Terra-firme y Santª Fe, los vinos, aguardientes, vinagre, aceyte de olivas, pasas y almendras del Peru y Chile, y privados rigorosamente en todas partes, los plantios de olivares y viñas." Vide Gazeta de Mexico, 6 de octubre 1804. also, Censor Extraordinario, No. 59. Cadiz, 1812.

† That this singular prohibition may not appear dubious, I quote the letter of the law: "Ordenamos y mandamos á los Vireyes del Peru y Nueva España, que infaliblemente prohiban y estorben este comercio y trafico entre ambos reynos, por todos los caminos y medios que fuere posible." Recop. Leyes Ind. Ley 79 Tit. 45.

‡ Examen imparcial, fol. 149.

sins, almonds, silks, cloths, glass, &c. of the mother country, on whom they became dependent for supplies of these articles. They were not suffered to work the quicksilver mines, with which their country abounds; and the king preferred to expend a considerable sum, annually, in the port of Trieste, than that the Americans should not be beholden to him, for the requisites to amalgamate their ores. Another unjust and impolitic principle in the colonial policy of Spain, was, that one section, was to be sacrificed to the advantage of another. In 1792, the cabildo of Lima, petitioned the court to prohibit the planting of the sugar cane in Chili, in order to render the latter dependent on them for this article, and it was granted. Chili was also refused permission to grow tobacco, almost, now, become a necessary of life amongst all Spaniards, and was thus forced to draw its supplies from the Peruvian district of Lambayque, though its quality was the very worst. Acapulco and Mexico, were not suffered to take the wine, olives, raisins, and almonds of Chili; and in many other instances, unequal and disproportioned shackles, were placed between the respective provinces. In Chili, a company was established to catch seals, which abound on the coast and contiguous islands, but the court refused its sanction, notwithstanding the subjects of the United States of North America, were allowed to whale and seal on all the shores of the South Seas. The great restrictions on the importations of books, were, also, ex-

† It was, only, on the other side of Cape Horn, that wine, oil, brandies, raisins, and almonds, were allowed to be raised, though every other section is congenial te their growth. This was in consequence of the length of the voyage, for articles of so heavy a nature.

tremely grievous; for, if any thing besides prayer-books and catechisms, escaped the vigilance of the custom house searcher, it was difficult to elude the fangs of the Inquition, on whose expurgatory list, were to be found, the best and most useful authors in modern languages. It even entered into the colonial policy of Spain, to hide from the Americans, the real and faithful details of the primitive conquest of their country; so much so, that the works of Las Casas, who was, at the same time, venerated as a saint, were forbidden by Government, because they constituted a true and just picture of the horrors and cruelties, committed by the first conquerors against the inoffensive Indians, and enumerated the ravages and destruction of the primitive towns, with all the ardour of a christian, and all the truth of an eye witness. Epic poems, and romances, in praise of the first conquerors, like the history of Solis, were, alone, suffered to be read, and in which the ignorance and vices of the defenceless natives, were alleged, as a plea for the unheard of butcheries, which so soon depeopled the lately discovered sections of the new world. It is, only, when Spanish America is freed from base despotic power, and the freedom of the press, established, that the occurrences of the primitive conquests, will be fairly known to the world. The friend of humanity, has still many fresh tears to shed over the more faithful picture of the first ravages; and his heart will, often yet, beat with sympathy, at the untold degradation heaped on the Indians, for more than three hundred years.

By being deprived of foreign trade, the Spanish Americans, were obliged to pay for their clothing, three times dearer than it was worth; and as there was no competi-

tion, and most of their territorial productions were not consumed in the Peninsula, they were under the necessity of selling at low prices. During the wars, in which Spain has been engaged, the evils of this exclusion, have been incalculable, and, amongst other things, so great has been the want of iron, so necessary for the implements of agriculture, that, in Quito, according to Ulloa, it has sold for one hundred dollars, per hundred pounds weight, and steel for one hundred and fifty ditto.* Ou rown navigation act, by which we hold an exclusive trade, has been quoted as an excuse for Spain, and as a correct example, how all parent states ought to act to their colonies; but even, if such was the relative situation of the Spanish American provinces, (and sufficient concurrent testimony, has been brought forward, to prove the contrary) the adoption of the same law, on the part of Spain, would not either be just or political, at the present moment, from her neither having ships, credit, capital, nor manufactures. British settlements are restricted to our own ships, because they can always have them cheaper, and better protected than others; and because this is one of the clauses of their original compact. Were the impossible case, however, ever to occur, and by any unforeseen event, we were to be deprived of a sufficient number, for colonial purposes, it would be both cruel and unjust, that the productionsof our planters, should rot on their farms, for want of conveyance home. When Lord Chatham asserted, that not a nail ought to be manufactured in our late North American settlements, it would have been most tyrannical, if this article had not been manufactured in England, and that at a cheaper rate, than any where else.

Patriotic societies, which had for object, beneficence,

* Viage a la America Meridional, Part 1. Lib. 5. No. 713.

and the dissemination of knowledge, under the most specious pretexts, were prohibited; as well as the study of the laws, and rights of nations, which latter, were supposed to form no part of the claims of the Americans. The Indian college of Tlalclolco was abolished, because the natives of colour, therein acquired information. Cacique Cirilo de Castilla, spent thirty years of his life, in endeavouring to found an Indian college, in La Puebla, but died in Madrid, without succeeding. Dn. Juan Francisco, an Opata chief, travelled to Mexico on foot, a distance of five hundred leagues, and then crossed the ocean to Madrid, solely to solicit a grant to found a school in his own interior province, for the only purpose of teaching his fellow Indians, the first rudiments; and he was refused by the council of the Indies, in 1798. A patriotic society, established by the benevolent Villaurrutia, in Guatemala, for the object of encouraging the arts and sciences, was, also, interdicted, as offensive to the views of the court,

The numerous instances of a similar nature, I could quote, would almost exceed credibility; and any other than the practical observer, would be induced to doubt their existence. In a country, like England, where the king, and also the dignitaries of the crown, are the active, as well as the professed patrons of benevolent establishments and institutions, for the care and instruction of the lower orders, it will scarcely be believed, that when Charles IV. was solicited to found an university in the city of Merida, in the captain-generalship of Caracas, his Majesty, in his royal cedula, or decree, after consulting the council of the Indies, and the fiscal, refused permission, alledging, *that he did not conceive it proper, for learning to become general in America.*

Thus, whilst the other nations of Europe, devoted their best exertions, to spread useful knowledge among all orders of society; whilst, even those which had colonies, hastened to make them share in every thing liberal and enlightened, they themselves attained, Spain alone, was prohibiting the extension of useful knowledge in her transmarine provinces, and debarring them from the progressive advances of the latter centuries; on a system, and in conformity to principles, which can scarcely be supposed to exist, even in the most uncivilized and barbarous nations. This strange obliquity of intellect, can be explained in no other way, than by adverting to the narrow-minded and bigotted manner, in which all her governmental transactions have been conducted; nor could such instances of antisocial principles be credited, were they not derived from the best authorities, and proved by the testimony of all those, who have been observant in Spanish America. The Inquisition, with all its horrors, and exclusively composed of European judges, like the police of Napoleon, was charged to watch over every one who murmured against government, whose instrument it had become, rather than that of religion. In short, the despotism of Asia, or Turkey, scarcely presents a picture more horrid and debased, than the policy acted upon by the European Spaniards in their American provinces; one, that, in defiance of every just principle, and in direct opposition to the law, not only existed, but had gradually grown into a most undeviating regularity of actual system.

Hitherto, therefore, it would appear, that the inhabitants of Spanish America, have been treated, rather as the meek and servile servants of their European masters, than

as men, endowed with the same understanding, equal to them in rights, and, by the laws of justice and of nature, entitled to the same privileges and social footing. In most countries, where civilization has superseded the ravages of conquest, the individual has some degree of personal protection against injustice, by the impartiality and soundness of the laws, by these being fixed and unchangeable, or by the correct manner in which they are administered; for it is a folly to suppose, that a society could ever long, and properly subsist, that is not protected by adequate codes. Few, indeed, are the established societies, so wretched, and so destitute, as not to have some check or other on the powerful, and some provision made against arbitrary power, and the despotism of their rulers; but, in this number, Spanish America might be counted; for experience has proved, that an appeal, at the distance of two thousand leagues, before a corrupt court, had no other effect, than to aggravate the case. How many unfortunate claimants, unjustly deprived of their property, have collected the last remnant of their fortunes, and have crossed the ocean to seek redress at the foot of the throne; but if Americans, they have had to expend the whole, and, perhaps, the remainder of their lives, in seeking, what from principle and corruption, was denied them, but what, in justice, could not be withheld. How many such instances, are there, not on record; how many, up to the present day, yet occur; nay, how many victims of vengeance and injustice, could not the prisons of Cadiz, at the present moment, disclose? How many, in the dungeons of both hemispheres, are now dragging a wretched existence, or perishing in hopeless captivity; without trial, or without having, even, been notified of the

cause of their sufferings? The records of the colonial policy, and of the judicial proceedings of Spain, applied to her ultramarine settlements, have been filled with the greatest horrors; nor is there a pretext of any nature, that will amount to a justification of a continuance of such outrages. Yet, are we astonished, that the settlements have sought redress; nay, we, ourselves, have been deaf when they appealed to us as a nation, and sought our interference, as a shield against the horrors by which they were surrounded; and this under such grievances, as those already sketched, and after the most friendly assurances on our part. When they called on the universal sympathies of mankind at large, and strong in so sacred and just a cause, addressed themselves to us, we were the only nation that acted with indifference, and that negatively told them, their object was unjust, and that the Spaniards were acting right, in punishing them as wanton insurgents, and in filling their country, with horror and devastation.

Unjust and improvident as was this colonial system I have just sketched, it was nevertheless exercised over one of the richest and most interesting portions of the globe, and inhabited by seventeen millions of people, more enlightened than their European brethren, more liberal, and possessed of a character and disposition, filled up with many interesting traits. There is in the Creole, a degree of sensibility, which, whilst the partial European has often construed into effeminacy, partakes more of the finer feelings; and though, at first sight, it may have the appearance of languor, and a want of energy, facts, have, nevertheless, proved, that the native of Spanish America, is not divested of courage, but, that he

seldom descends to cruelty. Gifted with a warm and brilliant imagination, his mind is adapted to every science that is not peculiarly dry and abstruse; and amongst the literary characters the settlements have produced within few years, almost all have been Creoles; indeed, in the very Cortes, the most eloquent and liberal, are of that class. I make these few incidental remarks, because, the natives of the country to which I allude, amongst us, are partially known, and not justly appreciated. Fortunately, also, the upper classes, as previously stated, have, by dint of perseverance, overcome most of the obstacles opposed to mental improvement; in such manner, that the European traveller is now astonished at the various acquirements, which, in general, they have attained, and which he would have thought impossible, under the political despotism, in which they have been so long held.

However, snch as I have just pencilled; has been the degraded aspect of the transmarine government, and such the melancholy picture, the Spanish Americans have presented, for 300 years; and scarcely is there a country where the smallest spark of rational freedom, and of civil liberty has existed, that has not lamented the fate of that injured people, and condoled with their abject state. Since the time of Raynal, scarcely has there been a pen employed in describing those varied and extensive regions, that, after enumerating their neglected resources, has not deplored the unnatural subjection in which they were kept, and the privations to which they were reduced. All governments, with regard to the citizen, ought to have a just and moral power; but, very much the reverse, was that by which the Spanish settlements were ruled; ingratitude was the basis of the colonial policy of Spain, and

that same ingratitude which placed the immortal Columbus in chains, was perpetuated to all the countries he discovered.

This enquiry into the ancient, but violated laws, as well as into the colonial policy of Spain, I conceived necessary, to the more complete, and full comprehension of the state of Spanish America, at the beginning of the 19th century; and even up to the commencement of the patriotic cause of the Peninsula; a period at which, the rest of Europe, was astonished by political occurrences, more remarkable and momentous, than any to be found in the historical annals of that country. I have, purposely, examined the laws of the Indies, as the most correct means of establishing the relative, and social footing of that people, for whose exclusive government, they were enacted; and after recapitulating their primitive compacts, undertaken on the most solemn pledges of kingly faith, and successively guaranteed by the most express, and repeated acts of Spanish legislation; I have supposed, that a faithful picture of the present colonial policy of Spain, would be the most sure criterion, to judge, whether there has been any deviation from the original rights and prerogatives of the Spanish American subjects; and whether or not, they required redress and reform. If, I have enumerated the galling restraints on civil liberty, as well as in many other shapes, which existed; and, if, in short, I have represented the situation of that country to be most deplorable, where the order of a corrupt minister, had, often acquired the force of law, and where every thing was venal, degraded, and oppressive; it was in order to promote an enquiry, whether these same abuses have been continued, since the boasted rege-

neration of Spain; and whether, when a most favourable opportunity offered, the late governments of Cadiz, have complied with this most sacred of all their duties, by bringing alleviation to the ills of their distant brethren, on which, principally, depended, the future salvation of the whole monarchy.

In examining all the principles of the theory, and the practical circumstances of the case in view, I have been guided, only, by such documents and records, as could be relied on; and these premises once established, it will be easy to judge, correctly, of the point at issue; particularly after the subjoined display of every thing material, that has occurred in Spanish America, and in the Cortes, on this important subject, of which details will be brought forward, in the course of this production. If, I have defined, in an ample manner, the primitive, but long-invaded rights of the Spanish Americans; it was to ascertain whether the infractions of their past rulers, have been remedied by the present ones; and whether, every thing allowed by reason, by justice, and even by the laws, has been practically granted to them. If, I have explained the relative situation of Spanish America, to Spain; it was not only to clear up doubts, under which we, ourselves, have long laboured, and in order to establish, that Spanish America, from being an equal, incorporated, and integral part of the Spanish monarchy, has equally become our ally; but, also, to elicite an impartial search, into the conduct and disquisitions of the Cortes on the existing dissentions. My object is, to demonstrate, on which side rests, the blame of so many horrors and ravages, now committing in the transmarine provinces of Spain, and consequently, to ascertain, which party is to be charged with ingrati-

tude and injustice. If my premises and deductions should turn out correct, it will result, that the situation of Spanish America, instead of being bettered, since the period of the late changes in the Peninsula; had rather become worse; nor, do I doubt, that experience and faithful observation, will fail to authorize the tenour of my allegations. If my conclusions are fairly made, it will be proved, that it was not the remembrance of past evils and infractions; it was not a spirit of wanton innovation, and undue revenge; but rather, the recent pressure of fresh aggravations and unprovoked insults, which first roused the natives of Spanish America, which urged them to resist the tyranny of the Cadiz rulers, and to seek, by force, what, on remonstrance, had been denied them. In short, the subsequent details on which I shall soon enter, will tend to evince, that the situation of the transmarine provinces, instead of being ameliorated by the regeneration of the parent state, had, in fact, become more degraded; so ancient, and so habitual, was the practice of the heads of government, and of the monopolists of the trading ports, to consider the kingdoms of America, as dependent colonies, only destined to contribute to the luxury and advantage of the mother country, and as a fruitful harvest, intended, only, to enrich the impoverished natives of the Peninsula.

§ Nor do the people of Spanish America, appear to have been, altogether, insensible to the hardships and privations under which they had so long lived. Prior to the present situation of things, some attempts had been made by the Indians, to obtain, by force of arms, a partial redress and reform in the governing system, the whole of which, seem to have had for object, to with-

stand or limit, the oppressions and exorbitant exactions of the *Alcaldes* and *Encomenderos*; and though unsuccessful, they, nevertheless, prove, that the natives were alive to all their wrongs, and were indignant, to be thus dealt with, by their cruel task-masters.* It would not, however be possible, in this place, to enter into the details of these transactions, or of those which took place in other sections, amongst the whites; they would be tedious, and, are, at least, partially, known in Europe. Hence, however, has it happened, that most of our political writers, who have fundamentally discussed this question, and have examined the situation of both Spain, and her settlements; have been of opinion, that the former, could not, long, hold the latter in dependence and subjection. They, indeed, conceived, that the influence, affinity, and identity of religion, customs, and prejudices, might, for some time, retard the period, when Spanish America, would shake off so galling a yoke; but they all pronounced, that according to the late growth, and moral improvement of the settlements, the period was not far distant, when the present century began.

They reasoned, however, from analogy, and not from

* I cannot refrain from announcing, that shortly will be published here, an account of the revolution of Inca Tupac-Amaru, in Peru, from authentic documents, found in the public offices of Buenos Ayres and upper Peru, since the changes of government. It is high time, that the cruelties committed by the Spaniards on the Indians of Peru, about the year 1780, and which have purposely been kept so secret, should be laid before the world, in an authentic shape. At sight of the mass of information that will henceforward be laid before the public, it will be seen, whether the most callous Briton, could put his hand on his heart, and say, Spanish America required not a radical reform.

local knowledge; for without the late revolution in Spain, and without the ungrateful conduct of her present governments, no general commotion could have taken place; and even now, the Spanish Americans are very far from wishing to change their allegiance; that is, if they are to be dependent on any European power, they will always prefer Spain; even, though conquered by the French, notwithstanding the oppression of her government. We are not, however, to be astonished, since information has become more general, that the political events of Europe, from 1789, should have excited a lively interest amongst a people, who have been long sensible of their abject situation, and who have been aspiring to the extension of rights, which, as I have already manifested, in effect, belonged to them; when this privation, was not only a material obstacle to the mutual prosperity of both countries; but, has, also, now become, a motive of such just resentment, against the parent state.

§ But, before I proceed any further, I conceive it necessary, previously, to take a short retrospective view, of what was, at one time, the decided policy of the British government, with regard to Spanish America, and what professions were then made in its name; as a better deduction may be thence formed, of the manner in which we have abandoned the interests of that injured continent, since our present treaty with the Peninsula.

Long, and rational has been the boast, that in our sea-girt isle, the lamp of freedom burned with a clear and steady flame; a blessing, which, whilst we enjoyed, we have never failed to regret, was not equally the portion of others. Early, therefore, did the people of Eng-

land, imbibe sentiments of compassion, and feelings of personal interest, for the natives of Spanish America; which were gradually confirmed and strengthened, by the writings of Robertson and others, as well as by the line of policy some of our late ministers traced out, for their political conduct. Our illustrious Pitt, felt this just and rational sympathy, and clearly saw, that the improvement of so immense and diversified a continent, would not only redound to the advantage of Europe in general; but would, in a pre-eminent degree, contribute to the commercial prosperity of the nation, over which he presided. He was undoubtedly aware, that Spain, from her geographical position, from the debased state of her government, and her want of energy, industry, and firmness; could be considered, as little else than a province of France; who, by the sale of her goods, and by the exactions of her government, absorbed all the treasure that arrived from the settlements, of which Spain was scarcely more than the landing place. He evidently saw, that the resources of the continental war, were, thus considerably increased; and with a magnanimity and foresight peculiar to his character, he resolved to cut off this annual accession of wealth from our rival, and to give it a new channel. That same enlightened statesman, reasoning on the independence of Spanish America, and contemplating the wonderful changes, the discovery and possession of that immense and fruitful country, produced on the continent of Europe, nay, in the whole world, even when its resources were yet in embryo; naturally calculated the greater change that must ensue, from its separation, in its present comparatively advanced state; and that the benefits, thence to be derived, would, consequently, result

in favour of the country, that aided to effect so important an event.

Forcibly urged by these strong and flattering convictions, Mr. Pitt, had ever present to his mind, a change so desirous and momentous, and for the furtherance of his views, and in conformity to his plans, natives of that country were encouraged and collected; some were placed in the charge of our government, and projects were formed. Unfortunately for England, as well as for Spanish America, with very few exceptions, the characters thus encouraged, were neither men of influence, information, or connections; they were, in general, mercenaries, rather intent on their own personal interest and aggrandizement, and if we may judge from the plans adopted in the subsequent ministry, and the complete darkness, in which the government has been kept with regard to Spanish America, and the manner in which it has been misled, they never knew the public sentiment of that continent, and I have the best founded reasons to add, they had neither abilities, nor principles, to aid in any cause, that was to be conducted on the basis of liberality and honour. When the services of such characters, are, still preferred to the sacrifices, approved zeal, and unrequited exertions, of our own subjects; no wonder that the Spanish Americans complain, that our ulteriour views towards them are dishonourable, and that we should, yet, know so little of this valuable portion of the globe, whose resources are so fast wasting from us.

The plans Mr. Pitt adopted for the Spanish settlements, appear to have been an absolute independence, and an entire separation from the mother country. Yet, this was a work of a very complicated and gigantic nature;

the means and persons employed, were not adequate; nor were the settlements in a state of maturity, for such an event, or, even disposed for its accomplishment. Posterior circumstances, have proved, in a manner the most evident, that, notwithstanding the wrongs of the Spanish government, a mere reform was wished; and, that the natives of those distant, and injured settlements, were not tired of the name of Spaniards. Perhaps, there is not an instance, when this question was popular in England, in which, both the public and the government, were more deceived, than in the one here alluded to. The fate of our own expeditions to South America, convinced us, that its natives were not debased enough to submit to conquest; and the stages at which the more recent insurrections yet stand, most clearly demonstrate, that the ties of the mother country, were too strong, to be easily shaken, much less so, by exteriour interference. Loyalty was never wanting in Spanish America, and the manner in which the natives have defended their own coasts,* the sacrifices they have, so long, made for the parent state, and their late antipathy to the French, unequivocally prove its existence. It has, only, been (as will, hereafter, be more fully evinced) since ingratitude has been thrown into the cup of the other ills, the settlements had to endure, that the people have been roused, that they have attempted open resistance; but, even yet, they have not generally expressed sentiments, coincident to independence; nay, they yet cling to the Spanish name, revere

* It is a fact, that prior to the expulsion of the Jesuits, no regular Spanish troops were on the American establishment. The unpopularity of this measure, made it requisite to be provided against insurrections of the Indians, which immediately followed, in 1780.

the same monarch; the Cadiz government, alone, is the dissentient point.

There are too many public testimonies, on record, for it to be doubted, that the British government was, at one time, busied in either plans of reform, or of separation, for the Spanish American settlements; but they do not appear to have been, publicly, and officially, announced and avowed to them, till June, 1797; notwithstanding the different neighbouring governors, had, long, been corresponding on the subject. About that period, General Picton, governor of Trinidad, by orders of Mr. Secretary Dundas, addressed and circulated a proclamation on all the contiguous main, which, from the express manner in which it acknowledges, the *oppression and tyrannic system exercised there*; as well, as from its containing the most ample and express proffers of friendship; besides actual assurances, of England being ever ready to give *aid and support, whenever the inhabitants were disposed to make use of it*; I have conceived highly illustrative of my present subject; and have, consequently, placed it in my Appendix, under the head of A; as its insertion in this place, would interfere, too much, with the body of my text. This, was a solemn and sacred pledge, then made to the people of Spanish America, that England felt for their debased situation; was sensible of their wrongs, and was, at all times, ready to redress them. This, was an act, as solemn and as binding, as our first engagements made with the Asturian and Sevilian deputies; and though it would have been inconsistent and dishonourable in England, in such moments as these, to have abetted the absolute independence of Spanish America, it was, however, a most sacred obligation and bounden duty, on her part, to see that the objects of her former promises, now attached to her by a new alliance,

were not butchered as ingrates, totally undeserving of her regard. Her former offers, added to the fresh bonds, she had just contracted with the whole Spanish monarchy, ought to have urged her, to apply those principles of truth and reason, as well as that manly promptitude, which, in general, have guided her cabinet, not only in objects of policy and legislation, but, also, in all foreign transactions, in order to hinder the destruction of the best portion of that same monarchy, that had, now, become our ally, and the common feelings of men, ought to have made us feel for a flagrant and crying injustice, of which we bore a proportionate blame, and of which, eventually, we shall experience the deepest consequences.

Such, as contained in document A. were the sentiments and professions, which the British government, by express command, caused to be manifested and circulated on all the Southern continent of America, and such the assurances which were never withdrawn. They are on public record, they are well remembered by the natives, to whom they were often individually repeated; and up to the time of the late Spanish revolution; and till a change of policy took place, similar sentiments were confirmed by all the governors of the contiguous islands. Thus, did England stand pledged; thus, did she acknowledge the oppression under which the Spanish Americans laboured; and after such a confession, after an offer so solemn and so voluntary; they had the best founded reasons to look up to her, as their future deliverer, from that same oppression, she had so often, and so explicitly deplored. They had substantial grounds to believe, that her sympathetic sentiments were real and sincere; that they had not been proposed as a snare, or under the guise of momentary interest. The least, they were, thence, autho-

rized to expect was, that, when they were equally patriotic, equally enemies of the French, equally ready to join in the common cause,and when their wishes were the best, that England would never commit herself, so far, as to abandon them to the fury of their enemies, and to deliver them up to the devastating scourge of a cruel war, waged between irritated brethren. Yet, can it be believed, that when the newly constituted authorities of Caracas, appealed to the justice and generosity of the British government, in a most eloquent and pathetic letter (hereafter quoted) to the king, and only complaining of the illegality of the new governments of Spain, that not an answer was deigned to their communication, nor an efficient measure adopted, to stop the evils, which daily increased.

It was about the period of our dispute with Spain, respecting Nootka Sound, that Mr. Pitt first commenced his projects, for revolutionizing the Spanish possessions in America, and opening their lost resources to more general enterprise. It would be foreign to my present purpose, here, to endeavour to trace the various engines set to work, in the first place, to obtain information, and afterwards to construct plans, which might eventually lead to the political emancipation of that quarter of the globe, and insure its regeneration. Many of them, have, already, studiously, been laid before the British public, either in Reviews, in detached Tracts, or in the Annual Registers. Most of them, would warrant the assumption, already, made, that the means projected and employed, were neither adequate or congenial; and abundance of positive testimony, might be adduced, to prove, that the beneficent intentions of our ministers,were, in some cases, egregiously imposed upon. It would, at the same time, be irrelevant here, to discuss the merits of that part of Mr. Pitt's pro-

ject, which related to the expediency of interesting the United States of North America, by a proportionable co-operation, in the emancipation of their sister continent; or, to dwell on a renewal of the same projected scheme, during the administration of Lord Sidmouth. They may be seen, at some length, in the Edinburgh Review, for January, 1809; and many interesting particulars, may, also, be collected, from the instructions given to Generals Crawford* and Whitelocke; and in the trials of the latter, of Lord Melville, and Sir Home Popham. The fact is, that at the period to which I allude, in Europe, vast and brilliant plans existed, on paper, for the emancipation and political regeneration of Spanish America, when, at the same time, its natives were neither predisposed, or even acquainted with what was meditating so far off, for the amelioration of their lot. Eventually, these long projected plans, ended in injudicious attempts to subject them, by the force of arms; and to impose upon them, a fresh allegiance, against which, they had the strongest prejudices. Roused by the spirit of freedom, and galled by the experience of the past, the American provinces might have been induced to throw off the Spanish yoke; but instead of leaving these results to the energies of mind, and to the gradual, and more effective means of convincing its natives of their degradation and abject state, and animating them, by the prospect of a brighter era which awaited their own exertions, we not only attempted by the bayonet, to rend asunder, all the ties which united them to the soil, from whence they derived their origin; but we held out to them, what, as

* General Crawford, with 5000 men, was bound against Chili, where it is reported he had before been incognito to take plans.

they conceived to be, was a greater degradation than the one, we sought to remove.

So much was the British government engaged in its plans for the Spanish main, that expeditions were sent to Buenos Ayres; but their failure having been, already, attributed to, partly, the right causes, viz. to the plans of conquest, and to the attempt, of, merely, giving the chains of the people, another form; it will not be necessary, here, to enter into any further particulars. Even up to the breaking out of the present Spanish patriotic cause, a fresh expedition was ready to put to sea, commanded by Sir Arthur Wellesley, and to be accompanied by General Miranda and others; the troops and commander of which, afterwards sailed to the Peninsula, from their rendezvous at Cork. These circumstances were not unknown to the Spanish Americans, and such demonstrations, added to the solemn declarations they had continued to receive, from the year 1797, amounted to an undoubted certainty, that interest and liberality, would urge the cabinet of St. James, when in its power, to interfere, at least, for an amelioration of their lot; and that, when they had offered to become parties in the war against the French, they would not be left, deserted, and abandoned to their fate; more especially at a time, *when they only asked for reform*, and for the restoration of those rights, of which they had been unjustly dispossessed. When they appealed to England, as their umpire, little did they dream, that she would behold, with cold apathy, those very struggles, she, herself, had so lately excited and encouraged. Little did they suppose it possible, when they were only aiming at redress, and she had just before pledged to support, even, their independence, that England would not befriend them; and this, at a moment, when, had she only lifted

up her hand in time, nearly all bloodshed might have been spared, and the Spanish cause made doubly strong; whereas now, the Spanish monarchy is dismembered, civil wars have been enkindled, universal devastation has ensued, to such a lamentable degree, that, on a correct calculation, more lives have been, already, sacrificed in the Spanish American provinces, than in European Spain.

§ I have been more explicit in this short sketch of the former intentions, views, and professions of the British government towards the natives of Spanish America, because I have noticed the odium and rancour, our dereliction, and subsequent silence have caused; and, because, had it not been for these repeated assurances and demonstrations; as well as the positive conviction, that an attempt at reform, would coincide with the good wishes of England, and even with those of the whole liberal world, the provinces of Spanish America, would not have sought it; but, would have, still, hugged their chains, had they thought it consistent with justice, and the common feelings of men.

Urged by the love of common justice, if I have thus far, traced the hardships of the political situation of Spanish America, if I have pointed out the defects of the colonial system of Spain, and explained the arbitrary conduct of her governmental agents; it has not been for the purposes of reproach; but, rather, with a view to convey a just conception of the abject and degraded circumstances, under which, the Spanish Americans laboured, at the period, when the ruler of France, resolved on a change of dynasty in the Peninsula; and when the results of that debased venality and deep intrigue, by which he had, long, been preparing for the completion of his base design, became manifest to the astonished world. The unweildly power

of France, had, already, extended her limits, far beyond those known to her ancient kings; and a rapid succession of victories, aided by artifice and intrigue, had made the politics of the surrounding monarchs, subservient to the views of a chief, who had, dexterously, raised himself, on the ruins of republican anarchy and prescriptive right. To ordinary minds, one would have thought, that such acquisitions as these, would have been sufficient to satisfy the keenest cravings of ambition; but, in the bosom of such a man, as Buonaparte, in like manner, as in that of the hero of ancient history, he is most proud to imitate; this ever restless passion, like space, has no limits; and to conquer one world, was only to sigh for another.

To usurp the contiguous throne of Spain and the Indies, and place their sceptre in the hands of one of his own family, was a project he had long revolved in his aspiring breast; and consonant to his plans of universal monarchy, and general dominion, in 1808, he, openly, resolved to make the Peninsula, a domain of France. He was, already, in military possession of the principal frontier towns; and the persons of the Royal Family, had been, long, surrounded by his creatures. The degraded situation of Spain, was, also, propitious to so vile and hazardous a plot; and the general debility, which had spread throughout, was peculiarly favourable to the means employed for its execution. Charles IV. a weak and inactive prince, had then reigned about twenty years; but, from the time of his marriage with the princess of Parma, he had been so much under the control of his wife, whose scandalous intrigues had become an object of scorn to the meanest of her subjects, that scarcely an act of virtue or justice, had characterized his pusillanimous reign.

With such a monarch, and under the guidance of a minister, both a libertine, and a despot; Spain was, at this time, sunk in the most abject state of political torpor and debasement, and appeared to be on the eve, of falling an easy prey, to an insidious and powerful invader. The influence of the queen, and the excesses of her paramour, had spread dissentions between the king and his son; and the unprecedented favours shewn to an intriguing and ambitious, upstart, had not, only, alienated the minds of the nobles from the person of their sovereign; but, had, also, inspired contempt, amongst the lower orders of society. Spain, was, besides, without fleets, treasury, or arsenals; public credit had become extinct; and a considerable national debt, had been accumulated. Flattery, favours, and bribery, had, long, been the only means, by which employments had been obtained; the laws, had, frequently, been founded on the caprices of a corrupt premier; the court, and most of the higher classes, had become a prey to all kinds of immorality and dissipation; and every means of circulating liberal ideas, had been polluted. Patriotism and national interest, no longer preserved the union of society; the press was broken, or fettered; the public writers, were awed into silence, by proscription; or, shamefully, bribed to plead the cause of existing despotism, by ribbands, offices, or pensions; in short, every thing was grown into systematic tyranny and debasement, or consigned to the darkness and apathy of ignorance; whilst every spark of genius, merit, and liberality, were either damped, or extinguished.

Such, was the situation of Spain, in 1808, when Buonaparte threw off the mask of friendship, and entrapped the members of the Royal Family. I hasten to pass over

that brilliant display of patriotism and national feeling, which, immediately, burst forth in the whole Spanish nation; but, particularly, in the lower classes, where the contagion of the court had not reached; and, which, eventually, led to an alliance with ourselves. Confined, as I am, to the affairs of Spain, only, as they relate to the question, now under discussion, it would be perfectly irrelevant, here to call the attention of my readers, to military details, or to view the Peninsula, in the light of a grand theatre of successive, and brilliant victories. Those errors, also, of our policy, which contributed to weaken the affections of its inhabitants; and by which, the resources and energies of the country, have not been adequately called forth, or united, I leave, to a more able pen; certain as it is, that the public cannot long be deprived of a full exposé of the impolitic measures, and fatal effects of a weak diplomacy, which, if they have not greatly retarded the expulsion of the French, and stripped many of our brilliant successes of half their promised fruits; have, at least, detached the mass of the Spanish nation, so much from our interests, that they scarcely feel bound, either by the ties of gratitude, or by the tenour of that premature treaty, we so early made, with the first self created government of the Peninsula.—Whilst no language can be too strong, or too glowing, to pourtray the valour and prudence of our military chief, and the heroic ardour of his persevering troops; it is, at the same time, painful to reflect, how little effective co-operation has been obtained from a nation, that promised so much in the outset of its just cause; and how much its resources have been wasted and lost. It is lamentable to behold, the domestic anarchy and civil discord, which have been suffered to rankle and impair the energies of a

people, from whose enthusiastic and simultaneous insurrection, (being roused by the ingratitude of its foe, and, stimulated, also, by a loyal impulse,) so much was expected.—But, it is high time, to pass on, to that period of our connection with Spain, when our relations assumed the shape of a definitive treaty.

§ On the 14th of January, 1809, that is, after the Spanish nation had been receiving from the government and people of England, the most unequivocal and disinterested proofs of friendship, sincerity, and profuse aid, for upwards of seven months, a definitive treaty of peace and alliance was agreed upon, with the Central Junta of Seville, in the name of Ferdinand VIIth. This treaty stipulates, *a perpetual and sincere amity and strict alliance, and an entire and lasting oblivion of past hostilities.*—It was, further, agreed, that the contracting parties *should make common cause against France, that England should supply abundant succours, and by an additional article, it was, also, stipulated, that a treaty of commerce was to be carried into effect, at a more convenient time;* a promise, which apparently stands as a counterpoise, for the aid which England, was, about to give; and as an equivalent for the enormous expences she was, thereby, to incur; but which up to the present moment, has not been complied with—By some posterior arrangement, not attatched to the original treaty, as published in the prints of the day, and preserved in the Annual Registers; it was afterwards agreed, that England should *guarantee the integrity of the whole Spanish monarchy*; an obligation, which the Spanish government, has interpreted, as a positive exclusion to our interference with the American provinces; and as an actual engagement on the part of England, even, to employ force against their revolted inhabitants

as wanton insurgents; a compliance, with which, the Cadiz rulers have, since, more, than once, officially exacted. This stipulation, was, also, partly, announced in the king's message to both houses of parliament, on the 4th of July, 1808; wherein a pledge is given, to maintain the power and independence of the Spanish monarchy, *integral and entire.*

Such, is the substance of the engagements, which bound us in sacred and effective alliance with the whole Spanish monarchy: of which, as the American provinces constitute an equal and integral part, not only by the ancient laws of the realm, as already proved; but, also, by the more recent acknowledgments of the newly constituted authorities of the Peninsula, as will hereafter be seen; it appears strange, that it should now be interpreted, that this same treaty of alliance, was, exclusively, confined to European Spain. The want of some definite basis for the American provinces, added to the posterior conduct of both the Spanish and British governments, have, however, practically, given such interpretation to these engagements; thereby, constituting Spain, as the fully authorized and despotic parent state, and, thus leaving the American provinces, on the footing of dependent colonies, divested of any will of their own. This unfortunate and material error, out of which have arisen, most of the fatal dissentions, now so fast, dismembering the Spanish monarchy, to whom we then bound ourselves, and whose integrity we guaranteed, without explaining the real purport of so comprehensive a clause, has never yet been corrected, but has rather been confirmed by the acts and correspondence of the British ministers, in which mention has been made of the Spanish American pro-

vinces, as well as in every other transaction relating to them. It is, therefore, here, necessary to enter into some explanatory details, respecting our first treaty with Spain.

It was, unfortunately, at the very moment the Spanish patriotic cause broke out, and when the first deputies arrived from the Juntas of Seville and Asturias; that England lost the favourable opportunity, of complying with her ancient promises and engagements made with Spanish America; as well as of adding fresh strength and resources, to the new ones, on which she was about to enter, with European Spain. Founding herself on that self evident principle, that Spain could not, eventually, withstand the struggle, and repel the force preparing against her, but, by the aid and resources of her ultramarine provinces, England ought to have foreseen, that their union and allegiance, was not only necessary, but if possible, that it was, besides, requisite to increase their revenue, in order to multiply the essential means. When, therefore, Spain proposed the integrity of the monarchy, as a stipulation to her treaty, if she thereby understood the abject dependence of her *colonies*, she, as well as ourselves, must have been aware, that if they continued in their past degraded state, and under such an unjust a system, as that I have before pourtrayed, the advantages to be derived, would be but small; and that nothing, but a grand and radical reform, added to a full restoration of their rights, could adequately turn them to account. When England bound herself to give succours, Spain, reciprocally, pledged herself to exertion, and to husband her resources; and when the former guaranteed the integrity of the said *colonies*, as part of the entire monarchy, she must have been sensible, she was signing the warrant of a fresh war,

if Spain did not acquiesce in a just reform. Under the enthusiastic hopes, with which we embarked in the Peninsular struggle, we ought also to have foreseen, that in all times of need, Spain had been obliged to negociate loans in America;—that, in 1797, after the treaty made with the French at Basle, so great were her pecuniary wants, that she was obliged to borrow 17 millions of dollars in Mexico, to refund which, the crown-monopoly of tobacco, was placed in the hands of the lenders;—that when her invasion took place, according to the statements of Minister Count Cabarús, she had a national debt of 400 millions of dollars on her shoulders,—that her *Vales Reales*, or paper money, had depreciated 59 per cent,—that in the best of times, when her territory was untouched, and when under an active trade, and in the receipt of colonial products, her annual revenue did not exceed 35 millions of dollars;—and that, in short, by the alienation of the American provinces, the mother country would be deprived of the very nerve of war.

Spain, with great reason, relied on the many ties which bound the ultramarine provinces to her; but she must have known little of the feelings of the human heart, and less of the situation of her sister kingdoms, to suppose, that they were to be drained of their treasure, to be placed under a war system, and plunged into all its privations, for the sole purpose of aiding the mother-country to gain her independence; when, in return, their own chains, instead of being knocked off, were to be tightened and rendered more heavy. Whoever, like myself, has had an opportunity of viewing the Spanish Americans, attentively, must pronounce them the most loyal people any sovereign could wish; and it must further be confessed, that they gave to the term and to

the idea of mother-country, as well as to their constitutional monarch, a respect and veneration unexampled; but there is a point beyond which the most abject cannot proceed, and it was that, at which both Spain and America had arrived, when the transactions at Bayonne, roused both from their sullen torpor.

It was self evident, that Spanish America would not let slip, such an opportunity, as was about to present itself, without demanding the alleviations and political reformation, so essentially necessary to her own welfare; together with the restitution of those rights, of which she had been dispossessed, by the despotic conduct of her successive monarchs. This was, an event, easily calculated and foreseen; as well as, that, if denied, she would persist in her demands. This position being, therefore, correct, our guarantee of the integrity of the Spanish monarchy, that is, our authorizing Spain to treat her American provinces, with every species of harshness and injustice, we, pledging ourselves, at the same time, to stand aloof, can be considered, in no other light, than as an actual consent on our part, for one half of the Spanish nation, to tyrannize over the other; nor can this clause be interpreted in any other way, when all circumstances are considered, than as a prelude to that consequent declaration of war, which was, clearly, to result, since Spain seems never to have dreamt of redress, or reform. From this vague stipulation, which, we have, besides, left Spain to interpret, widely, to her own convenience, was, plainly, to result, the sacrifice of one half of the nation, whose united cause we were then espousing; and, in thus stepping forward, to guarantee a most flagrant act of injustice, and, in negatively, upholding Spain in the continuation of her oppressive and iniquitous conduct to her sister

kingdoms of America, we, ourselves, became a party, to the most atrocious outrage on the rights and liberties of an inoffensive people, that ever marked the annals of tyranny or imposture.

It has, indeed, been asserted in Spanish America, as a kind of excuse, but, God knows, with what degree of foundation, that the ministers of England, were, partly, surprised into this clause ; and that, when they assented to it, they were unaware of the latitude that could be given to its interpretation, and the destructive abuse, that could be made of their upright intentions. But, if this is the case, is it not high time, carefully, to ponder on this important point, and, to examine the fatal consequences, which have originated to so noble a cause, from this material oversight? Full of confidence in the rectitude of her principles, and, as the avowed protectress of reason and of justice, England entered into an alliance with Spain; but, if the consequences of that alliance, have been opposed to both, and, are, fast dismembering the monarchy, whose integrity, we, thereby, guaranteed, ought we, any longer, to delay, entering on a review of this part of our conduct; and, if possible, to fix on the most early remedy, to evils, which interest seventeen millions of our allied fellow creatures, of whom we have been, hitherto, unmindful, in the hour of sorrow.

In entering on such a treaty, as the one, to which I allude, the cabinet of St. James, must certainly have contemplated some objects of expediency; or at least, in an undertaking so expensive and so difficult, as that we then had before us, some account must have been made of the resources of Spanish America. If so, their being unexpectedly cut off, becomes a point of material consideration. Spain, even in time of peace, could scarcely

exist as a nation, although with the aid of her American provinces; for as already demonstrated, she had been long verging to a state of complete penury and degradation. We, certainly, must have been aware of this palpable fact, so soon, afterwards, confirmed by official statements laid before the nation; whereby it was proved; that, besides the interest of the national debt, the annual expences of government, amounted to 1,200,000,000 rials, to cover which, there was only a revenue of 255,000,000 do. thus leaving a deficit of 945,000,000 do.* If, such was the actual picture of Spain, at the beginning of 1811, that is, after 90 millions of dollars had been received from Spanish America, from the commencement of her patriotic cause, what must not have been her impoverished state, at the moment we formed our alliance, since so large a portion of her territory was in the hands of the French?

In such an exigency, Spanish America was the only country, on which, the government of Spain, could call for pecuniary aid and resources; it was evident she would refuse them, if not redressed; so that, a stipulation to this, or some other equivalent effect, ought to have preceded the one, by which we guaranteed the integrity of the Spanish monarchy; if it was, thereby, to be understood, that by this transaction, we did not intend to exclude the ultramarine provinces, from a concurrence and participation of benefits, in the very engagement, we were about to form, with European Spain. If, we had it

* Exposicion del ministro de Hacienda, sobre el Estado de la Tesoreria nacional. Real Isla de Leon, 25 de Feb. 1811.

then, in view, to give full efficacy to our new alliance, to hinder future misunderstandings and bickerings; and to call forth the united resources of the whole Spanish monarchy, in an active and condensed shape, against the common enemy; to combat whom, both divisions thereof, were, at first, so ready and so zealous; it was, from the commencement, not, only, essentially necessary to insure their perfect union and permanent co-operation, but, also, to peclude the possibility of its being, at any time, suspended. In order to render successful the grand scheme of warfare, into which we then entered for the immediate interests of Spain; instead of laying a groundwork that was to dismember the very nation, whose cause we were making our own, and, would, evidently, tend to disunite its forces, to infuse dissentions and distrust, and to waste so many valuable resources; we ought, in the very first moments, and by a solid and well defined basis, to have fixed the respective obligations of the parties thus contracting; we ought to have defined the relative situation, in, which, each was to stand in the general alliance; and by a full and explicit declaration and guarantee of our views and intentions, we should, thus, have hindered those misunderstandings and mutual clashings, which have materially foiled our projects in Spain; which have rendered our name odious to Spanish America, and have, also, filled this ill-fated country, with horror and devastation. If, we had then preferred to see Spain, enjoy the solid benefits of unanimity, security, and national honour, in the place of anarchy, and the transitory gratifications of bloody triumphs and fell revenge; by our said treaty, we ought not to have placed a barrier to the operations of reason, consistency and law; nor any ob-

stacle to retributive, justice being extended to the American provinces. The alliance of England, was sought, and solicited, by Spain, and, before it was matured into a specific and definitive form, it had been cemented by acts of friendship and sacrifices unexampled. If Spain was then *sincere* and grateful, and, if we looked for any compensation, to replace those sacrifices we were about to incur, this was the moment to have stipulated its nature, or, at least, to have established its basis. Had this, only, been done, in the first instance; had our treaty been made with European and American Spain, as equal and integral parts of the Spanish monarchy, and as, in fact, they stand; doubtlessly the government of Spain, would, in those moments, have acceded: nay, it would now have been thankful, that justice and liberality, had been made the groundwork of a transaction, by which so many melancholy consequences might have been avoided.

This, was the important moment to have traced a line for our own political conduct; then, it was, that we ought to have manifested to the Spanish nation, at large; what were our views on entering, with such cordiality, into so expensive and hazardous a struggle; and above all, our sympathy ought not to have been confined to one section, since the other, however distant, was equally an appendage, and, perhaps, the brightest, of the crown of the unfortunate Ferdinand, whose entire rights, we thus, nobly, stepped forward to defend. By this means, the good understanding, and the mutual regard of the two governments, would, beyond doubt, have been strengthened and preserved; and the eternal gratitude of European and American Spain, would have been our portion. Instead of considering the one, as a mere cypher, and lavishing

the most unbounded acts of friendship on the other, if we had only given to each, the relative situation that was due, and even by a tie, stronger than any they had before known, if we had but united both, in the same just and glorious cause, in which each was so deeply interested; besides laying the ground-work of certain success, we should, also, have stamped our policy, even in the eyes of the most cavillous Spaniard, with the features of disinterestedness, equal justice and firmness; we should have silenced all the grovelling and unworthy suspicions respecting our views, which would, thereby, have been proved, as originating from pure and honourable motives, and, as, divested of every mercenary, or rival feeling. Had the policy of England, then been enlightened, and the conduct of Spain, magnanimous; and had our alliance only been made, with the Spanish monarchy of both hemispheres; had it had for object, the welfare of the whole nation, and not of one detached portion, then, might we have been enabled to boast of an united and effective ally, and then, might all our sacrifices, have been crowned with corresponding fruits. A measure, like this, would have prevented the jealousies, and bickrings, which have since originated, and would have cleared up that mystery and ambiguity, by which our conduct has always been enveloped; for, with such a nation, as that, with which we were then dealing, a conduct, not only firm, and undeviating, was necessary; but, also, a policy, the most plain, clear, and unequivocal, ought to have been observed to all its parts.

The fact is, that in this, as well as in our other posteriour transactions, relating to Spanish America; we appear, not to have been aware, of her real and relative

situation; nor to have known, that she formed an equal and undivided part of the Spanish monarchy, But, yet, if we were ignorant of this material point, in our new alliance; if we were unacquainted with the rights and privileges of that injured country; in short, if, by the whole tenour of our conduct, we became the abettors of the tyranny and injustice of Spain; we ought, at least, not to have forgotten, that the neat revenue the crown received from Spanish America, was more than that of European Spain; that it was easy to double it; that it was the only country from whence bullion could be obtained; and, finally, that, if a civil war, which, the conduct of Spain, was, evidently, preparing, was suffered to rankle, and to spread widely, our European ally, would not only be deprived of the best half of her usual resources; but, that the mines, trade, and agriculture, would be at a stand, and that the just cause in which all parties were engaged, would, thus, lose half its effective strength.

How different, would the situation of Spain, have been, at the present moment; if a good understanding, and a solid and liberal basis for our future conduct, and satisfactory to all parties, had been adopted in the earliest stages of our alliance, and before the contest was made our own. She might, now, have had Spanish America bound to her, by the strongest ties of interest and gratitude; and, instead of now having money to expend, and men and arms to send over, to conquer her transmarine provinces, by thus, having made liberality and justice the basis of her conduct, and by the adoption of new financial plans, she might be in the annual receipt of 40 or 50 millions of dollars, besides her own local revenue; and she might have withdrawn 30,000 of her own troops,

now in garrison in different sections of America, busied in butchering the unredressed inhabitants, and expending those same resources, which otherwise, might have been usefully employed in the general cause. In addition, she might have received fifty thousand native volunteers, who would, then, have joined her standard, in Europe; and, besides, she would have deserved the good wishes of every feeling mind. Thirty thousand of the best Spanish troops, equipped with resources supplied by England, have, up to the present time, as will, hereafter, be more fully treated, been sent abroad; these might have kept in the Peninsula, and with this additional strength, together with the prospects I have just sketched, it might fairly be asked, what different results might not have been produced in the salvation of Spain, after the battles of Salamanca, Vittoria, and the Pyrenees?

How England, on this same occasion, neglected to stipulate for a participation in a trade, which the other contracting party could not carry on; and, which, by adding to the respective resources of each, would have been of the most essential benefit in tranquilizing and ameliorating the aggrieved provinces of Spanish America, appears a political problem, difficult to be solved; particularly, as it, early, formed a subject of conversation, between Mr. Canning, and Don Pedro Cevallos, according to the assurance of the latter. England beheld, with eager admiration, the first burst of the revolutionary cause of Spain; and, augured well, from the enthusiastic manner, in which the natives displayed their abhorrence of a foreign yoke; yet, if, we then hoped for eventual success, it was not, only, necessary to preserve this spirit entire, by the prevention of discord and dissentions; but, also,

to throw, in the fullest and most effective manner possible, that additional force, into the general scale of exertion, which might have been derived from Spanish America. The impoverished and debilitated state of the Peninsula, was public and manifest, and it was evident, that the only means of retrieving past losses, and of giving fresh vigour and energy to the whole machine, was, by husbanding and improving those Western sources of wealth and revenue, which, alone, could crown the sacrifices of all parties, with adequate success. It was, likewise, natural, for England to seek some compensation or other, for the strenuous exertions of her subjects, and, as a means to support her armies. Yet, when, consistently with reason and national honour, and, as a return for all our sacrifices, we had it in our power to open a trade, beneficial to all parties; and which, besides becoming a bond of union, would have rendered European Spain, a strong and powerful ally, we seem scarcely to have reflected, that Spanish America was in existence; and, hastily forming a treaty, that was to defeat its own object, we set armies on foot, and rush, as it were, into a summer campaign, at the end of which, we trust, to experience the generosity of the self created governments of the Peninsula. That individuals, within their own sphere, should sport romantic and disinterested acts of friendship, is in the common order of things; but, that a nation, entailing an enormous debt on its posterity, should thus act on visionary calculations, and be deaf to the dictates of prudence and foresight, in an obliquity of conduct, that can scarcely be credited. The fatal consequences, of our not then stipulating for a free trade to Spanish America, being, however, a material point in the main subject, now

under discussion, I conceive it better to omit any further remarks, in this place, and till I come to that part of my text, wherein I present a review of our posterior diplomatic transactions in Cadiz, undertaken with a view to obtain this concession; as any anticipation in this place, would interfere with the proposed order of my narrative. I will, therefore, proceed to describe, the first features of the several insurrections in the Spanish American provinces.

§ It may, with justice, be said, that the present dissentions, existing between European Spain, and her ultramarine provinces, have, in this country, never, yet, been placed in a correct point of view; consequently, they cannot be fully understood. Unfortunately, amongst a large portion of the natives of the Peninsula, and, especially, in the councils of the nation, a rancorous animosity, early, displayed itself; the flames of which, were constantly fanned, by all those, concerned in the monopolies of trade, and interested in the colonial subjection of Spanish America. Hence, has it happened, that from the very beginning of the disturbances, the reasons of necessity, and the calls of justice and equality, so strongly urged by the Americans; have been disregarded, or painted in the blackest colours; and mercenary and corrupt pens, have been employed, to disfigure, and cover them with invective. A feeling of prejudice and enmity, soon became transfused through the higher ranks of European Spain; and language, only worthy of the harpies of illiberality and monopoly, who, by their obscene and dissonant murmurs, would drown the voice of reason and equity, would scare the beneficent return of prudent and sober policy, and, with their envenomed claws, would tear the olive branch of peace, has, hitherto, been, almost

the only means by which the insurrections of Spanish America, have been represented to the Peninsula, and to the rest of Europe. The feeling and impartial mind, revolts at the masses of coarse and scurrilous invective and recrimination, which have issued from the Cadiz press; and, is, at the same time, astonished, at the numerous, foul, and corrupt engines, set to work, in order to influence the dastard passions of the multitude; and, to oppose the fair and unbiassed discussion of the most important question, ever agitated in the Cortes of Spain. Whence, is it to be deplored, that war, instead of conciliation, has been made the order of the day; and the clearest and most evident points, even the tendency of the transmarine insurrections, have been disfigured and mistaken.

In vain, have the transatlantic governments, and newly constituted Juntas, endeavoured to fix the public opinion, by solemn declarations and manifests; breathing the same principles and views as those promulgated in the Peninsula; and expressive of their firm resolution, to remain united to the grand whole, as long as it should hold together; provided they were granted in the same, that relative and social importance, which their population, extent, riches, and services, not only entitled them to, and even the laws granted; but, which, the urgency of present circumstances, also, imperiously demanded. Each of the American provinces, in the Peninsular struggle, expressed the most sincere and unequivocal attachment and adhesion to the parent state. Each felt the justice of so good a cause, and each stepped forward with the balm of consolation, and poured it into the bleeding wounds of their European brethren. Each

manifested, respectively, its hatred and abhorrence of the insidious cruelty of the common tyrant; each forwarded succours and donations; each, in short, pledged itself, to avenge these mutual wrongs.

The declaration of war against France, and the new intercourse with England, were announced by order of the Supreme Junta of Seville, on the 6th of June, 1808; and followed by other spirited and encouraging manifests. The whole was wafted to the other side of the Atlantic, as fast as the tardy winds would permit; and in all the various sections, was received with more enthusiastic acclamations, than had even been evinced in the Peninsula. The temples, on every side, resounded with rogations for the release of Ferdinand; and every voice called down the blessings of the Most High, on the arms and exertions of the heroic and loyal natives of the Peninsula. Ferdinand was proclaimed, with the most sincere effusions of loyalty, by the heads of government, in which the people joined, with the most animated demonstrations of joy. Extasies of sincere delight, were witnessed on all sides; and illuminations, feasts, and rejoicings, filled up the first days, after the receipt of the resolutions of the Spanish nation at home. Addresses, on the occasion, were presented to the viceroys, by the respective municipalities and public bodies; they were filled with congratulations, for the new era that opened on the whole monarchy; they breathed warm and genuine offers of allegiance to their newly acknowledged sovereign, and they pledged their property and persons to defend his dominions for him, as their rightful owner. Money, with his name and bust, was coined; his portrait was placed on all the banners and in all the public

places of the cities and towns; and, perhaps, no monarch that ever swayed the sceptre of the united kingdoms of Spain and of the Indies, was ever adjured with such lively and sincere effusions of loyalty and personal regard, as were now to be witnessed, in all the American provinces.

Nor, were these, demonstrations extorted by the nod of power, or influenced by the hopes of reward. They were the spontaneous overflowings of hearts, filled with respect and veneration for an unfortunate youth, entrapped by a subtle enemy; whom they beheld as the hopeful instrument of future regeneration to both hemispheres; and as it were, as a superior and benign godhead, that was about to raise European and American Spain, from the abject state of degradation and vassalage, in which both had been so long sunk. All, in short, was fraternity and brotherly love, and like loving and faithful subjects, the Spanish Americans complied with every duty of allegiance, and nothing was left them, but to raise their ardent and fervent prayers, for the release of their absent monarch. The winds, for the first time, seemed tardy, that were wafting to them the news of the situation of their brethren in arms,—every delay or suspence, was a moment of anxious torture.

The first resolves, of the whole of Spanish America, were twofold; in the first place, to resist the intrusive dominion of the Emperor of the French; and in the second, to give abundant succours to the patriots of Spain. Nor were these professions confined to any one section, they were, equally, displayed in all. Such, I can warrant, was the enthusiastic spirit, which, then, pervaded the breast of every Spanish American, and such was the loyalty, sym-

pathy, and patriotic feeling, universally felt and manifested, when the outrages endured by the natives of Spain, became public, that, had the early governments of the Peninsula, been, only, influenced by just, liberal, and generous sentiments; the transmarine provinces, besides, being preserved tranquil and entire, and besides being rendered happy and prosperous, might have been created into a great additional aid, and used as a powerful instrument to the grand purpose, in which England and European Spain, at that time, united their noble efforts.

Yet, after the sincere avowal of such sentiments, after a solemn oath of allegiance had bound every province of the great Spanish American continent, to the same unfortunate monarch; and after a mutual exchange of fidelity, dictated with the purest effusions of patriotism, national honour, and unanimity, had preceded; it would appear, almost, impossible, that these same provinces, were, so soon, to become the seat of anarchy and of civil war; that they were about to witness scenes, which outrival those of the conquest in horror; and that, in short, besides universal devastation, a war of extermination, was about to be declared.

That some weighty and important reasons, have urged the natives of Spanish America, to resist the newly constituted governments of Spain, and to refuse to admit their control, will be easily acknowledged by those, who consider the characteristic and docile disposition of the inhabitants of that country; and when, also, it is remembered, that this was not an act, partial or confined; but, that, on the contrary, it extended to the largest provinces and kingdoms; that it was simultaneous in all, though no correspondence existed between them; that it is not the

feeling of a day, but, has now lasted for more than four years; that it does not subside at the sight of danger, but, that it urges its abettors to the most daring acts of courage and heroism, and that, instead of decreasing, it daily gains ground, and enlists fresh partizans. As the Americans, themselves, have confessed, no other conclusion could be drawn of their conduct, in thus deserting the cause of the mother-country, than, that, they *were more ferocious than wild beasts*,* if it could not, at the same time, be clearly proved, that this alienation, had arisen from the most cogent reasons; had been caused by the most imperious circumstances; and had emanated from motives of an insuperable nature. The Spanish Americans, cannot be accused of disloyalty; after 300 years of abject submission, are thrown into the scale; nor can they be charged with a spirit of wanton innovation, when we consider, their long and unrepining resignation, which has astonished the whole of Europe, and which was proof against all the efforts of exterior influence and intrigue, even those England had been combining for years, as well as the more recent plans, the French had been concerting, to inthrall their allegiance. The cruelties now committing, and the profuse oceans of blood now flowing in every section, are not attributable to the Spanish Americans, since with them they did not originate; nor did they ever consider their European brethren, as a nation distinct from themselves, They cannot be charged with undue ambition, since it was in the cause of the Peninsula they first stepped forward; nor have they been urged by a wish to have the exclusive com-

* Representacion de la Deputacion Americana, a las Cortes. 1811.

mand in their own country, since they charged their deputies in the Cortes, only to ask for half the public offices for their own natives. With regard to the mistaken idea of independence, in the course of this exposé, it will be proved, never to have existed, at the time the first leven of discontent, soured the minds of the Spanish Americans, and eventually produced disaffection.

That some material, and radical defect, exists on one side or the other, must, consequently, be evident; and, for the sake of humanity, it is to be lamented, that it has not, long since, been discovered and remedied. It having, however, been already proved, that it was no want of loyalty on the part of the Spanish Americans, which first gave rise to these fatal dissentions; it becomes necessary to trace them to a more advanced period of the Spanish revolution, which will be best done, by describing minutely, the prominent features the insurrections of Spanish America assumed, in their very commencement.

The Central Junta of Seville, whose members had early invested themselves with the sovereign power, in the name of the absent king, and exercised it with all the arrogance of despots notwithstanding their manifest illegality, had, nevertheless., been acknowledged in all Spanish America, and had been obeyed in all the provinces, which, had, hitherto, remained tranquil and in perfect harmony with the parent state. They had continued, during a period of two years, to send over abundant succours, and had lived on the most cordial terms with their European brethren, notwithstanding, even a solitary effective measure of redress, or amelioration, had never reached them, in return. During, however, this

interval of perfect amity, each section, respectively, had been furnished with an opportunity of discovering the views and sentiments of the Spanish chiefs placed over them; each, beheld the precipice, preparing for all. It was, evidently, the intention of their leaders, for the transmarine provinces to follow the fate of the mother-country; and they beheld themselves destined, to deck the triumphal car of the ruler of France. They had, also, been able to discover the divided, delapidated, and impotent state of the Peninsula; and the dispersion of the only government which existed there, covered with the execrations of all their fellow-subjects, together with the invasion of the Andalusian provinces, sounding at such a distance, as the entire loss of the kingdom; alarm for their own situation, at first, became manifest, which added to a grounded distrust in the colonial chiefs, caused the Americans to conceive it was high time, to consult their own safety.

This despondence in the affairs of the Peninsula, was not only natural from its depressed situation, from the great force employed by the enemy, from the general disunion that was known to exist, and the scandalous manner in which the resources of the country, had been wasted by the central Junta, but it was, also, strengthened and confirmed by manifests circulated in every quarter, particularly by the remonstrance of the Junta of Valencia, the proclamation of that of Cadiz, and the circular of the Marquis de la Romana; besides various papers, which were wafted to the other side of the Atlantic. Every thing, in short, that arrived, was disheartening; and every new occurrence, tended to represent to the Spanish Americans, the uncertainty and hoplesness of their situation.

The European Viceroys and Captain-Generals, were not to be trusted; for holding their commands from the old governments, most of whose members, besides, being corrupt; were known to be devoted to, and even joined with the French, it was natural to suppose, that the persons of their election abroad, were, also, ready to adhere to any sovereign, who would continue and confirm their commands; and that, consequently, they were, *in pectore*, the firm defenders and supporters of that system of despotism, of which, they had, hitherto, been the principal instruments. These surmises, were, at length, confirmed by their own conduct and declarations; and their removal was judiciously resolved on, by the provinces respectively, each, considering its own local administration, most secure in the hands of persons elected out of its own bosom, and possessed of the confidence of the people.

In the adoption, however, of this measure, every one alledged and published, that they took the government and administration into their own hands, *for the time being, in order to promote their own security—not to be delivered over to the French, or to any other power,—and to preserve themselves for Ferdinand VII.* whom all, with one voice, again acknowledged as their lawful king, and in whose name, their proclamations were made. This, was an act, spontaneous and general in every division of Spanish America, however secluded and distant, one section was from the other; and by the respective details of the governmental changes of each, it is proved; that no exterior influence, no ulterior views of independence, or any thing, in short, disloyal or inimical to European Spain, as a nation, had any direct or indirect share there-

in. In the remonstrance presented by the American deputies to the Cortes, in August, 1811, are to be found, the details of all the immediate causes and peculiar circumstances, which lead to the assumption of the authorities into their own hands; and this important document, is the more deserving of credit, from the official shape it bears, and because it was never contradicted. They are, in substance, as follows:

"In Caracas, the invasion of the Andalusian provinces by the French, and the dissolution of the Central Junta, gave rise to the revolution; in which, without any effusion of blood, the authorities were deposed, on the 19th of April, 1810; and a Supreme Junta was created for the purpose of governing the province, and in order to *preserve its existence and guard its security*, and as fully expressed in the proclamation then issued."*

"In Buenos Ayres, the purport of the same news, communicated by Viceroy Cisneros, and his calling together a congress, in order to adopt measures of precaution, on the 25th of May, 1810, produced a provisional Junta, till a congress was formed of all the deputies of the provinces."

"In New Granada, the imprudent conduct of the Corregidor of El Socorro, by causing his troops to fire on the unarmed citizens, of whom eight were killed, occasioned the first movement, on the 3d of July, 1810; the immediate consequences of which, were, the imprisonment of the Corregidor and his satellites."

"In Santa Fé de Bogotá, a private individual, passed by the shop of an European, who insulted him, with words injurious to the Americans in general; and parties

* Vide the various proclamations of Buenos Ayres, Chili, Caracas, Santa Fé, Mexico, &c.

siding with the principals in the quarrel, produced dissentions, and gave rise to the eventual creation of a Junta, on 2nd. July, 1810."

"The offensive measures of the governor of Carthagena, and the odious divisions he attempted to sow between the Europeans and Americans, ended in a provisional Junta, on the 18th. August, 1810."

"In Chili, the people were so much roused and irritated by the arbitrary acts and extraordinary violations of governor Carrasco, (afterwards tried at home for his conduct) that he found himself under the necessity of resigning his command; and a Junta was, consequently, created on the 18th. Sept, 1810." A singular circumstance is, that this was the only Junta, the government of Spain ever acknowledged.

"In Mexico, the arrest of Viceroy Iturrigaray, on the 15th. Sept. 1808, executed by a faction of Europeans, excited a strong rivality between the latter and the Americans; which spread gradually throughout the kingdom. The death of several Americans, and the arrest of others, transfused still greater irritation amongst the latter; which, added to the impolitic measure of Viceroy Venegas, carrying out rewards, and distinctions for the authors and accomplices of the European faction, produced a revolt in the town of Dolores, on the 14th. Sept. 1810, which soon extended to the whole country."*

Such are the prominent features and first causes, of all the insurrections, or rather local changes of government, which have taken place in the various sections of Spanish America. Such, do they result, from the respective official accounts I have carefully examined, and

* Vide Deputacion Americana, 1° de Agosto, 1811.

such are they represented to be, in the respectable document, from which I have made the above extracts. In this shape, were, they laid before the Cortes, and of course exhibited to the censure of the nation at large. In weighing well, all the collective testimony on this subject, it will result, that, in addition to the conviction of the hopeless situation of Spain, which even the governmental chiefs, themselves confessed; "local insults and ill-treatment, more immediately tended to rouse and irritate the minds of the people," and it is deserving of remark, "that the whole of these insults and outrages, commenced on the part of the Europeans towards the Americans, and in no instance whatever, were the former ill-treated by the latter."* The Americans, who used any disaffected language, or complaint against the Spaniards, however insulted and irritated they might have been, were arrested and thrown into dungeons; and in no place, were the latter molested, though they frequently insulted the Creoles, even in the public squares. The principal and first causes of these misunderstandings, have consequently, rather originated in the impolicy of the European chiefs, and individuals, according to the contents of the document already quoted; and they have now grown into open war, by the want of timely remedies, and by a wish rather to domineer, than to conciliate. The pride and arrogance of the Spaniard, was increased, and the passive disposition to the American, was, at length, roused. To escape insult, and to watch over the security of his country, was the object of the latter; and the former had in view, to inforce the subjection, to which he had been so long accustomed.

* Ibid.

§ The commotions in Spanish America, have not, therefore, originated in a want of loyalty; for no greater a proof of its existence could be given, than the sentiments all the inhabitants evinced, when they were informed of the occurrences at Bayonne, and when Murat's first dispatches, were received amongst them. By the European chiefs, private and mysterious meetings were then held, to know in what manner, the allegiance of the American people, could be safely transferred; at the very moment, that the latter were enthusiastically proclaiming Ferdinand VII. swearing adhesion, obedience, and fidelity to him, aud calling on the magistrates, to join them in this spontaneous and solemn act. But the constituted authorities, (who had been assured of the good intentions of the French Emperor to keep them in office, this having been expressly notified by Minister Champigny, in a circular letter addressed to all the chiefs) being confounded and surprised at the sudden and animated resolution of the peopel, designedly kept aloof, in order not to implicate their reputation with the French, and declared the necessity of waiting further accounts of the state of Peninsula.

During this interval of uncertainty, there were chiefs of the rank of Viceroys, who dared openly to make proposals in favour of the Gallic line; and Liniers, in a proclamation addressed to the people of Buenos Ayres, after coldly relating the events by which Ferdinand VII. had ceded his crown to Napoleon, and he afterwards to Joseph; and instead of commenting on an occurrence of that nature, with all the indignity, the circumstances would inspire, concludes, by saying, *that the Emperor of the French, returned his thanks to the people of Buenos*

Ayres, for the glorious defence they had made against the English. The solemn act of allegiance, sworn to, in Caracas, on the 15th July, 1808, in the name of Ferdinand VII. amounts to an authentic proof of the timidity, and uncertainty, which prevailed in the councils of the European mandataries, and constituted authorities; for, it expressly says, "that the Captain-General, and some of the ministers of the audiencia, had authorised it, *in consequence of the clamours, and repeated messages of the people and cabildo*; by which clause, they prepared a loophole for themselves; and, in the line of conduct they afterwards followed, nothing but ambiguity and half measures, are to be discovered. They all feared to offend him, whom they considered as now constituted their new master, and who had promised the continuation of their commands, the object they had most at heart. Even the governor of the Philipine islands, persisted in following the orders he had received from Murat.

Treacherous, in the extreme, was the general conduct of the Spanish constituted authorities abroad, with only one exception; for, no sooner had the kings of Spain ceded their crown to Buonaparte, than emissaries were sent over to every section of Spanish America, with orders, signed by Ferdinand, by the council of the Indies, and by Azanza, for a general transfer of allegiance; and all confirmed the old chiefs, as a means to secure their interest, and the consent of the people. The Americans, alone, opposed their views; they, alone, publicly burnt the proclamations sent out by Buonaparte, and expelled his agents. The European chiefs, on the contrary, protected them, and, the governor of Caracas, when Captain Beaver, of his Britannic Majesty's ship, Acasta, demand-

ed the French brig, which brought out the agents and papers, returned for answer, that he had given orders to the forts of La Guira, to fire on his ship, if he attempted to capture the Imperial flag.

Thus, in these critical and trying moments, did the Americans stand firm and decided in their conduct; and the chiefs, such as Iturrigaray, viceroy of Mexico, who declared for Ferdinand, and were induced to consult the safety of the country, in a legal and consistent manner, were, by the European party, deposed, imprisoned, and persecuted; for, they were all of opinion, that the Spanish American provinces, were, to abide by the fate of the mother country. This, even, entered into the views of the Spanish government, at home, as may be seen, by the proclamation of the Regency, of the 6th September 1810, addressed to the Americans, in which are found, the following pointed words: "*It does not suffice, for you to be Spaniards, unless you also belong to Spain; and this, whatever be the event of fortune.** It is, then, to the steady and firm conduct and loyalty of the Americans, that we now owe the liberation of their country from the fangs of the French; that its resources are not, now, turned against us, and that we have them, at least, partially, open to our trade and enterprise. And, can the British nation, alone, be insensible to this triumph of probity, loyalty, and good sense?

Had it so happened, that the conquest of Spain had been effected, at the period of the dissolution of the Central Junta, and when Soult commenced the siege of

* No basta que seais Españoles, sino sois de Espana; y lo sois, en qualesquiera casos de la fortuna.

Cadiz; had the sacrifice of principle, then been made by the Spaniards, in order to spare further devastation, and the spilling of more blood, (and both in Spain and in England, such a dread certainly existed) if the Americans had then, only, wavered or been disloyal, it would not, now, have been a dubious case, what flag would be flying in Spanish America. Their inconstancy or irresolution, at that time, would have caused. the brightest prospects that ever dawned on the hopes of England, to have been for ever blasted. Liniers told them, they ought to wait, in the same manner, as they had done, in the war of Succession, till the fate of the mother country was decided, and till it was ascertained, what dynasty was to ascend the throne of Spain; as they would, then, have in their power to follow her example. In order that the views of the French on Spanish America, may be more manifest; as, well as, that the candid and generous conduct of the Americans, in resisting their overtures, may be better appreciated; I have inserted in Appendix B. copy of the instructions, given by Joseph to his thirty-two emissaries, destined to revolutionize Spanish America, in his own favour. This, is an important document, to those who desire to form a correct idea of the transactions to which I allude; and it is rendered the more curious, from not having been hitherto laid before the public. I have only omitted the list of the agents names.

The means concerted by the French, for the purpose of transferring the allegiance of the inhabitants of Spanish America, to their new dynasty, by various official documents, are proved to have been, a general confirmation of the powers and commands, of all the heads of government and colonial chiefs. And who, at that time,

were the partisans of these chiefs? Who, were those, who were ready to support them, in all their machinations? The old Spaniards, all those, who were connected with the Peninsula, by the ties of blood, or by the relations of trade. The same who imprisoned Iturrigaray, because in the orphan state of Spain, he conceived it necessary to assemble the proper representatives of New Spain, in conformity to the laws and the exigence of the moment. The same who held all the monopolies; and who, are, still, endeavouring, by plots and conspiracies, to pull down the very Juntas, which, at that time, saved the country from the dominion of the French. The same, in short, who would, now, deliver it over to them, if Spain were under the subjection of its invaders. The last two campaigns, have proved, that the independence of Spain, is only maintained by the exertions of England; and were this aid, by any peculiar circumstances, to be withdrawn; were France, by any unforeseen contingencies, to effect her intended conquest, or establish her influence, the consequence would be, that no sacrifices on our part, would then suffice, to prevent those sections of Spanish America, which have not had sufficient energy to insist on the administration of their own concerns, from following the fate of the mother country. The partisans to this measure, and to an adhesion, in favour of the French, would be the very persons, who then opposed the Juntas, and we have only to calculate their strength, in order to draw the inference.

On the appearance of the first alarm, excited by the dangerous situation of Spain, as I have already shewn, the governmental agents would have exerted all their influence, and called forth all the resources of the countries

they had in charge, in behalf of their new sovereign, from whom they expected dignities and emoluments. For him, also, they would, yet, employ the very means they are, at present, wielding against the just rights of the people, in as strong, and decided a manner, as the mercantile interests of Cadiz, on the fall of their country, would struggle to preserve their monopolies, and to prolong their former connections. The very same persons, who now vociferate the injuries of the nation, and the rights of the throne, would, then, be favourable to France. They would use the same exertions, and make the same sacrifices, to obtain an object, in which, they are so much interested; nor would they fail to support adhesion to the Peninsula, after its flag had been changed. Now, they talk of resisting the despot of the continent, then they would say, as they have done before, let us combat the tyrant of the seas. The governors in Spanish America, there, possess nothing, beyond their dignities and honours; they are strangers in the land; and, as I have already proved, they were lately ready to sacrifice every thing to their preservation; what guarantee, then, have the Americans, or we, ourselves, that the same would not be the case, at present, if similar opportunities offered?

It has, not, been, in the mass of the people of Spain, or of the ultramarine provinces, that the French have found partisans or support; the higher classes, and persons of the first influence and distinction, have been those who have furthered their views, and seconded their intrigues. Such, have, uniformly, been the abettors of the French usurper; and such, those, who have served as the instruments of his guilty ambition. In Europe, we have seen them ready to sell the honour and independence of

their country; and, could it be expected that the same species of men, embued in the same politics, stimulated by the same ambitious views, and tutored in the same school, although removed to a distance of two thousand leagues, would have been more scrupulous, with regard to Spanish America? The British government is, also, possessed of a list of the agents, Buonaparte had prepared to change the allegiance of that country to his own dynasty; let it be examined, and it will be found, that none of them are men of the lower orders, that they principally consist of persons, formerly in office, and out of thirty-two named, only three are not European Spaniards. None of the persons who have mixed in the American insurrections, or formed part of the new governments there, are enumerated on this list; yet, some of them, are yet employed by the Spaniards; and, till lately, one was acting as a general in Peru, who, had, also, sworn allegiance to, and received dignities from Joseph, in Madrid. This, is one of the worthy instruments, employed by the Cadiz governments, to butcher the unredressed and insulted inhabitants of Spanish America; and destined to fill the peaceful towns of the interiour, with carnage and horror, as will be more fully seen, when I sketch the ravages and cruelties, committed in that unfortunate country.

Yet, sincere and well disposed, as were the lower orders in Spain, little has been done for them; their condition has not been bettered; and, though composing the real strength of the nation, they appear to have been counted on, for little else, than to fight and to contribute; and, in Spanish America, they have been left to the fury and revenge, of those, who, a few months before, were plotting to deliver them over to the French. I am induc-

ed to dwell the longer, on this part of my subject, because, I wish it, clearly, to be understood, that in the transmarine provinces, at the period, when the first ruptures took place, there did not exist, amongst the inhabitants, the smallest party for the French, or any disposition to listen to their overtures. We, on the contrary, at that time, possessed all their good wishes, and, it was, then, in our power, to have retained them. Time, and a variety of circumstances, have, however, unfortunately, produced a considerable change in the sentiments of the Spanish Americans. The intrigues of the French, particularly, in some sections; together with the indifference of England, and the insults they have received from British officers, are fast contributing to the distrust and coldness excited against us, as will, in a particular manner, be noticed, in a more convenient place.

§ That no general, or deep rooted sentiment of independence, prevailed in the minds of the Spanish Americans, at the period of their first resistance to the government of the parent state, or even at present, is a fact which will be readily admitted, by every close observer of the transmarine transactions; acquainted with the situation of those provinces, their tone of feeling, and the construction of their society. This is a position, that will, at first sight, surprize many; particularly, those, who reflect on the enormous expence, the British government had incurred, under a different impression. When our own North American settlements, raised the standard of rebellion, the tax on tea, was made the ostensible cause; but, there existed at the bottom of the design, plans of ulterior separation. This, however, has not been the case in the American provinces of

Spain. The relations and bonds, which united the inhabitants of the latter, to their European brethren; a conformity of habits and customs; and the intimate connection which originated from the Americans, in general, being educated by Spaniards, had evidently strengthened that inherent love to the Peninsula, which was transfused through all classes, from their very cradle. To this, was added, an habitual respect paid to the government and its agents; together with a blind, and, almost, trembling submission, which, by length of time, had been converted into a second nature. The whole of these powerful ties, had created a gordian knot, which it was, nearly, impossible to sever.

Influenced by opinions and prejudices, which they could neither control nor discord, and which education, habit, conscience, and, perhaps, honour, lead them to cherish, and retain; it was impossible to infuse into the mass of the Spanish Americans, any wide and effective wish, for absolute independence, unless a total revolution in their sentiments, previously took place. This, could only be the effect of time, or be caused by the immediate pressure of extraordinary circumstances, which certainly had not occurred, during the period of their late harmony with the mother-country. To proclaim independence, under such exigencies, as those which pressed heavy on the monarchy at home; would have stamped such a measure, as the offspring of disloyalty and ingratitude; and the late resolves of the Americans, not to listen to the French, as before described, as well as every other feature of their political conduct, sufficiently repels so unfounded a charge. That ingratitude and ill treatment; that the sight of their de-

populated and ruined towns; and the repetition of their interminable butchery and human misery, should, in the course of time, produce a revolution in their sentiments, and gradually engender a fund of odium, and create inimical feelings, to such a degree, as to render all intercourse with Spain impossible, is, indeed, within the possibility of fact. But, this, was, by no means, the case, when the Americans first took the administration of their own local concerns, into their own hands; nor was it till the government took refuge in Cadiz, and till its insensate and infuriate acts, had scattered firebrands and death, in every section, that open enmity partially flamed. It was, not, till Spain, forgetful of the long and affecting proofs of loyalty and attatchment, she had uniformly received from her provinces abroad, by her impolitic declaration of war, severed the bonds of fraternity and mutual interest, that one detatched section of America, resolved on independence; but this was in consequence of peculiar hardships, and a variety of cogent motives, detailed in its manifest then published. It was, not, till terror and alarm, instead of redress, had been employed as weapons, by the agents of Spain, to inforce the subjection of the American provinces—it was not, in short, till indignation, sharpened by taunts, revilings, as well as by unheard of horrors, had roused the inhabitants of the western continent to a state of political phrenzy, that the deadly enmity now existing, made its appearance. No, the Spanish Americans can never be charged with disloyalty, the spirit of their history, and the leading features of those commotions already pencilled, not, only, prove that they possessed loyalty; but, also, that it was genuine and sincere.

They, would have remained tranquil, would have even conceived it honourable and conformable to their wishes and interests, to have continued united with the mother-country, had her government, only, corrected the tyranny and oppression of its agents, whose wrongs, had, at last, become so flagrant, repeated, and galling, and whose politics were so manifestly treacherous, that it were to judge the people divested of sense or feeling, to suppose that they could endure them any longer.

The changes of government here alluded to, had, therefore, no connection, whatever, with any ulterior views of independence; nor, did they originate in causes, emanating from foreign influence. This fact is fully established by abundant testimony, and particularly by the official declarations, respectively made on these occasions, but which, are too voluminous for insertion here. In the urgency of the moment, and for motives both legitimate and cogent, the Spanish Americans resolved no longer to put their trust in men, whose treachery was evident; and they determined to administer their own local concerns; not, only, as a remedy against past and present ills; but, also, in order to promote their own security. Neither, did any spirit of disloyalty, or French intrigue, in any way, influence their actions. As, before observed, the Spanish American provinces resolved to acknowledge no other sovereign, than a descendant of Charles IV. and every where, war was proclaimed against the usurper of Spain, with as much enthusiastic ardour, as at home. The firm resolution of the Peninsula, to repel, by force, an insiduous invader, was not, only, applauded; but every American stepped forward, with anxious zeal, and with offers of private

and public donations, in order to contribute his mite, to the general expence of a popular enterprize. It was, consequently, neither disloyalty, nor ingratitude, which stimulated the conduct of the Spanish Americans; although these have been the principal charges brought against them, by the party spirit of the monopolists of Cadiz, and the ravings of a violent war faction, which have uniformly attempted to disfigure every transaction, and to give edge and fury, to the burnings of revenge and of disappointed gain.

§ In order, however, to manifest, in the clearest manner possible, the intentions and views of the Spanish American provinces, in their recent changes of government; it will be extremely proper, to draw a parallel of the situation of Spain, at the period of the seizure of the royal persons, with that of the Spanish American provinces, when the news of the advances of the French, and the dispersion of the Central Junta, reached their alarmed shores. I dwell, with greater stress, on this particular part of my subject, because, it is of the first importance, to a just and correct conception of the matter in view, to present my reader with a full picture, of all the concurrent and existing circumstances, which induced the inhabitants of the transmarine provinces, to deposit their confidence in local Juntas of their own choice; and to explain, what were their real intentions and views, in so doing. This being the particular circumstance, that nearly involves all the points at issue, it is necessary to examine, with a scrupulous care, the immediate causes which lead to it; for which purpose, it is, essentially, necessary, to retrace and describe, the respective situation of each part of the Spanish monarchy, at the two distinct periods, above alluded to.

The debased situation of the government of Spain, as already pourtrayed, had, in a great measure, brought upon her inhabitants, the horrors and misfortunes which befel them. Before the perfidy of the French, was unmasked to the world, Spain had been bereft of her monarch; the principal provinces and fortified places were in the hands of the enemy, even the capital itself; and the whole country was reduced to a crisis, not only unforeseen and unprovided for by the legislation of the state, but, also, unexampled in the annals of history. During the absence of the king to Bayonne, the administration of the provisional government, had been the work of the enemy, in whose hands, perfidy had also placed every other branch of the legislature; and plans for the general submission of all the realm, had been long and deeply organizing. A foreigner had been placed at the head of this same administration, and the enemy not only possessed the persons of the royal family, but had, even, succeeded to use them, as so many active instruments to his base designs, which had been rendered the more powerful and dangerous, from being the more sacred and respectable.

The councils of the nation, the constitutional interpreters of the law, the ministers, as well as the supreme courts and tribunals, were all under the control of the usurper; and were all ready and disposed to contribute to cement his base and treacherous seizure. And, what had been the springs, employed to secure all this ascendency? Nothing, besides address, corruption, and the promise of continuation in office and command; in short, the very same means, which had been, equally, practised in America. To add to this national calamity, these same occurrences, had been preceded by one of

the most unfortunate and abject epochs of the Spanish monarchy, of which, an outline, has been, previously, given. In consequence of the baseness, abjection, and venality of the ministry, the nation was, at that time, without an adequate army, without resources, and had fallen a prey to interior convulsions and distrust. Every branch of the administration and government, was, besides, in the hands of chiefs; who owed their elevation to the most debased measures and intrigues; the king's agents and rulers, in a word, every where, were men destitute of talents and probity, and in general, had forfeited the public confidence. In such a dilemma, what was the conduct of the provinces of European Spain? Did, they not, wherever they could, elect provisional Juntas, and did they not vest in them, the public confidence, and place under their charge, the momentous struggle, on which they were about to enter?

And, if this picture of the state of the Peninsula, at the period referred to, be true and faithful; can it be denied, that these same evils, with all their respective aggravations, existed in the ultramarine provinces? Owing to their distance from the seat of power, and, in consequence of many defects in the governing regimen, must they not, rather, have been there felt, in a more sensible manner? It has, already, been evinced, that the *colonial* chiefs, were, in general, partisans of the French; and, it is equally a fact, that the Americans were as ignorant as their European brethren, to what an extent the machinations of the enemy, and of their abettors, had been prepared, and how far, their efficacy might be relied upon. Both, were equally ignorant, how long, and how widely, snares had been laying to entrap their allegiance; and,

in the first moments, when both were roused from the same lethargy, each was unaware of the depth of the precipice, to the brink of which, both had been dragged. The Spanish Americans, beheld one section, commanded by a Frenchman, and in the other sections, they saw as their chiefs, and governors, no other than corrupt courtiers, venal dignataries, and sycophant placemen, whose patrons and supporters, had already enlisted under the banners of the enemy, and were actively employed to further his views and plans. If so, may it not be fairly asked, whether such chiefs and heads of government, were worthy of the confidence and trust of the American people, when, at the same time, most of them had, actually, given evident signs of treachery? In the trying and momentous crisis, Spain experienced at the period above alluded to, she varied her government, and changed her rulers, because the one was reduced to an actual system of political despotism, and the others, were no longer deserving of the confidence of the people. And are the Spanish American provinces, alone, divested of this right, when the motives are not less founded, and when the danger is more manifest and urgent?

§ The situation of both European and American Spain, on the seizure of the Royal Family, amounted to a complete interregnum; for, the legal monarch, being, no longer, in the exercise of his authority, also, absent, and in actual confinement; was, of course, unable to watch over the welfare of his subjects, and to attend to the safety of his realm. Consequently, it became necessary, to replace his lost authority, by transferring it, as a deposit, into the hands of a body of persons, elected by, and vested with the confidence of the people; under such

forms and restrictions, as the laws prescribed. It would be useless, in this place, to burden my reader with the opinions of writers on the general laws of nations, applicable to case in question. For the immediate purposes in view, it is only requisite to examine the legislation of Spain, in this particular; and, to discover what its annals prescribe, for a national exigency, like the one above described. *In all cases of great calamity, or whenever the king dies, and leaves a son under age, it is ordered, that the representatives of the cities and towns, archbishops and bishops, together with the nobles of the land, be assembled to deliberate on the emergency which has occurred, and to decide what measures are to be adopted.** This is the substance of a variety of laws, which might be quoted; and Spain, in her creation of provincial Juntas, acknowledged both its truth and application.

Were we to examine, attentively, the events which occurred in the Peninsula, in the calamitous moments above traced; and, were we to watch the stimulus of action, that, then, urged the most important movements of its inhabitants, we should find them in exact coincidence with what took place in Spanish America; and, that the example of the one, actually justified the conduct of

* The law of John II. Madrid, 1418, is as follows, Porque en los hechos arduos de nuestros reynos, es necesario consejo de nuestros subditos y naturales, especialmente de los procuradores de las ciudades, villas y lugares de los nuestros reynos; por ende ordenamos y mandamos, que sobre tales fechos grandes y arduos, se hayan de ayuntar Cortes, y se faga con consejo de los tres estados de nuestros reynos, segun que lo hicieron, los reyes nuestros predecesores. Vide El Especulo, ley 5. tit. 16. lib. 2.—Also, Leyes de Castilla, ley 3. tit. 15. part 2. et alibi. Azcarate declares, that the above law was extended to Spanish America.

the other. The inhabitants of the latter, notwithstanding the long invasion of their rights, nevertheless, stood on exactly the same footing, as did those of European Spain, at the time, she was bereft of her monarch. In that cephalous state, as was fully proved by Elola, in his sound and judicious preliminaries to the new constitution of Spain, (maxims on which the Cortes, themselves, have acted, and thereby acknowledged as true) it results that "*the people are free and independent, and neither are, nor can be, the patrimony of any one family or person; and, that the sovereignty, essentially, resides in them; consequently, the right of establishing its fundamental laws, and of adopting the most suitable form of government, exclusively, belongs to them.*"

Such are the principles, and such the basis on which the boasted constitution of Spain, is founded; and such have been the grounds, on which the Cortes have divested the rightful king of his sovereignty; an occurrence, not only, hitherto, unknown in the history of the Spanish monarchy; but, also, an extreme, to which the people of America, have never thought of going. Jovellanos, whose name will always be mentioned with veneration, in his celebrated report, laid before the Central Junta, on 7th October, 1808, establishes as a principle, applicable to the existing case of the nation, "*that when a people perceives the eminent danger of the society of which they are members, and are aware, that the administrators of the authority, which is to govern and defend them, are suborned or inthralled: they naturally enter into the necessity of defending themselves, and consequently, acquire an extraordinary and legitimate right of insurrection.*" Such was the sanction given by the first States-

man, Spain, at that time, possessed, to the conduct of the new revolutionary governments, therein established; and it formed the basis of all their operations. Yet, when the American Provinces apply the same maxims to themselves, their European brethren take the alarm, and constituting themselves into the dictators of the whole monarchy, they decree, thar its rights are concentrated in them alone. When the Spanish Americans, find that their chiefs are become the tools of Buonaparte; that most of the Europeans amongst them, are addicted to his views, and pledged to his support; when they behold all the treasure they had sent over, had been wasted, and they despaired of the success of the Peninsular struggle;—when they, equally, beheld themselves bereft of their legal monarch, and without any constitutional or safe government; and when, in short, they, find themselves on the eve of becoming a French colony, by the very treachery of those, who were charged to watch over their safety, and are, besides, surrounded by uncertainty, doubt, and dismay; still, are they denied the application of those very acknowledged principles, in which Spain, had so lately, gloried; still, are they not allowed to consult their own security, and still, are they commanded to endure all, without repining.

In order to form a correct idea of the critical situation of the Spanish American provinces, at the period here alluded to, it is particularly requisite, to remember well, the debased regimen under which they were governed, and the great privations under which they laboured. The immediate instruments of this debased regimen, were the Viceroys and Captain-Generals, who, besides, being, with few exceptions, corrupt, immoral, and ar-

bitrary, also, held in their own hands, a power, in such moments as these, neither consistent with the security of the country, under their charge, nor compatible with the welfare of the people governed. Possessed of the resources of all the districts under their jurisdiction, commanding the armed force, and being, at the same time, the direct and immediate channel of every thing that arrived from, or was conveyed to Europe; they had not only the fate and lives of the inhabitants in their hands, but they had it, likewise, within their power, to deliver them over to the French, if they thought fit, or it was at their option, to leave them at the mercy of any other foreign power. In addition to the ramifications of offices and trusts, which they immediately controled, the European residents were ever ready to second and support the measures of their constituted chiefs, as well from a spirit of party and direct opposition to the Creoles, as in order to secure an adhesion to the Peninsula, for they, like the Israelites of old, hankered after the flesh-pots of Egypt. Always bending to the nod of their chiefs in power, and always assembled round him, in consequence of their extensive influence and connections, they, at all times, became a formidable plalanx; the more to be dreaded, from the greater union that existed amongst them, and from the great facility, with which they might be misled, in any thing that related to the transactions of the parent state.

§ This picture of the various occurrences, which preceded and accompanied the changes of government in the ultramarine provinces; will be, however, rendered more perfect and intelligible, if, before I proceed any further, I give a particular outline of what occurred in

Mexico; as, from the greater importance of this section, its antiquity, and the precedence given to it, by all the other sections; it deserves some individual consideration, in the general details which comprehend the whole of the Spanish American continent. This little detached sketch, will, at the same time, more clearly, explain the tone of feeling then prevalent in the country, and will, greatly, elucidate the grounds on which the inhabitants acted.

On receipt of the news of the deplorable situation of the Peninsula, of the seizure of the king, and of the invasion of the French, Viceroy Iturrigaray became diffident of those powers he had received from Charles IV, through his corrupt minister Godoy, and which had been, so recently confirmed by the Duke de Berg, and by the Spanish ministers of the intrusive king. Fearful of the impossibility of maintaining harmony, amidst such general despondency, distrust, and the clashing of interests, and considering also, that his limited authority could, in no way, replace that of the lost king, he proposed calling together a general assembly, or Junta of the representatives of all the provinces, in order to resolve on the future mode of government, and to establish, in this critical situation of affairs, an administrative system, in which the people might confide. In this he was opposed by the audiencia, consisting of old Spaniards, these were joined by all the European merchants and placemen, who trembling for the ascendency of the more numerous Creoles, in any plan of government founded on popular election, resolved, by open force, to frustrate any attempt that might give preponderance to the latter. The adoption of the viceroys

measure, was supported by the cabildo, which, in Spanish America, still retained some shadow of popular representation, and by its official remonstrance (part of which I have inserted in Appendix C. as highly illustrative of this particular point) it proved, that this was the only means of consulting the voice of the people, promoting confidence and unanimity, and of producing security to the whole kingdom, in a manner conformable to the injunctions of the law, and the example of the provinces of the Peninsula. A powerful faction of Europeans, was formed and armed, the person of the viceroy was seized, and himself and family,, under aggravated indignities, were sent prisoners to Europe. Thus, did European despotism, under a new shape, rear its hydra head in Mexico, and the seat of power became usurped, whilst the laws of the realm, and the patriotic wishes of the Creoles, were laughed to scorn.*

The latter, trusted to the justice and equity of the government at home, but instead of a thorough investigation into this affair, although Iturrigaray was absolved of every charge, and his intentions were, thereby, proved to have been legal, pure, and patriotic; the principal members of this faction, aud the chief plotters of this flagrant insult on the American people; were rewarded with insignia, offices and distinctions, carried out to Mexico, by the successive Viceroy Venegas. Such was the origin and commencement of those disorders and

* The principal occurrences connected with this affair, are detailed, at full length, in the Rovolucion de Mexico, the work before referred to. The principal object of the author, appears to have been a defence of the viceroy, and an explanation of the material causes which produced open enmity on the part of the Creoles in New Spain.

intestine divisions, which first began to spread open enmity between the Europeans and Americans in Mexico; and afterwards, gave rise to the numerous evils, which, so fast, spread in that unhappy section of the Spanish American continent, and so soon filled it, with ravages and destruction. It was this impolicy and injustice, on the part of the Europeans there, and the government at home, which first convinced the Creoles of the insulting extremity of their sufferings, and renewed the irritating sense of their actual and varied oppression. In this particular, the sentiments and feelings of each section, have been alike; though their open display has been more immediately excited, by different concurrent circumstances and local causes. The origin has been the same, though the features and the results, in some measure, have varied.

§ The situation of the Peninsula, though more melancholy and alarming, was not so perplexed and doubtful, as that of the various sections of Spanish America. The distance at which they were placed, created a gloomy suspence; they knew not the fate which awaited them; they were ignorant what political changes were reserved for them; whether they were to be bartered to a new master, and thrown into the scale of political compensation,—whether the transfer and alienation to France,was to be carried into effect,—whether they had been made the price of British co-operation,—whether the princess of the Brazils, was to be their future sovereign, and, in short, whether they were to be left a prey to the despotism of the popular demagogues at home. In the mean time, the bosom of the whole country, was torn asunder by parties and factions; and discontent, and distrust,

reigned in every order of society. The audiencias, were plotting to supplant the viceregal power, every one was ambitious of command, and, at the same time, the people were at the will and mercy, of men, who, besides, being strangers to the land, were neither possessed of their choice, nor vested with their respect or confidence.

They were aware, that, in the United States, a wide plan for their political subjection, had been organized,—that General Dalmivart, had already penetrated to the interior provinces of Texas,—that, besides, the numerous orders and confirmations of powers, sent out to the governors, bishops, &c. by the council of the Indies, and besides the proclamations filled with venom against Ferdinand; they knew that crosses of the legion of honour, had also been prepared by the French, for a long list of *worthies*, then amongst them. They were informed, that the Portuguese court, had long had pretensions on that part of Spanish America, which borders on the Brasils; and that even in 1808, acrimonious disputes were pending, respecting their large innovations on the Spanish territory. They were not ignorant, that the princess of the Brasils, as infanta of Spain, sought to be made regent of the monarchy of her absent brother; that she was corresponding with various sections of Spanish America, in order to sound their chiefs and further her views; in short, the Spanish Americans had reason to expect, overtures and emissaries from Napoleon, the Duke de Berg, Joseph, the king of Naples, the princess of the Brazils, and they were moreover, uncertain, as to the conduct and views of the British.

They, also, well remembered, that they had been, long, under doubt and uncertainty, as to the situation and stabi-

lity of the government at home; that when the provisional changes took place in the Peninsula, deputies from the central Junta of Seville, had been sent amongst them, urging the supremacy of that body, and demanding their acknowledgement and remittances. Shortly after, they remembered that the viceroy had received dispatches from the Asturian deputies, then in London, demanding the same pre-eminence, and expecting the same obedience and supplies; and now they beheld these late idols of the Spanish people, dashed to the ground, and that it was uncertain, what kind of government was to succeed them. At home, they were sensible that every thing was mutual distrust, discord and misfortune; and that ambition, rather than patriotism, had, hitherto, actuated the conduct of the principal government of the Peninsula. They had seen the Central Junta, which owed its existence to a concentration of the provincial ones, (though effected in an irregular way;) had plotted the overthrow of those very same bodies, from whence it derived its supposed origin. They had beheld, the basest means employed by its members, in order to extend and enlarge their command; and they had seen them resort to every undue measure, in order to prolong and consolidate their power, and for the purpose of securing to themselves, a complete despotism over their fellow-citizens. The council of Castile, was known to have been plotting against the Central Junta of Seville, this against that of Valencia, Asturias, &c.; in short, they had experienced, that no regular, acknowledged, or legal government, existed in the Peninsula; and they had seen with their own eyes, that the chiefs in the American provinces, changed masters, as fast as the Protean shape of the Peninsular government, varied,

In the mean time, a tremendous crisis, impended over the fate of the Peninsula; the supposed impregnable passes of the Sierra Morena, had been forced; on every side the national troops were dispersed, and the generals, attributed the losses and misfortunes of the armies, to the ineptitude of the provisional central government. No sooner had this been driven from Seville, and dispersed, than it was accused of despotism, malversation, corruption, inexperience, negligence; and even, of corresponding and siding with the French. The battle of Ocaña, appeared to have put a seal to the fate of Spain, 50,000 French, are already spread on the plains of Andalusia, and dismay was painted in every countenance. Amidst such general confusion, even the local and provisional Junta of Seville, creates itself into a sovereign, circulates orders throughout the whole kingdom to assemble fresh deputies; and even sends couriers to Cadiz, to arrest the members of the late Central Junta, or to kill them. The president and vice-president, were seized in Xeres, and with difficulty escaped with their lives; in short, such was the odium attatched to the members of this government, and such the influence of the factious, that any one who had undertaken their defence, would have been held as a traitor to his country.*

The above is the picture of the state of the Peninsular government, about the beginning of January, 1810, as drawn by a Spaniard, who has publicly taken to himself, the character of impartial, and such is the corresponding report of public affairs, at the time abovementioned. We will next proceed to examine what

* Estrada, Examen Imparcial, Part I^a.

kind of a governing system originated out of the wreck of the Central Junta, in conformity to its decree of 29th of January, 1810, issued in La Isla de Leon.

"At length, after great dangers and difficulties, the members of the Central Junta, collect in La Isla; where, filled with dread, and without energy to determine on the continuation of their command, during the fews days which remained till the assembling of the Cortes; in the midst of obscurity, furtively, and without the requisite powers, they elect a Regency of five persons; who, how great so ever might have been their private virtues, were, doubtlessly, very little fit, to fulfill the duties of the ministry now confided to them. Without having sufficient courage to cause this Regency to be acknowledged, they (the central numbers) put it in the full exercise of its public functions, and all determine to leave that point, in order to escape the fury of the people.*" Such, also, is the picture of that same government, the Spanish Americans were called upon, blindly, and submissively, to obey; and such is the origin of that same Regency, which afterwards declared war against them, because they did not conceive it conformable to their political interests, and general safety, to cringe, and bow their abject heads, to a set of new despots, created out of the worst and most execrable government, that ever insulted the rights of a people, or abused the exigencies of a state.†

* Estrada Id. Id.

† It is a fact, that the Junta of Cadiz, shut the port, in order that the news of this confusion and dilemma in the affairs of the Peninsula, might not reach to the other side of the Atlantic.

After presenting my reader, with this faithful picture of the respective situations of the Peninsula, at the two periods of time, before prefixed; I would now ask him, in candour, and, in sincerity, whether it was, either reasonable, or just, for the distant provinces of America, to continue as the servile slaves of these crest fallen demagogues; or whether it was wise, for them to be made the submissive tools of five individuals, who had sprung into power, out of the choice and nomination of men, at that very time, covered with universal execration? Was it conformable to the real interests of European or American Spain, or, even, of England, for this valuable quarter of the world, to remain subservient to the nod of a government, founded on illiberality, illegal in its essence, now infected with the contagion of monopoly, and awed by the interest of the trading port, in which it had just taken refuge? Nay, at the moment of such an eventful period to European Spain, and during such an existing exigence in the whole world, was it rational, for the rights, liberties, and security of the Spanish American provinces, to be any longer, insulted by the governmental forces, that had been, hitherto, representing in the Peninsula; or was it politic, that the improveable, but long neglected regions, to which I allude, should, in such critical circumstances, as those just described, still remain enslaved, outraged, and aggrieved by an ephemeral government, desirous only to prolong their degradation? I leave it, to the upright and impartial in every clime, and in every situation, to draw his own conclusions; fully convinced as I am, in my own breast, after a patient research through dubious and contradictory authorities, that I have not only been correct and faithful in my preceding delineations of events and

circumstances; but that the main point of the whole question, now at issue, is, *whether the Spanish Americans, in such moments of danger, distrust, and despondency, did, or did not, do right, in thus changing (for the time being) their local government, and placing the administration of their own affairs, in the hands of men, possessed of their trust and confidence?*

§ These essential premises being established, it now remains for me to examine, what was the species of government which the laws of Spain enact, as well as the annals of her national history, prescribe, for calamities, like that which had befallen the Spanish monarchy of both hemispheres; and next, whether it was such as the Spanish Americans, equally, adopted. I have, previously, quoted some of the fundamental laws of Castile, which ordain the assembling of the three estates of the realm, in all cases of great emergency and national misfortune. This axiom is, moreover, fully authorized, by the spirit of the Spanish history, by many precedents, and, recently, by the conduct of the whole provinces of the Peninsula. When the functions of the crown, were there unfortunately suspended, the various provinces, immediately placed their confidence in Juntas, and vested in them, the administration of their affairs; with full powers to call forth the resources of the districts under their jurisdiction, and promote their security and defence. Notwithstanding, however, this measure of prudence, there existed in each, a captain-general, and an audiencia, or other equivalent authorities, constituted by the king; but still, these were not sufficient, even, for local purposes. For the general guidance and government of the realm, a concentration of these provincial Juntas,

was esteemed most conducive to the welfare of the state; and if this concentration, had, only, been made, in a due and consistent manner, (and it was not, as will, hereafter be fully shewn) the hopes of the country, would, never, have been so much frustrated.

Notwithstanding this new measure, the council of Castile, nevertheless, existed; as well as of the Indies; but to neither, was the management of the nation, confided. Yet, in their respective jurisdictions, at home, they each exercised an authority, infinitely superior to the viceroys, captain-generals, and audiencias, in America; for, in fact, they represented the supreme power, as well as the person of the king. Still, they were overlooked in the new arrangements, and the people of the Peninsula, considered that the Council of Castile, was not adequate, to fill up the void newly created between them, and the sovereign. And what greater reasons existed in America, for the inhabitants to trust their all, in the hands of local viceroys, captain-generals, and audiencias, under the guidance of the council of the Indies at home? Ler us call for the test of fact and experience, and thereby ascertain, what fresh proofs of probity, rectitude, and sincerity, there existed in them, at the precise period referred to, more than had been evinced by the governors of the European provinces, or by the council of Castile, when the form of government was changed. The general conduct of the transmarine authorities has been, already, pointed out, and as for the Council of the Indies, from the time of the Spanish revolution, in its plans for the well-being of the country, over which it presided, it had done nothing more, than send over orders, and full confirmations to the powers of the

chiefs and bishops in office there, as the best means, to insure subservience to Napoleon.

§ In Europe, we have seen both of these councils, under the necessity of submitting, first to the Central Junta, then to the Regency, and afterwards, to the national Cortes. And in what way was the loss of the king, to be supplied in America? In the annals of Castile, no traces or precedent of a monarch having been, surreptitiously, taken from amidst his subjects, is to be found; consequently, such a case as the present, was, in like manner, novel in the history of Spanish America; since, from the time of the conquest, the kings had, always remained in the bosom of the nation, respected and obeyed by all its members. Yet, in all cases of emergency, as before established, the laws of Castile ordain, that the representatives of the people, be assembled; and, by express statutes, it is further enacted, *that in all cases of minority, the regents of the realm, and the tutors of the infant heir to the crown, be named by a general Congress, for that purpose assembled.* And is not the seizure of the royal person, (by which an interregnum, together with all the weighty and momentous consequences of an actual minority, have been produced to the whole nation of both hemispheres), a case equally arduous, important and calamitous? Spanish America, by the fullest and most express acts of the Spanish legislature, had been annexed to the crown of Castile, as already proved, whose laws and statutes, were there equally binding; and the monarchical constitution, had been, likewise, extended there to. In addition to this, by an express enactment, it is directed, that the viceroys and governors, provide for and determine in all general matters, within their jurisdiction

but, always consult arduous matters, with the Real Acuerdo,* Consequently, in such cases, the viceroy was not the sole arbiter, nor, could so monstrous a system of legislation, be imagined, as one that left to the direction of a single individual, the fate of a large and detached section of a nation, when the whole was surrounded by imminent dangers, and convulsed by a variety of contending and clashing interests.

A local Junta, in the provinces of Spanish America, was not a novel occurrence, or one, unauthorised by precedent. The earliest annals of New Spain, record an instance of an *Ayuntamiento*, or Junta, being assembled in an emergent case. Cortes, not trusting to the powers and nomination of generalissimo, he had received from Diego Velasquez, captain-general of Cuba, delivered them up, together with his commission, into the hands of a Junta, in Villarica, and received from that body, a fresh confirmation, the legitimacy of which, was never questioned, either by Velasquez, or Narvaez, although his most deadly enemies. A local Junta, also, governed the whole kingdom of New Spain, immediately after its conquest and pacification; for the audiencia did not go out till the year 1529, nor the first viceroy, till 1534. In a royal cedula, issued in Madrid, 6th June, 1664, it is, moreover, ordered, that *the viceroys consult arduous matters in a general Junta*, this is, therefore, a full acknowledgment of their legality. This mode, of, provisionally, conducting the affairs of government, is still more expressly established in another royal cedula, dated Madrid, 24th June, 1766. In the beginning of the last cen-

* Recop. Ley, Ind. ley 45. tit. 5. lib. 3.

tury, a Junta was formed in Mexico,* for the purpose of consulting weighty and important matters relating to the state; particularly, respecting a diminution in the price of quicksilver, which, from being a monopoly of the crown, was out of the jurisdiction of the viceroy; and, even at the period of the governmental changes in the ultramarine provinces, a superior Junta of finance existed, independent of the viceroy and audiencia. In short, the plan of Juntas, is not, only, the most reasonable means of establishing unanimity and confidence, and providing for public security in extraordinary cases; but is, also, in strict accord with the laws and usages of the whole nation, and conformable to its most recent precedents. Had not this been the case, a viceroy, in charge of an American province, would, scarcely, have recommended such a measure to his own detriment, and with so much responsibility on his shoulders; nor could he, when surrounded by all his councils, have committed so egregious an oversight, in the application of the laws, and usages of his own nation.

Valencia and Seville, as before noticed, were, equally, conquests of the crown of Castile; yet they were allowed to adopt this measure; and the Junta of the latter, did more, it undertook to exact obedience from the entire provinces of both hemispheres. The sections of America, in altering their local governments, had for object, to provide for their own safety, and to put an end to the reign of doubt and uncertainty; and most assuredly, the bsst means of answering this end, was by cementing the fidelity of the people afresh, also by esta-

* Comentario de las ordenanzas de mineria, cap. 1. fol. 25

blishing an union of intentions and wishes; and thus transfusing harmony through each order of society. These objects, in the Spanish Americans, were a thousand times more prudent and reasonable, than the conduct of the governments of European Spain, in overturning the fundamental laws of the entire monarchy, in divesting the king of his sovereignty, and in waging an unjust and intemperate war, against half his subjects. The only material difference, which existed between the two parts of the monarchy, at the above parallel of time, was, that one was under an invasion, and the other was not; but were the American provinces to wait, till armies were landed on their shores, before they provided for their security; or were they, in like manner, to be roused from their slumber, by the very same storm bursting upon them, which had, already, laid waste the Peninsula? When the news of the melancholy situation of Spain, at the beginning of 1810, reached them, they conceived that the seal had been irrevocably put to her fate; and that this circumstance, alone, with a small degree of address on the part of the French, was sufficient to render the Peninsula, a powerful instrument in their own subjection; and even independent of this circumstance, which their own chiefs, besides, lead them to believe as inevitable; if the French squadron, which about that time, left the port of Rochefort, had reached its proposed destination, what would have been the situation of New Spain?

§ In taking this general review of the situation of European and American Spain, at the period of these two remarkable transactions in their political conduct; it is, at the same time, necessary, in order, clearly, to mani-

fest the urgent motives which induced the provinces of the latter, to change, for the time being, their form of government, to examine the particular state of the society in Spanish America, and also to bear in mind, the numerous privations under which its inhabitants laboured. The general system of government practised in the whole of that country, in consequence of a long accumulation of abuses, was, according to the outline already given, rather suited to support and procure a degree of sovereignty and dependence, than to promote the prosperity, improvement, and happiness of the people governed. The most galling of all these privations, was, however, that, by which the Creoles were excluded from a participation in all offices of trust or dignity, for they had, certainly, long beheld with irritated feelings, that foreign Samaritans had come amongst them, exclusively to enjoy the waters of the well of Jacob, and to whose portion alone, fell the fat of the land. They had, nevertheless, waited with patience, for two years, yet no effective relief had been procured them; nay, their situation had been rendered worse; for besides their old aggravations, they now beheld their country filled with denunciations, espionage, arrests, prosecutions, banishments, &c. principally levelled at themselves; and which, not only tended to infuse alarm and disgust into the bosoms of the inhabitants, but, also, strongly, to alienate their minds, from the immediate authors of such scenes.

The distance at which the transatlantic provinces were, moreover, placed, the many stratagems used to deceive them, by the circulation of incorrect and exaggerated accounts, had greatly contributed to fill them with uncertainty and dilemma; they beheld disasters succeed

the first victories gained by the patriotic arms; they saw their treasury exhausted, and that the enemy had already over-ran the best provinces of the Peninsula, and had shut up the wreck of an impotent government, within the walls of Cadiz. The chiefs, who, so lately, had placed themselves at the head of the nation, were now dispersed and covered with ignominy; and they heard that the Central Junta, which, not long ago, had been pronounced a paternal and beneficent government, had now all the disasters of the nation laid to its charge; and yet it was plain, that the succeeding government, was no other than a committee of the preceding one, with no more than the delegated power of its predecessors. They beheld, on the other hand, that two years had produced no alteration in their own degraded state; that in consequence of intrigue, and the influence of the French over their own chiefs, they were running the same risks, as were the inhabitants of the Peninsula, from open force. Under such circumstances as these, could it be pronounced treason, or rebellion, in the distant provinces, to choose men of their own confidence; in order to superintend their local administration, to watch over their welfare, and to remove, or reform, the most crying of the privations under which they had so long groaned? To effect these necessary and reasonable purposes, they imitate the example of the mother-country; and they establish a provisional government, during the absence of the monarch, or till the general government of the realm, was organized on a new and legal basis.

It had, candidly, been confessed by the new governments of the Peninsula, on assuming their functions, that the late defective administration of the Ma drid ca-

binet, had opened the gate to the French, and brought abjection to the whole monarchy. And might not the same evils in Spanish America, have produced consequences, equally serious. Was it, there, also, as in the Peninsula, that reforms were to be delayed, till the remedies would be of no avail? Reform, was, then, as necessary in the one, as it was in the other, even as a means of prevention; and independent of right and justice, in such critical moments, to aggravate its denial, by fresh wrongs, was not only dangerous and impolitic, but, was, also, unjust and criminal. The European Spaniards, considered reform as the second grand object for which they were fighting; this alone, aided by loyalty, rendered their country worth defending, and the idea that their former degradation was to return, would have extinguished the bright and animated flame, which burst forth on the opening of their glorious cause, and would have rendered despondence general. Why then were the transmarine provinces, which doubtlessly required reform in a double degree, and which were, at the same time, contributing their wealth and resources for the united object of all, alone, to be excluded from an alleviation of their wrongs? The fiscal laws, had, there, reduced the country to the impoverished state at which it then stood, and had rendered the choicest productions of nature, of no value; yet, at the very instant, the Spanish Americans were about to receive some alleviation, by trade being opened to them, the Cadiz Regency ordains, that its own decree, should be revoked and publicly burnt;* because it was offensive to the monopolists of that trading port.

* Vide Regency decree, Cadiz, June 27, 1810, and this impolitic measure fully discussed in El Espanol, London, No. 4, page 305.

Itwas both the interest and honour of the inhabitants of the transatlantic provinces, (and as an eye-witness, and with substantial documents in my hand, I can aver my assertion to be true) to give all the aid and succour in their power, to the patriotic cause of the Peninsula, as long as was consistent with their own safety; but, in return, it was, undoubtedly, the duty of the government of the latter, to throw to the ground, that improvident and unjust system, by which the former had been so long governed. The Spanish government, by being wanting in this essential and primary duty, not only placed the Spanish Americans, under the necessity of looking to themselves; but, by declaring a hasty and intemperate war against them, also authorised the attitude in which the latter have placed themselves, in order to defend their own rights. Consequently, the former, is, alone, answerable for all the fatal results. The Central Junta, at a moment when pecuniary succours were wanted, and fearful that the transmarine provinces, might be endangered, amidst the general confusion, and dismay, likely to spread abroad, did, indeed, decree, that the Spanish American provinces, formed an equal and integral part of the Spanish monarchy, but this appears, rather, to have been a messure of expediency or flattery, than an attempt at redress; for the decree was never acted upon, but was left to die away of itself, or to be disavowed by the opposite conduct of the successive governments.

This theoretical, rather than practical, step, was not, however, necessary, to stimulate the Spanish Americans, to acts of loyalty and generosity; for, as before proved, the first, was the general sentiment that mani-

fested itself on the opening of the cause in Europe; and, in order, to prove the second, I have only to add, that, during the administration of the Central Junta, ninety millions of dollars, were sent over from all the transmarine provinces, of which the section of Mexico, alone, furnished fifty-five. A very large proportion of these funds, were, besides, private donations, or belonged to local establishments, and, consequently, not the property of the crown. Were all these effective demonstrations on their part, therefore, deserving of no consideration at home? Empty declarations of nomirnal equality, when opposed to practice, could be considered as nothing else, than as a snare; and, could, of course, by no means, satisfy the justice, and restore and secure the rights of those, who had so long suffered. Similar promises and offers, on paper, but, unaccompanied by practice and effect, resemble the two algebraical terms of *plus* and *minus*, which, mutually destroy each other, and leave the result as nothing. Even if such declarations in intention and in theory, had been sincere, (and time has proved them to have been the reverse) the delay of their full and effective execution, on the most frivolous pretexts, too plainly evinces, that the motives, under which they were made, were ambiguous; and their want of practical realization, proves, the disdain and unfair manner, in which the Spanish Americans have been dealt with.

§ The insurrections in Spanish America, have, in this country, by many, been viewed in an unfavourable light, from being supposed, in some measure, to be analagous to the French revolution, whose horrors, both recent and great, have, deservedly, excited the disgust and resentment of every sober nation. This opinion of the Spa-

nish American transactions, is, however, exremely, incorrect and unfounded; and has only originated from gross misconceptions, arising out of the complexity and obscurity of a subject, hitherto, unexplained to the public. In the revolution of France, we had before us, the fatal consequences and atrocious effects, of extending licence beyond what its votaries could bear; but in the insurrections of Spanish America, we have beheld a stimulus of action, both just and respectable, and the accompanying movements, have not been similar. Though many scenes of confusion, and some instances of cruelty, have occurred, the ones, have, nevertheless, not hindered considerable improvements in the governing system, where any thing regular has been established; and the others, have not been wanton, or when sanguinary, have not been instigated by any other motive, than retaliation, as will be more fully understood, when I subjoin my abridged detail of the horrors and havoc, which have desolated the several regions of the unfortunate Spanish Columbia. If the situation of those sections, where the governmental changes, have had a fair, though yet partial means of operating, had not been, thereby, bettered; many of the accusations brought forward by the monopolists of Cadiz, and which, have, in some measure, produced amongst us an unwarranted stigma, might have had their due weight; but the political and social state of Buenos Ayres and Chili, the only two sections from which any limited inference can be drawn, have materially changed for the better, as will, hereafter, be fully considered.

§ The facts I have, so far, related, respecting the views and intentions of the Spanish Americans, in their respective governmental changes. I now leave to the un-

unbiassed conclusions of British minds; fully sensible, that these transactions, will never warrant the charges of disloyalty, ingratitude, or of sinister, or unlawful proceedings. The preceding description of the relative bearing and position of affairs, sufficiently manifests the grounds on which the transmarine provinces, then acted; and this material point being once established, and in exact conformity to the events as they occurred, it results, that the original views of the Spanish Americans, in deposing their own chiefs, and establishing provincial Juntas, were excited by the alarm, spread amongst them, in consequence of the hopeless situation of the Peninsula. They were urged by the immediate, evident, and general despondence, which every where reigned, and by distrust in the government at home, and in the chiefs, who were then in office, amongst them. These, with a variety of local and more pressing causes, were the radical and primordial motives, which stimulated their conduct; but, in addition to all, they felt, heavily, the fatal effects of their bad plans of government, and its galling oppression, which had grown into a most degrading system, to which they saw there was no end. They laboured under a total suspension of commerce; and the aggravated weight of domestic tyranny, had, daily, more and more, irritated and roused their feelings; for they looked round and beheld other nations, their neighbours, and even the colonies of European powers, situated on their own shores, happy, prosperous, and possessed of civil liberty, whilst they, alone, were to have their old and abject degradation prolonged. They pondered on the prospect before them, and scarcely a bright or cheerful shade, was found in the melancholy picture, that rose before their troubled sight.

The great instruments destined to carry on the colonial system of Spain, were the viceroys and captain-generals; and consequently, it was natural, that they should be the first to feel the blow. That the Spanish Americans, could, no longer, remain cold spectators of the fate preparing for them, or tamely submit to be made over to the French, much less, endure the fresh insults heaped upon them; was the natural result of their long injured, but not abject, feelings; their resentment was of course, directed against their rulers, as the persons intrusted with the machinations of Buonaparte. Their removal was, thence, resolved upon; but they were divested of their commands, in the most quiet and constitutional manner possible; and Juntas were established to represent their authority, on exactly the same plans, as those of Oviedo, Seville, and the other provinces of the Peninsula. The Juntas of the transmarine provinces, were, therefore, exact prototypes of those of Spain; they were created under similar circumstances, and I can with confidence assert, that had the Cadiz Regency, at this time, and the Cortes afterwards, when they first entered on their national functions, and as urged by the American deputies therein, only, then, confirmed these same Juntas, as authorities constituted in conformity to the laws, and the urgency of actual circumstances; nay, had this local administration, been granted to the Americans, for the time being, and with only a partial redress of the most galling grievances, the horrors, anarchy, and bloodshed, which have since followed, might have been avoided, and cordiality might have been preserved.

§ The Cadiz Regency, that had, by this time, created itself into a Sovereign power, and though chosen for a tem-

porary purpose, sought the prolongation of its command; instead of entering into the feelings of the Spanish Americans, and weighing, well, the circumstances which had stimulated their conduct, declares war, and orders measures of a strict blockade against Caracas; from whence, as being the nearest section of America, the news of the recent governmental changes, had been received. This declaration of war and of blockade, is dated August 31, 1810; and from its being the first link of that long chain of impolitic and unjust measures, which have, at length, produced open enmity, I add it in my Appendix D, in order that my reader may judge for himself. This being, however, the primary source, and real cause of all the subsequent calamities, it is necessary to subjoin some explanatory remarks.

The motives of the Spanish American provinces, in changing their respective governments, have, already been manifested, literally, as they occurred, and, as explained in the declarations of each. In Spain, the same motives had authorised the institution of Juntas, and a murmur was not heard; yet the same measure in Spanish America, produces a declaration of war, on one part of the monarchy against the other. In what way, can this be reconciled? As an exterior form, and, perhaps, as a snare; but, at the same time, with substantial grounds, the ultramarine provinces, by a royal decree, dated 22d Jan. 1809, had been declared integral and equal parts of the Spanish monarchy; this had been confirmed, by a fresh decree of May 22, same year; and again, by proclamation of the Central Junta, on January 1, 1810. This was, still, no more, than a just restitution of sacred, but long invaded rights, as fully pointed out, in the early stages of this

production. Why, then, is Spanish America, to be precluded from consulting her own safety, and promoting her own welfare, in a way not only conformable to the laws and precedents, but also, sanctioned by most recent example? The existing Regency, was no more than a committee of the Central Junta; this had decreed Spanish America to be equal, in rights, with the Peninsula; and, now, the former, by its decree, again, publicly, divests them of this right. Whence, then, this palpable contradiction? The small island of Majorca, was allowed to assemble a Junta, for its own local administration, and no complaint was ever uttered. Why, then all this partiality? To the fact. The government had now been removed from Seville to Cadiz, and in their plans and of reform, the Americans sought to rend asunder their trammels on trade. The Cadiz merchants, trembled for their monopolies, and the Regency, by this time, had become the tool of their extravagant pretensions, and the instrument of their injustice.

As a specious pretext to this public outrage, and in order to gloss over their arbitrary conduct, the Regents declare, that the people of Caracas, *had made themselves independent of the mother-country, and created a governing Junta, to exercise a supposed independent authority*; when, at the same time, nothing of the kind had either been attempted or manifested. But it was necessary, to give some plea for so flagrant an act of injustice, and such an abuse of power; and the Cadiz monopolists, and the ravings of a mercenary war faction, were, not long, in defining the nature of the colouring, that was to be given to so intemperate a measure. If the self constituted Regents of Spain, then, charged their

distant fellow-subjects, with rebellion, treason, and ingratitude, the only motives which could authorize a war; they ought to have been confronted and heard, and the illegality of their views, ought to have been made known, by strong and deliberative evidence. Before one half of the nation, declared war against the other, the reasons ought to have been explained, the circumstances cleared up, and above all, unwise and dangerous self-delusion, ought never to have been the motive of so important a rupture. The cold blooded fury, and the mercenary malice of faction, ought never to have influenced or guided the actions of a government, that pretended, not only, to render the Spanish monarchy powerful and effective, but, also, to regenerate its abject subjects; nor, should it ever have been guilty of an injustice, which involved a direct contradiction to the promises made to the suffering inhabitants of a country, that had given such long, and sincere proofs of attatchment and recent loyalty. It was that political power, these Regents, then, arrogated to themselves, beyond the limits of their authority, which first disturbed the just equipoise of the state, and shook that ancient fraternity, which, by length of time, had grown into a degree of habitual dependence, between European Spain, and Spanish America.

§ By an unfortunate combination of circumstances, if the policy of Spain in this particular, was improvident, illiberal, and unjust, that of the British government, also, does not appear to have been, sufficiently, firm, decided, or enlightened. From the very moment, we entered into our treaty with European Spain, of which sincerity was the acknowledged basis, we lost sight of

Spanish America, whom we seemed no longer to regard, as soon as we were easy on the score of the French. Mutual sincerity had been pledged, yet the ingredient of mutual confidence,seemed entirely excluded. We appear to have been afraid, of convincing Spain, of the error she was then committing, or of reminding her, of the heavy consequences, she was about to bring down,on her own guilty head. If a rupture, with a large transatlantic population, was a case novel in the Spanish historical annals, it was not in our own; was there, then, no advice that the experienced ministers of an allied nation, could, at their most important juncture, have given; nay, was there no good, which England might, not then, have derived, out of the great and ponderous mass of evils, thence about to result to Spain? Was this not the most suitable moment to have stifled an increasing calamity, which, we now see has, for upwards of four years, germinated into a wide growth of public and private misery, and has spread its poisonous influence over the whole monarchy?

What sound policy, would, at that time, have dictated, was plain and easy; for the dispositions of the Spanish Americans, were avowed and public, and appearances could not be mistaken. They demanded redress, not as a favour, but as a right to which they were entitled; and in case of refusal, every thing announced, that the movements would not be slight or temporary. The general and animated features of the insurrections, made it manifest, that palliatives could, no longer, be employed with success; and the stages and probable consequences of the events, were too alarming, to be looked upon with indifference. If delicacy and prudence

made the British government, then, abstain from fomenting the insurrections in question; no motive of policy, whatever, could authorize it, to suffer the Regency of Cadiz, without the wishes of the nation being, previously, known, to declare war against one half of the monarchy, equally bound by a solemn treaty, particularly in moments so pressing; nor could the British government have been unaware, that it was a war, unjust in its nature, and fraught with the most fatal consequences to all parties. What renders this circumstance the more astonishing, is, that this same Regency, avowedly, owed its existence, protection, and support, to the influence of the governmental agents of England. Both in European and American Spain, the creation of this ephemeral government, after the dispersion of the Central Junta, is known under the appellation of *hechura Ingleza* (British make) the influencing or counteracting of its acts, when unjust, was therefore, in a particular manner, expected from a mutual ally; and beyond doubt, in those moments, dexterous and energetic remonstrance, would have been successful. The triumph of probity, good sense, and moderation, on this occasion, would have redounded, more to the solid advantage of England, and have produced more real benefits to the entire Spanish monarchy, than any of the other military or political transactions, in which we have been engaged for its welfare.

It was the two undivided halves of the Spanish empire, and constituting the whole nation, who were the allies of England, and not the Regency of Cadiz, which had been engendered, amidst the terror and dismay that succeeded the flight of the Central Junta from Seville;

and if five persons, illegally constituted, were on the eve of committing an unjust, and impolitic act, against one half of the nation whose sovereignty they had usurped; if they were about to declare an unwarrantable war against it, and which would deluge it in blood, and dry up those resources, that were to give efficacy to the exertions of the whole; who so well as England, their mutual ally, and with equally as much at stake, could with propriety step in between the irritated parties, and insist on being their umpire? It is honourable in a nation, as it is in an individual, to be misled by the impulse of expanded philanthropy, but to merit the opposite charge, each ought, equally, to avoid. The immense havoc, that has ensued from the unfortunate measure here alluded to, might, then, have been easily calculated on and foreseen; but it would almost appear, as if both Spain and England, were envious of the profound peace enjoyed in all the transmarine provinces; and as if Spain, in flames by the hand of a deadly enemy, had likewise hastened, to hurl on the quiet shores of Columbia, the same conflagration, by which she herself, was fast consuming.

Had England, then, only used energy, talent, and address; had she held out to Spain, the example of dignity, and true wisdom, and had she by sound and firm reasoning, only silenced the ravings of a boisterous war faction, according to the united testimony of both Spaniards and Americans, she would not, only, have been successful, and averted this storm from bursting on her ally, but she would, besides, have derived considerable advantages to herself. She would, moreover, have, then, really, maintained the integrity of the entire Spa-

nish monarchy, to its unfortunate owner, and would, likewise have secured to herself, the everlasting gratitude of its two component parts. England had claims upon, and ties over the then existing Regency, which from a variety of circumstances, she cannot have over the present Cortes; and the Americans, with founded motives, blame her for not using them in time, for the good of all. The firm and decided interposition of the British government, in order to hinder the decrees of the Cadiz Regency against Caracas, would have cut the evil to the root; would have spared the blood which has since flowed; would have warded off the general desolation which has ensued; would have kept the nation united; and would also, have prevented the war of extermination, now enkindled. By strongly urging the sincerity of that treaty, which existed; by a full guarantee of the upright intentions of England; by, thus, gently, leading the Spanish government by persuasion and argument; by enlightening the nation with regard to its real interests; and, in short, by convincing it of a sense of what was right; we should, not only, have given strength and duration to our alliance, and consolidated it by an union of interests; but, we might, in that case, have expected to see the entire monarchy of Spain, rise superior to the adversities by which it was beset.

Instead of a hasty and intemperate war, the Spanish Americans had every reason to expect a full investigation, and a fair, impartial, and independent exposure, of those multiplied sources of wrong and hardship, under which they had so long laboured. If the urgent state of the mother country, did not, at that time, admit of formal

and tedious deliberations, they were, at least, entitled to an immediate and willing redress of those most glaring privations, by which, they had been so uniformly depressed. If the government of Spain, had, then possessed sufficient wisdom and energy, to second the manifest wishes of the transatlantic provinces, in sueing for an essential reform; if gratitude, equity, and good faith, had, then, triumphed over the enfuriated yells of an inconsiderate war faction; if the conduct of Spain, had been confined within the sober range of rational hope, and had only laid aside, its deluding intoxication, then, and only then, might Spain have been made strong, and then might she have hailed the cheering return of virtue, happiness, and domestic peace. If the Cadiz Regents, instead of being misled by intrigue, and stimulated by faction; had, only been influenced by a mutual spirit of benevolence and accommodation, under the influence England, these differences, whilst yet in embryo, would have been adjusted; fresh vigour and resources, would have been added to Spain, and the career of those, who delight in the annihilation of confidence, would have been checked,

Every government in the Peninsula, that preceded the Cortes, was illegitimate, in its essence and formation; and the sovereign powers by them arrrogated, were, in direct contradiction, to the laws and usages of the realm. Necessity, and the absence of avowed opposition, on the part of the people, might have given a limited sanction to their conduct, in acts relating to the defence, or more immediate welfare of the nation; but to overturn its fundamental laws, and to declare war against one half the monarchy, before the consent of the other, had been obtained; was not, only, exceeding, the powers which

Charles or Ferdinand themselves possessed, had either been quietly sitting on the throne of his ancestors; but it was, moreover, exercising an arbitrary and impolitic despotism, which could not fail of meeting with the deserved reproach of every member of Spanish society, as soon as calmer feelings, had succeeded to the general confusion of the whole kingdom. From such a system, nothing, but a perfect disunion of the elements of the state, could be expected. And if the agents of England, then looked quietly on, and without a solemn remonstrance or protest, suffered this great and flagrant act of injustice, to be carried into execution; and which, alone, sufficed to defeat the very object of the *sincere* treaty, that formed the basis of her conduct, it is hardly to be distinguished, whether, the conduct of the five Regents of Cadiz, or the pusillanimous negligence of the British cabinet, was most to be blamed.

From that moment, it was, that, unmindful of the real and durable interests of the Spanish monarchy at large, we were awed into silence, by the upstart and self-sufficient governments of the Peninsula, who sought power, more for the gratification of ambitious views; than for the well-being of their fellow-subjects. We then became subservient to the will of creatures, who, by their conduct, have proved, that they were ready to sacrifice the lives and rights of their distant brethren, to the smiles of greatness, and to the undue gains, of one hundred and fifty Cadiz monopolists. Even, if we had no other means in our power, than the press, we might have convinced Spain, of the injustice and impolicy, and of the tyrannical nature of this single measure; we might have forewarned the people, if we could not the government, of the fatal

consequences that were about to ensue; nay, we might have excited and fixed the impartial judgment of the nation at large, on this singular and intemperate act of its rash government. Every one, who knows the peculiar situation of the Cadiz government, in those moments, and is aware of the many successful springs that might have been touched, without implicating the dignity of the nation, or offending our new ally, will candidly confess the truth of this assertion.

This over delicate conduct on our part, has not cured the Spaniards of distrust; it has not inspired them with confidence, but it has alienated the affections of the Spanish Americans, and has blasted many of our future prospects amongst them. It has produced a civil war, with all its fatal consequences, and it has, besides, driven the injured provinces on the other side of the Atlantic, even to the extreme, of sighing for the aid and protection of our enemies, and of rejoicing in their success. Our delicacy and forbearance, must have been intended, as a remedy to the captious distrust of the Spaniards: but this remedy, has, rather, aggravated the disorder, and caused its baneful influence to spread still wider. Would not, the pacification and union of the transmarine provinces, have been the most powerful tie to the affections and gratitude of European Spain; and, if, in either quarter, it is deduced, that a want of energy, and zeal on the part of England, and illiberality on that of Spain, has been the only bar to such desirable results, the unfavourable conclusions drawn against us, in the minds and feelings of the Spanish Americans, are not divested of grounds.

But, what is most to be feared, is, that England, in this particular, has erred, rather from a want of serious and deliberate enquiry, into this important question; or, that she has been influenced by the acrimony constantly circulated in the Peninsular prints, and the partiality of the Cadiz government. This, could not have been the case, if, as before fully testified, we had, only, in our very alliance, traced out a line of conduct for both parts of the monarchy, with whom we were contracting; and had fixed the relative duties of each, before we gave a pledge, both vague and inconsistent in its essence. Had England, then, reflected on the consequences about to befall all parties; or even as a redemption of this first error, had she been, only, sensible, that, every month, she was delaying efficient remedies to the evils thence arising, she was, actually, condemning thousands of the unredressed inhabitants of Spanish America, to death, to dungeons; and was, besides, throwing millions of useful resources into the general scale of destruction; it scarcely can be thought, that her ministers, would have delayed, for a moment, some firm and humane resolution, on this material subject; nor can it be supposed, that the policy of her deliberative and executive measures, in this particular, would, then, have been so remiss. It was a reasonable anticipation, in the Spanish Americans, from plentiful motives already explained; to expect that England would sympathize in the repeated acts of cruelty and injustice committed against them; and, when the fatal effects of the precipitate and rash conduct of the Cadiz Regency, became public and manifest, they had still more founded hopes, that no time or opportunity would be lost, in England, resorting to some sound and liberal experiment, in order to stop the effusion of

blood; or at least, that under her mediation, a prompt and cordial means, equally honourable and desirable to all parties, would be afforded, for discussing and adjusting the interests of each. In short, the decree of the Cadiz Regency, declaring war, and instituting a blockade against Caracas, under the peculiar circumstances just explained, stands as an everlasting monument of the injustice and intemperance of that same ephemeral government, and, further proves, the want of influence, or existing coldness, on the part of England.

Some of our statesmen, speaking of our policy, with regard to European and American Spain, have been heard to say, that the British government could not interfere, or have any direct, or indirect correspondence, with the latter; for, what should we think of an ally, who took part to protect a revolt in Ireland against ourselves, whilst under a treaty of alliance and mutual co-operation. How fallacious such reasoning, and how devoid of all analogy. The government of Cadiz, has, indeed, construed the conduct of the transmarine provinces into wanton revolt, and into an open rebellion, founded on ingratitude; and such is the picture, drawn of it, in the Peninsular prints. But, is this a fact, or does this inference, equally, belong to England? Has she, in like manner, been, influenced by partial, or undue motives? The prejudices and invectives of Spain; have never slept, since Cadiz became the seat of government; and to judge from appearances, it would seem, as if they had, also, formed the basis of the political conduct of England, in those points, to which they referred. Yet, when viewing the subject, dispassionately, it comes to be un-

derstood, that the stimulus of this animosity, on the part of the Cadiz government, has been partiality, motives of interest, and, partly, rancour; and, when it is, at the same time, remembered, that the Spanish Americans, from the commencement of their pretensions, have only asked redress, and such governmental reform, as they required, and were entitled to; that they have ever been ambitious of belonging to Spain, as an integral and incorporated part; that they have ever acknowledged the same monarch, and that, in short, they have, uniformly, given, the most unequivocal proofs of fidelity, loyalty, and fraternity, it seems impossible, that such conclusions should have been drawn by Spain, or that they should have warped the independent and upright councils of England.

§ The first fatal effects, produced by this injudicious declaration of war, on the part of the Cadiz Regency, against Caracas, was the driving of the inhabitants of that province, to the extreme of declaring their independence; the first act which occurred on the other side of the Atlantic, to endanger the integrity of the Spanish monarchy. This being an occurrence, too remarkable to be omitted, in this general outline, and full explanation of all the insurrections of Spanish America, I will hereafter, submit a short detail of its most leading events; contenting myself, for the present, with observing, that the people of Caracas, were urged by open hostilities, by the aggravations, and repeated insults of the Cadiz government; and that if a partial attempt was then made at absolute independence, it was not till July 11, 1811, that is, nearly a year after this same declaration of war, now under consi-

deration, had been made. This event, therefore, in Caracas, took place, at a subsequent period, and when the unjust conduct of the Peninsular government, of which this same Regency decree is quoted, as the principal basis, together with the coldness of England, had convinced the people, that they had nothing to expect from home, but a continuation of ill-treatment, a prolonged refusal to the discussion and restitution of their rights, and, in short, this measure was resorted to, because, from the preparations, making on their shores, they conceived it was time, to seek the means of their own defence. They judged, under such circumstances, that it was the same thing, to be in open hostility, as to endure the grievances of covered enmity; surrounded, as they were, by plots, by arrests, and by every domestic and external horror, that civil discord, and an implacable enemy, could hurl amongst them.

§ If, the impolitic declaration of war, made by the Regency against Caracas, and which has, avowedly, been the cause of all the misfortunes that have since harrassed the other sections, from its operating as an insulting defiance to the just claims and pretensions of all, was, at the time of its promulgation and execution, overlooked by the British government; nearly a year afterwards, that is, when the injuries and insults of Spanish America, had become manifest and urgent, and when the integrity of that same monarchy, we had guaranteed, became endangered; was it not time to ponder on the state of that injured country; was the hour not yet come, to concert remedies for evils, which had, already, risen to the most alarming height; and was it not, yet, evident, what would be the

melancholy consequences, of this increasing overflow of gall, on both sides? Would it not have, then, been, more manly, generous, and just, in the British government, under the influence, and actuated by the sincerity of that same treaty, which had constituted us, the united guardians of the crown of the absent Ferdinand, when its brightest gem, was, thus, likely to be torn from it; nay, would it not have been more politic, at once, to have struck at the root of these disorders, which were about to prey on the very vitals of the Spanish monarchy of both hemispheres, and which would, eventually, defeat the object, which led to our alliance. This was, only, to be done, by a mutual approximation and compromise; these could, only, be produced, by the influence, advice, or demand, of a third party; can it, therefore, be doubtful, on whom this essential duty devolved?

It would not have been impossible, though the task was, undoubtedly, difficult, for a dexterous and energetic minister near the Cadiz government, to have called its members, seriously, to the contemplation of the fatal consequences of this unfortunate rupture; nor would it have been an arduous undertaking, to have convinced them, of its being the primary, and most sacred duty of their public functions, as well as the interest of the nation at large, to restore and cement the harmony of all parts of the monarchy; to keep down parties and war factions; to stop the waste of public treasure; to put an end to the evils which the state suffered; and above all, that it was the imperious dictate of humanity, to terminate an unjust war between brethren, which for so many reasons, was to be deplored by all parties, and on which, at a future period, the

whole world would sit as judges. England had, then, the most manifest and crying justice on her side; and if the objects of her alliance, were comprehensive; if she had in view, the lasting, and not the temporary welfare of the Spanish monarchy, and if, more particularly, she had it in contemplation, to secure to herself, the sincere gratitude of its inhabitants of both hemispheres, and cause this same gratitude to last beyond the duration of the present conflict, she ought to have lifted up her views to higher hopes, and to a bolder policy, than merely to fight the battles of the deluded Ferdinand.

§ It has been, so far, my object, to trace to their very origin, the present dissentions existing between European and American Spain; and if in pursuit of this purpose, I have been diffuse, it has been owing to my anxious wish, that every concurrent circumstance, might be fully understood. I have, also, by this time, brought my reader, as much, in chronological order, as I was able, to that stage of the transatlantic occurrences, when open war began to flame between two sister kingdoms, who had, for more than three hundred years, remained united by the strongest possible ties; and between whom, till now, no material variance, had occurred. Yet, though, I flatter myself, with having irrefragably demonstrated my position, in general principle, founded on a series of facts, and illustrated by the most leading and accompanying circumstances, I am, nevertheless, scarcely, satisfied, with having fully attained my object. I am, still, fearful, that some of the premises on which my deductions rest, may, by the superficial reader, to whom the subject is novel, appear partial, or devoid of

sufficient testimony. I could not, therefore, in this place, refrain from sanctioning my assertions, respecting the impolicy and injustice of the war declared, by the Cadiz Regency, against Caracas, on which, my most material arguments are founded, by the opinion of the respectable editor of the El Español, whose testimony to a British mind, must bear the greater weight, from the sincere and unbiassed manner, in which he has uniformly discussed the detatched transactions of the Spanish revolution, which, as a periodical writer, have fallen under his review. From his being, also, an European Spaniard, one, who was never on the other shores of the Atlantic, but who has, ever, felt for the welfare, as well as for the honour of his native soil, I feel the greater confidence in bringing forward his remarks; which through all his labours, have not only been distinguished for range of general reasoning, but in many interesting topics, have bespoke the patriot and the philosopher, conversant in human nature, and alive to the multiplied evils, by which the bosom of his ill-fated country, has been harrowed up. The following, are his words.

"An attentive meditation on the actual state of things, between Spain and America, has excited in me the following doubt. If a people, or province, belonging to the crown of Spain, were to raise their voice and to proclaim;—from this moment, we no longer acknowledge Ferdinand VII. as our king—we divest ourselves, of the obedience we had pledged to him—we declare war against Spaniards,—and we deliver ourselves up to Napoleon,—what punishment would be assigned for such a crime, and what measures would be taken against such a people or province? It seems to me

that no man of honour in the world, would fail to say, such a people has committed an indignity; and so criminal a proceeding, deserves condign punishment. He would add, government ought to take the most effective measures, to oppose so absurd an idea; it ought to blockade their shores, that they may have no communication with others; the ships which approach their ports, of whatsoever nation they may be, ought to be confiscated, as those of enemies; and, though it is hard, to go to extremes against a people, who formerly constituted one family, and to arm brethren against brethren, it is nevertheless, necessary, in consequence of their rebellion, to shut them up and to blockade them, by land and sea; and their neighbours ought to be commanded, to hinder the entry of provisions, and the export of the products of their soil and industry; in short, every exertion ought to be made, to prevent every communication with their inhabitants. In case the authors of such a measure, are apprehended, they ought to be punished, with all the rigour, authorized by the rights of sovereignty."—

"And, what would the unhappy and benevolent Ferdinand VII. say, if he knew, that this same rigour had been decreed against a people, who, enthusiastically, renewed their obedience to him; who offered their blood in order to preserve their fidelity and dominions to him; who tendered the fruits of their industry, as a ransom, for him, and his country, whilst in the possession of enemies; who affectionately hoped at some period, to have the means of consoling him, for all his misfortunes; and who, perhaps, only err, in believing, that their beloved sovereign, is not, at present, represented in those distant provinces, in a manner,

even, conformable to his own interests? Certainly, I cannot guess what Ferdinand VII. would say, but I do not believe, he would use the language of the Regency, in its decree against Caracas."*—These sentiments, were penned in September, 1810, that is, a month after the Regency decree, had been signed; consequently, long before its fatal consequences had been produced.

Not, sufficiently, satisfied, with the sole testimony of one Spaniard, however weighty and respectable his authority, before I take leave of this part of my subject, I conceive it my duty, to insert the avowed sentiments of another; who in presenting to his own nation, "*An impartial examination of the dissentions of America, with Spain,*" uses the following words. "In conformity to these mistaken principles, the Central Junta, instead of binding, afresh, the sections of America to the Peninsula, by authorizing them to name and form provincial Juntas, composed of their own inhabitants, as the only means, radically, to destroy the repeated acts of injustice, there, committed by the governmental authorities; not only endeavoured to abolish them in the Peninsula, but, also, never took care to establish them in America. This measure, alone, would, most assuredly, have filled the Americans with joy; and by this means, discontented parties, would have beeen avoided."† Further on, he adds. "The news of the occurrences in Caracas, was received by the Regency; but, instead of preventing a civil war, by acceding to the most just proposals, made by the members of that Junta, in their letter of May 20, directed to the Marques de las Hormazas, (hereafter

* Vide El Espanol, London, Sept. 1810.

† Estrada, Part I.

quoted) and without attending to the uniform dictates of justice, and unmindful of the situation of the Peninsula, it decrees, to reduce them, by force, to submit to the law, which they (the Regents) thought proper to dictate. Neglecting all other measures, but those suggested by an impotent vengeance, the Regency declares the port of La Guira in a state of blockade, commissions a counsellor, and a parcel of other ministers, with ample faculties, to oblige the people, to enter into what, despotic governments, usually, call, duties of the subjects; and for this purpose, it adopts such measures, as a similar government would only adopt, when able to realize them; but which, in other cases, it would disregard, if want of reflection were not added to despotism, &c. Such measures, which, besides, being unjust, the Regency had not the faculties to carry into execution, could answer no other purpose, than to exasperate, still more, the minds of the discontented, and to give them new and just motives of complaint, thus, urging them on, to the prosecution of their enterprize."*

These are the united sentiments of Spaniards, and of the two principal characters, who have attempted to discuss the question in view. To them I could add, the corresponding opinions of others, were I not afraid to trespass on the patience of my reader. I have produced them, rather, as a corrobation to my premises, than as an amplification of my subject; and when the British government had equity and justice on its side, when the thinking part of the Spanish community, also, both openly, and in their hearts, condemned the arbitrary

* Estrada, Part II.

conduct of the trade-leagued Regents, their perusal cannot fail to excite surprize, that no effective measure of prevention was attempted; and that the ministers of St. James, in this unguarded moment, should thus, by their want of energy and foresight, have blasted the fairest prospect of giving force and efficacy to our new alliance with European Spain; and of securing great and lasting advantages, to our mercantile and political interests, in Spanish America. The present convulsions in this unhappy country, thus clearly, resulted from the intemperate and impolitic conduct of the five Regents who succeeded the Central Junta, overawed, as they were, by the trading interests of Cadiz. The Regency, in its official capacity, might have been injured or offended by the acts of the transmarine provinces, but how could it allege the rights of a sovereignty, of which it did not possess a single component element; and under the circumstances in which Spain was at that time, how could such impotent rigour, redound to the advantage of the general cause? This offence, however, could scarcely be resented by the Cadiz Regency, individually, for the occurrences in Caracas took place, when the dispersion of the Central Junta was known, that is, prior to advices having been received, of the installation of the Regency.

§ The evident injustice of the Cadiz government, towards the ultramarine provinces, and the marked impolicy of England, in first not preventing, and afterwards, during more than four years, in not applying effective remedies to the increasing evils, which, have, already, bathed the fairest portion of the Spanish America, in the blood of its inhabitants, are, I presume, sufficiently,

evinced in this division of my subject, and in the deductions, thence, regularly, established. From my general statements, it would result, that most has been owing to the wanton cruelty, and unjust and intemperate conduct of the Cadiz Regents; who, callous to the sufferings of their fellow-citizens, and awed by the mercenary clamours of the monopolists of that trading port, declared war against their distant brethren, and thereby opened the floodgates of anarchy and civil discord. It was this impolitic measure, which first excited a spirit of indignation and open enmity, in the insulted and outraged inhabitants of Spanish America, whom we, lately, beheld glowing with the most enthusiastic sentiments of loyalty and patriotism, and pledging their lives and fortunes in aid of the Peninsula. Amongst the same, for more than four years, have we, nevertheless, witnessed a merciless warfare, such a one, that humanity shudders to contemplate. As a vengeance on them, we have seen new racks and tortures invented, even such, as are unknown to the States of Barbary. We have read of oceans of carnage, and of the indiscriminate massacre of the defenceless natives of every section; and still, we are not weary of the long drama of iniquity, so long representing in that unfortunate country. We see 17,000,000 of our most faithful and zealous allies, endure all these evils, and we scarcely remember that they exist. Yet, what has been their crime? If only redressed and regenerated, Spanish America, was ready to form a sincere and active part of the entire nation; she was willing to contribute with her treasure and her sons, to fight the common enemy; and could England or Spain, require more? Could either, look for a greater

proof of loyalty or cooperation? Yet, both never attempted to improve these valuable sentiments, in proper time; nor had either, the courage or the energy, to staunch so many horrors, which issued from this first neglect. Early remedies, one would have thought advisable, if they had been for no other object, than as a means of wisely redeeming this first error.

Every measure, in short, hitherto, prescribed and adopted for American Spain, both by the Cadiz and London cabinets; seems rather to have been dictated by the enemies of both, than as emanating from either a consistency in reasoning, or sound wisdom in political systems. Hitherto, the promises of the one, have been as insincere, as the reproaches of their presses, have been unjust; and every step has helped to plunge European Spain into fresh difficulties, and fresh wants, by depriving her of all her Western sources of revenue. And, could the enemy have desired more? Was, not this, rendering her, a more easy prey to his base attempts? The conduct of the other, besides, aiding to produce the consequences just stated, has transfused an odium to the British name, which will become an hereditary feeling in the descendants of those families, who have suffered and lost so much; and from whose commercial intercourse, present and future, so much private opulence and public revenue, might have been derived. It is, also, in consequence of this odium, that our great and grounded hopes, on the unexplored resources of the Spanish American continent, will, hereafter, be frustrated. And, could the enemies of England, have desired more?

It was, early, evident, from the unjust conduct of the

Cadiz government (and I make this distinction, because the accusation includes not the nation at large) that if Spain was, ever, to restore her authority in the incensed sections of Spanish America, if England did not interfere, it could, only, be at the expence of blood, and at the point of the sword. Victory and terror, in short, were to precede every step of this subjection. And from whence were the armies to come, which were to be made the instruments of these victories and terror? The annals of our own transactions, and our attacks on the shores of Spanish America, might have taught us, that no effective Spanish force existed there, even to resist foreign invasion, much less, to stop the spread of popular commotions. Where the armies of the Peninsula then, whilst so requisite at home, to be sent across the Atlantic, to effect purposes, neither warranted by justice, or recommended by policy? The united exertions of England and Spain, were then engaged in a struggle, the duration of which, was not fixed, and whose sacrifices, could not, at that time, be numbered. Was economy, therefore, no object, in the general scale of consideration? In politics, as well as in mechanics, it is an unpardonable error, to raise a high superstructure, where the basis is not sound and well prepared, and where each corresponding and relative part, is not perfectly adjusted and mutually supported. If we rushed into a treaty with an entire monarchy, without defining or understanding the relative situation, one half bore to the other, what expectation could we have, of full and durable effect being given to that alliance; and if we beheld the most essential resources of Spain wasted away, without a struggle to improve, or preserve them, what eventual hopes could

we have, of crowning our exertions with success, or of giving to that superstructure of friendship, sincerity, and cooperation, on which we had built the hopes of our alliance, any lasting and solid consequences?

The world beheld, with astonished wonder, the courageous and energetic manner, in which the people of Spain, rose in arms to repel the insidious invasion of a powerful enemy; and admired the persevering zeal, with which, they continued their enterprize, even amidst the most unheard of difficulties and hardships. Every nation, has, also, seen, the incalculable good that has been derived from the patriotic display of the energies of a people, of themselves, neither possessed of armies or fleets (comparatively speaking) and who, in short, had little else, than patriotism for their guide and support. But, how much greater, would not have been the benefits and effects thence derived, if this people had only been led on, by a wise, liberal, and just government; and their energies had been seconded, by upright and provident councils? What different effects, would not, then have been produced? Spain has operated as a pivot, on which the great insurrections of the north of Europe, have, in great measure, turned; but how, different, would have been the results, particularly, on her own soil, if all her resources had been condensed and kept united; if, anarchy, distrust, and open enmity, had been prevented; and if her European, as well as American strength, had been directed, in a straight line, towards the main object in view? If Spain, should, unfortunately, fall, it will not have been from want of energy, and patriotism on the part of the people, so much, as in consequence of a want of pecuniary resources. It will, rather, have been owing to the

debility of her government, the increase of disunion and distrust, and finally, because care has not been taken, to keep together, the most interesting elements of the state.

§ The more closely we examine the subject matter in view, the more plain and manifest it appears, that the transmarine provinces of Spain, at the period, when the whole monarchy was deprived of its sovereign, could be viewed in no other light, by the newly constituted authorities of Spain, than as forming a people, in every sense, equal with themselves, and entitled to the right of replacing the lost authority of the king, in the same way as had been done, in the Peninsula. The only bond of union, which existed between the two, was the person of the king; Spanish America to Spain, had no other legal relation, than that of belonging to the same sovereign, and forming part of the same nation. Yet, both the Juntas of Seville and Asturias, pretended a full sovereignty over the sections of America; each used every exertion to obtain it, not as it would appear, to confer happiness, to give redress, and to act with liberal justice; but, rather, to monopolize more resources, to obtain the produce of the mines, and to enjoy a more extended sphere of command. So great were those exertions made to ensure control, and so well disposed, and habitually submissive, were the Spanish Americans, that the Central Junta was, at one time, notwithstanding its manifest illegality, acknowledged by all the viceroys and captain-generals, tribunals, and cabildos, abroad;* not that this

† Quito, was the only section, that opposed allegiance to the Central Junta; but this was a temporary occurrence, obedience being, soon, inforced by the troops of Lima and Santa Fe.

was an act, in which the people at large were implicated, for the constituted authorities, did it as a means to preserve their own power, and retain their offices. The cabildos assented from European influence, but possessing, in themselves, scarcely the smallest shadow of popular representation, from the seats therein, being more purchasable than elective, they had, consequently, no right, of any kind, to transfer the sovereignty of the American people, to any isolated body of the Peninsula whatever. How could it, therefore, be expected, that a people, neither consulted nor represented, would willingly and permanently acknowledge a corporation, which, in the Peninsula itself, had only a provisional character, and, besides, being defective in its legal essence, was, also, divested of every efficient form.

The only fair and just manner, in which it is possible to interpret the unalienable and imprescriptible rights of a nation, and such as they are supposed to reside in every people, is, by fixing, as a basis, that all the divisions and members thereof, have an equal right to share in the national representation; the only fountain of civil liberty, and the only means of guarding against, and of correcting the abuses of that government and administration, which all have considered necessary, from a principle of general good. This principle of mutual benefit, founded on consent, constitutes the really true, and strong tie, which binds the willing obedience of society. These are rights, which, therefore, are considered, as never having been affected or lost, by any possible circumstances; and, they are of such a nature, that no generation can deprive their posterity of them. Consequently, the rights of the Spanish Americans, could not

have been impaired, by the acknowledgment made of the Central Junta, by the viceroys and captain-generals; since it was done without the consent and concurrence of the people, and, in many places, the acquiescence of the cabildos or municipalitios, was obtained by threats. Even some of the audiencias in America, in whom a respect for legal forms, predominated over Peninsular prejudices, and who have always been the strongest instruments in the subjection of the ultramarine provinces, were opposed to the absolute control of European Juntas; not, so much, from this dependence being in contradiction to the principles of liberty, since proclaimed at home, but in consequence of its militating against the ancient and less liberal character of the Spanish legislation. In fact, according to the known laws of the Spanish monarchy, the pretended absolute sovereignty of the Central Junta, over the ultramarine provinces, was not only unjustifiable and inconsistent; but, even the manner, in which its anthority was, in a temporary manner, acknowledged by the colonial chiefs, as a means of prolonging their respective commands, and on which the government of Spain, now grounds a charge of ingratitude, and rebellion, when every circumstance is duly considered, turns out to be, the greatest chimera, by which the patience and discernment of a people, were ever insulted. To render this allegation more clear and intelligible, I will carry back my reader to a contemplation of the manner in which the Central Junta was first formed, as well as of its character, and leading conduct; as this, will be the most effectual means of enabling him to draw his own conclusions, and of establishing, whether or not, a legal committee thereof, was afterwards, authorized to become the despots of Spanish America.

The editor of the El Español, who from being an eye-witness, and well acquainted with the early occurrences of the Peninsula, is deserving of full credit, after sketching the spontaneous energy, with which the Spanish people rushed to arms, observes, "that the first persons who offered themselves to the people, then in a tumultuous state, were chosen to govern the provinces. In Seville, a popular leader proposed the creation of a Junta, and, for this purpose, the curate and superiors of the convents, were assembled. Tilly and his party, having formed a list of the persons who were to constitute this Junta, he and his emissaries entered the town house, and proposing each other in a loud voice, they were elected as members, without waiting for any body's answer. To these were afterwards added, other persons, who, from their credit or dignity, were possessed of the confidence of the people." Such is the picture of the formation of the Junta of Seville, which afterwards denominated itself Supreme and Central; and, as drawn by an eye-witness of undoubted credit.* I omit any further details, which might serve, more fully, to explain the irregular character of the principal persons, who contributed to the formation of this Junta; as they would only tend to make its origin more degrading, when my object, is, principally, to insist on its injustice.

In such a government as this, it was, that the Spanish people, blindly, placed their confidence; unaware, what powers they had, thus, assented to, in these their new representatives. This government it was, according to the above author, "that began its career, by consecrating error, and perpetuating ignorance; and to

* Vide El Espanol, No. I.

it, the losses of Sir John Moore, are to be attributed." The Central Junta, after tasting the sweets of power, was resolved to retain it, and delayed the assembling of the Cortes, on which the hopes of the nation were founded. The name of Ferdinand VII. which its members placed at the head of all their official papers; and the term of *Majesty*, with which they clothed themselves, appeared as sufficient authority to exercise a political despotism, even unknown to the real monarchs; and to render this farce the more complete, they decreed to themselves, titles, uniforms, ribbons, guards, &c. at once, creating themselves into Eastern bashaws. Without ever reflecting on the nature or limits of their power, they instituted in themselves the sovereign command; amused the people and the British, by false and delusive statements; demanded and received copious supplies of funds, from the European and American provinces, which they squandered away, without rendering in any account. In short, they insulted the noblest cause that ever animated the bosoms of a people; till at last, they were driven from their den, by the advance of the French; and the people of the Peninsula, opening their eyes, were astonished at their long forbearance.

And, if such was the picture of the very government, which, at that time, exercised its power and authority over Spain and the Indies; if such, it is universally acknowledged, to have been, both by Spaniards, and other eye witnesses; and if, moreover, its general injustice is deduced from its own recorded acts, could it be judged criminal in the Spanish Americans, under so many peculiar circumstances as those already explained, and after 90 millions of their dollars had been received by the Central Junta, almost without thanks, and squandered

away without even the compliment of a public account; could it be judged criminal in them, I repeat, to refuse any longer confiding their own security, and the administration of their local affairs, to men, who came amongst them, by the choice, and vested with the authority of this same body of self-created despots? Or, I may add, in the eyes of the impartial world, could that war be pronounced just or politic, which was declared by a committee of such a government, against one half of the monarchy, to whom, even a hearing had not been granted? To answer in the affirmative, would be to commit the greatest possible insult, both to the rights, feelings, and understandings, of mankind at large; and would at once, establish, the most flagrant and extensive principle of injustice, that the annals of history or legislation, ever recorded. Are laws and rights, then, nothing in the scale of Spanish policy; and does a declaration of war, unjust in itself, and fraught with the most fatal consequences, amount to nothing, in the great considerations of expediency, which ought to guide the conduct of her ally? If the first is, really, the case, what is the character of that nation, and of that government, whose alliance we yet boast; and if this want of faith, equity, and of even humanity, results on the part of Spain, even to her children and descendants, those who are united to her by the ties of blood and of interest, what is it, we are, eventually, to expect, who are scarcely linked, by the common tie of gratitude? If the second position be, likewise, true, and if the Spanish monarchy is thus dismembered, and its resources frittered away, by impolitic, and unjust domestic wars, from which result distrust, impoverishment, and, in short, a general disunion of every effective element of the state, what

grounded hopes have we, of crowning our united cause with success; and how can we fulfill to the outraged Ferdinand, our guarantee, of the integrity of his crown?

In what light, soever, we consider the inhabitants of the new world, whether we view them with the eye of philosophy, or found ourselves on the ancient legislation of Spain; we shall find them in social rank, and in political rights, equal with those of the provinces of the Peninsula; consequently, the claims of absolute sovereignty, over the sections of America, arrogated to themselves by the irregular governments of the former, are equally as absurd, as if the provisional governments of the latter, had attempted to exercise despotic control, over the Central Junta, the Regency, or the succeeding Cortes. Supposing, for a moment, that these were legal and constitutional forms of government for the Peninsula, (and even with regard to the Cortes, in this particnlar, my reader shall, hereafter, be enabled to judge for himself) they could not be so, for Spanish America; unless constituted in a regular and correct manner, with the concurrence of the latter, in compliance with the general principles and laws of the realm, and in strict accord with equality, equity, and justice. There is a just and moral principle, which, equally, belongs to every individual member, as well as to every individual province, of an extended empire. This principle was, then, equally, the birthright of American Spaniards; and to divest them of it, by the acts of an illegal government, and then to persist in the support of that same injustice; is not, only, opening the road to discontent, oppression, and consequent civil war, but it is, also, authorizing them to seek justice by the extreme means of hostility, as the only alternative, left within their reach. The laws and

rights of the whole monarchy, ought to have been maintained, in undisturbed authority, and equal exercise, in American, as well as European Spain; and the political order of the state, by no departure from its most fundamental principles, being suffered, ought, then, in like manner, to have been preserved. To deviate from this principle, is to level to the ground, the boundaries of order and the safeguards of civil freedom; and, to authorize the inhabitants of one half of a monarchy, to tyrannize over those of the other, is to lay the foundations of anarchy, and eventual ruin, to the whole state.

The great mistake of the British government, seems to have been, that, it considered Spanish America, as insulated from all the laws and principles of the rest of the monarchy; and its natives, as detatched from the European ranks of the state. Had not this been the case, how could the ministers of England, have, silently, beheld a declaration of war, made against 17 millions of people, bound to her by ancient promises, and now linked to her interests, by a fresh alliance? Had Spanish America been in the wrong, and had she committed crimes so great and flagrant, as to deserve the utmost rigour, in the eye of justice, this criminality ought to have been previously proved; and the grounds thereof, ought to have been, incontrovertibly, established. Before Spain declared an expensive and unjust war, it was her duty to have discussed the rights of the ultramarine provinces, in a fair and adequate manner; their complaints ought to have been heard; and if this was omitted, her conduct has been unwarrantable and arbitrary; and, when the narrow policy of the day, is gone by, the British government itself will be the first to confess it. But, then,

alas, shall we be in time, to prevent the fatal consequences intailed on ourselves?

That the Central Junta was an unfair and unconstitutional government, is confessed, not only by Spaniards, but, also, by the whole world. Jovellanos said it was illegal; *because its powers and representation, were neither complete, nor constitutional* *. Yet it was this form of government, which, as before shewn, constituted the Regency into a Sovereign, by merely transferring and deputing its own powers: which, if illegal in the whole, must, consequently, have been so, in part. Arguelles, confessed the first Regency *was not legitimate* †, and this has, also, been the public avowal of the Cortes. How, then, can a war proclaimed by such a government, be legal; or how can its improvident conduct, be justified? The silence of the people of Spanish America, with regard to the Central Junta, arose out of a hope, that its acts would promote the welfare and defence of the realm; but when its conduct, and that of the succeeding Regency, became manifest, they protested against those of its enactments which related to themselves, on the very basis of this flagrant want of legality.

§ In explaining to my reader, these various causes, which first led to an unfortunate rupture, between European and American Spain; my object is, not only, to manifest the sentiments and peculiar situation of the latter, but, also, to lay before him, the accompanying sentiments and pointed charges of the former. For the want of better reasons, the defenders of Spanish injustice, go so far as to allege, the vague and indefinite rights, which they

* Dictamen de Jovellanos, Oct. 7, 1805.

† Discurso contra Lardizabal en las Cortes.

suppose to be derived, from the relations, arising out of a common origin. The denomination of mother country, which, as a wise writer observes, has produced numerous mistakes and false reasonings, in all questions, relating to European settlements abroad; in the Peninsular papers, has been an inexhaustible source of bitter invective, against those of the ultramarine provinces, which have considered the transformation of their local governments, necessary. Crimes, of a variety of kinds, are charged against them; particularly that of ingratitude, an allegation founded on no other grounds, than this chimerical filiation. This term, besides, being abused, has been brought forward, as an imaginary metropolitan right, and as if it were founded on law, and established by actual compact. These are denominations, which, if applicable to the case in question, ought merely to be confined to the expression of affection, and as referring to an affinity of mutual origin, existing between the various members of one entire monarchy, and as exciting those sentiments of fraternity, natural in two great families, derived from one common stock. Thence, however, to deduce a positive ground of dependence and subordination, were to introduce a new maxim of policy; as well as an axiom, not only unknown, but also, extravagant and unjust. Each nation, in that case, would be obliged to acknowledge the sovereignty of its primitive stock; and the rights of the people, would have to be traced to their tables of genealogy.

The proper manner to have used the strong claims, and endearing ties of mother-country, would have been, to have redressed their wrongs, and not to have declared war against them; to have adopted some equit-

able plan of conciliation, and not to have insulted their judgment and feelings by refusing a hearing; to have viewed the hardships of their case, impartially, and not to have proscribed, men and measures, which only had for object, the safety and reform of their country; and, in a particular manner, not to have declared and treated those persons as rebels, who stepped forward in the exercise of their own rights, in order not to be delivered over to the French. The tender ties, and sacred claims of mother country, ought, at least, to have secured to her offspring, a fair, unbiassed, and fundamental discussion of their rights; and an unprejudiced hearing of the appeals, in which, they stated their wrongs. When Charles V., as severe a monarch as ever lived, was desirous of allaying the disturbances, which during his reign, took place in Peru; instead of armies, threats, and executions, he sent out Licenciado Gasca, as a pacificator, and with full powers; under the impression, that if the complaints were just, they ought to be redressed; but that mildness, conciliation, and good words, would be more effectual than force, which, would only add fuel to the flame. These disturbances, were, nevertheless, of a serious nature; and nearly threatened the sovereignty of the king, both in Peru and Mexico. Yet Charles, though the proudest and most powerful of the Spanish monarchs, instead of applying insulting stigmas, merely called them dissentions; and said they must be looked into, and remedied; because this was not only just, but, because unwarrantable and harsh measures, might endanger those his distant kingdoms, then so valuable and so interesting, from being the great sources of all his wealth, which rendered him

of such consequence in Europe. When more justifiable occurrences happen, in our own time, the Cadiz government pronounces them, rebellions, ingratitude, and crimes of high treason, and decrees, that they are to be punished as such. Not, even, content with this, it rushes into a war of extermination. Such, have been the hasty and inconsiderate resolves of men, who from abject obedience, by the most undue means, rose to the command they then held; whose systems were founded on theory, whose arguments were terror, and whose councils were swayed by monopolists, who from interest, were opposed to reform, and to every thing that would curtail their individual profits.

The dread of the ulteriour loss of the ultramarine provinces, and the fear of being thus cut off from the receipt of their precious metals, so necessary for the support of his numerous armies, urged Charles V. to use plans of redress and reconciliation. In the great enterprizes in which he was engaged, the failure of his Western resources, would have deprived him of the very nerve of war. And has not the Cadiz government, all this time, been engaged in a still more arduous enterprize, and avowedly, possessed of less means? Consequently, was it not doubly bound, to husband every part of the public revenue? Yet, with this precedent on record, one, that occurred in times, when the Spaniard might, justly, boast of the glory of his name, still have the present sovereigns of Spain, been above following such an example, and have been too self-sufficient, to borrow grounds for their conduct, in the most renowned annals of their own history. Charles was a legal and powerful monarch, safely seated on his throne, and supported by

numerous armies. Yet policy dictated to him, mildness and a patient hearing; but when the illegal, weak, and ephemeral governments of Cadiz, come to grasp the sceptre of power, unmindful both of their own weakness, and insensible of their own illegality, they insultingly disregard the wrongs and sufferings of their fellow subjects; they turn from the appeals of truth and justice; and instead of redress, reform, and a just restoration of rights, they hurl amongst their American brethren, the firebrands of destruction, discord, and revenge. Resolved on the declaration and waging of an impotent war, they become superiour to the sacrifice of even punctillo; and spurning every overture to conciliation; they prefer the weapons of terror and vengeance, to the more safe and effectual measures of redress and reform. They even do more. By the most cruel and unheard-of means of warfare, they seek to impose and rivet a bloody yoke on the reluctant necks of their fellow-citizens; rather than see them bound, by the more rational and lighter bonds of gratitude, mutual fellowship, and reciprocal intercourse.

§ The more this subject is examined, the more plainly does it appear, that the Spanish American question, was the most important of all those, in which the Cadiz governments have been concerned; and as such, I am confident it will be confessed, by all those, who are aware, how much European Spain, depended on the ultramarine provinces for pecuniary succours. The principal consideration, hitherto, attached by the former to the latter, has been the mines; yet, it was evident, that war would close them; that it would exclude from the circulation of Europe, the annual coinage of 42 millions of dollars; that the armies of the Peninsula, as well as those of its

Allies, would be driven to the greatest shifts for the want of specie; and that this privation, would produce calamities to the mercantile interests of both Spain and England. Nevertheless, all these considerations held no weight with the Cadiz cabinet; who, mindful only of a temporary and delusive advantage, in favour of a small body of men, and instead of adopting the natural and safe plan of conciliation and redress, preferred rushing into an unjust and impotent war, that was to bring ruin in its train, and defeat the very object for which it was declared. It was the prevention of all these manifest evils, and the making of all the resources of the entire monarchy, strong and effective, in order to answer the great objects in view, that in this particular moment, required foresight, coolness, judgment, and impartiality. Then, was it, essentially, necessary, to consolidate the vacilating power of Spain, instead of tearing it asunder. Then, was it, more than ever, requisite, to tighten the bonds which held the two sister countries together, instead of putting a fresh bar to their peace and harmony. Then, was the time, to have healed, instead of afresh tearing open inveterate wounds; in short, then, was it necessary to ease and satisfy the minds of the Spanish Americans, in lieu of irritating and rousing them, by fresh insults.

Resentment and passion, in so important a case, ought to have been banished; and above all, vengeance on the weakest side, ought never to have been wielded against the strongest. Conciliation and disinterestedness, on the one hand, and affection and submission on the other, would, alone, have produced the desired effect; would have hindered a dispute, which every day, becomes pregnant with more serious consequences, and on which, the fate

of unborn millions, depends. Certainly, the latter sentiments existed on the part of the Spanish Americans; as will, hereafter, be fully evinced; and, if the irritated feelings, and disappointed and mercenary passions of the Cadiz rulers, had not been roused to such a pitch, as to make them insensible to the real interests of the nation, whose guidance they had undertaken, the most salutary results might then, have been produced. If the Cadiz government, stimulated by fanatical phrenzy, and awed by mercenary demagogues, was in those moments, incapable of drawing just and fair inferences of guilt and innocence; at least, England ought to have been more prudent, and more enlightened; and above all, she ought never, to have suffered such motives as these, to have been the basis of an unnatural and merciless warfare, in the fatal consequences of which, she was equally, interested. Scarcely is there a nation of the continent, either allied or not, when suffering by the horrors of war, by epidemical diseases, or by other misfortunes, beyond human control, that has not received succour and consolation, from the exertions and benevolence of the British government and people. Yet, in the case of Spanish America, and when we have it in our power to prevent the worst of all horrors, viz. that of a sanguinary and revengeful civil war, we are, not only, silent and unmindful; but, when other attendant evils, like the forked lightening from a portentous cloud, burst amidst its inhabitants, and desolate the whole of their country, with corresponding ruin; when earthquakes, ravaged plains, depopulated towns, and dungeons, crouded with numberless victims, rise before our sight, and the cries of widows and orphans resound in our ears, still do we

look on with cold indifference, and still are we deaf to public appeals, that would rend the hardest heart. And who are all these sufferers? The very people, who, lately, were the objects of our proffered friendship and support, and now the victims of our own delusions, though included in a solemn treaty, recently made.

There was a bond of interest, friendship, and relationship, rendered sacred, by the lapse of time, and cemented by the fidelity of Spanish America, which, might have been made a happy basis for our friendly exertions; and a powerful means of preventing a precipitate, act, on the part of a government, on whom we had then such great claims. A new era, had by this time, broke upon the Spanish monarchy of both hemispheres; and though the defence of Spain was an object of the first political consequence, the regeneration and preservation of Spanish America, in another light, was also of incalculable importance. Influenced and impelled by that love of rational and just freedom, which urged us to support the cause of Spain, and led us to rejoice in the liberation of Germany, Holland, &c. we ought equally, to have gloried in the same happy results being produced in Spanish America; as well, consistently, with our old professions, as, because this was the only means, to render our alliance effective. If national honour, and the sincerity which formed the basis of our treaty with the representatives of Ferdinand, did not suffice; at least, motives of expediency, both to ourselves and Spain, ought to have caused us, as soon as the dissentions appeared with all their aggravated consequences, not, only, to bring both parties together, in order to discuss their differences; but, also, to establish present harmony, in

such a manner, as to prevent future collisions. This was both a duty, and interest, on the part of England; and I can now aver, and will, at a future time, amply prove, that we should, always, have found a sincere and cordial disposition for conciliation, on the part of the Spanish Americans, which certainly might have been improved, if the proper and timely means had been employed.

§ It was not a restless desire of change, it was no wish to break down the mounds of regular establishment, it was not, in short, any thing opposed to justice, equity, and the strict letter of the law; which first caused the Spanish Americans, to depose their European chiefs, and to place the administration of their affairs, in the hands of persons of their own choice and confidence. As before, fully, and substantially explained, the accounts circulated, even by the agents of government, were disheartening; the entire Peninsula was believed in danger; and it became evident, that the cause was solely maintained, by the aid of England; but, it was, at the same time, uncertain, how long this cooperation would last. The intervening ocean, might, with good reason, be considered as a sufficient barrier against ravages, like those, to which Spain was, already a victim; but, it could not shield the ultramarine provinces, from the intrigues and domestic machinations of the same enemy. Every interiour and exteriour exertion was making there, in order that they might equally share the pending fate of the mother country; and the very orders of that Regency, which declared war against them, amounted to no less. The doctrine of all the Spanish chiefs there, as well as of their adherents, was, that the dynasty which obtained the crown of Spain, was to be acknowledged on the other side of the Atlantic;

and every measure both there, and at home, tended to prepare for this ulteriour object. The strength and influence of the European part of the community, were in favour of it; and as before testified, nothing but the energy of the Creoles, prevented its completion. Yet both Spain and England, have been forgetful of these facts; and the one pronounces these testimonies of loyalty, as treason and ingratitude; whilst, the other, calmly beholds them, punished as such.

The very occurrences, which preceded and accompanied the governmental changes in Spanish America, prove, that the adoption of provisional Juntas, was resorted to, in the first place, as an essential means of safety; and in the second, that reform, was the next object, to which their attention was directed. Right, necessity, and example, are on their side; and the declaration of war, against acts, which had such motives for basis, was not only unjust, cruel, and impolitic, on the part of Spain; but, on that of England, it was, also, weak, humiliating, and insincere, silently, to behold such an excess of outrage, committed against one half of the monarchy, with whom she was allied, and to whose security she was pledged. The degraded situation of Spanish America, was a theme general in every nation; of course, it could not be a secret in Spain. If so, what duty in the new governments, was more urgent and pressing, than its reform. The restraints and privations under which the Creoles laboured, had long been a subject of complaint and remonstrance; and the shelves of the public offices, were loaded with volumes on this subject. The destruction of these restraints and privations, the revival of trade, judicial and financial reform,

and particularly, the reduction of despotism and oppression, were therefore the primary considerations which ought to have actuated the proceedings of the new rulers; these ought to have been the object of their earliest deliberations. The encouragement of arts and sciences, as well as the introduction of all the useful discoveries of Europe, was, besides, a paramount duty on the part of the Spanish government, as blessings only inferiour to those of civil peace and personal freedom, with which they are so closely entwined; and after the long and dark night of ignorance, in which Spanish America had been shrouded, the moral as well as political reformation and improvement of its inhabitants, became necessary.

Nothing of this kind, however, had taken place; the colonial system; such as before described, continued in full force, and besides, orders were continually going out, to drain the ultramarine provinces of their last dollar. Strict watch was instituted over their inhabitants, to scrutinize every action and thought; and a full system of espionage and prosecution was organized, of which numbers were victims. Even the nomination of viceroys and captain-generals, sent out to govern abroad, proves how little, policy and circumspection have guided the Cadiz governments; and how little, the dignity and critical situation of the transmarine provinces, have been consulted. I omit dwelling on the inconsistencies of the Central Junta, or describing the feelings of one section of America, on seeing two viceroys come out to govern it, one named by the Junta of Gallicia, and the other by that of Asturias. Venegas is sent out viceroy to Mexico, the same, who, from a Lieutenant-Colonel on half-pay, was made a General by the Central Junta; who delivered

up an army of 14,000 men in Ucles; who, after deserting his, post, received, from the same government the command of the army of Andalusia, consisting of 32,000 men, with which he was beat by the enemy, in Almonacid. The same, who declined co-operating in the battle of Talavera, and, who, in short, never gave signs of talent, patriotism, or probity; but to whom, a large share of the disasters of the Peninsula, have been attributed. Calleja is named to succeed him, the very same who put 14,000 old men, women and children to death in Guanauato; who, leveled to the dust, the town of Zitaquaro; and who has, in short, in his public dispatches, (as will be seen hereafter,) boasted, that he had put to the sword, many thousand Creoles. Emparan was sent to Caracas, after swearing allegiance to the French, in Madrid; and the command of the Peruvian army, was given to Goyeneche, who a little before, had been invested with the insignia of Joseph. In the lower departments of government, numerous similar instances might be quoted. Such have been the men, the Cadiz governments have destined to wield the arm of power in the ultramarine provinces; and in such are their inhabitants invited to place their confidence. In the hands of such, in short, was the fate of Spanish America placed, till its natives had sufficient energy to withdraw it.

When the force and correctness of the particulars just stated, have been maturely examined, the motives which first urged the inhabitants of the provinces of Spanish America, to prefer the administration of their local concerns, being in the hands of persons attached to their own soil, and possessed of their own confidence, can no longer remain dubious. Besides the more recent

dangers, by which they were surrounded, they felt sensibly, the galling weight of that oppressive system, into which they had been, gradually, dragged, from the time of the conquest, and which as men, and as possessed of a larger share of enlightened liberality, than is generally met with in their European brethren, they could, no longer, endure. My statements further tend to prove, that in first asking, and then persisting in the reform of their political and social situation, and redress of grievances and restraints, they not only act on the substantial grounds of justice; but also, in strict accord with the most sacred and inherent rights, which have been guaranteed to them, by the respective monarchs of Spain. In opposing the fair discussion of those rights, in denying their restitution, and in repelling their appeals, by hostility and vengeance; it will, moreover appear, that the governments of Cadiz, have not only acted with injustice and impolicy; but have, besides, deviated from public law, and the spirit of their political history.

Humboldt observes, that the Spanish ministry, too often sacrificed the interests of the whole American continent, to those of a few maritime towns of Spain. The present government has done more, it has sacrificed the most sacred and essential interests, to the passions, resentment, and undue gains of the monopolists of Cadiz; irritated and alarmed, at the dread of seeing the loaves and fishes, they had so long and so exclusively enjoyed, shared amongst those, for whom they had, always, testified, hatred and jealousy. The new governments of Spain, have uniformly reprobated the ancient and corrupt policy of the court of Madrid; they have constantly in-

veighed against its acts, as the cause of the general degradation, into which the whole nation had been sunk; yet, when their own power is affianced, and opportunities of reform and of favourable deviation, offer; their egotism urges them to follow the same beaten track, and they leave untouched, the very vices, which they confessed, had before exhausted the state. Avowedly, the revolution of Spain, had two material objects; viz. to recover the independence of the nation, by repelling its invaders; and next, to reform the abuses, which had so long prevailed. Both these objects were held out to the people, by the new authorities; it was these hopes which made them tacitly consent to endure control, under an illegal shape; but in their elevation, phrenzy, or blindness, the new chiefs forget the provinces abroad, till they, themselves, begin to be uneasy at the manner in which they are treated, and are roused by the dangers to which they are exposed.

The governments and people of Spain, have aspired at every thing that could perfect and secure their own national independence, personal freedom, and moral improvement. For these purposes, the fundamental laws and most ancient usages of the realm, have been overturned and trodden to the ground; why then were not these, which Spain considered as the greatest benefits and blessings, to be denied to Spanish America? Was it not also time, for her inhabitants, to receive the most unequivocal and strong assurances and positive proofs, that their dearest interests were equally attended to and secured; that civil freedom, for them, was no longer an empty name; that military despots, were no longer, to be the instruments of their oppression; that a sus-

picious, and crafty police, should no longer be the basis of their governing system, and in short, that in the councils of the nation, equity, and justice, belonged to the one, as well as to the other. Was this to be done, by the prolongation of that same colonial system, presented to my reader, in the early pages of this exposé? Were these just restitutions to be made, by aggravating, instead of removing those privations and disabilities, under which the Spanish Americans had so long laboured; or was it to administer equal and impartial justice, to declare war against one half of the monarchy, for no other reason, than, because, it had followed the example of the other, and sought its own security and reform, in the very measures, in which the other, had, so lately, gloried? And if this conduct was opposed to justice, was it not equally in contradiction, with policy and expediency? The colonial regimen, practised by Spain, in the ultramarine provinces, loudly called for reform; the Seville and Cadiz governments, therefore, are, in the first place, answerable for two years negligence; and for no effective relief to Spanish America, being found on their records, from the year 1808 to 1810, the period when the governments of the latter, were transformed. If this is a fact, and also that the situation of the inhabitants of the transmarine provinces, required immediate attention, and particularly the revival of trade; to refuse it by an insulting declaration of war and blockade, was not only to commit the most flagrant act of injustice in the face of the whole world; but it was, besides, to involve the last remnant of Spanish power and influence in the Western hemisphere; it was to sow the seeds of fermenting passions, which would soon unnerve

the strength of the whole nation, and produce a fatal relaxation in every part of the social body; and a war that would deluge its fairest portion, in blood and destruction; and, eventually, dry up both the resources of Spain and her ally.

The motives which first urged the various sections of Spanish America, to resist the control of their viceroys and captain-generals, and to entrust the administration of their local concerns, respectively, into the hands of provisional Juntas, the only motives which excited the anger, and called forth the vengeance of the Cadiz Regency; are, by this time, sufficiently explained and proved. The first movements, it consequently, results, had for object, to escape the shackles of the French, and afterwards, to commence the grand work of reform. The first motive, was even respectable to the most illiberal of Spain, and particularly so to England; and as for the second, who can step forward and say, it was not necessary? The grounds of the first, originated in a merited distrust in the colonial chiefs; who, as before manifested, had given testimony of their bad faith; and had proved by their conduct, that they were not to be trusted. A variety of peculiar circumstances, had added to this want of confidence; and at such a distance, the eventual fate of the Peninsula, was extremely uncertain. What hopes could be consistently entertained, when its then deplorable situation, is considered; or why was Spanish America to be more sanguine in her hopes, when, even the rest of Europe, dispaired? What prospect of reform, did there exist, when two years of apathy, had gone by; during which time, the ultramarine provinces, had only been thought of, to contribute supplies,

and to add to the sounding dignity and parade, of the new rulers of Spain and the Indies. The only government which had raised itself on the anarchy of the moment, was now dispersed, and it was uncertain, under what new shape, succeeding despotism would act. How could confidence subsist in Spanish America, when in Spain, all was discomfiture and dismay; when division reigned in the national councils, amongst the military chiefs; and even the allies; when the treasury was exhausted; when the national armies were broken; when the garrison towns and chief provinces, were in the hands of the enemy; when the people were tired of the war; and when in short, the best opportunities of saving the Peninsula, had been lost? All these dilemmas, have, indeed, since been overcome; but this, has not been, by the energies of the Spanish government and people, but, rather, by the perseverance of England. At the period to which I allude, and when the governmental changes took place abroad, nothing but the salvation of Cadiz, preserved the monarchy; and this was, more owing to the zeal and activity of the Duke d'Albuquerque, than to the prompt or prudent measures of the government; and when things had arrived at this low ebb, were the Spanish Americans, also, to wait, till the eleventh hour, or till they had, equally, fallen a prey to a designing foe?

In strict conformity to the laws of the realm and the successive grants of the kings of Spain, we have, before, seen the ultramarine provinces, entitled and authorized to hold their Cortes, within themselves; yet, when they erect provisional Juntas for local purposes, and for motives the most just and respectable, and in exact imita-

tion of those of European Spain; they are warred upon as rebels, and treated as outlaws. War and blockade, is openly declared against them; and after all their testimonies of loyalty, both recent and sincere, after their copious remittances, and finally, after 300 years of affection and fellowship, which have been proof against all the instigations of England, they are treated worse, than the very provinces of the Peninsula, which had already bent to the allegiance of the French. If the position be true, that the Spanish Americans were equal in rights with their brethren of the Peninsula, and this relative footing is not only analagous to the spirit of their history, but, also, founded on the most repeated, and express acts of the Spanish legislature; and if as before proved, the person of the king was their sole bond of political union; I fairly ask my reader, what steps the Spanish Americans were to take, when this bond was wrenched from them; when no legal or substantial form of government was established, to replace it; and when, in short, they were equally driven to an emergency, for which, in the statutes, no adequate provision could be found? If their conduct then proved any thing, it was attachment and respect to the parent state. Attachment, by not immediately deposing their chiefs, as soon as the first news of the French invasion, and the loss of their rightful monarch, arrived out amongst them; thus preferring to wait with patience and forbearance, and this for more than two years, and till their own situation, was not only desponding, but, also, till they found it was in vain to look, any longer, for relief, or redress, to a country, which, in itself, had not even the form of a government, and, which, they supposed, had, already, become a prey

to its enemies. Respect, by following the very example of the Peninsula, when plunged into a similar distress.

The Americans from their distance, as well as from their loss being the greatest, required a temporary and substituted power; was, there, therefore, any other than Juntas, that could be adopted? Was there any other form that could adequately supply their wants, or fulfil their wishes? The Juntas of Oviedo, Seville, and Valencia, as independent bodies, could treat with England, and enter into an alliance, in the name of the whole monarchy, and their right and authority was never doubted. Their creation was the same as those of Spanish America, with this difference, that those of the latter, were in form and in essence, more regular and constitutional; and the urgent circumstances which gave rise to both, were on a parallel. Yet, though equal in rights, and actuated by motives both more honourable and just, the Juntas of Spanish America, are warred upon, because they merely undertake the administration of their own affairs, and consult their own local welfare, without interfering with the rest of the monarchy. The general object of the sections of Spanish America, was to assemble local and provisional Juntas, as well for purposes already expressed, as a kind of preliminary step to the calling of a general congress, of the representatives of each. This, also, was the original plan in Spain, but the Central Junta and Regency, after tasting the sweets of power, were loath to forego it; and, consequently, struggled to retain it, as long as they could; that is, for more than three years. I mention this intention of the Spanish Americans to call a general congress, in case the disasters of the nation continued; in order to repel the charge of individual

ambition in the respective leaders of the people, having been the basis of their origin. The formation of Juntas, in Spanish America, particularly in one section, has, indeed, opened a tempting and easy path to unprincipled ambition, but this has been an occurrence, both recent and partial; nor could a general principle, be drawn from so limited an instance.

§ The judicious and attentive reader, who has thus far, accompanied me in my subject, will, by this time, be at no loss to judge for himself, of the real origin and causes, as well as of the most material circumstances, of the first dissentions, which arose between European and American Spain. It no longer remains dubious, that they originated in the injudicious and unjust conduct of the Cadiz government. The basis was a want of liberality, accompanied by jealousy, and an avowed spirit of monopoly, which soon assumed the shape of hostility, ill-treatment, and ingratitude. Not that I level these charges against the whole Spanish nation; no, I am well persuaded, that the sensible and impartial part of the community, has long regretted, that equity, disinterestedness, and candour, had not been made the basis of the Spanish American question; and that the means of mutual explanation and conciliation, have been neglected. A large portion of the Spanish people has long lamented, that the Regency of Cadiz, did not adhere to that system of equal political rights, on which the social and relative situation of the Spanish Americans, had been founded; and, from which, they had been, gradually, dragged, by the despotism of the successive monarchs. Unmindful of that great and sound truth, that the real liberty of the subject, as well as public peace and secu-

rity, can only be preserved, by making the authority and administration of the laws, equal, pure, and unbiassed, and, by maintaining the tone and energies of government, the Cadiz Regency sacrificed the rights and welfare of the whole sections of Spanish America, to the monopolies of the Cadiz merchants, and to their incessant and unwearied endeavours to retain an unnatural trade. Having, however, in the course of my observations, refered, in general terms, to this particular point, and asserted, that it was from Cadiz, that issued, the first sparks of that devouring flame, which has, already, overspread the whole of Spanish America, I conceive it my duty to add some explanatory remarks.

Much must the liberal mind regret, that since Cadiz became the seat of government, the influence of the mercantile bodies over its operations, has been not only great, but, also, exercised in the most undue and unbecoming manner. Accustomed to view the commerce of the ultramarine provinces, as an exclusive right and monopoly, belonging to them, and, as it were, vested in them, by charter or compact, every engine was now set to work, in order to preserve it. This injudicious monopoly, by which the inhabitants of Spanish America, had long endured the greatest privations, which had rendered the choicest gifts, nature had so bountifully bestowed on their genial soil and climate, of no value; and which, during the wars with England, had nearly left them without clothing, was the first object, to which the people of the ultramarine provinces, directed their plans of reform. Trade with all powers, was declared free, as soon as ever the new provisional governments, entered on their functions. The news of this resolution, as well

as the creation of Juntas, reached Cadiz, at the same time; and this attempt to throw down old and habitual monopolies, was, by those who had so long founded upon them, their riches, and the means of their elevation, considered as implicating all the crimes of treason, rebellion, and ingratitude. Reform, the restitution of long-invaded rights, and the full establishment of equality, the objects at which the Spanish Americans aimed, in their transformations of government, consequently, found enemies in the commercial bodies of Cadiz, from being opposed to their interests, and from depriving them of those exorbitant gains, which time had rendered habitual; and which they considered themselves entitled to retain, notwithstanding the other party, was thereby sacrificed. The influence of the Cadiz merchants over the members of the Regency, arose out of loans of money, individually advanced, or raised for the general service of government, as well as from personal favours. The tables of the merchants, were surrounded by persons who had offices and influence; all which, aided by intrigue, mercenary pens, and an active press, soon stifled the calls of equity, liberality, and justice; and this most important of all questions, thence became involved in virulence, inveterate opposition, and malignant calumnies. Gradually, a fund of rancour and open animosity was engendered, and soon the measures of government, became identified with the local views and interests of that trading port. The Cadiz columns, became panders to the worst passions of the multitude; and were used as channels to convey to the public, every species of factious misrepresentation. The transactions of government, from that time, were wrapped up in mystery, and

its councils, weak in themselves, were surrounded by falsehood and deception.

No sooner were the governmental changes in the sections of America, known in Cadiz, than a war faction was immediately formed; and instead of the merits of the case, being deliberately examined, open hostility was proclaimed, and the voice of policy, justice, and humanity, became drowned, amidst the shouts of monopoly, and the conflicts of party. This same rancour, extended soon after, to Puerto Rico, Montevideo, Havana, Mexico, &c. whose public papers, together with those of Cadiz, must have often filled their readers, with disgust. The coarsest invectives, that malignity or wickedness could invent, feelings of personal malice and revenge, in short, every thing that could poison or irritate, has constantly operated as a bar to hinder the beneficial results that might then have been produced; whereby, those fatal enmities, now so justly to be deplored, have been occasioned. The same want of sincerity, the same arrogant and fulminated threats, and the same misrepresentations of facts, have often struck the unbiassed in Cadiz; whilst balm, conciliation, and redress, have been entirely overlooked. In Cadiz, it has been held as a crime to suppose, that the Spanish Americans had rights, the same as other men; and the Consulado of Mexico, sought even to divest them of feelings. Their subjection, without being heard, has there been held as an unalienable right; and the rendering of the productions of their soil, not worth collecting, has been, also, considered as an exclusive privilege of that same trading port, as will, hereafter, be more fully shewn. The possession and government of the American provinces, has been con-

sidered as devolving on those temporary governments, created in the Peninsula for its defence; and in default of the rightful successors of Charles IV. and during the suspension of the crown functions, the Cadiz merchants have supposed, that the inhabitants of the former, were bound, blindly, to obey those illegitimate governments, in which they had no part, and which were established, without the concurrence of even the people at home.

§ But, even granted, that the Central Junta, and the succeeding Regency, had acquired the right of absolute command, in the Peninsula, and that the want of due election, had been made up, by the tacit consent of the people; their authority must have been founded on some real or supposed constituent principle. If so, the members of such governments, could only carry to their sessions, those same rights and powers, which their constitutents themselves possessed; and these, being no other than their own individual rights and faculties, such as are common to all men, they, of course, could confer no right, title, or power, whatever, to use an imperative voice, out of their own provinces. It would, therefore, be as inconsistent in Juntas of the Peninsula, arrogating to themselves the sovereign and absolute power in the distant provinces, on the real footing on which they stand; as it would for the Junta of Seville, to command within the jurisdiction of Asturias; or for a concentration of all the American Juntas, to exact obedience in the Peninsula. It was a monstruosity in policy, as well as in legislation, for Juntas of detached provinces of the Peninsula, and afterwards a concentration thereof, to exact obedience of, and treat the sections of Spanish America, as dependencies; and if it is a fact, that there

is an undisturbed and inherent right in every people, to choose for themselves; the Juntas of Spain, that is, all the governments which preceded the Cortes, either individually, or collectively, possessed no legal right of absolute control over the ultramarine provinces, unless by their own will and consent.

To judge, correctly, of the acts of a government, it is necessary to calculate the good which has been produced, and the evils which have been avoided. The Central Junta, left behind it, an exhausted treasury, dispersed armies, disunion and distrust, and most of the provinces, likewise, in the hands of the French. The Regency, on the basis of injustice and terror, declared an intemperate war against one half of the monarchy, which, besides, cutting off the chief resources which would have rendered the patriotic cause of the Peninsula, prosperous, has changed the ultramarine provinces, into a wide, and extended waste, of ruin and desolation. Had the integrity of these two ephemeral governments, been incorruptible; had their views, principles, and actions, been free from selfish and undue passions; had they not nourished, and been biassed by the conflicts of party; had their ends been always upright, and their means pure; had wiles been unknown to them, and their professions always sincere; in short, had they attended, with equal solicitude, to the interests of all parts of the monarchy, and therein administered justice, impartially, and without local prejudices or party feelings, then, might any trivial oversight in their public conduct, have been overlooked, or attributed to the difficulty of the times, in which they had charge of government. Had the ambition which guided their actions, been regulated

by principles, and controled by circumstances; had its object, been the real welfare of the whole country over which they presided, rather than personal aggrandizement and the gratifications of intrigue; they might, in European Spain, at least, have still deserved the name of Patriots; and their actions, and not their intentions, would have been arraigned by the rest of the world. Had their descisions, been guided by sound and impartial counsel; or had the great objects of their public administration, been steadily pursued; had the high stations, in which the members of each government, were placed, been unsought; nay, had patriotism been their guide, and had, even their conduct, been unassuming and divested of arrogance, the illegality of their powers, would, perhaps, never have been made a subject of censure or reproach; they never would have been scoffed at, for their authority being neither founded in law, or accompanied by the public voice; but, they would, rather, have acquired glory and renown, out of the difficulties with which they had to contend, and the great perplexities with which they had to struggle. None of these public virtues and essential qualifications, were, however, found in the Central Junta, or Cadiz Regency; and during the long period of their command, England, in her alliance, was, perhaps, involved, in the greatest of all possible contradictions; viz. that of fighting in one of the noblest causes, that ever animated the bosom of a people; and, in the furtherance of her views, of having to support two of the worst, weakest, most illegal, and degraded governments, that ever usurped power, or insulted the rights and liberties of a nation. Thus is it, that almost every member of these two governments,

has sunk into solitude, or is forgotten; and even the virtuous Jovellanos, from being connected with the Central Junta, appeared to have tarnished his political reputation, and to have obliterated the remembrance of that honourable cause, for which he suffered, under the corrupt Godoy.

England, in her treaty with Spain, was thus destined to contend with the strongest prejudices, which a combination of circumstances, the irritation of passions, and illiberality could produce; and as time has been added to our connection, these difficulties have increased. Yet, this has principally, been owing to a want of early remedies, and to a mean subservience, had to the illegal governments of the Peninsula, rather than to the nation at large. When Lord Wellesley, was received in his official capacity of ambassador, by the Central Junta, he reserved to himself, the right of remonstrating on any point, that might interest the respective sovereigns and nations.* This stipulation, was admitted with apparent satisfaction; and of course, it could not have been considered an imprudent interference, in his successor, using the same privilege. He early discovered and complained of the "poverty and exhausted state of Spain," to which he attributed all the hardships and privations of our armies, and the whole, he says, was aggravated by the debility of government.† At this time, however, the Central Junta still continued in command; and the French had, hitherto, been kept in some degree of check. But, when the hopes of Spain, became confined to the tenure of Cadiz; when the best provinces were in

* Vide Papers published by order of Parliament, March 19, 1810.

† Letter to Mr. Canning, Seville, August 15, 1809.

possession of the French, and when, at the same time, nothing but a committee of that execrated government had been placed at the head of affairs, were not these evils increased, and did not the necessity of giving strength and resources to European Spain, become more urgently manifest? And could this be done, by an impolitic declaration of war, against that part of the monarchy, which, besides, being out of the reach of the enemy, had always been an essential source of revenue, to the Kings of Spain?

Lord Wellesley, in the same letter, complains "of the erroneous policy of a weak government, operating against the general cause of the Peninsula;" and he himself, often remonstrated on this subject. He asserts, that "the promises of the Central Junta, in the most essential points;" even those which involved the means of enabling the British army, under Sir A. Wellesley, to remain within the Spanish territory, on which the safety of Spain, then, actually depended, "were only verbal, were merely matters of form, and never carried into execution." All was "procrastination—delay," and at last, he adds, these "proofs of inactivity, served only to increase the suspicions of ignorance, debility, and a want of sincerity, already attached to government." Such was the nature of the government, which, at that time, presided over the destinies of Spain and the Indies; and such was its neglect, under the most imperious circumstances, when pressed by an active and powerful enemy, and when the most vital interests of the nation, were at stake. The members, thereof, were, nevertheless, strongly urged by a British general, and an active ambassador from the court of St. James; and though a

continuation of their supineness, was about to deprive them of the co-operation of British forces, and thus leave them single-handed with the French, disasters, only, served to rouse them from their apathy and torpor. And if this was the situation of the Spanish government, at the period here alluded to, if such was its remissness, negligence, and even ignorance, in matters of most urgent moment; could any thing but blunders, impolicy, and a want of discriminating judgment, be expected with regard to the affairs of Spanish America, situated at such a distance, and crouching, as the members of the European government supposed, under the most abject submission and dependence?

The conduct and nature of the governments of Spain, must have been early known to the British cabinet, since it was fully pourtrayed by an active and intelligent envoy, for their express information. It was evident, they were not guided by an undeviating sense and principle of moral right, and fairness of intention, since, in their public functions, they neglected those means of general welfare and defence, which alone would stand the test of time, and bear the scrutiny of the impartial of every nation. Speaking of the nature of the Central Junta, Lord Wellesley observes, " Its constitution, is not founded in any well understood system of union between the provinces; and much less, in a just and wise distribution of the elements and powers of a government. So far, there does not exist a confederation of the provinces; the executive power, is divided and debilitated in the hands of a Junta, too numerous for any unity in deliberation, and promptitude in execution; and too reduced, for the purpose of representing the body of the Spanish

nation. The Central Junta, is not an adequate representation, either of the king, the aristocracy, or the people; nor, has it in itself, any of the useful qualities of an executive council, or of a deliberative assembly; at the same time, that it unites many of those defects, which interfere with both deliberation and execution."* In the same letter he adds. "Whether this ill-formed government, is sincerely affected, or not, to the cause of Spain and her allies, is certainly dubious; all the jealousies which exist, of every nature, against the British government or the allies, are principally, found in this body, in its ministers, or their adherents; in the people, no traces of such unworthy thoughts, are to be found. But leaving to one side all examination of the dispositions of the Junta, it is evident, that it possesses no spirit of energy and activity; no degree of authority or force; that it is not supported by the good will and affection of the people, whilst, from its strange and extravagant constitution, it unites within itself, all the most contradictory inconveniences of the known forms of government, without having one of their advantages. It is not an instrument of sufficient force, to execute the objects for which it was formed; nor can it ever acquire sufficient force or influence, to call into action, the resources of the nation, and the spirit of the people, with that vigour and energy, which might give efficacy to a foreign alliance, and repel a powerful invader. This is the true cause, at least, of the continuation of that state of debility, confusion, and disorder, the consequences of which, the British army has lately experienced, in the interior ad-

* Lord Wellesley to Mr. Canning, Seville, September 15, 1809.

ministration of Spain, and especially, in that of the military department."*

Two material truths, must have been deduced by the British government, from this statement of facts; viz. that the then existing government of Spain, was unjust in its formation, and inadequate to the wants of the nation at large; and next, that by rousing it to a sense of the necessity of acting on the broad principle of justice, and of meeting the invasion of the French, with all the force and united courage and resources of the provinces of both hemispheres, we might have, perhaps, offended the individual members of an ephemeral government, which could only last, till the people were convinced of their own forbearance, but, that we should thereby eventually, have deserved the gratitude of the entire monarchy, since as Lord Wellesley says, *these jealousies only existed in the government and its adherents, but not a trace of them, was to be found in the people.* It thence results, that all this delicacy and forbearance of the British cabinet, has had for object, rather to please and flatter the members of a government, faithfully, though sparingly, pourtrayed to them by their own minister; than to consult the real welfare and lasting interests of the people to whom we were allied, and of that monarchy, whose preservation and integrity, we had pledged, on behalf of its unfortunate sovereign.

And, on the part of the British government, did there, then, exist no right, nor no grounds for interference; had we no means left us, to procure remedies for so many evils, either by remonstrance, or by positive

* Lord Wellesley to Mr. Canning, Seville, September 25, 1809.

demand? Either the basis of our treaty with Spain, was insincere; and a contrary stipulation was therein specified; or, it was confined to the European provinces, only. If it was sincere, Spain ought to have been grateful for that advice, which was to keep the monarchy united; and was to secure a prosperous issue to that war, against which, there would, otherwise, be so many founded probabilities. Spain must have considered our treaty, as extending to all the monarchy over which Ferdinand had a claim; and the many times which the Spanish government has, since, remonstrated with, and demanded military and naval aid of us, as an ally for the reconquest of Spanish America; together with the manner in which the Spanish ambassador in London, solicited of government, the persons of the first deputies, who arrived here from Caracas, evidently proves, that we were supposed to feel an imperious interest in the ultramarine provinces, and that we were equally bound to their fate. Why, then, did we hesitate to convince such a government of its self-delusion; and why could not this invitation, have been made the basis of more just, equitable, and honourable measures? If Spain had sufficient right and confidence in England, to call upon her to fight battles, of which, the policy and justice, had never been proved; could she not place trust in her as an umpire; or would those blessings have been less acceptable, which had been purchased by conciliation and just redress, rather than crimsoned with the blood of brethren, and extorted at the point of the sword?

Before Spain called upon England, for fresh succours, it was her duty to prove, that her own resources had been husbanded, and not wantonly wasted away. In

good faith, this was necessary, in order to establish, that further sacrifices, were both just and unavoidable. It, therefore, became the legislation of Spain, as it did the policy of England, to push the war against France, with all possible vigour; for, otherwise, it could only terminate in the ruin of the hopes and downfall of the liberties of the one, and render useless those enormous sacrifices which the other had been making, for the whole of Europe, during a period of more than twenty years. To effect this so great and so desirable a purpose, it was, in the first place, necessary, to bind all parts of the monarchy together, by stronger and more indissoluble ties; and secondly, to found the rights of Spanish America, on a just and renovated equilibrium; as the only means of giving to the entire nation, unity, strength, and energy. Spanish America, was a country, that, from a variety of most interesting motives, was deserving of our most anxious regard and tender solicitude. On it, at that time, opened an era, which the friends of the happiness and liberty of the human race, beheld with delight, and had long, and ardently, desired. Our immediate interests, as well as our remote political advantages, forcibly pointed to this quarter; whilst a most peculiar combination of circumstances, such as may never again return, rendered those moments, we then lost, the most favourable and propitious. Lord Wellesley, early informed government, that he had recommended to the secretary of the Central Junta, a new governing system, to be established under an act, that was " to contain the principle articles of amendment of injuries, correction of abuses, and an alleviation of imposts, both in Spain and the Indies; together with the

principal points of concession to the colonies, of those rights, which alone, could secure to them, a just part, in the representation of the body of the Spanish empire."* The British government, even if no other means of information, were attainable, was, thereby, early aware, what was absolutely necessary for the well-being of Spanish America; and was it by suffering a war to be declared against her unredressed inhabitants, even without a hearing, and when they merely took their own reform into their own hands, because they had been forgotten at home, that these requisites, pointed out by Lord Wellesley, were to be obtained?

No record of the Central Junta, or of the Cadiz Regency, that is, no governmental act, during a period of more than two years, can be produced to prove, any effective measure in alleviation of the wrongs of Spanish America; or to evince, that the members of either government, were actuated by a sincere and zealous desire, to remove the hideous and galling yoke, that had, so long, rested on the shoulders of her oppressed inhabitants. Lord Wellesley had sufficient candour to confess this truth, up to his own time, when he told his government, "that the admission of the colonies, to a participation in the government, and in the representation of the mother country, appeared rather to have been suggested, as an expedient to secure to the Junta, a continuation of its actual authority, and that it had no connection whatever, with any extensive or liberal view of policy or government."† As I have before asserted, this

* Lord Wellesley to Mr. Canning, Seville, September 25, 1809.
† Ibid

measure on the part of the Central Junta, was, consequently, no more than a lure; since these verbal sentiments of moderation, were belied by actual conduct. At the same time that the executive published flattering decrees, private orders, of a very opposite tenour, were sent over to the chiefs in power; so that its insincere offers, though fair on paper, when put to the test, were as flimsy as the texture, on which they were transcribed. Was this, then, the species of justice, that was to satisfy the wants of a suffering people; or were they to continue to place their confidence in a government, which, besides being illegal and inadequate, was sunk into every error and every corruption, which, in the course of ages, had crept into the cabinet of Madrid? Lord Wellesley, in his said letter, assures his government, that, even in Spain, "no plan had been adopted for the effective amendment of injuries, the correction of abuses, the alleviation of exactions, the administration of justice, the regulation of the revenue, imposts and commerce, the security of persons and property; and that all the other branches of government, were as defective as that of the war department." Yet this is the picture of the very government, Spanish America was commanded to obey; this was the nature of the executive, from which her inhabitants were to expect relief. Lord Wellesley further adds, "The Supreme Junta, continues multiplying precautions to prolong the duration of its command, in spite of the interests of the monarchy, and the intentions and wishes of the people; by which means, all the evils and abuses, which now oppress the nation, will increase," &c. The Spanish Americans were, then, not the only ones, who were sensible of the degraded state of the Peninsular government,

since it was public to the whole of Europe, and particularly known to the British government, through the most respectable channel that possibly could be found. But what is more, Lord Wellesley, actually, foresaw the effects which would be produced in the ultramarine provinces, by the disorders of the Seville government, when as early as September, 1809, he announces to Mr. Canning, "that when the true state of the government of the mother country, is known in the colonies, there will be imminent danger of a commotion, in this most important part of the empire," The commotions in Spanish America, were, consequently, foreseen, and must have emanated from causes, not only of an imperious nature, but, also, exclusively originating on this side the water. And are the inhabitants of the transmarine provinces, then, to be plunged into the horrors of a civil war, on this account, and treated as rebels, for the adoption of measures, which were both suggested by prudence, and controled by motives, arising out of the common order of things?

§ Lord Wellesley, moreover, certified to his government, that "the greatest obstacle to the liberty of Spain, was the very state of her government; but, for the Spanish Americans to be sensible of this fact, and to act accordingly, is a crime of high treason, is pronounced rebellion, and their conduct is branded with all the terms of opprobrium, that malignity, disappointment, and rancour, could invent. Actuated by the pressure of their own ills, and as we have already seen, urged by the desponding situation of the Peninsula, they elect a provisional government, the most rational and the most constitutional they could; and for this, war is proclaimed against them. For this, they are, in fact, declared, *hors*

de la loi; and on this unjust basis, the subjugation of the ultramarine provinces, becomes a plea for the greatest excesses of ambition and revenge, of which instances, such as never before soiled the page of history, will be, hereafter, quoted. The two reasons alleged by all the sections of Spanish America, for thus varying the forms of their own local administration, was the hopeless situation of the Peninsula, and the illegal and degraded state of its government; and these sentiments, were fully conveyed both to the Spanish and British cabinets, in the two documents placed in my Appendix, under the heads of E and F. The first, in a letter written by the Junta of Caracas, to the Marques de las Hormazas, as Spanish minister, under date of 20th May, 1810; in which, the deplorable situation of that province, (exactly the same as in the other sections) is faithfully pourtrayed, and the reasons for preferring local Juntas, fully explained. I have thought it best to give it in its entire state, not only on account of the energetic and plain display of facts, therein contained; but, because it serves as a remarkable contrast to the sentiments of a British minister, alluding to the conduct of Caracas, of which notice, will be, hereafter, taken. Document F. is a letter, written by the said Junta of Caracas, to his Majesty George III, under date of the 1st January, 1810; which I have, also, inserted at full length, in consequence of its being extremely explanatory of the views and motives, which urged the Spanish Americans to vary their forms of government. Having, moreover, in the course of this exposé, strongly urged the neglect of timely interference, on the part of the British government; and, besides, argued, that it was not only inconsistent with our true po-

licy, but even with our pledge made as the joint guardians of the Spanish monarchy of both hemispheres, to suffer the ultramarine provinces to be rent asunder by unjust civil wars, and their resources to be wasted away; I conceive it my duty to manifest to my reader, what was the nature of the appeal, at that time, made to the feelings and justice of the British nation; particularly, when I can thereby explain, in a full and official manner, the grounds on which the Spanish Americans acted.

The object of this letter, was to announce to the British government, that the inhabitants of Venezuela, under the dangers to which they were exposed, and the pressure of domestic ills, by which they were bent down, had no longer been able to endure the illegal, unfair, and corrupt government of the Peninsula, through the immediate control of its agents. It was to complain of the inadequate and tyrannical measures of a government, that, up to that period, had concurred in no single act for the relief of the ultramarine provinces; but, that seemed resolved, to sustain the edifice of the most oppressive tyranny, ever invented for the misery of the human race. As the mutual ally of the entire monarchy, it was to inform England, of the prostration of a galling and political despotism, not only opposed to sound reason and rational freedom, but also in direct contradiction to the general welfare of the state. It was to complain of restraints and privations, which Spain prolonged, from motives of interest and illiberality; and, it was to condemn a system, that sacrificed a populous continent, to the gains of one hundred and fifty Cadiz monopolists. It was, in short, to enumerate aggravated hardships, of

which England had, before, expressed herself sensible; and, at the same time, to implore her protection, not for an independence of Spain; not for any thing unwarranted by law, or opposed to right and justice; but, only, that they might not become the victims of an enfuriated government, actuated and misled, by the ravings of a war faction, framing in the trading port, in which its members had lately taken refuge.

Was the disavowal of such a government, and was the deposition of those authorities constituted by it, a crime of such great magnitude, as to deserve a cruel and intemperate war; or were such sentiments as these, motives of shame to the British government? The contents of this letter, do no more, than correspond with the picture drawn of this same government, by Lord Wellesley, and by Spaniards themselves; nor do they constitute any thing, beyond a faithful outline of an executive, that so soon after, received the general execration of every good citizen of the Peninsula. And was it high treason, in the Spanish Americans, to discover and complain of this fact, a few months sooner than their European brethren?

This letter constitutes the best epitomé, possible, of the views and intentions of all the sections of Spanish America, from its corresponding with the true situation of each; yet, it breathes loyalty and fidelity to Ferdinand: it professes a strong adhesion to the name of Spaniard; it burns with equal ardour against the common enemy; and merely disowns the authority of a government, whose disorders had plunged the European provinces into the greatest distress, and were entailing the same evils on those of America. The first jurisconsults

and politicians of Spain, have acknowledged the picture therein drawn of the Central Junta, to be correct and true; how, therefore, could the Spanish Americans, acting upon those same avowed premises, be pronounced traitors and rebels, and how could decrees be issued to punish them as such? A near contemplation of the events as they passed, will unravel this mystery. Cadiz, as already explained, had now become the seat of government, and the new authorities abroad, in consequence of the impoverished state of the country, after a long war with England, and in order to increase the public revenue, had judged it necessary, to annul all restraints on trade. This measure, was resented by the old monopolists thereof, with all the fury of disappointment, and all the rancour, of which the sordid are capable. Gall is immediately infused into the public mind, the worst interpretations are put on views and measures, which were not only just, but also necessary; and without previous deliberation, remonstrance, or hearing, a rash war is declared. In conformity to their respective avowals, and in strict accord with every concurrent circumstance, we see, that the various sections of Spanish America, conceived, that their political safety, required them to have local and stable governments amongst themselves; in order that they might not be dependent on an authority, placed at an immense distance, and continually changing. An authority, abject, corrupt, and debased in itself, and unable to attend even to the concerns of the Peninsula. And this, was actually, anticipated by a British minister, and expected by Spaniards themselves. Yet this measure of urgent necessity, becomes a crime of the deepest hue, in the eyes of the Regency; who, instead of recon-

ciliation, redress, and mutual explanation, rushes into a thoughtless and unnatural war; and attempts, rather to weaken by disunion, and depress by terror, than to consolidate and unite, by a just equilibrium of interests.

This unjust war, which was about to deprive Spain of resources, such as would have poured fresh vigour and energy into the state, and redoubled its exertions; this war, which would, evidently, drive the injured and unredressed inhabitants of Spanish America, to the extremes of despair; which would deluge the fairest portion of the empire, in blood and desolation; and urge a forsaken people, to lengths, not only uncongenial, but also unintended; lengths which might endanger the safety of the monarchy, whose integrity we had guaranteed, was completely overlooked by the British government, who, in this most interesting moment, kept aloof; and after omitting to prevent, afterwards, devised nothing effective, with a view to promote the consideration and adjustment of these momentous differences. Yet the great point with Spain, at that time, was, not why she was to continue the war, but, how it was to be carried on. This was the most material consideration for Spain, and, consequently, for ourselves; every other was subordinate; or at least, of comparative insignificance. To give energy and union to that part of the monarchy, which had to resist the power and influence of France, was an object of the first consequence; and our attention ought primarily, if not solely, to have been directed to it. And was this to be attained, by an impolitic and fatal war, being hastily declared by one part of the monarchy, against the other? Most assuredly; no. Where, then, was England, in such important moments, as these?

Where was the foresight, energy, and sincerity of that government, which had guaranteed the integrity of the Spanish monarchy, and had taken into its hands, the rights of the absent Ferdinand in joint trust? Of that government, whose minister in Cadiz, beheld this dismemberment about to ensue, without an effective effort to maintain union and fraternity; and who was silent, when the murder of many thousands, was about to take place, in countries, which had never thought of deviating from their allegiance to a monarch, whom they revered for his virtues, and respected for his misfortunes.

The letter just noticed, from the Junta of Caracas, to the king of England, was placed in the hands of the British ministry, about the middle of July, 1810, that is, near the same time that the declaration of war against Caracas, and dated June 27, 1810, arrived from Cadiz. The smallest reflection on the contents of each, must have demonstrated, that one side or the other, was egregiously in the wrong; and that this extreme rigour of the Regency, if not absolutely unjust and tyrannical, was at least, premature, and divested of legitimate motives. If, therefore, we had at heart, the real and lasting welfare of the whole monarchy, and not of a detached part; were there not here, sufficient grounds for direct or indirect interference, either by strong remonstrance, or positive demand? In effecting so noble, so just, and so humane a purpose, what had we to contend with? One hundred and fifty Cadiz monopolists, and their mercenary partizans. And were not the entire influence and sacrifices of England, superiour to such a faction? The means this faction used, to neutralize the good wishes of a large portion of the Spanish community, was, by

printing the grossest and most malevolent misrepresentations, that ever issued from a slanderous press, or were invented by malice. And was not our fair use of the press, a means, even, if no other could avail, of counteracting this poison, or of correcting opinions, in which often, our own national honour was implicated? The grounds on which the Spanish Americans acted, were, then, fully and officially known to us; and it might be imagined, from the practical experience of one illustrious member of the cabinet, one, who had been an eye witness of the very abuses, disorders, and hardships, of which the ultramarine provinces complained, and when the urgency was so great, that prudence and foresight, might have suggested some timely plan, to guard against so many evils which were about to befall our allies; and which would, materially, weaken the state, we were strongly bound to support. England was, at that time, as a point, destined to connect and conciliate, these clashing interests between brethren; she was the bond of union, alone, capable of knitting the two halves of the Spanish monarchy closely together; and each, had the most substantial motives to hope, that she would never cast from her shoulders, a sacred duty, which honour, the welfare of her mutual allies, and the future interests of her own subjects, had imposed upon her.

And might not the British nation, at that time, have been proud, in being instrumental to the happiness of a virtuous and unoffending people, who had been left no other choice, between abject and degraded submission, and all the horrors of a civil war, waged against them, by an illiberal unenlightened nation? Was not this a rich, an interesting field, for the display of British jus-

tice, and British philanthropy? A feeling interest, a sincere warmth, and benevolent promptitude, even bordering on a generous indiscretion, have, uniformly, been the characteristics of the British government, when called upon to protect right, and to afford a shield for suffering virtue. This has been the case, when common interests, alone, bound her to the fate of nations; why then silence, coldness, and indifference to Spanish America, now, by a recent alliance, as well as by great and willing sacrifices made against the common enemy, participating in a communion of interests; and formerly, the object of our promises and pledges? In other quarters, and in pursuit of a less just cause, England has not been content with sacrifices and perseverance; but the benevolent magnanimity of her subjects, has also been desirous of healing wounds, inflicted by the ravages of war, and even of alleviating the distress of individual sufferers. Almost every nation of the European continent, even the Indians of North America, at one time or other, have experienced the consolations and fatherly aid of England, and the sympathies of her people. Spanish America, alone, is overlooked and forgotten. Was this section, of the globe, alone, undeserving of our anxiety? On it, we behold the most dreadful of all calamities, ready to burst; we see a decree, rash, impolitic, and destructive, carried into effect, and, already, is European Spain deprived of her best resources, whilst her American provinces, present a picture of indiscriminate murder, anarchy, and destruction. And, still, from delicacy we dare not interfere. Yet, we have induced Sicily to change her constitution, to new model her laws and customs; and we look for the gratitude of that people in

whose regeneration we have, thus, cooperated. We have dictated in Portugal, and have placed a British General over the armies of Spain; and we, there, conceive we have been fulfilling the sacred duties of a potent and faithful ally; in short, for all our political friends, in Europe, we have made the greatest sacrifices and exertions; for their welfare, freedom, and well-being, we have fought and struggled; yet, after the most solemn pledges and promises, are on record; after frequent and unsought protestations of sincere friendship and regard, unconditional, and unlimited by time, we hesitate, we are afraid, nay, we appear ashamed, of lifting up our hands, to ward off the blow of destruction from the heads of our transatlantic friends, those who have been the object of our long and reiterated offers. When, their unhappy country, has been, for more than four years, drenched in the blood of their fellow-citizens; and when murder and desolation, have, there, reared their ghastly heads, in every quarter, we can no longer find time, to pour the balm of comfort into the gaping wounds of these our new allies, as well as our ancient friends. When the subsequent abreviated detail of havoc and injustice, which have originated from the coldness of England, and the rash and precipitate conduct of the Cadiz Regency, meets the eye of a British minister, or the ear of a benevolent but uninformed public, the tear of sympathy cannot be withheld from the one, nor the glow of indignation from the other.

The cabinet of St. James, did not, however, content itself with entirely, abstaining from all interference in behalf of the outraged provinces of Spanish America, for by its public and official conduct, it negatively expressed

an approval of the conduct of the Regency, rather than testified a just and dignified interest, for the sufferings of Spanish America, or sympathy for the desolation that was about to ensue. Lord Liverpool, on 29th June, 1810, wrote to General Layard, governor of Curacoa, in the following terms: "that his Britannic Majesty has the greater motives for forming these hopes" (viz. that the inhabitants of Caracas will re-establish their bonds with Spain, which, as before shewn, were not broken, till a declaration of war, on the part of the latter, had taken place) "from the Regency established in Cadiz, having appeared to have adopted, with regard to the dominions of America, the same wise and generous principle, before adopted by the Supreme Junta, of establishing the relations between all parts of the Spanish monarchy, on the most liberal footing, by considering the provinces of America, as integral parts of the empire, and by admitting its inhabitants, to share in the Cortes of the whole kingdom. This letter, was communicated to the Cadiz government, and published in the gazette there, as a kind of confident support to the measures of the Regency. Governor Layard, was also authorised to make every public use thereof, and it was, consequently, transmitted to Caracas, and there inserted in the public papers.* What a contrast in the sentiments of this letter, written as a basis for the political conduct of England, with regard to American Spain, when compared with the documents E. and F. on which the preceding remarks have been made! What a variance between the opinion of Lords

* This letter of Lord Liverpool to Governor Layard, is found, entire, in El Espanol, No. 6.

Wellesley and Liverpool! One says, that promises, delusive, and unaccompanied by works, are all that the Central Junta, has done in favour of Spanish America; and, the other, as much as tells her inhabitants, that every thing has been done for them, consistent with justice and reason. The one gives a faithful picture of the degraded situation of the Peninsular government, and the other, enters into a panegyric on its liberal systems.

Lord Liverpool, when he penned the above dispatch, must have been unaware of the real situation of the ultramarine provinces; and urged by his anxious solicitude to preserve harmony with the Peninsula, and fearful of giving fresh motives of jealousy and distrust, he laid the blame of dissentions, which he foresaw and feared, to that quarter, where the primordial causes did not exist. The Spanish Americans, on the best grounds, might have asked the Noble Lord, when he thus condemned their conduct, what the government of Spain had done in their behalf; and at the period when he penned his dispatch, what proof he had to substantiate his assertions? They had been, long, living under a system, of which despotism was a fixed and fundamental principle; had this, then, ceased to exist? Could his Lordship then prove, that personal freedom, the impartial administration of justice, the increase and advancement of commerce and agriculture, reform in their mode of national education, in financial and military arrangements, in short, all that tends to perfect and secure national independence, had been granted to Spanish America? Were unfair restraints, no longer, imposed on the domestic economy of any orders of the state; and was the administration of justice, guided on principles, so as

to secure to every man, his personal freedom and property? Did local interests, no longer, palsy the plans of general government; and were the public laws founded on the true interests of the nation at large, and not of any individual class of inhabitants, or of any particular section? For three hundred years, the whole world had beheld Spanish America, governed by the arbitrary acts of military despots, from whose mandates there was no appeal; and, was this reign of terror, then, at an end? The prisons, had only been emptied of sufferers, where the energy of the people, had broken their own chains; and, were these victims to return to their solitude and misery, because the Spanish government had made verbal promises, in which the heart had no share? In short, if those restraints, of which the British government itself, had often complained, were not then removed; and, if the ultramarine provinces, had not been freed from all those vexations, which impede the course of justice, which oppress and damp genius and industry;* which subdue the spirit, which convert free and social beings, into abject and degraded vassals, and render their condition, that of dependant slaves; the notification of its being the wish and policy of England, for the sections of Spanish America, *to re-establish their bonds with the mother-country*, that is, again to invest their ex-viceroys and ex-captain-generals with their former powers, and to

* Can it be credited, that whilst the Spanish government ordered the tobacco to be plucked up in the sections of Spanish America, the king, as tobacconist-general, was paying to Portugal, annually, six hundred thousand dollars, for what was supplied him from the Brazils?

return, with full penitence and submission, under the control of the Cadiz Regency, the object which the latter exclusively sought, was no less than implicating the name of England, in the acts of the Spanish government, and upholding the grounds of its proceedings. If we had no balm, no consolation, to bestow on an injured and unoffending people, at least, we might have spared them the pang of being scoffed at in Cadiz, by this letter being there produced by the monopolists, as a kind of sanction to those measures, which they had induced the Regency to adopt; and which the liberal mind, could not fail to disapprove. Certainly, the sound judgment of Lord Liverpool, in this particular, must have slumbered; nor could these instructions ever have been intended, as a basis for that line of conduct, afterwards followed by the governor of Curacoa, in his relations with the unfortunate sufferers of Caracas, of which, notice will, hereafter, be taken.

§ The silence of the British government on the declaration of war against Caracas, together with other general traits of negative disapprobation, on its part, as well as on that of some of its officers; the disdain, with which the appeals of the Spanish Americans were treated, and the indifference, with which the fleets and armies of Spain, were seen to cross the Atlantic; for the exercise of revenge, and the spilling of more innocent blood, amounted, in the minds of a suffering people, to no less, than a positive approval of the conduct of Spain, and an actual condemnation of that of the Spanish Americans. Yet, would it not have been more salutary, for some mutual explanation to have taken place, under the guarantee of England; would it not have been better, that the provinces of Spanish America, had been enabled to

found a temporary government, suited to their territorial and local interests, as well as conformable to their manners and habits, during, at least the time, whilst the functions of the crown were suspended? In their acts, they complained, that the produce of their imposts, was devoted to purposes, entirely foreign to them; might they not have been satisfied, that these were moderate, fairly distributed, and applied to uses, both beneficial and of general good? They lamented, that in their own country, they were treated as aliens, and that every spring of private and public prosperity, was closed to them, by odious and onerous monopolies; and would it not have been more politic, that their reasonable wishes should have been accomplished? Would it not have been more prudent, and more equitable, in Spain herself, changing those very chiefs, who had always been the instruments of the despotism of the court, and of the ministers in power, from whom they received their nominations? Would it not have been more advisable, to have established such a system, as would have left both the government, and the people governed, without suspicion and distrust? Would it not, moreover, have been more honourable, to have converted the political changes of the Peninsula, also, into sources of public benefit, in Spanish America? Would not this, in short, have been the best possible security of the social happiness, and consequently, of the tranquillity of the inhabitants of all American Spain?

Had England, in due time, notified to Spain, in a dignified and strenuous manner, that as the joint guardian of the rights of the lamented Ferdinand, she could never consent to an act, that was about to place them in the

greatest danger; and, when the unfortunate consequences of that indiscreet act, had become manifest and urgent, if she had, strongly, signified, that she was, inseparably bent on the restoration of peace; had she, firmly and officially, convinced both parties what was consistent with the object of the general league, in which all were engaged; and what was, at the same time, in strict accordance with the honour and safety of those most immediately concerned; during the time of the Cadiz Regency, during the visit of Lord Wellington to Cadiz, on our rupture with the United States, after many of our brilliant victories, when the hopes of the nation were high, and, particularly on the removal of the Cortes to Madrid, as well as on other occasions; the objections to our mediatory interference, which only lingered in the bosoms of the illiberal, and were only kept alive by the conflicts of a desperate war faction, might have been silenced; and in that interesting portion of the globe, to which I allude, the tears, might very long since, have been, wiped, from the eyes of distress and misery, and the cheering prospect of repose and prosperity, might again, have been opened.

In the general avowal of the sentiments of the Spanish Americans, such, for example, as are contained in documents E. and F. was there nothing that merited the consideration and gratitude of England, individually; and was there no disposition, during a period of four years of bloody war, she could improve, for the general good, even as the ally of European Spain? Unfortunately, the disorder that required an immediate remedy, was suffered to linger and increase; and its most dangerous symptoms, were disregarded, till the case became ex-

tremely aggravated. If the sacred tie, which bound us to the Spanish monarchy, failed to excite in us, a strong anxiety for the welfare of its best half, amidst the obscure clouds of doubt and fear, by which we were then surrounded, could we not there discover a bright spot, on which to rest our future policy and hopes? It was evident, that the more communications we opened with Spanish America, and the more gratitude we infused into the bosoms of her inhabitants, the more we bound that rising country, to our interests, and the greater strength we thereby acquired. England might then, as she yet may, have produced a confederation between European and American Spain, on a basis, in unison with the wishes of the advocates of rational freedom, and even stronger, than any bond of political union, that before existed. One, that by casting off the yoke of despotic power, and establishing, in its place, a paternal, legal, and venerable government, such a one, that even the benevolent Ferdinand, might have approved, would have given renovated strength to the Spanish empire of both hemispheres, and connected its detached parts, still more closely together. Gratifying, as is the contemplation of all that has been achieved by England, for the repose and well being of the world, a dark cloud has long overhung the western continent of Spain; and amongst the numerous wreaths of never fading laurel, with which the former has crowned the heads of her champions, fighting for the rights and liberties of Europe, has she no civic wreath in store, for the wise and politic minister, who, by his exertions, shall dissipate this gloom, who shall restore peace to Spanish Columbia, and open her unexplored resources to more general enterprize? Could

England require a greater glory, or a more consoling reflection, than to pour the balm of comfort, into the bleeding wounds of seventeen millions of people, and thus merit their eternal blessings?

§ Whoever goes back, to the early stages of the dissentions here alluded to, and contemplates the degraded situation in which the ultramarine provinces stood, will not hesitate to confess, that the government of Spain, had many acts of justice to do for the inhabitants of the former; and that an extensive and radical reform, consequently became one of its primary duties. Yet, we saw the whole of the administration of the Central Junta, and of the Regency, pass by, and not an effective measure of alleviation to the wrongs of the Spanish Americans, was carried into effect. The first did, indeed, declare them equal in rights with their European brethren; yet, the Regency immediately afterwards, forbade them a free trade, more essential to their interests, than any thing else. Even the new constitution of Spain, makes them equal, yet in so doing, prohibits them that trade, which the inhabitants of the Peninsula themselves enjoy; as will, hereafter, be more, fully, noticed. The Spanish Americans then, have, hitherto, been living under fallacious assurances, without any grounded reliance on the firm and impartial faith of their lawgivers at home; who, certainly, ought to have been the steady preservers and careful and zealous guardians of their civil rights, as well as of those of the European portion of the community. The Spanish Americans were declared equal in rights, yet, the Juntas of La Paz and Quito, were murdered for the exercise of this equality; the same was attempted with that of Chili, and public war is pro-

claimed against that of Caracas. They are declared equal in rights, yet, in Caracas and Mexico, every one, favourable to the formation of a Junta to represent Ferdinand, is buried in dungeons. They were declared equal in rights, yet they are ordered still to endure the odious clogs, and the mad and unprincipled monopoly of 150 Cadiz merchants. They were, in short, declared equal in rights, but these were promises, as hollow, as those of the Central Junta to Mr. Frere. The subsequent conduct of the Cortes, as will be shewn in a review of their transactions with regard to Spanish America, has been a punctillo, not to deviate from the measures of their predecessors the Regents; and the precipitate and summary discussion of this important question, like the hasty investigation of the Boston port bill, during the struggle of our own transatlantic possessions, has rather been the real and efficient cause of the prolongation of so many disasters, than any conviction that the war was just. This negligence and lukewarmness on the part of the Cortes, has, also, in a great degree, been owing to the temporary triumph of the Cadiz mercantile interests, and their influence over the press; and it is a melancholy reflection, yet, founded on correct data, that such illiberal principles as these, should have been the chief barriers, which have obstructed redress and justice, to those who had so long suffered.

Gratitude and political expediency, alone, as before fully evinced, might have roused the justice of the new governments of the Peninsula, if no other more equitable principle existed; and the first display of loyalty accompanied by copious remittances from the ultramarine provinces, might have been made the basis of an ex-

tensive and liberal system. Yet, one government succeeded the other, and no reform was thought of; nor were any of those effective concessions granted, which Lord Wellesley indicated, as the only means of producing permanent good. One of the first acts of the Cadiz Regency, was to annul its own decree of free trade, under aggravations, which must have roused the injured feelings of the most weak and submissive. Fresh powers were sent over to the colonial chiefs, for the purposes of rendering their administration more severe, and consequently more oppressive. A most tyrannical plan of espionage was set on foot; victims of resentment, every where, abounded; and in order to cloak and support all these vexations, the course of public justice, was, actually, declared suspended. An order was sent out, to impede the circulation of all newspapers, except the gazette of the Cadiz Regency; and this was only tolerated, when officially transmitted by the government to its agents. The situation of Spanish America, was, in fact, rendered worse, by the new changes in the Peninsula; for fresh and galling insults, were added to the increased acts of injustice on the part of the governmental agents; and on the degradation of old systems, renewed terrors were ingrafted. This systematic terror, rose to such a height, that in Lima, the editor of a public paper, for telling the inhabitants of Spanish America, that they had a country (patria) was arrested and sent home a prisoner; and in other sections, many other despotic acts might be enumerated. Yet by Spain, the ultramarine provinces are told to endure all these hardships, without repining; and England, by her indifference, tells them, they are to expect no redress, as long as she is linked to the parent state.

The rancour of the Cadiz governments, as before demonstrated, became analagous to the interests by which it was first roused; and it was afterwards kept alive, by every base artifice and design. But, that this blindness, and this infatuation, should, in like manner, have pervaded the acts of the British government, and the conduct of its agents, is the most unaccountable of all political solecisms; and if it proves no more, it at least evinces, that the extent and importance of this subject, did not receive due and timely consideration; and that it was treated, rather as an every day incident, than as one of the great occurrences, which the page of history, will, at a future period, have to record. In fact, the whole of the changes, which have taken place in Spanish America, within the last four years, have excited less interest and sensation in England, than would have been caused, by any alteration in one of the petty States of Germany, or by a change in the governmental forms, of the citizens of the Alps. Thus, has it happened, that every thing was thrown on the chances of a war, not of common hostility, to establish a right, to fix a boundary, or to dislodge an intrusive enemy; but one, accompanied by bloody persecution, and sharpened by peculiar feelings of revenge. It was the boast of modern times, that civilization had stripped warfare, of nearly all its ancient ferocity; but, in Spanish America, we see it, not only brought back to the horrors of the dark ages, but, if possible, rendered more brutal, savage, and deformed. The British officers who have cooperated in the Peninsula, have had an opportunity of judging of the nature of Spanish troops, and we have seen how dangerous it was, even to let them loose, on the French natives of the

Pyrenees. To the feelings of such officers, do I now appeal, when I ask the question; what fatal consequences, must not be produced, by such troops, being let loose, on the often defenseless natives of Spanish America, situated, at a distance, from the arm of power, and as it were, answerable to no one for their excesses? Thence, have the military reports of the European chiefs, commanding in that ill-fated country, presented little else, than details of individual murder, and general massacre; as will, purposely, be shewn, from official sources, in a detached section of this exposé. Boundless robbery, indiscriminate seizure, vengeance, horrid impiety, and atrocious murders, are the evidences, that attest the conduct of the officers, who have had to subject the *insurgents*; and a mode of warfare has been established, which has been made a plea, for the greatest excesses, and a continual source of rapinē and bloodshed, throughout the ravaged provinces. The feeling mind revolts at such scenes, but what must be the reflections of the impartial Briton, who sees the name of his own nation, materially implicated in these horrors; who sees the instruments of these butcheries, sent over cloathed and armed with those resources, England had generously lavished, for the defence of Spain?

However urgent the dictates of policy, and loud the calls of humanity, nothing on the part of either Spain or England, has yet sufficed, to wind up this long drama of horrors and disasters; and when a wide and extended civil war, with all its attendant scourges, has deformed and harrowed up the bosom of Spanish America, for more than four years, and in which, many hundred thousand souls have been sacrificed, not an effective measure

of pacification, has been organized; but, rather, the issue of all, has been left to a system, founded on mutual ruin, cemented by blood, and generating vice and misery in endless succession. As the governments of Spain, have taken a more regular form, we shall hereafter see, that the deputies representing the American provinces in the Cortes, have often complained of these horrors, and have lamented the unfortunate causes which gave rise to them. They have fully and repeatedly manifested their basis; by urging, unfair monopolies, inequality of representation, the vices of the colonial regimen, and the hardships under which the Spanish Americans laboured, as the grounds of all these disasters; and till such time as it is proved, that the councils of Spain, have reformed all these points; that the claims of the inhabitants of the ultramarine provinces, have received a fair and impartial discussion, and that they have been restored to their long invaded rights, the government of Spain, alone, is answerable for all the crimes and horrors, committing in the injured provinces of Spanish America; as is England, for that waste of lives and treasure, which might have been useful in Europe; for that destruction, which ensues; and for those dangers, to which the Spanish Americans are exposed. She is answerable, by giving a pledge of national faith, to at least, an obscure and dangerous condition, open to abuse and misrepresentation—by not stipulating for a trade, in favour of her own subjects, which alone, would have prevented these evils that have followed—by suffering the Cadiz Regency, to declare an unjust and impolitic war—by not putting a timely remedy to calamities which make humanity shudder—and by suffering those resources sent to Spain,

for a prosecution of a just war against the French, to be employed on the other side of the Atlantic, in the furtherance of views, founded on injustice, illiberality, and the most flagrant of all invasions of right. England, has also been to blame, for giving to the monopolists of Cadiz, frequent causes of triumph in the realization of their views; and particularly, after all her indifference, in herself celebrating one of the greatest horrors that the most dreadful visitations of nature, or the fell revenge of unprincipled power, could bring amongst a detached portion of the human race, as will be hereafter shewn.

Accustomed as England has been, to balance her own substantial interests, as well as the future destines of empires, her pusillanimous silence respecting the horrors committing in Spanish America, whilst actually her ally, and when she had so much at stake, appears a problem, both singular and unaccountable. That the contagion of Cadiz party and war faction, should, equally, have extended to England and her agents, is one of the greatest sacrifices of policy and discrimination, that ever warped the measures of a potent ally, from the path of rectitude and justice. Yet what other conclusions can be drawn, when we behold one half of the resources of Spain, rendered useless and abortive; when we see an unnatural and cruel war prolonged; when England disregards the continuation of horrors, only found in the annals of a Nero or a Tiberius; when no medium of approximation and friendly intercourse, under stipulations advantageous to all parties, and founded on liberality, reason, and gratitude, is carried into effect; and when, under the greatest sacrifices of the British public, an annual trade of twenty millions sterling, as will

hereafter be demonstrated, is neglected and forgotten, nay, unimproved by no one. From the date of our alliance with the Spanish monarchy, we have been plunged in a crisis, big with the most important results, and such as must have filled the mind of every friend of his country, with anxious solicitude. This has been an interval of alarm, and often of despondency; whilst the whole of Europe, has been struggling against the lawless ambition of one man, who had, at his command, the united resources of the greatest nation of the globe. The consequences of these struggles, have been war and ravages in every quarter of the globe, where French influence could reach; producing events, more striking and more momentous, than the ordinary occurrences of centuries. England has stood preeminent in her glorious exertions to procure that peace, she has, perhaps, now attained, but, all this time, has no attempt, by conciliation, been made for Spanish America, to obtain an object, that in Europe, has cost so many lives and so much treasure? Conquests and dear bought acquisitions, have, often, constituted the leading features of the parliamentary speeches from the throne; but would it not have been a more glorious and sober boast, that such a continent, through the exertions of England, had received a government, founded in law, and on the basis of equal representation, instead of one, built upon despotism, supported by the sword, and unaccompanied by rights, either sacred or defined? Would it not have been more wise and expedient, that such a continent, by means of political and commercial relations, had been opened to Britith enterprize, and also made a powerful means of increasing revenue, even to Spain?

The long injustice of Spain to the ultramarine provinces, was evident and true, would it not, therefore, have been more honourable, and more upright, in the new Peninsular rulers, to have confessed and corrected errors, rather than to have continued to deceive themselves, by fallacious, but plausible palliations and excuses? Ingratitude, was the hue and cry raised against the conduct of the Spanish Americans; it resounded in the Cadiz prints, and in all those where the money of the monopolists could have access; nay, it often reechoed in those of London. This was, however, a means, rather to cover the disgrace of convicted folly, and to turn merited odium on those, who from distance, were unable to make their own defence. Not, that the Americans, have been altogether free from blame, or exempt from all censure or reproach. Under such feelings of provocation, they were, often, loud in their complaints, and invective, was too frequently, mixed with their clamours. But, wherever a contrast is made between the pieces written in Cadiz, and those produced on the other side of the Atlantic, the heaviest charge will be attached to the first. Even granted that the complaints of the Spanish Americans, were, in some instances, exaggerated, and this is most that can be alleged against them; even supposing the terms in which they were conveyed, were angry, disrespectful, and irritating, their counterpart was to be found in Cadiz; and it was besides clear, that old degradations, as well as fresh intemperance, had laid their foundation. On the one side, was a spirit of monopoly, founded on illiberality, stimulated by self interest, and put in motion by the lever of gain; on the other, were galling inconveniences, flowing from

the unequal footing which existed between the inhabitants of each hemisphere, which could not fail to produce conflicting interests, mutual disgusts, irritation, and even alienation, amongst the suffering members of the empire. It could not fail to rouse the feelings of the most abject and submissive, to see great national interests, and the most sacred of all rights, wantonly sacrificed on the altars of state jealousy, illiberality, and monopoly. Such principles of conduct, could only tend to perplex, injure, and sour that harmony of measures, on which general utility depends; and acrimony and enmity, were inevitably to flow, from a flagrant and insulting violation of those establishments of justice and legislation, which are the only solid and just basis, of the honour and prosperity of nations. The Spanish Americans, demanded no more, than to stand or fall, by those very laws, which had been early framed for their government; they persisted for no other, than the exercise of those rights, they had inherited, but of which, successive despotism had stripped them. In short, they sued for no more, than a practical equality with their European brethren, founded in reason, and in contradiction to no avowed maxim of equity. They struggled, with unabating zeal, for the exact observance of those charters and grants, their forefathers had left them, as a sacred inheritance; and of those sacred pledges of kingly faith, whose infraction, particularly in moments such as those, in which Spain stood; was not only forbidden, by the principles of moral justice, but also, by the dictates of sound policy. If they are blameable for the means they often employed, they are warranted in the object to which they aspired.

It would be unjust to assert, that no excesses have been committed by the Creole party; or to deny, that private interest and individual ambition have, sometimes, actuated the conduct of their leaders. With regard to the first charge, partial excesses have indeed occurred, to the great regret of the well wishers of the cause; but they have been such, as are common to the tumultuous assembling of armed men, roused and irritated, and who have had 300 years of oppression, ill usage, and injustice, to avenge; but even from the confession of the Spanish government gazettes, I will afterwards prove, when I appeal to the humanity of the British nation on this subject, that they have partaken of none, of that premeditated and systematic plan of terror and vengeance, which has, uniformly, followed the victories of the Spanish chiefs abroad. These facts, will now, for the first time, meet the eye of the British public, and they will be found both opposed to the laws of humanity, and the legitimate mode and established usages, of honourable warfare. Every one, acquainted with the records of history, is aware of the great difficulties, attending, even a partial release from the chains of despotism; and must know, that even variations, of a trifling nature, in the scheme of government, have deluged whole countries with blood and ruin, and involved them in the most aggravated miseries of civil contention. But, there are traits, that have accompanied the war in Spanish America, which, besides, being unheard of, in modern times, constitute a monument of unknown and unnatural crimes and atrocities. This has been a war, carried on by means of excommunications, as in the dark ages, when the engines of terror and fanaticism, armed Christians against Chris-

tians, dethroned kings, and bathed their empires in the blood of their subjects. The author of the Revolucion de Mexico, speaking of the degraded state in which the whole of the Spanish monarchy, had been so long held; and complaining of the civil and religious despotism, prevalent therein, forciby observes; " that, as the rights of the Spanish Americans, to join in representing Ferdinand VII. and to administer their own local concerns, were palpable and defined; how could it, otherwise, have been possible, for Spain to have armed the inhabitants of the transatlantic provinces, one against the other; and thus hinder their union, which would have enabled them, easily to have triumphed over such disproportionate numbers. It has been with the aid of this religious despotism, that Spain has principally fought her battles on the other side of the Atlantic; for, if there, the true religion of Jesus Christ, had been known; had the gospel, there, existed, in its true purity; and had it ceased to be the tool of civil power, and the instrument of despotism and terror; how could fanaticism, rushing from the episcopal palaces, and from the caverns of the inquisition, have been seen to mix its sable torch with the flames of civil war; and cause those to be held as excommunicated heretics, who refused to bend the knee, before the bloody image of a military despot?"

It has, therefore, not been to the common modes of warfare, that the agents of Spain have recurred, in order to arrest the arm of justice, and to inforce a system, that would add to the past aggravations, under which the Spanish Americans had groaned; nay, would even deprive them, of the first consolations of humanity. Every engine, that malice, vengeance, and fanaticism, could

invent, has been set to work; even the name of England, has been used, by the votaries of tyranny and usurpation, as an instrument to wrest from a suffering people, the most sacred of rights, even those of nature. Besides the aggravated vengeance of heaven, the terror of British arms, has been denounced against the Spanish inhabitants of the western shores of the Atlantic; nor is there an artifice, which illiberality, could invent, that has been left unpractised.

§ The further we pursue this enquiry, into the origin and causes of the dissentions, which, unfortunately, exist between European and American Spain; and the more we lament the horrors by which they have been accompanied, the more manifest does it result, that they sprung from two material sources, viz. the rash, unjust, and intemperate conduct of the Cadiz government; and the want of timely interference, on the part of England. These two facts, are not only, to be traced out of the passing circumstances as they occurred, but, are, also, consonant to the opinions of those, who are practically acquainted with the events. The new governments of Spain, in entering on their functions, were responsible for the greatest trust, ever confided to the organs of a political society; this was a period of probation, in which the eyes of the whole world, were cast upon them. Then, was the moment, to have established the national character for ever; then, was Spain to have given such tone and energy to the government, which was to administer the general interests of both parts of the empire, as would have enabled it to answer the noble ends, for which it was instituted. It was, then, in the hands of the new rulers, to render Spain, as a nation,

prosperous and respectable; or, to lay the basis of her future misery and contempt. This was the moment, to have testified whether the revolution of Spain, was to prove a curse or a blessing; not only to the present race, but, also, to generations yet to come. Under the conviction of the importance of the then existing crisis, the new chiefs, in power, had it within their reach, to promote and secure those salutary results, which justice, gratitude, good faith, and honour, imperiously prescribed, and which ever attend on those virtues and good qualities, which enoble the acts of a nation, and endear its memory to the rest of the world. The new governments of Spain, were, however, unfortunately blotted with the reverse of all these cardinal and essential virtues; for influenced by local prejudices, they were opposed to those mutual concessions which are always necessary to general prosperity; and in many instances, that might be quoted, they were not, even, disposed, to sacrifice their own individual advantages, to the welfare of the community at large. In short, I may add, that the most essential points, relating to the well-being, nay, to the existence of Spain, have been controlled by party and local prejudices, whilst the voice of sacred justice, has, scarcely, been heard.

Had not this, unfortunately, been the case, the new rulers, would never have been so unmindful of those imperious obligations of honour and equity; nor, would they ever have misjudged the real interests of the nation so much, as to withhold their consent to a measure, on the part of the Spanish Americans, that was founded on the most respectable motives, and emanated from the conviction of circumstances, in which they had no share.

Had jealousy and local policy, not mixed too much in the public councils, of the Peninsula, we should not have seen the open and insulting violations of those most sacred obligations, which public and private contract could create; we should not have beheld the declarations of equality, founded as they were in right and justice, and even theoretically decreed by the Central Junta, opposed in practice, and only made a lure to entrap unwary sufferers. Instead of declaring an unjust war, and making manifest falsehood its basis, if the government of Spain, owing to its distance, was unable to discern between right and wrong, it ought, first, to have sent over commissioners of integrity and abilities, exempt from the suspicions of prejudice, to treat with whatever recognized organ of public authority, was found on the other side of the Atlantic; with whom, explanations ought to have preceded, sound and liberal ultimatums, ought to have been mutually exchanged; and if her influence had diminished, she ought to have called in that ally, as mediator and umpire, who, from so many cogent reasons, was able to make justice triumphant. A spirit of rash persecution, could only irritate and tend to connect the Spanish Americans more closely together; it was, therefore, impolitic, to inflict deeper and wider wounds, afresh, before the old ones, were healed. And when the alternative of peace, had, unfortunately gone by, and when war, with all its horrors, had become the sole arbiter of the destinies of each country, its tremendous power ought, at least, to have been wielded on principles, consonant with reason, and justice, and not in a manner, so as to outrival the horrors of the most barbarous ages. If the sufferings of the Spanish Americans were, in some

instances, uttered with the angry vehemence of men, who had long borne galling and unprovoked injuries, the Spanish nation at large, ought not to have forgotten, that their grounds were just and true; and that they were only directed against illegal governments, whose degradation was manifest and public. Spain, as a nation of brethren, ought ever to have remembered, that the ultramarine provinces, uniformly, adhered to Ferdinand, early lost, but mutually lamented; and that, in no way, had they wandered from their general allegiance. She ought to have borne in mind, that the Spanish Americans, had never attempted to plunge the parricidal weapon, into the bosom of the conntry, from whence they derived their origin; and that if a detached province had changed its flag, it was not till after the most aggravated provocations, and even then, the sentiment was not general. The inhabitants of Spanish America, have ever revered the land of their forefathers, and the existence of this affection, is sufficiently proved, by the abundant and conclusive testimony, adduced in the outset of my subject.

The new governments of Spain, ought certainly to have marked out for their political conduct, a more indulgent course, instead of opening the floodgates to disasters, so deliberate and extensive. If the Spanish Americans had rights, their fair and unbiassed discussion, ought not to have been prevented; and those, who constituted themselves their rulers, ought to have been convinced of the real policy, as well as of the moral duty, of administering impartial justice, to men, who had so long suffered; and who, for the first time, had now an opportunity of listening to the voice of truth;

who from the greater degree of light and knowledge, by which they were surrounded, were enabled to examine the real state of their late degradation; and who would not be easily induced, particularly by force, to return to a system, under which, they would have to forego, all the great objects, in which the happiness of social beings, is comprised. The new governments, could never expect to be called paternal, unless they freely assented to the exercise of those rights, which belonged to each portion of the monarchy; and every thing was to end in anarchy and confusion, if partialities stood in the way, of what was indispensable, for the individual happiness of all. It was just for the inhabitants of Spanish America, to participate in the fruits of a revolution, in which those of the Peninsula, gloried; and they were equally entitled to enjoy the benefits of civil liberty, under a form of government, free and uncorrupted, and of sufficient tone and energy, to guard them against the return of oppression. This could only be effected, conformably to public and private prosperity, and considering the distance at which the ultramarine provinces, were placed, but by some great and radical change; nor could these advantages be procured, in any other way, than by some limited, but safe, and well guaranteed system of self-government. Some instrument, was, therefore, necessarily to be adopted, to administer this system, so as to render it competent to the great objects for which it was instituted; and was it reasonable, that this instrument should be a viceroy, possessed of such powers, as those described in the early part of this essay? Had equity and good faith, been the basis of the conduct of the new Peninsular governments, that doubt and un-

certainty, that partiality and remissness, in matters of the most vital importance; that instability and change, which marked the footsteps of each form, they successively assumed, would, never, have produced so long a train of ills at home, and which could not fail of equally spreading, to the other side of the waters of the Atlantic. That restraints of a most grievous nature, bent down the inhabitants of Spanish America, was plain and manifest; these were only to be removed, by a radical extirpation, and this was not to be done, by the sacrifice of the rights of others. The long and unrepining sufferings of the ultramarine provinces, required a compensation; and the new governments were bound to give it, as a reward for the blood, cares, toils, and calamities, occasioned by the misconduct of the old one. Above all, they were entitled to a patient and unbiassed hearing; the whole of which, if Spain had granted, she might now have told her tale to the world, with a good grace, and England might have believed her; but, complaints and invectives, ill become those, who were the first aggressors.

In Spanish America, at any period of these unfortunate dissentions, there was to be found, a sincere disposition to conciliation and adjustment, which certainly might have been improved, so as to meet any just and liberal plan, the legislature of Spain, might have urged, or England have recommended. Ineffectual, also, as we shall soon shew, all the exertions of the American deputies in the Cortes, to have been, to obtain redress for their constituents, on a basis, legal and equitable, it cannot be denied, that amidst the heat of so cruel a warfare, there existed, on the part of the very insurrec-

tional chiefs, a readiness, not only to stop the effusion of blood, but, also, to enter on some definitive and permanent arrangement. Hidalgo, chief of the Mexican insurrection, on 31st of October, 1810, sent two generals to Venegas, to treat for peace; the only terms of which were, to restore the Junta and local authorities of the capital, and to form a strong cantonment of troops, on some of the leading positions from Vera Cruz, the descent of the French, being at that time, dreaded. Rayon, when at Zacatecas, likewise, solicited Calleja to agree to the formation of a Junta or Congress, consisting of Europeans and Americans, respectively elected by the provinces; on which terms, he offered to lay down his arms. He barely received for answer, that if he laid them down, he should be comprehended in the general indult published by government; that is, his life should be spared. Some time since, a solemn offer was made by the Mexican deputy in the Cortes, to obtain money for the Peninsular cause, in loans, by mortgaging the mines as a security; provided Spain would guarantee the ulterior independence of the ultramarine provinces, in the only case, of herself being conquered; as an assurance of that kind, by convincing them, that it was not intended to bind them to the car of Napoleon, would make them cease to be impatient, and the public mind being thus tranquillized, peace and confidence would be restored, and suspended agriculture and the working of the mines, would be continued. This proposal, as all others had been, was not only rejected with disdain, but, also, treated as revolutionary; and an offer, liberal and disinterested in itself, and only suggested in consequence of that prevailing anxiety of the

inhabitants of Spanish America, to know what was to be their future fate, in case of a misfortune, which all thought unavoidable, but which each deplored, became a fresh motive of persecution, and an additional plea for further excesses.

The Junta of Sultepec, in March, 1812, sent to the Viceroy of Mexico, a plan for peace, which was intended as a basis of reconciliation, and as a means of preventing further effusion of blood. This was accompanied by a plan for war, amounting to a proposed compact between the contending parties, respecting the manner in which the war was to be carried on; in order, that an end might be put to so many atrocities, as were continually committing. Both were rejected with disdain, but, as their contents are highly illustrative, and tend to corroborate some of my chief premises, I annex them in my Appendix, under the head of G, together with their accompanying manifest; particularly, as they will throw considerable light on the exertions of the Spanish American deputies in the Cortes, to bring about some plan of pacification and mutual adjustment, a subject on which we shall presently enter. On many other occasions, a sincere disposition to accommodation, was manifested, on the part of the Creoles, which we shall have occasion to notice in the progress of this exposé. But, whilst Spain appeared determined, not to submit her controversy with the ultramarine provinces, to the mediation of a third power, England bore with the greatest tameness, every rebuff in her offers of mediation; which she, apparently, undertook, rather as a political experiment, than as a measure of urgent necessity, in which every possible engine was to be set to work, and every strenuous means of success,

employed. Every pacific disposition, was overlooked, and no rational mode of explanation, was suggested. The government of Cadiz, preferred war, blockades, threats, and persecutions, and in vain, did one of the American deputies, in the Cortes insist, that it was cruel and inhuman, to send out troops to make war upon brethren, without having previously appropriated an hour, to fix on some means of conciliation, or even given their rights and the basis of their conduct, a fair and unbiassed discussion. Rancour and animosity now flamed high, the Cadiz merchants formed a Junta out of their war faction, which contributed by loans to the expence of the equipments, and, thus, resolved to maintain by force, what must, necessarily have been ceded, if the ultramarine provinces had been heard and redressed. Ah! one moment's reflection, on the part of the Cadiz Regency, and timely exertion on that of England, would have prevented all these calamities; and in, like manner, one week of moderation, justice, and impartiality in the Cortes of Spain, would have done more towards the pacification of Spanish America, than all the armies, the monopolists could send over, or all the engines of terror and vengeance, they could set to work. Yet, on the precipice on which Spain, then, stood, it was evident, that every means ought to have been essayed, in order to prevent the effusion of human blood, and the wider spread of anarchy and confusion; nor was it less essential to husband her own troops and resources, when her very existence, at home, was at stake.

Thus, has Spain by her own illiberality, placed her American provinces in the greatest danger; by her rashness, she has been plunged into a war of extermination,

and, during the most momentous period of her struggle against France, she has been cut off from those resources, which would have rendered success more easy and certain. The united interests of both countries, were however sacrificed to puuctilio, to clashing interests, and to the most grovelling of all passions. If Spanish America, laboured under grievances, and the government at home, was unable to redress them; it might, at least, have confessed their existence, and acknowledged its own inability, then to attend to their removal. But time has not been wanting, since there has been sufficient to overturn the fundamental laws of the realm, and to frame a constitution, on a basis, that could neither bring permanent happiness and tranquillity, to one portion of the monarchy, or the other. The reform of the colonial system of Spain, was an object of clear and unequivocal importance, and in it, the enlightened and virtuous citizen, could not fail to concur. Its defects were plain and well known, and a practical declaration of rights, or a comprehensive decree, would have sufficed for their extinction. And was there no time for this? In granting a free trade, a disposition to be just, would have been evinced; but even this was denied, though of its equity and necessity, no great contrariety of sentiment could prevail. The wise and thinking part of the community, those, who unbiassed by local ties and prejudices, could trace the existing evils to their real source, strongly, recommended the incorporation of such principles, into the political and governing system of Spanish America, as might correct obvious vices. If Spain had time for nothing else, she had at least plenty, to devise some uniform system in the commercial relations of both parts of the

monarchy, which besides promoting the mutual interests of each, would have maintained harmony on the other side of the Atlantic, and testified her gratitude to England. When the grounds, on which a trade with Spanish America was denied to the latter, are made known, a very just conclusion may be drawn, of the principles and motives, which have operated as a bar to the extension of justice, on a larger scale.

Had the commotions in Spanish America, not originated in real grievances, such as would admit of redress, so great a share of blame, would not have fallen to the lot of those, who thus unfairly withheld it. But if these grievances were real, why was the proper remedy delayed, till the public mind, would bear them, no longer? If lenient measures had been adopted, and had only tended to increase the resentment and exasperation of the complaining parties, and to enlarge their demands; had equitable proffers been made, and rejected with scorn; had the conciliatory efforts of the Spanish government, given edge to their audacity, and had they actually organized a systematic plan of rebellion, confounding liberty, with a contempt for legal control, then, the rigour of the Cadiz Regency, the subsequent apathy of the other governments, and the coldness of England, might have had some plausible grounds; and the conduct of the *insurgents*, might have equally been lamented and deprecated. Had the latter been bent on magnifying positive evils, and fomenting causeless jealousies and disturbances; had they asked any thing opposed to law and justice; had they thrown off their allegiance to that monarch, whom the entire nation had acknowledged, or joined the French, Spain might have been warrantable,

in her declaration of war, and England might have had some reasons, for all her indifference. But if this was not the case, ought not all the fatal consequences, of so many horrors as have been committed, to fall on the heads of those, who first provoked the contest; and why should England be ashamed of men, who do no more, than assert their own rights? Ought not the oceans of blood, so long flowing in Spanish America, to rest wholly on the heads of those, whose self-interest, and indiscreet and arbitrary conduct, first gave rise to such a long reign of atrocities?

§ The true Spanish patriot, could not fail to regret the clouds which so early spread over the brightest morn, that ever dawned on the monarchy of both hemispheres. From the period of these dissentions, its political sitution was such, as to excite every feeling of anxiety; under the existing embarrassments, it was difficult for the wheels of the public machine, to move on with any probability of success; the future, in short, presented little else, than a gloomy obscurity of doubt and fear. The gathering clouds, became dark and menacing, so as to threaten a storm big with impending ruin; and besides an empty treasury, and the pressure of a potent enemy, complicated and heavy calamities, which flowed from the inefficacy of the general government, were to be deplored; whilst nothing but the interference of England, or a return of equity and liberality to the councils of Spain, could prevent an accumulation of difficulties, and ward off some terrible convulsion. Negligence on the part of the Central Junta, and rashness on that of the Cadiz Regency, had plunged the whole sections of Spanish America, into scenes of desolation, which would

be widely felt, and long remembered; and would, besides, close the only secure source of pecuniary supplies. Yet, a large portion of these horrors, would have been spared; and at least the national honour might have been retrieved, if the succeeding Cortes, had been possessed of an enlarged philanthropy, and if they had followed the sound dictates of policy, prudence, and justice. Had they even acted, with the same generous liberality to the transmarine provinces, as the Emperor of Russia, did, with regard to Poland, and afterwards to France; had they, like him, assured their American brethren, that they were ready to cooperate with them, in any establishment, that might secure their freedom, happiness, and prosperity; had they, instead of impotent wars, forgotten the past, and offered a sacred and sincere amnesty; had they, like Charles V. used conciliatory men and measures; and had they, above all, cordially set about the discussion of their rights, and the full redress of their wrongs; that immense and valuable portion of the Spanish empire, might have been preserved tranquil and entire, its resources might have served as a powerful instrument to repel the French, and the European and American brethren of Spain, might have been bound together, by the ties of fraternity and fellowship, even stronger, than those, which before existed. And would not this have been grateful to the true Spaniard, who had long, wept in silence, over the misery and degradation of Spain, as well as of Spanish America? And would not the contemplation of such results, to England, have given rise to reflections, not less satisfactory, than interesting? After the freedom of Spain, was not this, the next glorious object, to which she could aspire?

But the Cortes of Spain, as well from the defects of their formation, as owing to the prevalence of illiberality, were not disposed to spread the blessings of peace and regeneration to the other side of the Atlantic; as will be shewn in a subsequent section of this exposé. The American deputies therein, laboured in vain, they were always outvoted, and it was evident, that the issue of their exertions, could not fail to increase the mortification and resentment of their constituents. The whole of this passed, under the eyes of the British agents in Cadiz; and if we had no other than the records of our mediation debates, and the results of our free trade solicitations, these would have sufficed to have convinced us, that illiberality and injustice, were the chief basis of the conduct of the Cadiz government, And, if England had before neglected opportunities more favourable, could she not, when the Cortes first assembled, have recommended and urged, in the most forcible, glowing, and pathetic terms, which language could afford, or a sense of justice inspire, what was absolutely necessary and indispensable, for the salvation of the country, and the avowed honour and interests of the nation at large? She ought never to have forgotten, that the Spanish Americans were entitled to every consideration; and that if they were not redressed, and war was proclaimed against them, for merely insisting on what was their due, it would result, that the rights they were contending for, would be rendered doubly strong, by being afresh withheld. And could any motive, more honourable and just, have been made the basis of those mediatory exertions on the part of England, which might have shielded many thousand victims from the vengeance of the

irritated and illiberal, and have, besides, given renewed energies to Spain? When the magnitude of the prize we were contending for, is considered, as well as the apparent doubtful issue of the contest, it appears impossible, that the British government should not have thought, seriously, on the fatal consequences of closing to Europe, the only country from which coin could be obtained, as well as of desolating by anarchy and civil war, the best section of the world for the relations of trade. Placed on an extensive continent, comprehending all the soils and climates of other hemispheres, England beheld a people, ready to sacrifice the produce of their industry, in support of the same cause in which herself and Spain were engaged; and who by calling their inert resources forth, would have been able to make easy, many of those privations, which the inhabitants of each, were suffering. Was it liberal in Spain, to command those resources to continue closed, or was it candid in England, omitting any means of removing the causes of such extensive disquiet? She then, more than, ever, required new channels in which to transfer her pursuits of trade; and in this, was she opposed by obstacles, that discouraged the adequate attempt?

Conclusive reasons induce a confident belief, that the affairs of Spanish America, did not receive that prompt consideration, which the public exigence demanded, or the magnitude of the subject required. Yet, England had before her a plan of conduct, not only consonant to the plain rules of justice; but, she had it also in her power, to effect results, which would have afforded infinite delight to every benevolent and liberal mind. She might have produced a reconciliation, that would have

been the parent of future happiness. Her conduct might have been arraigned by the sordid and the servile, but she would have deserved the everlasting gratitude of the good Spaniard; and she would, in that case, have fulfilled, completely, her sacred trust to Ferdinand. Spain might have been induced, to receive the Spanish Americans again into the bosom of their common country; even if their conduct, at first, had been hasty and reprehensible this would have been, by a just and equitable reform, by a solid peace, and by such self elected, limited, and guaranteed governments, which alone could suit a distant, extensive, and populous country. How to effect this, was, perhaps, unknown to such new politicians as those who assembled in the first governments of Spain, nor was the infected atmosphere of Cadiz, perhaps suited to the growth of ideas so liberal. Yet, would it have been dishonourable, in England urgently promoting such desirable ends? If the occupations of her own ambassador, precluded the pursuit of such an object, could she not have attached to him, those who from practical experience, intelligence, and zeal, were likely to aid in so essential an enterprize? But, the British government never appears to have endeavoured, earnestly, to find out, what were the points in dispute, what each was disposed to grant and accept, or what could be made a basis of restored harmony. Maintaining a guarded secrecy, and unmoved by horrors, such as would excite the coldest to pity, the cabinet of St. James, has suffered these unfortunate dissentions, year after year, to linger and rankle, resorting solely to such remedies, as could only serve to add to the triumph of the unjust and illiberal.

England, in this part of her political conduct, seems to have considered the views of the Spanish Americans, as inconsistent with their relative situation to Spain; and her interference, it was feared, would clash with her existing treaty. That is, she adopted the language of the Cadiz merchants, pronouncing the ultramarine provinces, as dependent colonies; thus judging the illegal governments instituted in Spain, to be the legal dictators of the whole monarchy, to whom blind obedience was to be paid. Spain told her, the Spanish Americans were rebels and traitors, and she appears to have believed the verdict, and was silent. Had it, however, been possible, by any combination of circumstances, that fleets and armies had been sent from Spanish America, to land on the shores of Spain, to ravage her provinces, and to deluge them in blood; would England, in like manner, have been silent? Would she, with cold apathy, have, thus, beheld the objects of her treaty, frustrated; or would she have suffered such material diversions, to counteract the great ends she had in view? Would she not have remonstrated, would she not have interfered, nay, would she not have imperiously demanded, a cessation of such impolitic and unnatural acts? Yet, the same fatal consequences have arisen, from Spain sending her armies to the other shores of the Atlantic; the resources of both countries, have been equally dried up, and those stigmas have likewise fallen on Spain, which would in the first case, been cast on Spanish America. Had we seen such horrors and such calamities, hurled on Spain, as have for more than four years, desolated Spanish America, we should have interfered, even from principles of huma-

nity; yet, if both parts of the monarchy are equal, is not the latter, equally entitled to our regard?

If England, during her treaty with Spain, was too honourable to contemplate, for a moment, the advantages which would flow to her, from the erection of another independent empire, on the western shores of the Atlantic; she might, at least, have been sufficiently just, to have seen, that the war carried on there, was cruel and tyrannical; and she might have been at the same time so firm and humane, as to have peremptorily, demanded its cessation. She might, at least, have urged a suspension of hostilities, till some mutual accommodation had been negociated by the general legislature; and to this, she might have conveyed such sentiments, as would have secured an impartial discussion of so momentous a subject. Dependent as was Spain upon her, for essential supplies, there were many springs that might have been touched with success; and with full confidence, she might have prayed, for the effusion of blood to be avoided. The vital necessity, of adopting some measure, to prevent a separation in the integral parts, of which the Spanish monarchy was composed, became daily more apparent; and this could only be effected, by a mutual spirit of concession and defference, which the urgency of affairs, as well as the nature of the case, rendered indispensable. The mass of the people in Spanish America, had long felt the inconveniences of the existing plan of government, but, more especially, its administration; and they ardently wished for their reform. This could only be done, by some radical and comprehensive measure, such, alone, would crown the work with success; any thing partial, would, eventually, produce more dicon-

tent, and only maintain a short, but turbulent existence. The very idea that seventeen millions of people, are to seek justice at the distance of two thousand leagues, has something in it so monstrous, that one would suppose such a system had no partizans or abettors. The monopolies of the mother-country, in themselves, as well as in the manner in which they had been exercised, were both burdensome and unjust. The fact, that Spain, should say to the whole of her ultramarine provinces, your industry shall not go beyond those limits we have prescribed for our convenience, interest, or caprice; your productions shall rot on their trees, if we are unable to fetch them away; and you shall have no other cloathing, than what we have tripled in original value, appears the extreme of Asiatic despotism.

The pre-eminence of a government, is for it to be such, as to win the affections and respect of the people; and the grounds of national policy, ought ever to be founded on those immutable and pure principles of sound morality, which have been matured by time, and sanctioned by the wisdom of ages. In the conduct of human affairs, there is no truth more thoroughly proved and established, than that there exists an intimate connection, between an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and national happiness. The Cortes, therefore, ought to have considered, in a candid and deliberate manner, the numerous and urgent claims, the people of Spanish America had on the justice of the general government; and if the former organs of power, by their illiberality or impotency, had been unable to carry into effect, the dictates

of gratitude and equity, had they been deaf to the appeals of sound and temperate reason, it, at least, became that government which had now assumed a more substantial and regular form, and from whom the nation expected so much, to have made the agitated situation of Spanish America, an invariable object of anxious solicitude; and common justice, as well as the clearest and most urgent principles of political expediency, required this to have been made the subject of their earliest deliberations. Yet, no reform or scheme of government, that might conduce to the public happiness of Spanish America, was proposed; the war still lingered, and even the grounds on which it had been undertaken, were not reconsidered. The aspect of affairs, was, nevertheless, then most alarming; the monarchy was about to decline into wretched fragments, bathed in the blood of brethren; and nothing but prompt and urgent measures, could extricate Spain from the embarrassments, in which she was entangled. The blaze of civil commotions, already raged widely, and clashing interests daily added to the flame. This, was only to be extinguished, by reason, by convention, or by open force. The Cadiz press teemed with fresh productions of passion and prejudice; and the strength gained by the war faction, during the administration of the Regency, rendered its partizans more clamorous, under the Cortes. The coldness of the British government, was construed into an approval of measures, and instead of redress, explanation, or even a hearing, more troops, were prepared.

§ England, in the mean time, neglected to expose to the Spanish public, the real circumstances of the case; and to warn them of the dangers which overhung their

country. No means were adopted, to detect the numerous misrepresentations, which continually went forth; nor even to arrest and blunt the vital stabs, so frequently, aimed at the honour of a faithful and active ally. No exertion was made, to refute those arguments, by which the sophists railed against England and her mediatory offers, on the grounds of illiberal fallacy; nor did she attempt to increase her friends, by a full developement of those honourable principles, by which she was guided. These, though objects of serious import, were not deserving the attention of the British government, yet, they would have added facility to many important measures. Though, within its reach, they were disregarded. Thence has it resulted, that with all her influence, England has been unable to awe the insolence of contending faction, into silence; and her indifference, as well with regard to Spanish America, as on many other essential points, became a standard, which served as a fresh resort, to the disaffected against her. Yet, could it be possible, that so much time had been spent, and the Spanish American question, or the grounds on which the war was carrying on, were not understood? Can it be believed, that after the supplies we had furnished, the sacrifices we had made, and the blood we had spilt, we had no influence over the councils of Spain; or that we had inspired no confidence or gratitude, into the bosoms of the people? The timely exertions of England, at the commencement of these dissentions, as already demonstrated, would have allayed every irritated feeling; and at this late hour, it will not be pronounced impolitic or unwarrantable, if England as an ally, with the principal burden then on her own back, had urged, remon-

strated, or made it a *sine qua non*, that a reform should be granted, such as would restore harmony amongst all parties. England, certainly, could not be insensible to the gratification, of cooperating in the pleasing, though arduous task, of securing to the inhabitants of Spanish America, those blessings they had a right to expect, from a free, efficient, and equal plan of government, well administered. The anxiety of the Cortes, ought to have been awakened, by the magnitude of the interests which brought them together; and enabled, as they were, to deliberate in tranquillity, under the protection of British troops, and to fix on those reforms which were to advance the happiness of all, and secure a permanent union between the sister parts of the monarchy, they ought to have lost no time, in assuaging those bitter animosities, which had been engendered by the misconduct of the preceding governments; nor ought they to have distrusted in the good dispositions of an ally, who had been the anchor of their hopes in time of need, and from whom they had continued to receive, ample and unequivocal testimonies of regard and friendship.

The proper mode, of conciliating the affections of so large a portion of the empire, as Spanish America, was a subject of the most interesting enquiry; and, indeed, the most essential, on which the Cortes could enter. An agitation had been produced, so great and so extensive, as not to be easily calmed; yet, it had not arisen out of a licentious and turbulent spirit, bent on disturbing the harmony and tranquillity of the general state; nor was it an infection, occasioned by the wide spreading contagion of the times. The same love of country, still glowed in the breasts of the Spanish Americans; in Ferdinand

the wishes of all parties confided, and in him the interests of all united. The sincerity of these feelings, rendered the refusal of redress, the more galling; nor is there any truth that can be uttered with more confidence, than, that if paternal affection had only glowed in the bosom of Spain, the duteous sentiments of filial love, on this interesting occasion, would have been kept alive, in her distant offspring. When the first legislature of the country assembled, under the form of the ancient Cortes, many matters pressed heavy on the attention of the members; yet, after the invaded state of the country, and the means of repelling a formidable enemy; the agitated and convulsed situation of Spanish America, demanded a serious and deliberate enquiry. The latter question, embraced two essential points; viz. harmony amongst the common members of a state, on which, national strength, depended; and next, the means of revenue, without which the French could not be repelled; and without which vital spring, the action of government could not long continue. It was to the assembling of the Cortes, that Spanish America, and the whole world, looked for a remedy to the fatal dissentions, which had so long, desolated the ultramarine provinces; and it was then, fully, expected, that England would, immediately, agitate something, for the liberties and happiness of her transatlantic ally. That no private disgusts, or individual irritations, should occur on the meeting of so heterogeneous a body; or that certain public measures, should not meet with some disapprobation, were things, beyond human expectation; but, under the persuasion, that justice and policy, demanded that negociations should precede any further

hostilities, it was thought, that both Spain and England, would promote a candid and fair revision of those motives, which had given rise to a cruel and unnatural war, between the two halves of the Spanish monarchy.

England, however, still kept aloof, and appeared insensible of the necessity of using her powerful exertions in favour of suffering humanity; and though, by this time, she must have been convinced, that local prejudices, separate views, and party animosities, had, hitherto, misdirected that comprehensive and equal eye, which ought to have watched over every part of the monarchy, thereby producing the most serious evils; still, she disregarded the prolongation of their fatal consequences. Bound by the most sacred ties, to the welfare of Spanish America, England could not divest herself of feelings of lively interest for the unredressed inhabitants thereof, unless clear and insurmountable conviction, had proved they were in the wrong. She could not but lament the horrors, by which their unhappy country was torn to pieces; to feel otherwise, was to surrender up sound judgment, to the caprice of party. She must have been sensible, that it was necessary to remove every cause of quarrel, by treaty, and by mutual explanation; and the undistinguishing vengeance with which the war was carried on, increased the necessity of greater circumspection, in those who administered government under a new shape. These were controversies, of so delicate a nature, as to require a great degree of moderation and firmness for their adjustment; but yet, their results were of that alarming aspect, as to demand an immediate attention, and they, besides, called for all the imposing weight of character and influence, which both England and Spain, could add to measures of pacification.

§ Unfortunately for Spain, as well as for England, as her ally, there has not existed in the Peninsula, since the loss of the rightful monarch, a constitutional, proper, and legal form of government, as often before inculcated; and what has existed, has rather been busied in its own preservation, in forms and ceremonies, in etiquettes, and in parade, than in seriously attending to the two most essential points; viz. *the driving out of the French, and conciliating of the ultramarine provinces.* I say not constitutional, because the ancient laws of the Spanish monarchy, do not admit of any other Cortes, than those formed out of the nobles, clergy, and *procuradores* or representatives of the cities and towns, entitled to vote therein; all of which, are specified by law. I say proper and legal, because, he only is correctly entitled to take his seat and vote in a representative Congress, who has been formally elected by a majority of votes, fairly given and duly summed up, in the districts, entitled to such representation. But this was not the case, with the new Cortes of Spain. When they entered on their functions, on the 24th of September, 1810, ninety persons only, took their seats as duly elected members, or what were called *proprietarios.* To these were added fifty-three substitutes or *suplentes*; picked up and placed in the Cortes, without any other requisite form, than that of being known to belong to the districts, for which they sat as representatives.*

Besides this glaring informality, twenty-nine substitutes were put in for the whole of Spanish America, to represent seventeen millions; whilst European Spain,

* These calculations, are founded on official statements, corresponding with the Court Calendar, published in Cadiz

had one hundred and twenty-five delegates to represent ten millions of people. All the provinces occupied by the French, had substitute representatives therein; so that it remains, at least a dubious question, whether a congress thus constituted, had sufficient authority to enact laws which were binding to the whole empire; and to wage an unnatural and inhuman war, against an equal, integral, and incorporated part of the monarchy, whose rights had not even been discussed, and whose illegitimate conduct, had not been proved. Emergency of circumstances, is indeed, pleaded in favour of this representative body; the same as was said of the Central Junta and Cadiz Regency; yet, these were both, afterwards, declared illegal. But even for this plea to have had full effect, the consent and concurrence of Spanish America, as an integral part of the entire nation, was necessary; and this was formally refused, not only in consequence of the irregularity which prevailed, but, also, because redress was withheld. It was that very Regency, assuming to itself the kingly powers, and created as before shewn, out of the terror and dismay of the Central Junta, which called these Cortes together; ordering one member to be elected for every 50,000 souls in the Peninsula, but for Spanish America, one was only allowed for every province, even though its inhabitants exceeded a million. The Spanish members, were to be elected by the people of each parish, but the American ones, were to be chosen by the *cabildos* or municipalities, who are generally Europeans, or influenced by them. There were, besides, eleven deputies allowed for the provincial Juntas of Spain, in addition to the prorata for the population; but in Spanish

America, the very existence of those Juntas, was pronounced a crime of high treason. Delegates, were, also, sent from the capitals in the Peninsula; so that the disproportion was extremely great. In this statement of facts, the irregularity of the elections, is overlooked.

Thus, did the Cortes of Spain, enter on their functions, with twenty-nine substitutes for Spanish America, chosen out of different natives thereof, whom chance or business had brought to Spain; and like the Cortes of Bayonne, they have sounded as the general and extraordinary Cortes of the nation. These said substitutes for America, protested the second day after the installation of the Cortes; that is, on the 25th of September, 1810. These protests were made verbally, and in writing, in presence of the president; all declaring, that in yielding to the necessity of the moment, they, in no way, intended to injure the rights of their fellow-citizens whom they were supposed to represent; or to counteract the just claims they had to an equal representation, which they pledged themselves, afterwards, to demand in the Cortes. Ireland, stands on the same relative footing to England, as Spanish America does to Spain; and what would our sister island think, of twenty-nine substitutes being chosen in London, to sit for her in the Imperial Parliament? Would she consider the acts of a legislature, thus constituted, to be valid and binding? Such are, nevertheless, the facts, the installation of the Spanish Cortes, presents; yet, this body has enacted laws for the whole monarchy, has divested the king of his sovereignty, has overturned the ancient legislature of the state, and has, in short, continued the war against Spanish America, without even having discussed or proved that its grounds were just.

Other more duly elected members, have since, arrived from the various sections of Spanish America; but, the former substitutes were continued. The whole of their joint time therein, has been spent in jarring and wrangling with their prejudiced opponents, on the situation of their unfortunate country, the neglected interests of those they were chosen to represent, and in urging redress, which was never granted. The first object of the new Cortes, was to decree the sovereignty of the nation; and the American substitutes immediately remonstrated, that it would be improper, to suffer the news of such a decree, to reach the other side of the Atlantic, without some satisfaction for the violated rights of the ultramarine provinces; or some concession, that might tranquillize the disturbances, already commenced there. A project of a decree, was consequently formed; but after seventeen days of boisterous debate, in which acrimony, partiality, and invective, had the greatest share, the Americans were outvoted.* It would be an unpleasant task, in this place, to convey to my reader some idea of the grounds, on which justice, was on this solemn occasion, denied to Spanish America; nor would it be possible, to enumerate the shafts of calumny levelled by the Spanish members, and the Cadiz prints, which had early entered into the feelings of the monopolists. The report of these discussions, resembles, in a singular manner, the celebrated disputes between the bishop of Darien and the venerable Las Casas, which took place in presence of Charles V.; for, if possible, more illibera-

* The project of the decree formed by the American substitutes, may be found in the Cosmopolita, No. I. and II.

lity was displayed. Every fierce passion, that rancour and sordid gain could stimulate and impel, or slander and malice could inspire, was now unchained; and neither the intrinsic merits of the scheme, or its justice and urgency, could establish those principles of honest policy and diffusive patriotism, which were so essential to the return of peace. Spanish America, had to behold, in the first debates relating to its welfare, one of the greatest violations of national faith and common justice, ever before witnessed; and when the edifice of public happiness had been laid in ruins, by factions and the storms of war, those who presided over the fate of the nation were too unjust, seriously and impartially, to enquire, on what basis it was to be rebuilt, and what proportions the structure was to possess in future. In short, the first debates of the Sanish Cortes, respecting the situation of Spanish America, evinced, that the majority of its members, were not prepared to contend with the habitual influence and authority of long established custom, however faithless the grounds on which it had been founded; and that they were far from being ready to break to pieces, the old idol of their blind and fatal superstition. Spain, appeared disposed to regenerate within herself, every thing that she was able; but she seemed jealous of bringing her American brethren into the light of truth, and into the consoling atmosphere of civil liberty; nor was she sufficiently liberal, to dissipate the Egyptian darkness, by which they had been so long surrounded. She was careless about regaining the esteem, which in the eyes of Europe, she had forfeited, by her degraded conduct to her distant provinces; and she was forgetful of those humanising principles, which

constitute the essence of civilization, and form the bond of union, by which nations are held together.

The assembling of the Cortes within the Spanish realm, was an occurrence of the first consequence; and from it, much was expected. It indicated, that Spain was about to return to those days of strength and splendour, with which her annals are filled. The arm of despotism, had long suspended the reunion of popular representatives, but it was thought, that the reign of liberality, had now commenced. Notwithstanding the irregularity under which the Cortes assembled, much good was within their reach; and that they would improve the precious moments before them, was the warmest wish of the true patriot. They, indeed, beheld their country in the most melancholy situation that can be imagined, for besides an insidious and powerful invasion which was to be repelled, the distempers of the state, had grown to such a degree of violence and malignity, as to mock the efforts of ordinary remedies. The state of the nation, was such, as to call for all the energies of zeal and talent; but the deplorable situation of Spanish America, after the means of resisting the French, was, certainly, the next grand object, that demanded their attention. To restore peace and harmony to sister provinces, which had suffered so much, from the degradation of the old government, and were now plunged into the direst of all misfortunes, by the rashness of a late self-created power, was a theme not less splendid than endearing, nor was it possible, one would have imagined, for the Cortes to have been more substantially happy, than in being able to congratulate themselves, on the fair prospect they had before them,

of seeing a consistent administration of laws, established in the transmarine provinces of Spain. This was a subject that could not fail to inspire feelings of delight into all, to whom the success of justice and equity, is an object of desire; and the remissness and subsequent hostility of the Cortes, were, consequently, beheld with grief and sorrow.

§ This was the valuable moment, for the new legislature of Spain, to have healed the wounds which had been lately inflicted by impolicy and rashness; this was the momentous occasion, to have spoken to the inhabitants of Spanish America, with confidence, but with paternal kindness, and in strict accord with reason and justice. In the glowing language of a Burke,* the new Cortes of Spain, ought thus to have addressed themselves to the inhabitants of the Spanish American continent. We find, with infinite concern, that arguments are used, to irritate you, in order to impair your connection with your parent country, grounded on a supposition, that a general principle of alienation and enmity to you, had pervaded the whole of this kingdom; and that there does no longer subsist between you and us, any common and kindred principles, upon which we can possibly unite, consistently with those ideas of liberty, in which you have justly placed your whole happiness. If this fact were true, the inference drawn from it, would be irresistible. But nothing is less founded. We admit, indeed, that the most violent proceedings have been instituted against you, by wicked and designing men, in order by despair and resentment, incurably to poison

* Vide Address to the British Colonies in North America.

your minds against the origin of your race; and the illegal and unnatural hostilities declared and carried on against you, seem as if intended to render all cordial reconciliation between us, utterly impracticable?

But, we conjure you by the invaluable pledges, which have hitherto united, and which we trust will hereafter lastingly unite us, that you do not suffer yourselves to be persuaded, or provoked into an opinion, that you are at war with this nation. Do not think that the whole, or even the uninfluenced majority of Spaniards, are enemies to their own blood on the American continent. Much delusion has been practised, and much corrupt influence treacherously employed. But still, a large, and we trust the largest and soundest part of this kingdom, perseveres in the most perfect unity of sentiments, principles, and affections with you. It spreads out a large and liberal platform of common liberty, upon which we may all unite for ever; and it has long deplored and deprecated the degraded system, by which you have hitherto been governed. It also hails the revolution of Spain, as a propitious means of future regeneration to the monarchy of both hemispheres. It abhors the hostilities which have been carried on against you, as much as you who feel their cruel effects; and it disclaims the injustice, by which you have been dispossessed of your rights.

We particularly deplore the rash and intemperate acts of the preceding illegal governments of this country, and the undue manner, in which they have been influeuced, by the sordid and the illiberal. But the reign of terror and of despotism, is at an end, and European, as well as American Spain, beholds a new era of justice

and equity, by the revival of that popular representation, which constituted the greatest glory of our forefathers; As members of the new Spanish Cortes, we stand arrayed under the banners of our constitution and laws, ready to defend your rights, as well as those of the inhabitants of the Peninsula. You are all equal, and equal justice awaits you. For ourselves individually, we faithfully assure you, that we consider you as rational creatures, as free agents; as men willing to pursue, and able to discern your own true interests. We wish to continue united to you, in order, that a people of one origin and one character, should be directed to the rational objects of government, by joint councils, and protected in them, by a common force. Other subordination in you, we require none. We shall never press the argument of general union, to the extinction of your local, natural, and just privileges. Sensible of what is due both to the dignity and weakness of man, we shall never attempt to place over you, any form of government over which, in great fundamental points, you should have no sort of check or control in your own hands; or which should be repugnant to your situation, principles, and character. On entering on our public functions, we are ready to cooperate with you in every consistent plan for your present regeneration, and future happiness; and in again declaring you equal in rights, and in every other sense, with your European brethren, we stand pledged, that this declaration shall be no longer a lure, but it shall be carried into cordial effect. Liberty for you, shall be no longer an empty name. The only strong request we have to urge, is, that you be sincere and consistent in your conduct, and reasonable in your demands.

No circumstances of fortune, you may be assured, will ever induce us to form, or tolerate any other design. Nay, even if you should resist our sincere intentions, and the disposition of providence, which we deprecate, should even prostrate you at our feet, broken in power, and in spirit, it would be our duty and inclination to revive, by every practicable means, that free energy of mind, which a fortune unsuitable to your virtue, had damped and dejected; and to put you, voluntarily, in possession of those privileges, which you had in vain attempted to assert by arms. For we solemnly declare, that although we should look upon a separation from you, as an heavy calamity, yet we had much rather see you totally independent of this crown and kingdom, than joined to it, by so unnatural a conjunction, as that of freedom, with servitude; a conjunction, which, if it were at all practicable, could not fail, in the end, of being more mischievious to the peace, prosperity, greatness, and power of this nation, than beneficial, by any enlargement of the bounds of nominal empire.

We are further of opinion, that the system, by which you have hitherto been governed, is not adequate to your wants, or capable of promoting your happiness; we are therefore, ready to admit whatever proposals for change and amendment, you may wish to suggest, being perfectly ready to concur with you, in the promotion of what is just and equitable. As a pledge of our own sincerity, we beforehand, declare, that you ought to have the right of administering your local concerns, under such forms as the general legislature, may deem most expedient for all parties; and that you enjoy, within yourselves, the exclusive right, of applying to the support of your

administration, what God has granted as the reward of your industry. We also reason and feel, as you do, on the invasion of your charters, because these comprehend the essential forms, by which you enjoy your liberties. We, consequently, regard them as most sacred, and agree, that they ought, by no means, to be taken away, or altered, without process, examination, and hearing, as they have lately been; and, particularly, without the concurrence of those who live under them. We cannot look upon men, as delinquents in the mass; much less are we desirous of lording over our brethren, insulting their honest pride, and wantonly overturning establishments, acknowledged to be just. We cannot approve of putting the military power out of the coercion of civil justice, in the country where it acts; and, we conceive it monstrous, that you should not have the full means of redress within yourselves.

Born in a civilized country, formed to gentle manners, trained in a merciful religion, and living in enlightened and polished times, where even foreign hostility is softened from its original sternness, we lament and condemn the cruel modes of warfare, instituted against you, and the indiscriminate massacre and destruction, to which you have been exposed. We regret to find, that the name of the Almighty, has been prostituted in the vilest acts of bloodshed; that religion has been made an instrument in your subjection, and that the threats of fanaticism, have been added to the inevitable mischiefs of civil war, in order to increase discord and domestic enmity amongst you. We do not condemn you as rebels or traitors; nor do we call the vengeance of war upon you. We do not know how, thus, to qualify millions of our country-

men, contending for an admission to privileges, on which we have always founded our own happiness and honour. On the contrary, we revere the principles on which you act, though we lament their fatal effects. Armed as you are, we embrace you as friends, and as our brethren, bound to us, by the best and dearest ties of relation.

We view the establishment of such a continent as yours, on the principles of rational liberty and of just equality, as the best means to render this kingdom, venerable to future ages. We, therefore, exhort you, to cleave to those equitable grounds, which may form a true bond of union between us, but we do not urge you to an unconditional submission. The size of your country and population, require a suitable constitution; we are happy in being now enabled to form it, and it is to it alone, we implore your obedience. Let us, instantly, set about the work on both sides, with the same conciliatory turn of mind, and we may yet, owe to our mutual mistakes, contentions and animosities, the lasting concord, freedom, happiness and glory, of the whole empire of both hemispheres.

Had such sentiments and assurances as these, similar to what Mr. Burke sent over to our North American colonists, during the period of their disaffection and discontent, been early addressed, by the new Cortes of Spain, to the inhabitants of Spanish America; had the language of the new legislature, exhibited a warm expression, the only genuine offspring of ardent feeling, had conciliatory measures been used, instead of threats, and had solemn and sacred offers been employed, instead of terms of recrimination, then, might the world have expected to see the points of controversy adjusted,

and the hostile temper which had been manifested on both sides, might have been softened into a mutual and good understanding. Besides the principle of justice, in the existing circumstances of Spain, the reconciliation of the ultramarine provinces, ought, certainly, to have been the first principle of the new government; and the means of avoiding further bloodshed, ought to have been sought, with the most anxious solicitude. This was a war, unjust and unnatural, and attended with great public expence and private calamity, besides being productive of future consequences of a most fatal nature. Not to cause it to cease, was to confirm the rash acts of the preceding illegal governments; and to behold it, with indifference, was to carry fresh terror and destruction into the bosom of their common country. The new Cortes of Spain, had been called together, in order to fill the place of the absent monarch, and to organize a government, possessed of the confidence of every part of the empire. Its first duty, was to retrieve the national character, and to wipe away the stains with which it had been blotted, by the degradation and impotence into which the home provinces had been plunged, and by the unjust and impolitic systems, under which those abroad, had hitherto been governed. To establish a plan of revenue, commensurate to the urgent wants of the country, and to revive public credit, were the next arduous and exalted duties, imposed on the new legislature, by the distresses of the whole nation.

It, therefore, became the Cortes, guided by every possible intelligence and virtue, to take up the most pressing points with persevering labour; and in examining the nature of those claims which were the most ur-

gent, the melancholy situation of Spanish America, must have particularly interested their feelings and judgment, and its restored tranquillity, at that time, would, evidently, have been productive of the greatest benefits. And, had it been the happy lot of Spain, to behold her national legislature assemble, uninfluenced by those passions and prejudices, which grow out of previous divisions, and unnatural restraints, then only, might its acts have been liberal and enlightened; then local and narrow-minded policy, would never have disturbed the unanimity which ought to have reigned in matters of general import; and then only, would party spirit and the influence of undue monopolies, not have been mixed with its deliberations. Had due weight been given to the important consideration, that this was a cruel civil war waged by brethren, and carried on in that half of the empire most essential for pecuniary supplies, certainly such remissness would not have occurred; and the new Cortes of Spain, like the preceding Regency and Central Junta, would not have had imputed to them, dispositions unfriendly to the public happiness, of at least one half of the monarchy. In discussing a question of this intricate and interesting a nature, it was not easy for a body of men, surrounded by illiberality and monopoly, to be entirely divested of irritation; nor could it be expected, that no contrariety of sentiment would occur. It was, however, astonishing, that a majority should not feel the necessity of some urgent measure relating to Spanish America, where such alarming evidences of disquiet existed. The fact is, that twenty-nine American substitutes, had to vote against one hundred and twenty-five Spanish deputies; and by the result, the ultramarine pro-

vinces were convinced of that melancholy truth, which they so soon afterwards found confirmed, that the interests of one half of the monarchy, clashed with those of the other; and that no real justice awaited them, from the acts of a congress, so unfairly constituted, so foreign to their wants, and deliberating at such a distance.

Had true and sincere sentiments of fraternity and fellowship been timely conveyed, by the new Cortes, to their American brethren, then migh tthe one have felt the security, which, as a national government, the others were about to give, and the equal justice they were about to administer. Then might the Spanish Americans have expected, that the general interests of all, would be attended to; and thence, would they have learnt, that it was their duty, as well as their interest, to place full confidence in the assembly of their new representatives, and their trust in the hands of those, who were charged with the general execution of the laws. In the ultramarine provinces, a sincere disposition never was wanting to yield to proper explanations, and to comply with just measures, such as arose out of a due sense of public benefit, and a virtuous regard to the general welfare. Could a more valuable opportunity have been found, of improving these sentiments, than when the Cortes first assembled in La Isla de Leon? To consult the wants of every part of the community, and to lay the foundations of public administration, on the affections of all the members thereof, was the greatest glory to which the new Cortes of Spain could aspire; and this was not to be done, by continuing a war, of which the legitimacy had neither been discussed or proved. As men, anxious for the welfare and happiness of their entire nation, it

particularly behoved them, to guard the equilibrium established therein by the general laws; and if the Spanish Americans had been declared equal in rights, and were also found so in their ancient charters, the practical and full exercise of that equality, undoubtedly belonged to them. It was to the Cortes that they looked, for this act of justice, and to their patriotic exertions; to promote the essential redress, as a means of pacification, they trusted with new and undiminished confidence.

Unfortunately, however, for the interests of both parties, the Cadiz government was not disposed to adopt liberal and conciliatory measures, nor was it inclined to redress. *Slaves or nothing*, appeared to be the motto of all the new governments; and the words of the Jesuits, used to Benedict XIV. when he proposed a reform, in order to prolong the existence of their society, *sint ut sunt, vil non sint*, might be very well applied to them all. The fact is, the Cadiz mercantile interests had already taken the alarm, for in consulting the good of their country, the new governments in America, as before shewn, had removed the shackles of trade, and this sole measure, became the real nucleus, on which the whole odium gathered and accumulated. Instead of being grateful for the patriotic manner, in which the Spanish Americans had watched over the safety of their country, volunteered in donations and succours, pledged themselves to Ferdinand, bound themselves to the cause of Spain, and sworn eternal enmity to the common foe, the new governments instantly treat them as rebels, and war is declared against them, in compliment, as it were, to the chiefs they had just deposed. This war is continued under the greatest aggravations, mutual enmity is its

issue, and universal devastation ensues. The Spanish Americans appeal to Spain, recur to England, and are treated with contempt. Chastisement, threats and decrees of blockade, or at most, insulting proposals of pardon, are the answers given to their just and reiterated remonstrances and claims; all of which might be reduced to very few points, viz. equality of representation, Juntas, free trade, equal eligibility to offices in their own country, and the abolition of monopolies. And are these demands unjust; are they unreasonable; are they such as warrant a war, even in the best of times, on the part of Spain; or, are they such as to justify England, in leaving the aggrieved ultramarine provinces, thus neglected and abandoned, to the fury of their enemies, and compelling them, as it were, to have called in the French to their aid?

§ Spain, has not, however, acted from ignorance, in the great Spanish American question, though, it is presumable, England has; for these said claims were brought before the Cortes, the day after their installation, as already noticed, were repeated on the 16th November following, in eleven propositions; again, on the 31st December; were discussed in January, and rejected, or definitely deferred, in February, 1811. When the flames of civil war, began to rage wider and with greater fury, and when it was visible, that the Spanish Americans were indignant at the treatment they received from the national congress, the question was again agitated, when the famous remonstrance of the whole American deputies, was laid before the house, on the 1st August, 1811. But, even that clear, strong, and just statement of facts, was rejected with the same contempt, and treated with the usual disdain; or, in other words, twenty-nine American sub-

stitutes, voted against one hundred and twenty-five Spanish deputies, nearly all filled with prejudice, and tutored by the monopolists of Cadiz, jealous of their privileges. This same remonstrance, was afterwards transmitted, with seven other public memorials from America, to a committee, where it was buried in oblivion; and, in November following, instead of pacification, redress, and conciliatory measures, troops were sent to Mexico. And who was it fitted out these troops, since the poverty of the government, deprived it of the means? It was done by a subscription of the very same merchants, who trembled for the loss of their monopolies; the same who influenced the Cortes, as will presently be shewn, by specious arguments, not to open the trade of the transatlantic provinces to Englaed; the same, in short, who were ready to sacrifice the vital interests of both countries to their own private ends.

The only material alleviation granted to the Americans, has been permission to work their own quicksilver mines, found in New Spain and Peru; an article essentially necessary for the amalgamation of the precious metals, and, consequently to the coining of money, of which government stood in the greatest need. This grant became the more urgent, as the mercury from Trieste and Almaden, could no longer be obtained; but, it appears rather to have been a want of funds, that gave rise to this condescension on the part of the Cortes; for the monopoly in favour of the crown, still exists; though so extremely destructive and cramping to the mining interests. Generally, every memorial, petition, and remonstrance of a public nature, presented by the American deputies, has been passed over to an ultramarine com-

mittee, which, figuratively, has been called a *well of oblivion*, where they have been forgotten, and from whence the strenuous exertions of the parties, have never been able to call them forth.

The fact is, no cordiality existed, nor is it possible, that it should exist, as long as the mercantile interests, hold so much influence, or till liberality is made the basis of the governmental conduct. The Spanish government may boast of decrees made to better the situation of America, but what good have they produced? Even what reforms were decreed, have not been executed; and it is of this default, that more is complained, than of the letter of the law. Many parts of the code of laws of the Indies, were in theory, good, but they were never practiced. The sections of Spanish America, are still under the same kind of governors, and the same maxims, and the same routine, prevail. The same arbitrariness exists in the interpreting and infringing of the laws, and the same impunity is practiced to oppressors.

It has not, however, been for the want of means, or of correct data, on which to found themselves, that the claims and rights of the Spanish Americans, have not been, hitherto, fairly discussed, and adequately redressed by the Cortes of Spain. The wishes of the trans-atlantic provinces, beside the cases already named, were fully explained in the remonstrance of the Mexican deputy to the Cortes, in which he stated, that, according to the general opinion of New Spain, it was indispensably necessary to adopt the measure of provincial Juntas, in order to shield the inhabitants from the persecutions of Spanish chiefs; which Juntas, by holding, locally, the supreme power, under the government of the Peninsula, and act-

ing as its immediate organ in point of right, might restrain and keep in due bounds, the despotic and arbitrary authority of the viceroys and judicial magistrates, who would, then. become more the administrators of the law, than the tyrants of the people, who, if injured, would not, then, have to come to Europe for redress. That this local administration and check on the viceroys, even up to the present day, appears to be the chief object for which the Spanish Americans are contending, will be clearly seen from General Rayons letter to the Bishop of La Puebla, dated September 15, 1811, in which he says, "We are now arrived, at that precise period, in which it is not possible to remedy the great confusion the country at present experiences, unless it is, by adopting the system of government, intended to be established. The essential point of this is, that the European give up and resign the government, which he has held so many years, into the hands of a congress, or national Junta, to be composed of representatives of the provinces. That this congress be not the tool of Spain, but that it have the care of itself, of the defence of the kingdom, the conservation of our holy religion, the observance of just laws, the establishment of those which may be deemed adequate, and, also, that it watch over the rights of our acknowledged monarch, Ferdinand VII." And is not this consistent with justice, is it not practised by all other extensive settlements, does not the same exist in Ireland, in the British East Indies, in Canada, nay, even in our West India islands? Had not, also, Ireland her parliament, prior to the union, and was she not possessed of the means to withstand the abuse of power, and to stop the arbitrary acts of guilty ambition?

§ In thus, fundamentally, discussing the origin and causes of the unfortunate dissentions, which exist between European and American Spain, and, in circumstantially relating the various particulars, as they occurred, I conceive it my duty, before I proceed any further, to give my reader, in as abridged a shape as possible, an idea of the nature of the eleven propositions, made by the American deputies in the Cortes; as they were supposed to contain all their constituents demanded, and to amount to the specific basis, on which the Spanish Americans were ready to lay down their arms, and again enter into sincere friendship with their Peninsular brethren. At the end of each, illustrative observations, are added.

Proposition I. In conformity to the decree of 15th October ulto, the national representation of every part of Spanish America, and the Spanish West India and Philipine islands, including each individual class of their inhabitants, shall be, respectively, the same, in form, manner, and without distinction, as in the provinces and islands of European Spain.

Observation. By the decree of the 15th October, all the inhabitants of Spanish America, had been indistinctly declared equal with those of Spain. According to the ancient legislature of the latter, as explained in the early pages of this exposé, even the Indians had been declared as much subjects of the king, as the natives of Castile. It was this practical equality, particularly in representation, which the American deputies now insisted on. The population of both countries is, certainly, mixed in a great degree, for in Spain, besides Moorish descendants, there are persons of colour and gypsies, against whom no exceptions existed. In the

ultremarine provinces, some of the most laborious, valuable, and, often, rich, part of the population, consists of coloured persons; and if, under the ancient laws, they were even admitted to study in the colleges,* certainly, they were deserving of being represented, as long as their state was that of freedom. Against the Indians, there could be no reasonable objection, they being blended in the general population; nor can any thing be supposed so ridiculous, as that the chief inhabitants of an immense continent, are to be subservient to laws, in the formation of which, they have no part. This point was never carried, and in the new constitution, as will hereafter be seen, its intention was completely frustrated.

Proposition II. The free natives and inhabitants of Spanish America, shall be allowed to cultivate and rear whatever their climate will produce; and to promote their manufactures, industry, and arts, in all their extent.

Observation. Granted: but, it is much to be feared, that this, like other concessions made by the king's ministers, when from the evidence of justice, they could not be denied, will be of little avail. That is, the chiefs in power, have always been instructed to contravene them, in a secret manner. Humboldt, in several places, alludes to this fact, and observes, that even what the laws permit with regard to manufactures, the policy of the government frustrates, not only by not encouraging, but also by hindering them by indirect measures, as has always been the case, with the manufactures of silk, pa-

* In Lima, some mulatoes, under the celebrated Dr. Unanue, have made singular progress in medicine, and many useful discoveries, in the virtue of native plants, are owing to them.

per, and glass. In like manner, the Cortes, in order to contravene the advantages that might result from this concession, opposed its being published by the executive, nor were any measures taken for its effective compliance, in the country to which it referred.

Proposition III. That the Spanish American provinces, shall enjoy ample faculty to export their own natural productions and manufactures, to the Peninsula, as well as to allied and neutral nations; and they shall be allowed the importation of whatever they may want, either in national or foreign vessels; in consequence of which, all their ports are to be opened.

Proposition IV. There shall be a free trade between Spanish America and the Spanish possessions in Asia, every exclusive privilege opposed to this freedom, being abolished.

Proposition V. There shall also be established, a freedom to trade from all the ports of Spanish America and the Philipine islands, to other parts of Asia; every other privilege to the contrary, being annulled.

Observation. These three propositions relating to the same point, were reserved for discussion, till after the report of the committee of finance. The Regency at the instance of Great Britain, in April, 1811, proposed to the Cortes to grant a free trade, and it was agitated in secret sessions. The opinion of the Cadiz Board of Trade, was taken, whose members were all adverse to the measure, on grounds, which well deserve a separate revision. Another adverse opinion, was forwarded by the Mexico Board of Trade, consisting of Europeans, signed on the 16th of July, 1811, extremely injurious to the British, and in which it is attempted to prove, that a free trade, is contrary to the peace of Utrecht, and the Christian

religion. The Cortes rejected the motion, on the 13th of August, 1811, and not till the month of June, was a coasting trade allowed to nationals, but the order was never issued, which rendered it useless. Even in September following, the deputy for Vera Cruz, urged by the European interests, endeavoured to abolish this concession; and Viceroy Venegas opposed the entry of vessels from the Havanah, even after the substitutes for that place, advised, that the grant had passed the house. In 1812, England again renewed her overtures for a free trade, of which mention will be made in another place. With regard to Asia, and the Philipine islands, nothing was granted. Thus, has nearly the whole trade of Spanish America, laid dormant since the revolution of the mother-country,

Proposition VI. All *estancos* or monopolies, shall be suppressed, but the public treasury shall be indemnified for the ubility arising therefrom, by fresh duties on the monopolised articles.

Observation. This question was reserved for the opinion of the committee of finance, where it still remains, nothwithstanding that in Spain, from the time of the Central Junta, the monopolies had been abolished, and the people had burnt the guard houses. The monopoly of tobacco, has only lately, been thrown down.

Proposition VII. The working of the quicksilver mines, shall be free in Spanish America, but the administration of their produce, shall remain in charge of the constituted authorities.

Observation. This is the only point, on which the Cortes ordered the Regency to circulate orders;—the reasons of this readiness, are already explained.

Proposition VIII. All Spanish Americans, whether

of Spanish or Indian descent, thall be equally eligible with native Spaniards, to all offices of rank or emolument, both at court, and in every other part of the monarchy.

Observation, The exclusions in this particular, even in their own country, are what the Creoles have long borne with preying chagrin. Many juridical remonstrances have been laid before the throne, on this subject, some of which are to be found in Solorzano, as well as in Dr. Ahumada, an author of more recent date. Of this particular grievance, considerable mention has been already made. During the reign of Charles III. an attempt was made, entirely to deprive the Creoles of all nominations, which caused the municipality of Mexico, about the middle of the last century, to send over a celebrated remonstrance, which, certainly, deserves to be called, an eloquent demonstration of the rights of the Spanish Americans. This proposition was declared to be contained in the said decree of equality of rights, of the 15th October; or of promises, as before mentioned, made as a theoretical experiment, but which, never brought any good to the ultramarine provinces; as proof of which I will add, that the tributes were not taken off the Indians, till April, 1811, that is, when the revolutionary parties had already annulled them; nor was the destructive *mita* thrown down in Peru, till September, 1812. That this may be better understood, an explanation of the *mita* is found in my appendix, under the head of H. In order that my reader may have a more complete idea of the grievance, which the 8th proposition was intended to remove, I would ask him, what would be the feelings of Ireland, if her natives were prevented from rising in proportion to their merits, with our own citizens? Were this the case,

would it be expected, that the union could be cordial and lasting? Natives of our sister island, are even at the head of our councils and armies, and far from feeling jealousy or suspicion, they constitute our glory and our pride.

Proposition IX. Especially consulting the natural protection of the respective kingdoms of Spanish America it shall be declared, that half of the nominations in each, shall be given to natives thereof.

Observation. In pursuance to the ancient laws, we have already seen, that the Creoles are entitled to a preference in their own country, but that by the successive despotism of their kings, and the scandalous venality of the court, this provision was of no avail. Charles III. in consequence of the strong remonstrance from Mexico, above alluded to, had ordered the audiencias and church preferments to be given, in an equal proportion, toCreoles; but this was never complied with, nor was it now enacted afresh, though this is the principal point of complaint, which has caused disturbances in Spanish America, from the time of its discovery. In Spain, there are 164 Cathedrals and Collegiates, together with 4103 Prebendaries, of which, it may naturally be imagined, that few or none, fall to the lot of Creoles; and in the whole of Spanish America, there are 47 metropolitan Churches, and 501 Prebendaries, so that to ask for the half of these, was not by any means extravagant. The fact is, the Spaniards had always considered the ultramarine provinces as a land of promise, exclusively sought and held for their advantage, and to diminish their prospects of gain, was to touch them to the quick.

Proposition X. For the exact fulfillment of the above stipulation, there shall be a consultive Junta, formed in

each capital, who shall propose the persons in turns, who may be suited to fill each vacancy, &c.

Observation. This certainly would have greatly contributed to establish order and justice, in this particular, but there were too many hungry mouths to fill, for it to be carried into effect. And as the case now stands, it is less likely the Creoles can be satisfied in this their just demand, for they must, necessarily, expect to be over-run with a number of chiefs and dignitaries, who will there seek a compensation, for what they have lost in the Peninsula, unless king Ferdinand enters into a sense of the hardships of the transatlantic provinces, and acts with more liberality, than the governments which have represented him during his absence.

Proposition XI. Considering it essential to the progress of civilization, and the instruction of the Indians, the order of the Jesuits shall be restored.

Observation. This proposition was not admitted to discussion. It principally related to the advantage of Peru, where the Jesuits in former times, had certainly brought the Indians out of their barbarous habits, into those of civilization; and if it proves no more, it at least evinces, the liberality and enlightened zeal, with which the American deputies in the Cortes, sought to promote the interests and welfare of their country.

Such were the economical points agitated by the American deputies, up to the month of February, 1811, and such were the terms and context of the redress they sought for their constituents. Having thus presented the facts as they occurred, and also in the most official form, I leave my reader to judge of the justice of these démands, and to conclude, whether a war carried on

with their refusal, as a basis, can be just in the eyes of God or man; and whether England, with these proofs before her, ought to be ashamed of the inhabitants of a continent, to whom she has so often given assurances of regard and esteem. The objects of the above eleven propositions, together with a new governing system, consisting of provincial Juntas or assemblies, representing the general government at home, as a check on the viceroys and judges, was all the people of Spanish America, asked through their deputies in the Cortes; and it is to their refusal, that a continuation of the greatest horrors, that ever marked ancient or modern annals, is owing; horrors of such a nature, that the scenes of the primitive conquest, are thereby renewed. The new Cortes of Spain, as before explained, had it in their power, to place two nations, sprung from the same origin, alike in manners and in language, and formed to be connected by the bonds of reciprocal fellowship and mutual interest, in the situation of sincere friends; by only securing to one, a practical equality conformable to reason and law, and by thus removing the causes of present, as well as of future dissentions. For them was it reserved, to avert the continuance of civil storms, which already threatened to disunite those, whom a just cause and the abhorrence of a treacherous enemy, had united; and by fixing the firm basis of general good, they were then enabled to restore peace and harmony amongst their fellow-brethren.

These great and desirable ends, might have, undoubtedly, been answered, if that spirit of prudence and moderation, so essential to the management of discordant interests, had been displayed within the walls of the Cortes;

and if personal considerations, had not been mingled with the general acts of government. It was on the preservation of unanimity, and on the careful continuance in health and vigour, of that fraternity and fellowship, which had hitherto prevailed; that the happiness and security of the country, depended; and it was by this means only, both at home and abroad, that the legitimate executive powers, could be left unimpaired. It was not the Spanish Americans alone, who were sensible of the degraded system under which they were governed. The intendant Dn. Gonsalez Montoya, by order of the Cortes and Regency, drew up a plan, suited to conciliate the interests of European and American Spain, and as a basis of a constitution, for the latter. Speaking from experience, he ingenuously confesses, "that the European chiefs, exercise there, a pure despotism and a continued tyranny, always committing extravagant acts; that if they do any good, it is, because, the Creoles teach them, who, alone, understand their own welfare, and laws and customs. For this reason, Spain ought to give up to them, all their own economical government, for, since, they do not send over officers to us, he adds, there is no reason, why we ought to send such over to them."*

Impressed alike from reason, observation, and feeling, as ought to have been the members of the new Cortes, with the necessity imposed on the nation, of making every sacrifice to put an end to evils, whose symptoms daily became more menacing, the national government was still remiss and wavering; memorials,

* This sketch was printed in Cadiz, 1811.

petitions, and remonstrances of the most urgent nature, were treated with neglect and disdain; and even though to have kept entire the united revenue of Spanish America, for the pressing wants of the Peninsula, would have been a great point gained in the general concerns of the nation, yet, neither the calls of policy, nor the dictates of justice, could rouse the new legislature to energy and exertion. At the end of July, the substitute deputies for Santa Fé, presented to the Cortes, the new constitution made by that province, acknowledging Ferdinand VII, though independent of the government of Spain. Arguelles, then rose and exclaimed, "that since one province after the other, continued to separate, they were now bound to hear the American deputies;" who, on the 1st of August, 1811, were consequently, encouraged to lay before the house, an energetic remonstrance, signed by thirty-three deputies.

General allusion, has already been made to this document,* and its contents, certainly constitute a clear and official demonstration of the causes and origin of the existing dissentions, and an enumeration of the points of controversy. The causes and origin, are stated to have been a dread of being delivered over to the French; and their immediate explosion, was occasioned by insults, ill-treatment, and reproaches. The general and primordial basis of discontent, is, however, proved to have been, the state of servility and oppression, in which the ultramarine provinces had been kept, by the despotism of the old government, which the new ones, neglected

* This memoir was reprinted in London, 1812, and is also found inserted in El Espanol, for the 30th of March, 1812.

to remove. *As men*, the deputies argue, equal with the Spaniards in rights, their constituents are entitled to an equal representation, in the present, as well as in the future Cortes. *As fellow-citizens*, they plead, that they ought to have the working of their quicksilver mines, the cultivation of their lands, the fisheries of their own seas, and manufactures for their own cloathing, free and unrestrained. The deputies remind the Cortes, that, although, these points had been, in some measure, granted by the house, no orders for their accomplishment, had been issued by the executive; and they again insist, on the abolition of monopolies, which remained untouched. *As social beings*, they reason, that the Spanish Americans ought to be remunerated, equally, and according to their respective merits, by the distribution of offices; that they ought to be allowed a free trade with nations at peace; and be freed from the despotism of European mandatories, by means of provincial assemblies, to hold them in check.

Without these points being granted, the deputies add, " it will not suffice for Spain to destroy the present population, and send over new settlers, for their children cannot fail to love the land on which they are born, and consequently, they will not be more disposed to live under the trammels of oppression. It is this alone, which the present inhabitants, seek to remedy. If they do not acknowledge the existing government, it is because they believe it illegitimate; in this, they may be actuated by a political error, but it is not a rebellion, since they acknowledge the head of the monarchy; and they have even organized their Juntas, without withholding their representative concurrence, in the Cortes,

as far as allowed, conformably to what they themselves demonstrate, in their public papers.* For this very reason, they cannot be accused of sedition; for the division of two parts of the monarchy, cannot be treated as such, when both remain united in the same prince, in like manner, as the division of two brothers, who still remain under the paternal authority, cannot be termed an emancipation of either of them; nor is the separation of two churches who acknowledge the same pontiff, called a schism, since this was the case for many ages, with the Greek and Latin churches."

This memoir was read in secret sessions, and produced a degree of heat and asperity, that nearly brought on blows; and, eventually, it followed the fate of all the others; that is, it slumbers in the hands of the ultramarine committee, from which, neither the thunder of a Demosthenes, nor the eloquence of a Cicero, could call it forth. The fact is, that no cordial disposition existed in the majority of the Spanish deputies, to grant to the ultramarine provinces, the practical exercise of those equal rights, which belonged to them from the time of their settlement; and which had been so recently decreed them on paper. It, consequently, became useless, for so small a proportion of American deputies, to bring forward motions; for they were negatived, not from any conviction of their inconsistency, but, because, they were prejudged before being submitted to the house, and thrown out, merely in consequence of the quarter, from whence they originated. In a question of this delicate nature, it was, nevertheless, evident, that nothing

* Caracas Gazette, July 27, 1810.

but conciliatory measures could be productive of harmony; and it was particularly requisite, that above all, hatred and resentment should be discouraged. For the foundation of any just and equitable measures, on the part of Spain, there had long existed a broad platform on the other side of the Atlantic; for, as fully demonstrated, in the outset of my subject, at no period of time, had the attachment of the ultramarine provinces to the mother-country, been more strong or more general, than when the invaded state of the latter, was known to them. Whatever hostilities had been, hitherto, carried on, were for defensive purposes, but, the Spanish Americans, generally, still acknowledged the same monarch, and only complained of the degraded system by which they were governed, which it became necessary to remove, as a previous step to the restoration of concord. This desirable end could never be attained, as long as the members of the national legislature, were not disposed to divest themselves of prejudice, and till the reign of terror, was at an end; nor could the Spanish Americans conceive themselves satisfied, or happy with their lot, as long as the government at home, was continually distrustful, and rendered jealous and suspicious by the hardships of the American people, which it had neither the courage to remove, or even the liberality, candidly to discuss.

In the mean time, the Cadiz press, was continually plyed; invective, reproach, and scurrility, were daily dished up under a variety of seasonings, to please the palates of the votaries of gain, and galling expressions of scorn and contempt, were uttered on every possible occasion; till at last, the pride of the Spaniard was roused to the continuance of a war, which was supposed

just, because it was represented so, by the servile and the interested. In short, there was no disposition to render private convenience subservient to public good; and such was at length, the prevalence of deception, that the national character was thought at stake, and bound for its honour, to continue the war, with fresh vigour. Any thing less than unconditional submission, was deemed a greater blot, than even bowing to the French yoke. Thence, were all the exertions of the American deputies, rendered useless, and the tardy and slack mediatory offers of England, were treated with disdain.

§ Had the Spanish government, at that time, only examined well, the history of the revolutionary war of North America, what a variety of useful lessons, might it not have culled out for its future guidance? It would there have seen, the fatal consequences of a rash and inconsiderate act, on the part of a parent state, who, by subsequent concessions proposed, seems heartily to have repented of her intemperance. Had the Cadiz government further compared the present demands of the Spanish American provinces, with the original situation of the various settlements, now called the United States, it would have found, that the former actually sue for no more, than what the latter enjoyed, before they asserted their independence; that is, whilst even colonies of England, they had local checks over their governors, and that their governing system was such, as not to clash with their happiness or prosperity. Another still more valuable lesson might have been borrowed, from which the Cortes would have learnt, that it is never too late to do an act of justice; nor is it unbecoming, or

dishonourable, in a parent state, to endeavour to reconcile her distant offspring, as long as the basis offered, is consistent with reason and justice, and conformable to the dictates of prudence and humanity. The original causes which lead to the North American war, are too recent and too well understood, to require any comment here, as an explanation to those circumstances, I am about to subjoin. The high tone, with which His Majesty's ministers and parliament, spoke to those colonies, and the sanguine hopes, under which hostilities were commenced on the part of England, are fresh in the memories of all. Yet, after the war had been prosecuted by the crown, for some years, with heavy expence and great calamity, the cabinet receded from the high ground it had taken in the beginning, and a plan of pacification was determined upon, very different to the first pretensions insisted on, by the king and ministers.

After several motions had been made by the opposition, tending to the abandonment of the American war, Lord North gave notice in the House of Commons, that he had digested a plan of reconciliation; conformably to which, he moved to bring in 1st "a bill for removing all doubts and apprehensions, concerning taxation by the parliament of Great Britain, in any of the colonies and plantations of North America." 2dly "A bill to enable His Majesty, to appoint commissioners, with sufficient power, to treat, conduct, and agree upon the means of quieting the disorder, now subsisting in certain of the colonies of America."

The first bill, contained a declaration, "that parliament will impose no tax, or duty, whatever, payable within any of the colonies of North America, except

only such duties, as it may be expedient to impose for the purposes of commerce; the net proceeds of which, should always be paid and applied to, and for the use of the colonies, in which the same shall be respectively levied, in like manner, as other duties collected under the authority of their respective legislatures, are ordinarily paid and applied." It was insisting on the opposite of this clause, that, in fact, produced the war; but England, by fatal experience, had seen her error, and she was too liberal and too enlightened, to persist in it, any longer, in the face of justice. And may I not be allowed to ask, whether it would have been dishonourable in England, reminding Spain, as her ally, of these fatal momentos; and inspiring into her, sentiments of equity and just liberality, whilst it was yet time? Had the North American colonies, then to lay to the charge of their parent state, a fiftieth part of the hardships and restraints, with which Spanish America has now to reproach Spain? Yet, even their conduct had friends and partizans amongst ourselves, and eventually, England had to confess, that a great share of blame rested with herself, in not using timely redress, and plans of conciliation, before it was too late. The great and striking difference, between the situation of the Spanish, compared with the British Americans, may be well collected from the first sections of this exposê; and the opposite nature of the pretensions of the first, may be established from the transactions in the Cortes, of which a full detail has just been given. Yet, though the parallel of cases is so different, though the fate of Spanish America, is such, as to interest the feelings of the most apathized, and though the justice and nature of the object, is so transcendently

greater, not a glow of sympathy, appears, yet, either to have moved the ministers or people of England; nay, not even an expression of condolence, has escaped either.

The second bill authorized the appointment of commissioners by the crown, with power "to treat either with the constituted authorities, or with individuals in America, provided that no stipulations which might be entered into, should have any effect, till approved in parliament, other than is afterwards mentioned."—It was thereby enacted, "that the commissioners may have power to proclaim a cessation of hostilities, in any of the colonies; to suspend the non-intercourse law; and further, to suspend, during the continuance of the act, so much of all, or any of the acts of parliament which have passed, since the 10th day of February, 1763, as relates to the colonies."—"To grant pardon to any number or description of persons, and to appoint a governor in any colony, in which His Majesty had heretofore exercised the power of making such appointments."—These two bills, passed both houses of parliament, without any considerable opposition.

Such was the conduct of England, at the momentous period, when experience had taught her ministers, the fatal consequences of a rash act, and the many difficulties of carrying on a war at such a distance. Such were the proceedings of an enlightened nation, moved by the calamities that must necessarily follow in the train of a bloody civil war; the continuance of which, without these preliminary steps to conciliation had preceded, would have been most unjust and tyrannical. These measures were adopted, even though her aggravations were very different to those of Spain, and when the

points of controversy, were perfectly distinct. The olive branch, here accompanied the sword, and, if possible, England, considering she was fighting against her own blood, was more magnanimous in this act, than if she had decreed fresh troops to replace those of Burgoyne, since all they could produce, were fresh horrors and more calamities. Had Spain now on her national records, such overtures as these, and had she manifested a disposition to concord, on a rational basis, then, the destruction she has caused, might have some excuse; and then, the existing stigma, had been wiped from her name. Had she heard the claims of her distant brethren, had she coolly and deliberately discussed their hardships, and redressed what was just, and had all her pacific overtures been treated with contempt, then, and only then, would her war have been just, and in that case alone, could England have beheld her conduct, with indifference.

In prosecution of their conciliatory plans, the British commissioners arrived in North America, but it was, unfortunately, too late, circumstances had materially changed. General Burgoyne had been defeated, and, above all, the French and Spaniards had now manifested a readiness to join in the quarrel, in favour of the colonists. Their efforts to carry through the objects of their mission, were, consequently, ineffectual; the terms were indeed such, as the colonists would, at one time, joyfully have accepted; but these terms now required an union of both countries, under one common sovereign, and this was supposed too lowering for the ground, on which the Colonists then stood. All those mutual affections, which as parts of the same monarchy, they

had been accustomed to feel for their European brethren, had now been extinguished, by a long and distressing war; the States, by this time, had discovered their own strength; brilliant careers were already opened to most of their new chiefs; and their recent treaty with France, upheld them in their views of absolute independence. Another material trait, in the election of these commissioners, was well deserving of the imitation of the Spanish government, viz. they were all persons, who had openly condemned the violent measures of the administration, and had wished a settlement of differences, on the ground first taken by America, and were consequently, serious friends to a restoration of peace, on just and reasonable terms. And, were these the qualities found in a Cortabarria, a Venegas, a Calleja, &c.? In her terms of pacification, England authorizes her commissioners to treat with constituted authorities, and even with individuals; but Spain, has deemed it dishonourable, to treat with the Juntas of the ultramarine provinces, though they were assembled in imitation of her own, and for the most legal and constitutional motives.

In order, however, to complete my parallel, I conceive it my duty, to add the terms, on which the kings commissioners, offered to renew the bonds of former friendship, and to put an end to the ravages, by which the several States of North America, were desolated. They are as follow. " To consent to a cessation of hostilities, both by sea and land.—To restore free intercourse, to revive mutual affection, and renew the common benefits of naturalization, through the several parts of the empire.—To extend every freedom of trade, that the respective interests of Britain and America, could

require.—To agree, that no military force should be kept up in North America, without the consent of the general Congress, or particular assemblies.—To concur in measures calculated to discharge the debts of America, and to raise the credit and value of the paper circulation.—To perpetuate the union, by a reciprocal deputation of an agent or agents, who shall have the privilege of a seat and voice in the parliament of Great Britain; or if sent from Britain, to have a seat and voice in the assemblies of the different colonies, to which they may be deputed respectively, in order to attend to the several interests of those, by whom they may be deputed.—In short, to establish the power of the respective legislatures in each particular colony; to settle its revenue, in civil and military establishments, and to exercise a perfect freedom in legislation and internal government; so that the British colonies, throughout North America, acting with Great Britain, in peace and war, under one common sovereign, may have the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege, short of a total separation of interests, or consistent with the union of force, on which the safety of their common religion and liberty depend."

Such were the assurances under which England, as a powerful nation, sought to reestablish her bonds of relationship with a country, she herself had settled, in the light of colonies and plantations, and over which the king, besides his public capacity as sovereign, had private prerogatives, which still added to his right of controul. Thus did England address herself to a people, less than three millions in number, contained on a comparatively much smaller tract of country than Spanish America, which, though inhabited by seventeen millions, was

treated by the Cortes, as has already been shewn, like a handful of dependant vassals. Spanish America, though equal in rights with European Spain, as well by primitive charters, as by recent decrees, is warred upon, for the establishment of Juntas for interiour government, though such establishments were, by England, deemed essential to the happiness and well being of North America, even prior to her attempts to separate; and which all enlightened powers, consider indispensable to the common principles of freedom, even in a West India island, that only contains half a million of souls. A principle of justice, and an earnest desire to spare the further effusion of human blood, dictated to the parliament of England the offer of the preceding terms; and, for the sake of humanity, every one was desirous to terminate a calamitous war, whilst policy also, strongly urged for the return of harmony and peace.

England, at the above period of her differences with North America, asked no more than such a bond, as was necessary to preserve that union of force, in which the safety and advantage of both consisted; and she pledged herself ready and willing, to enter into a fair discussion of all the circumstances necessary to insure, or even enlarge, that rational independent state, which, as a continent, she acknowledged North America ought to possess. How different were these advances to peace, then made by Great Britain, when compared with the conduct of the three governments, which have presided over the destinies of Spain, during the absence of Ferdinand. To the one, principles of reason and justice, accompanied by considerations of mutual interest, were held out as a basis of adjustment; to the others, threats of blockade, ra-

vaging armies, and the denunciations of heaven, are proposed as the means of subjection; but to discuss their rights, or to review, impartially, the grounds of the existing war, is thought beneath the dignity of the Spaniard. During the American war, the original ground of contest, was yielded by England; but in that waged against the ultramarine provinces of Spain, the Peninsular government never established any, but merely continued hostilities, because this was the voice of the town, in which it had taken up its temporary residence; and because faction and disappointed gain, vociferated for the measure, without demonstrating any substantial reasons. At any period of the colonial contest above alluded to, the prospects of England, certainly wore a brighter aspect than those of Spain, during the invasion of the French; and, most assuredly, the former had many more resources to wield. Yet policy taught her, that she owed it to her own honour, to improve every opportunity that offered for conciliation; so that, even in the spirit of Christianity, she was bound to put an end to the calamities of so distressing a war.

England, sought to make known to the colonists, the full extent of the beneficial tendency of the terms offered; but Spain offers none, and merely seeks to frighten her ultramarine provinces, by swelling the equipments she is making, and by repeating her threats, under a new shape. The commissioners of the one, even after their negociations had been refused by the American Congress, still expressed their readiness to proceed in their conciliatory endeavours, wherever there was an opening; but the others, conceive any advances to the same ends, as derogatory to the national character,

which could not stoop to such a degradation, as to treat with *insurgents*. The one, offered to treat with deputies from the colonies, conjointly, or with any provincial assembiy, or convention individually; but the others, not only disregard the claims of all Spanish America, as established by her deputies, within their own legislature, but decree, that the very existence of an assembly, convention, or junta, is a crime of high treason. England, through her Commissioners, addressed herself to the North American inhabitants of every class and condition, ad adjured them, in the strongest and most pathetic manner possible, not to lose so favourable an opportunity of securing their liberties, and their future prosperity and happiness on a permanent foundation; but Spain, demands an unconditional submission, and only offers fetters, heavier than those her ancient kings had riveted. The one, published a pardon, sincere and binding, for all insurrections prior to a certain date; and the other, crouds her dungeons with victims, even after a solemn capitulation and promise of general amnesty. The one, in short, treated her prisoners as freemen, who at most, were deluded, and not criminal, thus endeavouring to alleviate the horrors of necessary warfare; whereas the other, in numerous instances, puts them to the sword, in cold blood, and after surrendry, commits the most wanton devastations, and tramples on laws, which every civilized nation, has, hitherto, respected.

But, alas, a strange and blind infatuation, had seized upon the minds of the Spanish heads of government, and liberality, no longer actuated those, whose weight of political character, enabled them to guide the public helm. The claims and clamours of the Cadiz merchants, were

still urgent and loud, and their resentments sustained no diminution. Men, indeed, recede, slowly, and with difficulty, from favourite habits, in which their interests are, besides, concerned; and as it were, to court popularity, the government listened and condescended. A general remissness and neglect, moreover, prevailed, and the differences with Spanish America, were treated as of little moment, though it was a point that ought to have been investigated with the greatest labour, and being a principle which involved the greatest interest to the monarchy at large, it ought to have been presented to the public, in all the views of which it was susceptible. No real and sincere disposition existed to discuss the various contraverted points, with cool and unbiassed judgment, or to consider them, with all the weight and attention the subject deserved, and the grounds on which the opposing parties acted, eminently required. The government seemed determined to avoid those full and satisfactory explanations, so essential, not only to the good understanding of the basis of the dispute, but also, to the application of a safe and consistent remedy, as a means to restore a connection, so wantonly broken. Nothing was devised, in order to remove those discordant materials, which had been substituted in the place of that strong cement, which, formerly, bound each part of the monarchy together; for the re-instatement of which, horrors of a variety of kinds, had been resorted to, instead of the rational and sober means of adjustment. The lessons of other nations, in vain laid open for the guidance of the Cortes, they were unheeded, and never produced an useful suggestion. Had Spain, at the momentous period of her rupture with her sister provinces, only been possessed of such a man

as the Earl of Chatham, who it is well remembered, endeavoured to prevent our own rupture with North America, and afterwards exerted himself to produce a reconciliation; what blood might not have been spared, and what horrors might not have been avoided? England never can forget, the unavailing efforts of that great and good man, to prevent a dismemberment of the empire; but in the Cortes of Spain, scarcely does there exist, a solitary instance of an European, who has lifted up his voice in favour of Spanish America, even on the grounds of humanity.

§ In order, however, to give my reader a more complete idea of those principles which guided the legislature of Spain, in its general deliberations; and as a means to explain how England was affected by these controversies, I conceive it useful, here to subjoin the particulars and result of those attempts made by the British minister, to obtain a free trade with Spanish America, and for England to be admitted as mediatrix, between the contending parties. That no clause had been inserted in our treaty with Spain, to establish the commercial relations of both countries, this point being left to a future period, has been already mentioned; and those natural and obvious reflections, which result from the omission of not making this the basis of our co-operation, have already been added. Such an accession of commerce, as Spanish America presented to the enterprize of England, had long been an object to which the cabinet of St. James had turned its attention, and some of the expedients tried to obtain it, have before been passed in review. Immense sums had, in vain, been expended to open this new channel for trade—one that promised unequalled advantages; and

when this brilliant prospect opened on the British empire, by an association of propitious circumstances, not likely to return, it appears unaccountable, that it was overlooked. Spanish America presented to the world, an extended and varied tract of country, in which nature had made such an ample display of her bounties, that the more it was explored, the more it would rise in estimation. Yet, an illiberal system of government, had kept the whole closed, even to the industry of its own inhabitants, who, in vain, beheld the fertility of their soil, and the rich productions by which they were surrounded.

To open a trade with such a country, was, consequently, an object of the greatest consequence to England, not only as a relief to her then suffering subjects, but also, as a means to increase the revenue of Spain, and to add to her effective strength. To give stability to commercial relations with Spanish America, was, therefore, the primary object of both; and Spain was doubly bound to this act of justice, from the further motive of expediency, as tranquillity would thus have been preserved. As the ally of Spain, and bearing so large a portion of the war expences incurred for her salvation, England was entitled to this remuneration on the score of gratitude; and if the former enjoys the commerce of the latter, and we consume her oils, wines, brandies, fruits, &c. besides her colonial productions; and if she is, at the same time, unable to clothe her transatlantic citizens, and transport to Europe the produce of her soil, why was a trade to Spanish America, as an equal and integral part of the monarchy, to be objected to?

In conformity to these views, the British minister had used some endeavours to get this trade opened, soon after

the installation of the Cortes, but it was bluntly refused. The Regency, however, again pressed the national legislature, and the point was agitated in secret sessions, about the middle of April, 1811. The manner in which this demand was made, and the grounds on which it was substantiated, not having been laid before the Spanish public, it is not here possible to present them to my reader. By those who took a favourable part in the discussion, they were viewed in the light of a favour, which England asked of Spain, and to which the latter seemed to have fully corresponded, by putting it to the vote in her house of delegates. No sooner was this attempt known in Cadiz, than the public prints were set to work, mercenaries were employed to write sarcasms, and on the corners of the walls was announced, in large letters, Cancelada's work, called "*Ruin to New Spain, if trade is declared free, founded on twelve propositions.*" Such means had their full weight with the public, and even within the House, so that the wishes of England were completely frustrated.

Spain, owing to her want of manufactures, vessels, and capitals, was, at this time, unable to carry on her trade with the ultramarine provinces, in such manner as to supply their wants, and to receive their productions in return. Indeed, at the best of times, this commerce had been carried on by foreign capitals in Cadiz, principally French; the Spanish merchant doing little more, than cover the property with his name. To refuse, therefore, this privilege to her ally, was acting as the dog in the manger, and was particularly impolitic, it being the foremost demand of the Americans, to have their ports opened to England, after the long blockade

which had just preceded. This was the more necessary, because enlightened Spaniards themselves confess, and amongst them Estrada, that the Custom House systems, and the want of free trade, had, in great measure, ruined the finances of Spain. In fact, these improvident regulations made what little trade there was, contraband; so that the crown lost its dues; and the prohibitory laws reduced the productions to no value, whereby agriculture was destroyed, and the country was, besides, drained of its specie. Humboldt, as well as other intelligent foreigners, has remarked, that the trade restrictions, were destructive to both the prosperity of the mother country and the American provinces, and that their removal would greatly add to the revenue of the crown.

How a stipulation to open a trade to Spanish America, was omitted in our treaty with Spain, seems a circumstance the most unaccountable, for the latter does not appear to have thrown into the scale of equivalents, any advantages to compensate our succours. The English nation was, at that time, in great want of an extension of trade; and one would naturally suppose, that it was the object of all governmental transactions, to be either of present or remote benefit to their respective subjects: and when England resolved, thus lavishly to open her treasures, and sacrifice the lives of her soldiers in the cause of Spain, it certainly must have been with a hope, that some advantages were to be derived to her people, on whom the burden rested; and in those sanguine moments, the idea must have been very distant, that Spain could ever be so illiberal as to deny a trade, she herself could not carry on, and which would, besides, double her own resources, and tend to strengthen the allegiance of her distant provinces.

The British government, apparently sensible of this oversight, long after the treaty had been carried into effect, and when the succours had been given and expended, solicited the Regency to open the Spanish American trade; and it was formally refused by the Cortes on the 13th August, 1811; after a discussion filled with illiberality on the part of the Spanish members, but defended by the American ones, as a measure of policy and necessity. But times had now very much altered, Spain was no longer an humble supplicant for aid; and, from auxiliaries, we had become principals in the war. The former had, moreover, perceived, that we were as much interested in its issue, as herself; and, in the mean time, that unfortunate spirit of jealousy and distrust had originated, and had been allowed to spread. Animosity between the mother country and the American provinces, had also taken deep root, and plans of conciliation and of sober trade, had been superceded by threats, war, and revenge.

If, however, we reflect on the consequences of a want of trade, in a country that had been so long secluded, the illiberality of the Spanish government will appear the more glaring, as will, also, our want of energy and foresight. How a people must suffer for the want of active trade, whose great resources are in territorial productions, and whose dependence for supplies, is on European imports, particularly after the long stagnation occasioned by the past war with England, can easily be conceived in a country like this. The result has been, that in Guayaquil, cocoa, at present, is worth no more than three dollars per quintal, or in other words, is left to rot on the trees; and that, in all the upper provinces of New Spain, the common people are now clothed in skins. On a free

trade, at this particular time, the Spanish Americans besides conceived, that their present comforts, as well as their future prosperity, depended. They viewed it as a means to convey to the markets of the world, the surplus produce of their luxuriant soil, and they beheld their sanguine hopes, disappointed, with disgust and chagrin. In the mean time, also, the resources of that great continent, instead of being called forth and increased, were declining: every thing was stagnant, and the British merchant was losing an intercourse, that, besides the sale of goods, might have been attended with great political consequences.

From the time the seat of government was removed to Cadiz, the influence of the monopolists of trade, as already shewn, began to be exerted against any measure, which might deprive them of their accustomed profits; and every engine was set to work, to retain the sole possession of the right of shipping to the ultramarine provinces, and receiving their returns. The public opinion was gained by sophisms and misrepresentations; and in order to add strength to the opposition, and to influence the approaching discussion in the Cortes, the Consulado or Board of Trade of Cadiz, under the authority of its president, prior, consuls, deputies, and other members, for that purpose convened, on the 24th July, 1811, published its manifest, addressed to the delegates of the general and extraordinary Cortes, as well as to the public at large, in which they attempt to prove, "*that the granting of a free trade to England with Spanish America, is a monstrous and unwarrantable measure, and destructive to the interests of Spain.*" In this long and elaborate tissue of sophisms and invectives, the following arguments are the most conspicuous.—

This manifest attempts to prove, that a free trade with their American provinces, would bring *about a desolation, greater than the one, Spain at present experiences.—That the report of a free trade, would be a desolating voice, more terrible than the one heard on the 2d of May,* and be destructive of the very existence of Spain.—That those who are desirous of establishing it, are impostors, and deserving of exemplary punishment, and of eternal banishment.—That it is a measure, intended to bring desperation on the minds of the merchants.—That the destinies of Spain and her political existence, depend on the solution of this question.—That the names of the authors of such a disaster, will be preserved, in order to receive the indignation of future ages.—That it would produce a scene of most certain horror.—That the Americans do not require such a measure, but detest it, as destructive of their interests.—That nothing but open enemies, could have proposed similar ideas.—That it was an horrible monstruosity, similar to that, committed by one, who should pierce the heart of his brother, at the moment he was embracing him.—That Spain would be ruined, made the tool of foreigners, and that her merchants and manufacturers, being destroyed, would fall into slavery.—And, in short, that it would be subversive of religion, order, society, and morality, &c.*

Such are the sentiments and arguments, and such the official form of the Manifest, published by the board of Cadiz merchants, to influence and decide the Cortes, to refuse to England, a free trade with the American provinces; and this to the subjects of a nation, who were aiding and cooperating in the Peninsular struggle, at the

* The revolution in Madrid, against the French.

same time, also, that it was the foremost demand of the Americans. It, unfortunately, had all the effect proposed. And can it be possible, that there was not, at that time, in Cadiz, an Englishman, sufficiently patriotic and enlightened, to have answered such a string of inconsistencies; to unmask such an assemblage of dark inuendoes, and to confound their abettors? Can it be supposed, that there was not one to prove, that the pacification of the ultramarine provinces, and the increase of their revenue, depended on this measure; of consequence, that on it rested the integrity of the monarchy, and, indeed, the existence of Spain, as a nation? Was there no one, when the British people, as a mercantile body, stood expectant for such a boon from the gratitude of Spain, and from the liberality of the Spanish Congress, to expostulate, and even to remind them, that the very manifest which they made the basis of their conduct, confesses *the misery, to which the late wars had reduced the merchants of Cadiz*; of consequence, that they were not able themselves, adequately, to carry on this trade, being without capitals, vessels, or manufactures? Was there no one, dared tell this insolent body of monopolizers, that when they called themselves *the interpreters of the wishes of all the trading bodies of both hemispheres, and when they asserted, that the voice of the trade of Cadiz, was that of all America*; that it was the refusal of this very trade, which left the productions to rot on the trees, which deprived the Americans of cloathing, which produced distress, and that, in short, this very stagnation and inactivity, constituted the most material complaint of the Western provinces, and that the removal of this odious monopoly, would, of itself, destroy

the principal barriers, which impeded a good understanding between the two sister kingdoms?

Amongst the other strange inconsistencies found in this *celebrated* manifest; it boasts of the *great advantages, America enjoys from her connection with Spain,* such *as the consumption of her productions, mental improvement, and religion.* Yet this was at a moment, when cocoa in Cadiz, would not pay the duties, and when in Mexico, paper was worth 30 dollars per rheam. *That the late conduct of Spain, with regard to her settlements, was an object worthy the imitation of all the world*—when, her colonial policy has been an object of execration to every writer, who has touched on the subject. *That the trade ought to be kept exclusive, as a nursery for seamen,*—but they forgot to state, where the vessels were to come from. *That a competition with British merchandize, would ruin their own,*—and this, in 1811, when their own manufactures were destroyed, and the principal provinces in the hands of the enemy, so that the Americans were to wait for cloathing, till their works and looms were rebuilt, and reorganized, and the country freed from the French. *That the trade licences, formerly granted to foreigners, have tended to demoralize the American provinces*; at the same time, that it is universally acknowledged, that they have been of the greatest service, for a large share of the science, at present, found in Peru, is owing to the intercourse, that country once had with the French.*

Such are the arguments, used in the report of the mercantile interests of Cadiz, to combat the wishes of

* All the sentences *in italics*, are literally translated from the original.

England, in a particular point, not only due to her subjects on the score of gratitude, but, also, necessary, as the only means of adding to the revenue of Spain, and of tranquillizing the ultramarine provinces. The question was, however, negatived, and this in August, 1811, when Spain had, for two years, experienced the sincerity of England, when the resources of Spanish America, were nearly suspended, and the claims of her inhabitants were still unredressed. Similar arguments, and similarly pointed reflections, were used by the European Consulado of Mexico, in support of the monopoly mutually enjoyed by them, and their Peninsular brethren, but in which, however, a greater degree of illiberality was blended, so much so, that the Cortes themselves, sent out a spirited reprimand. It was under the general prevalence of such impressions, that both the discussion of the trade, and the mediation affair, were lost; and such will be the fate of all liberal questions, supported by the American deputies, and consonant to the good wishes of England, as long as the latter suffers such wrong and incorrect opinions to prevail, without seriously attempting to counteract them, and as long as the poison of such remarks, is not extracted, by the very same means, as those by which it had been infused.

And can it be supposed, that the government of Spain, situated as it was to England, could act with less justice, and with less liberality, than a former Spanish ministry had done; for during the war of Succession, the French enjoyed a free trade to the Spanish settlements, particularly in the South Seas; and both Feuillés and Freziers' voyages, will be found to refer to many licences granted, even for Lima. And, as an American orator,

(when urging a viceroy in America, to open a trade with the British, as the only means of alleviating the distresses of the landed interests, and repairing the wants of the treasury), justly said : *Spain ought to be ashamed of denying to gratitude and to England, what was, at that time, through dependence and dread, snatched from her. In working our own good, added he, let us not be sorry, that that nation should share therein, to whom we owe so much; and without whose aid, our intended reform, would not be possible.**

The above respective quotations, constitute a fair and correct contrast, between the sentiments of the Spaniards and Spanish Americans on the subject alluded to; and it is particularly deserving of notice, that there is not a measure, agitated in the Cortes for the interests of England, a proposal in which her policy has been implicated, or a plan of any nature founded on liberality, that has not met with the aid and concurrence of the American deputies, and similar also, has been their conduct, in several questions they have defended in print. When that of free trade was brought forward, they defended the measure, as necessary for the welfare of the Western provinces, which stood in need of supplies, Spain could not send out, and a sale of those productions she could not consume. They upheld it in favour of England, alleging, that Spain was in gratitude, and in justice bound, to make this sacrifice for a people, who were making so many for her. When the mediation affair was discussed they voted for it in a body, and, in like manner, on the nomination of Lord Wellington. And, does a con-

* Representation for free trade with England, Buenos Ayres, 1810, by Dr. Mariano Moreno.

duct so firm, and so disinterested as this, deserve no reciprocal support from the British government, when it sees these deputies, in vain struggling to obtain for their constituents, what numbers and illiberality have alone withheld?

The French under their late treaty with Spain, and when united by no other bond than that of terror, were allowed the residence of official agents in Spanish American ports; Depons was in Caracas, Humboldt had access to the whole continent, and in Cuba and Puerto Rico, privateer agents resided, who publicly condemned and sold English and other prizes, in the ports of these islands. The United States have a Consul at the Havannah, and we have none; nor have we, on either the Atlantic side of Spanish America, or islands, an individual to protect trade, the subject, or to hinder the false aspersions thrown on the British name. In the month of March, 1809, the Spanish consul-general Forunda, announced in the public papers of the United States, that all the Spanish consuls, were authorised to give clearances to Anglo-American vessels, desirous to trade to Puerto Rico, Cuba, Maracaibo, La Guira, and the Floridas, but no similar arrangement was made for the English merchant. In fact, the cream of the trade to Spanish America, up to the late declaration of war, has been enjoyed by the United States; and besides the sale, freight, and shipment of goods, we have lost the real and effective means of creating an influx of precious metals, both for our wants at home, and the supply of our armies abroad; and this, merely, because we forgot, that such a country as Spanish America existed, when we rushed into our alliance with Spain.

Seldom, has more conclusive testimony been collected of that undue ascendency, which, in the conflicts of party, prejudice and passion, so often, obtain our reason and justice, than in the discussion of the point just referred to. The avaricious spirit of commercial monopoly, had lost none of its influence; and within the house, as well as without, a stream of malignant opprobrium was directed against the views of England. The question was decided, with that hasty credulity and impelling prejudice, which cannot await the sober and deliberate decisions of judgment; and this illiberality of the Cortes, opened another source of irritation, which added to the copious torrent, already overflowing the Western provinces of Spain. The refusal of a free trade to England, when, at the same time, it was so essential to the welfare of Spanish America, was an evidence of combined ingratitude and injustice; and certainly added another item to the long catalogue of discontents, which already existed. The jealousy, which men, so readily, entertain of the views of those, with whom they are not accustomed to associate, and whom they have been taught to hold in an unfavourable light, had spread a degree of suspicion on every thing we attempted to do in Spain; and a strong party, was ever ready to thwart our most sincere endeavours. In all popular governments, (and Spain might, at that time, be considered as one) the press is the most ready and effective channel to convey opinions to the public, and to give them popularity. The Cadiz papers, as before noticed, in affairs relating to Spanish America, had early become the vehicles of calumny and invective, and, on this occasion, their mercenary zeal and acrimony, were increased. England, during the period of her co-

operation with Spain, has therein constantly been opposed, by avowed enemies and insidious friends, and those numerous wounding suspicions, and irritating charges which, so frequently, circulated, exhibit ample evidence of this fact.

§ Whilst it was her earnest wish and fondest hope, to give every energy to European Spain, in order to make her equal to the great struggle in which she was engaged, England, at the same time, sought, by means feeble, though sincere, to produce harmony and consequent good to the community at large, by offering herself to mediate, between the former and her American provinces. On the part of England, a desire had been early manifested, to adjust the subjects of controversy, and proposals for a mediation, were made by her minister in Cadiz. They were brought on the floor of the Cortes, in April 1811, and were accepted by them on conditions, which nearly involved all the points in dispute. The Cortes exacted, that the insurgent provinces, should acknowledge them as their sovereign, swear obedience to them, and send their deputies to be incorporated with those of Spain; which if they did not do, within fifteen months, England was to aid the mother-country to subject them by force. Spain, thus became her own judge, and instead of publishing a declaration of such rights, as the Spanish Americans actually possessed, with a solemn guarantee, that the same should form the basis of the adjustment, she tells them at once, to send over their deputies, but not elected as in the Peninsula, and not as there corresponding to each 50,000 souls. She tells them to obey, without having altered their governing system, without granting them a free trade, without destroying their galling

monopolies, and, in short, without giving them that practical equality which Spain herself possessed, or removing one of the material causes of complaint.

The Cadiz Regency, consequently, signified its readiness to accept the proffered mediation, but, on examination, its conditions, as laid down by the Cortes, were found such, as to be supposed "incompatible with the principles, on which alone the British government could consent to interfere. Under all circumstances, however, it was thought proper to name commissioners, at the head of whom, Commodore Cockburn was placed, His Majesty's ministers, trusting that the Cadiz government, in consideration of the honourable and liberal conduct, Great Britain had invariably observed, throughout her existing alliance with Spain, would so ameliorate and alter the objectionable conditions above alluded to, as to enable the commissioners to bring about the reconciliation, so devoutly to be wished, on terms, equally calculated to insure the future happiness and security of the American subjects, and, at the same time, keep unimpaired the honour and dignity of the Spanish monarchy."

From the 10th to 11th of July, 1812, this question was agitated in the Cortes, in secret sessions, and after a report of a committee, had been heard. The American deputies, went into all the details, necessary to explain the origin of these dissentions, and recapitulated the points in contest. They pleaded in favour of the measure, on the grounds of humanity and justice, and recommended conciliation, as a more honourable and secure means of adjustment, than the terror of arms. To promote it, they argued, no instrument was so powerful

and proper as England, who had made so many sacrifices, and possessed the confidence of both parties. The Spanish deputies, without bringing forward any specific or insurmountable objections, alluded to the interested motives which induced England to propose this measure, and the darkest and most pointed stabs, were aimed at her national honour and faith. Some complained, that the revolution in Mexico, had increased for the want of rigour, and others alluded to the difficulty of any thing effective being done, by foreign commissioners, who did not understand the points at issue. In short, all that tended to give influence to England, or open to her any access to Spanish America, was viewed with jealous disapprobation; and it was resolved, that a mediation could only be applied to Caracas and Buenos Ayres, already nearly out of the control of Spain, but that it could, by no means, extend to Mexico, where it was asserted, that no revolutionary government existed, wherewith to treat. A national Junta, nevertheless, was, at that very time, organized in Sultepec, which had long possessed the confidence of the inhabitants. Indeed, New Spain, has ever been the most suitable section of Spanish America, for the adoption of this measure, from its being more exempt from those extreme democratic and *frenchified* principles, which have been manifested in some other sections, and because it contained a larger degree of talent and collected influence.

That excess of caution, with which Spain, as Robertson, says, has always thrown a veil over her transactions in America, and the peculiar solicitude, with which she has concealed them from strangers, were particularly remarkable, during this and the debate on the question of

free trade. The cabinet of St. James, was, perhaps, not inclined to expose itself to another mark of disrespect, nevertheless, the most weighty reasons existed, to have a complete explanation on this subject, and to understand, perfectly, the views and intentions of the Spanish government. Yet, if we were to content ourselves, with merely asking a favour; if we were to address ourselves, in the tone of supplication, and not urge those strong reasons which actuated our conduct, and if particularly, we did not fully explain and guarantee the integrity of our intentions, as a preliminary measure, it is a pity, England ever exposed herself to a fresh and insulting rebuff, in proposing a mediation, after the fate of the free trade question, was known. In a measure of this kind, it was on the good sense and virtue of the nation at large, that we had to rely; and if the powerful engine of the press, was daily contributing its influence to the extension of opinions, calculated to misrepresent our views, and eventually to deprive us of all confidence; to neglect an antitode, was only doing the thing by halves. By such means, extensive animosity against us, had made its way into the public mind, without there encountering a just sense of the great sacrifices we were making, or of the humane and honourable motives which stimulated our conduct. In vain, did we testify the sincerity of our views, to the executive of Spain, if these testimonies never passed its office doors, whilst the French, on the one hand, and the illiberal party on the other, were actively employed in blackening our national character. Though in the free trade question, illiberality and invective, had lost us the measure, we, on this more important occasion, again neglected to

destroy those false and specious grounds, on which the opposition had taken their stand, and though it was evident, that the same would have their influence in the question now alluded to, still we sought not to attach the wavering, or gain the well-disposed to friendship. We disregarded that furious and malignant spirit, which had infused itself into the publications of the day; and though England could have demanded a free trade and mediation, as the reward of services, from which were flowing great and lasting benefits; though without any departure from those principles, which were held as fundamental to her treaty, she might have insisted on them, and convinced the Spanish people of their justice; the most effective means were, however, overlooked.

The points in question, were, indeed, delicate in their nature, as long as the Cadiz monopolists held so much sway; yet they could no longer remain untouched, without hazarding the most serious consequences. The wanton and unjust horrors committing in Spanish America, and the manner in which the resources of Spain, and the supplies of England, were wasted, were circumstances, in which the honour of both were implicated. It was, besides, time to settle the commercial relations of each, by amicable relations; points to which the interest and gratitude of Spain, were expected to contribute. However, to render a mediation effective, a great practical knowledge of the laws, institutions, manners, and even language of the countries to which it referred, were particularly essential. No mission of any kind, to a foreign country, was more difficult than the one to which I allude, and though it required a certain weight of character, it rather stood in need of practical men,

who fundamentally understood the relative interests about to be discussed, and who could on this, as well as on the other side of the Atlantic, attend to the drudgery of explaining, conciliating, and gaining on the public mind. With chagrin and disappointment, did the American deputies behold a British mediation, unaccompanied by these requisites; for it was early evident, to those who had stood the brunt of so much illiberality, and who were alive to the injuries their constituents were daily receiving, that the object could never be attained, unless by rendering this mediation extremely substantial; by its government displaying an uncommon degree of energy and resolution; and by resorting to every means of soothing the angry passions, and conciliating the jarring discords of men, who reasoned from interest and prejudice, and not from equity and moderation. To reconcile private convenience with public interest, was the chief point to be conquered; and both questions had such an affinity to each other, that to gain one, was to gain both.

To attain this, one would naturally have supposed, that conclusive arguments, as well as sufficient means, were not wanting, particularly, in the distressed state in which Spain, at that time stood. When it was agitated to name Lord Wellington, generalissimo of the Spanish armies, a measure infinitely more unpopular, and piqueing to the pride of the country, every engine was set to work, and the measure was carried, though many more inveterate prejudices were opposed to it, than to the two points, to which allusion is here made. Disputants entered the lists, and agitated the point in the public prints. Its necessity being proved, the measure was

carried. From the united principles of humanity and policy, England might have urged a mediation, with all the vehemence of conviction, and with those just principles of discrimination and mutual confidence, which ought to exist between nations so nearly allied. In this, at least, she was superior to the charge of egotism. Mr. Burke maintained the right, nay even the duty of the allies, to rescue France from anarchy and despotism; and did not the same right exist in England, to preserve Spanish America from the greatest of all horrors, that of a merciless civil war? The United States, in soliciting and accepting the mediation of Russia, did it from the avowed motive of the rectitude and impartiality of the Emperor, and as being engaged in a war as the ally of England. And has the intercourse and sacrifices of England, only served to inspire Spain, with sentiments of distrust? Russia was invited to concur as a general ally of England, but the latter was the particular ally of the whole Spanish monarchy, that is, equally of American Spain. The mediation of Russia was rejected, not from any doubt or suspicion in the auspices, under which it was to be agitated; but, because it was inconsistent for the point at issue, to be mixed with the affairs of the European continent.* Much greater reasons existed, for making the dispute between Spain and her American provinces. a question of exclusive interest and interference to Great Britain. Its irritable and violent symptoms, had long assumed appearances of increased malignity, and their fatal consequences, every day became more diffusive. The resistance of the Spanish Americans,

* Vide Lord Castlereagh's letter to the Secretary of the United States, Nov. 4, 1813.

wore the appearance of system, and was regularly progressive. From causes both incessant and active in their operation, a broad foundation had been laid for those animosities, whose fury is generally proportioned to the objects in view. Hitherto, all pacific endeavours on the part of Spain, that is, the proclamations of her distant viceroys, and military chiefs, which rather contained threats and denunciations of vengeance, than substantial offers of conciliation, had only ended in new and outraging proofs, of persevering hostility; and every social and domestic tie being broken, it was evident, that nothing but the interference of a third power, could again produce harmony. It was only by some extraordinary weight of influence, respectable to both parties, that those intemperate dispositions, could be moderated and restrained.

And was any power, so proper as England, to give this weight of influence? Whilst the maxims of good faith, and of moral and political justice, demanded that she should then have made the most strenuous endeavours, the same reasons, at the same time, required, that Spain should not have been illiberal. For one nation to mediate for the other, was not a trait, even novel in the Spanish history; and in recent times, it was peculiarly common. As the patron and protector of the Southern Indians, Spain has often asserted her right of mediating between them, and the United States; and during the war between England and North America, her mediation was offered to the belligerent powers, and its refusal, then induced the Madrid cabinet to declare war. Lately, we have seen England mediate between Denmark and the Allies, and many other recent examples, might be quoted. In En-

gland asking to become the mediatrix between Spain and her American Provinces, it was not like a foreign power intruding itself into their domestic and particular concerns, since the object to be attained, was interesting to the world at large. Commissioners could be sent by England, and the other allies, to Copenhagen and Norway, to settle differences relating to the latter; but when the most flagrant acts of injustice, and innumerable horrors have been long committed in Spanish America, no one seems to think seriously of the fact, and no one attempts, manfully, to put an end to the reign of terror. On England, as the great and good ally of Spain, this task particularly devolved; but if her government, in forming its mediation, merely went to ask a favour, and to say, for the sake of humanity, we beg these horrors may cease, and from motives of gratitude, we request a free trade with your *colonies*, without resorting to the many springs which might have been touched, it was putting into the hands of the Spanish government, the means of refusal, and using only an ineffectual exertion, which could not fail to add to the triumphs of the illiberal. If the British government was not disposed to attach to this mediation, all the appropriate zeal and talent in its power, not only to give the measure success in Spain, but also, to promote its execution on the other side of the Atlantic; if it was not intended to urge all the strong claims the case offered, and also, to use every exertion to explain the intentions of the measure to the Spanish public, it is a pity the expenses of the mediation were ever incurred, for its issue might have been foretold, before it left England. The most trifling informal attempt to know the sentiments of the Spanish government, would have proved,

that the means above adopted, would have been insufficient, if nothing strenuous and urgent was added thereto. But there was a dread to offend, and there, besides, appeared an apprehension, that a strong interest in the case, would rather impede than promote beneficial consequences. Yet the most powerful motives urged England to run the risk, since it was by her aid and guarantee only, that social order could be restored to Spanish America.

Ireland, as the rights of the American provinces will clearly demonstrate, stands exactly on the same relative basis to England, as the ultramarine provinces do to Spain; and had she, as a sister kingdom, been treated as the latter have been, for three hundred years, not only the impartial of our own island, but even those of the whole world, would respect the ally who interfered to better her situation; who, by energetic stipulations, and warm expostulations, endeavoured to close her wounds, to restore her long invaded rights, and to place her inhabitants on the footing of men; more especially, if the half of the force, thus to be obtained, was essentially necessary to give efficacy to the exertions of the whole alliance. It would be the extreme of delicacy, for one pilot, calmly to behold another, steering a vessel on a hidden rock, without adverting him of his danger, and insisting on a change of course, if blindness made him persist in his obstinacy. Nations interfere for one another, to obtain peace, and why could not we have done the same, in propitious moments, to obtain redress, and to preserve harmony and concord between our mutual allies? If such exertions had been rendered fruitless, if, however, the voice of reason and of justice had been stifled amidst the cries of monopoly, rancour, and intemperance, it would then be the duty of that ally

to acquaint Ireland, in the strongest and most unequivocal terms, that such exertions had been made, and had proved abortive. Yet, up to the present moment, the Spanish American provinces are ignorant, that England has ever raised her voice in their favour, that she has ever sighed over their wrongs and misfortunes, or that she has ever wished them an alleviation of those evils, which, from awe to Spain, she no longer dared to acknowledge, as existing. Spain, in rushing into an inconsiderate war with her ultramarine provinces, seems to have forgot how essential they were to her success, but that we should have been equally blind and wavering, is the most unaccountable of all political problems. Spain might have learnt from our own history and fatal experience, that it is first necessary to make a people happy and contented, by the restoration of their rights, before she could count on their allegiance.

But to carry on the simile. When the affairs and situation of Ireland, have been agitated and discussed in the parliaments and councils of England, not only rancour, partiality, and party spirit, have been banished from the debate, but the natives of the latter, have felt the most warm and cordial interest in the question, and in the rights and amelioration of the other, and have been actuated by a brotherly feeling, divested of jealousy, animosity, and pique. Had a glaring and open violation of the rights of the one, been ready to take place, the others would have felt the wrong as their own, and would have equally burned with resentment. Very different, are the facts to be deduced, from an impartial examination of what has occurred in the American question, and in the debates of the Cortes, in every stage through which it has gone.

§ The Spanish Americans, naturally entertained great hopes, that in the new constitution of Spain, some general ground-work of reform, favourable to them, would be laid; but, unfortunately, the basis of rights, on which there were to stand, not being properly defined and established, the new code has rather operated as an injury. Indeed, as long as the laws and statutes which are to govern the American provinces, are to be made in an European congress, particularly in one like that of Cadiz, situated amongst a powerful body of monopolizers, whose influence over the acts of government, is both manifest and undue; where such a disparity of votes is found, and where opinions and interests so materially clash, what hopes of strict and impartial justice can the former expect, more particularly now, since resentment is let loose, and the passions are wound up to the highest pitch?

Confined as I am to the present question, as it relates to Spanish America, it would be foreign to my subject, in this place, to analize the whole of the new constitution of Spain; yet I cannot but observe, that from the general remarks I have been able to make, after an attentive perusal, I, by no means, think it is calculated to secure the person of the individual, from the grasp of arbitrary power, since, on the contrary, it leaves him subject to as much violation as before. I can scarcely augur that code to be lasting, which confounds the different and opposite classes, which takes away the dignities of the clergy, grandees, and nobles, which divests them of their national representation, and tends to level them with the other orders of the community. These are bodies of extreme influence, in a country, that can scarcely be considered in any other light than feudal;

where the peasantry depends on them, where no intermediate class of citizens counterpoises their ascendency, and where, besides, they hold the lands and chief riches of the state. Spain is ill prepared for a change so great and so sudden as this; and if so, it cannot be expected to prove a basis of permanent quiet, or tend to produce perfect unanimity. The return of King Ferdinand to Madrid, will, indeed, try the merits of the constitution, and the parties already forming, give rise to serious apprehensions, that it will not long stand its ground.

The constitution formed by the Cortes of Spain, is the production of theorists, collected in the warm atmosphere of a popular assembly, and by no means prepared for such a task. In it, there is no division of powers, and the necessary equilibrium to maintain the whole fabric, is wanting. Under it, a king, master of an armed force, might be a tyrant, and the people would have no remedy. If, by the constitution of a state, is meant, the body of those written and unwritten fundamental laws, which regulate tho most important rights of the higher magistrates, and the most essential privileges of the subjects, such constitution can only be the work of time; for the attempt to change by violence the habits of men, and the established order of society, so as to fit them for an absolute new scheme of government, flows from presumptive ignorance, and must be accompanied with fatal results. How much more so, must not this be the case in Spain, where mental improvement is so backward, where innovation is beheld with so much dread, and where prejudices are yet so deeply-rooted. A free constitution, says the great Shipley, is the growth of time and of nature, rather than the work of human invention.

Such, also, is the opinion of all our other political writers; the quick and ready manufacture of all kinds of constitutions, was the discovery of the Abbé Sieyes.

One of the chief excellencies of the admirable system of British polity, is, the reciprocity of controul, which thereby subjects every adopted measure of one branch of the legislature, to the investigation and refusal of another. By this means, if one body is actuated by passion, has not been sufficiently deliberate, or not in full possession of the requisite data; if it should have judged hastily, unwisely, or partially, its resolutions are subject to the review and check of another body, where it is presumable, that the same motives of erroneous judgment, do not exist. In like manner, the Senate acts a check on the actions of the Congress of the United States; and indeed, any other system, is opposed to political expediency and the experience of ages. No check exists over the Cortes of Spain, who have hitherto acted as an executive as well as legislative body, since the ministers trembled to do any thing, without their previous concurrence. Spain may imagine she has received as the basis of her future happiness, a constitution founded on science and experience; but if we attend to the economy of providence, we shall discover, that beneficial alterations, are not hasty and violent, but gentle and progressive. The sudden and quick operations of nature, generally produce destruction; while, whatever is salutary, is mild and gradual. Experience shews, that human affairs proceed on a similar analogy; valuable improvements are slow and gradual, but hasty changes are mischievous, and end in destruction. The present governing system of Spain, has served to introduce highly

republican principles, dangerous where so much ignorance prevails in the mass of the inhabitants; and it has tended greatly to demoralize, by almost setting religion at naught. Libertinism, and even atheism, were never so general as now in Spain, for, from the extremes of superstitious despotism, what with the war, and a rage to imitate the French, licentiousness has become the order of the day.

Mankind, by the experience of the last twenty years, have at last discovered, that the frame and application of a well-ordered government, must, necessarily, grow out of the labour of years, and be ripened by sober experience. Also, that it must be interwoven with the usages of the people, be engrafted on their habits, customs, and manners, and correspond to the wants of the present times. Spain, though freed from her enemy, has still much to conquer within herself; great debility and confusion yet reign there. She presents to the mind, the idea of a deep and dreary chaos, difficult to reduce to order, unless the plans of the architect be clear and comprehensive, and his powers equal to the object to which he aspires. To draw order and arrangement from this chaotic confusion, is a work of gigantic nature; and it remains to be proved, whether the king, with this constitution in his hand, one decided in a hasty manner, founded on many principles of the French revolution, at variance with the most powerful orders of the state, and uncongenial to the habits and prejudices of the people, will be able to perform so important task. As before observed, the constitution of Britain, was not the work of a month, or of a year; it was formed out of the experience and wisdom of ages, and matured by unremitting care,

and by a constant progression of improvement. If any thing proves its excellence, it is, that the French now seek to imitate it, and that, throughout the long and tremendous hurricane, by which we have been threatened, our laws and constitution, have been seen, as seated on a rock, against which the boisterous billows of faction have broke their force, and as a superiour being, shielding us from that storm, which has laid so many other nations in ruins.

As far as the constitution of Spain relates to Spanish America, many of its clauses are not only opposed to common justice, but are likely to prove the causes of continual discord and dissention. Such are articles 18 and 22, which exclude from the rights of citizenship, and from even that of being included in a governmental census, all classes of persons, who may, in the remotest manner, be derived, or reputed to be derived, from African blood; so that all the mixtures of whites and Indians with the former, and many Indians who have passed for mulattoes, in order to be exempt from tribute, as well as many coloured families, who have been free for many generations, constituting the most hardy and industrious of the lower orders, are divested of this most sacred of all rights. And let it again be well considered, that this privation extends to a numerous, rich, and respectable, class of citizens, for they are all artists, artificers, and farmers; so that whilst, in Spain, even the gypsies are granted the full rights of citizens, in Spanish America, some millions of its most useful population, are stripped of that right, because a drop of African blood circulates in their veins, notwithstanding it may have long ago been absorbed, by successive mixtures with whites and In-

dians. Were this clause to be carried into effect, in Spanish America, it would create more confusion and more animosity, than the most arbitrary imposts forcibly levied by the crown. The public offices, besides, would be filled with nothing but tables of genealogy. Little do the Spaniards of the 18th century recollect, what has been their own origin, particularly those provinces bordering on the Mediterranean. Little do they reflect, that the best times of Spain, were those when she was in the hands of the Moors; and, that if she has yet any remains of architecture, tillage, civilization, and even courage, it is from them that they are derived.

Such is article 23, by which persons of the above description, by not being citizens, are excluded from the right of voting for members of the municipality. Article 25, which deprives of the rights of citizenship, all labourers receiving wages, by which, not only the casts are excluded, but also the greatest part of the Indians, who, having been deprived of their lands by the conquest, now cultivate them for their dispossessors. Articles 27, 35, and 75, purporting, that citizens only, with the exercise of certain rights, can be electors, and elected as deputies for the Cortes. Such is article 92, which besides requires for each deputy an annual income, proceeding from fixed property, by which the Indians are excluded, as the laws deprive them of the means of acquiring any. Article 91, by which a residence in America of seven years, confers the right of being elected deputy, by which the Americans will be eventually excluded, from the greater influence of the Europeans who may go over and settle there. Article 30, by which it is stated, that the scale of population, which is to regulate the number

of representatives for Spain, is to be established by the census list of 1797, the largest ever made; and consequently, not including the ravages of the present war; but with regard to America, the basis is to be a census, hereafter made. Article 222, which stipulates, two ministers for the great continent of America, and six for Spain. Article 231, which says, that out of forty counsellors of state, twelve only are to be Americans.

"The experience of Venezuela," says the editor of El Español, "practically proves, that this constitution, which the Spaniards seek to establish by force of arms, may be *liberty* in Spain, but it is a mere *slavery* in America. With the constitution in his hand, Monteverde has been able to kill, persecute, imprison, and commit all kinds of horrors, which have eventually caused a new revolution in Venezuela; and with the constitution before his eyes, Venegas has acted in such a manner, as to receive the name of Tiberius, in the loyal city of Mexico. It is consequently evident, that in practice, the constitution, with all its apparent equality, leaves the American provinces in a condition very inferiour to those of Spain; and it thence results, that a war, which has for object to enforce this constitution, without any modification that may constitute it the true support and the defence of the liberty of that country, is a measure, unjust and tyrannical*."

I have gone into these few particulars respecting the constitution of Spain, in order to answer those partizans of the conduct of the Cortes, who conceive, that in nominally admitting the Spanish Americans into a partici-

* El Espanol, No. 43, page 318.

pation of its benefits, as much has been done for them, as they are entitled to. And is this constitution alone, capable of securing the happiness of the ultramarine provinces? What guarantees have they, that even what little it stipulates in their favour, will be duly executed? Without a local assembly, or some other check over the acts of despotic viceroys, it is not possible to expect, at such a distance, impartial justice; for even the constitution, a general indult, and the liberty of the press, have been suspended at the will of the Spanish chiefs, on the most trivial pretexts. And from this, where is the appeal? At a distance of 2000 leagues, and before a national legislature, filled with rancour and prejudice. A viceroy abroad, even with this constitution in his hand, will be as much a tyrant as before: since the governing system is the same, since he has the command of the military, influences all the inferiour departments, and to no one, is answerable for his conduct. The constitution proclaims, that the nation is the reunion of all the Spaniards of both hemispheres, and that all are equal. Yet in so doing, part of the most interesting population of Spanish America, is excluded from the right of citizenship, and the disproportion in the general legislature, is great. Article 27, states, "that the Cortes are a reunion of all the deputies representing the nation," and can any thing be more ridiculous, than that one or two hundred deputies, are to be annually sent over from Spanish America and the Philipine islands, to meet a body of men in Europe, with whom their interests materially clash? What respectable man, however patriotic, would run the risk of a long voyage, and undergo every inconvenience, to serve his constituents; and then, see, that prejudice and partiality

carry every thing before them? And, besides, the expence! If Spanish America, for example, has 143 deputies in the Cortes, their salary alone, amounts to 1,706,000 dollars. And in case of a war, how are they to come? Perhaps, nothing was ever dreamt of, more extravagant, than this manner of governing two parts of one empire, with an immense ocean between. The American deputies were sensible of this fact, and they, consequently, protested on behalf of their constituents.

"Of little," says the editor of El Español, "has the experience of the whole world, served in its formation. The same principles of liberty wrongly understood, which the French made fashionable, but of which, they are now ashamed, are what form the free or *liberal* part of the Spanish constitution. The same intolerance which oppressed Europe, four centuries ago, has therein dictated those articles, in which the enemies of excessive liberty, now glory. The royal power, is therein encumbered with inconsistent chains; and there, religious tyranny, still appears with the dagger in its hand. On one side, the fountain of the laws, is exposed to be troubled and soiled, by the multitude by which it is surrounded; and on the other, the people are deprived of a most sacred right—viz. that of a direct influence in the nomination of their representatives."*

§ The late Cortes of Spain, have spent most of their time, in wandering in pursuit of visionary theories, as did the revolutionists of France. Instead of correcting abuses, by those safe and cautious steps, which gradually introduce reform without ruin; which may fit society for that

* El Espanol, No. 46, page 190.

better state of things, and which, by not attempting impossibilities, may enlarge the circle of human happiness, they, equally, formed the mad project of throwing down every thing at once, trusting to their own judgment and experience, to replace it. Much, as had the Spanish governing system to reform, its defects were more owing to the despotism of the ancient kings, and a want of a proper definition and security of the rights of the subjects; and certainly, its reconstruction was a difficult task, during a period of war and confusion, when every thing was in ferment. The greatest abuses, the most galling to the people and debilitating to the state, were in perfect contradiction to the ancient laws of the realm; and to their more immediate removal, the efforts of the government, ought to have been directed. A reform in Spanish America, was the most urgent of all the duties of the Cortes, for there still existed, whatever the most subtle tyranny could devise, to torment and oppress an unoffending people. Circumstances imperiously demanded, that the new legislature should review the grounds on which the war had been commenced, and that on this point, they should adopt and pursue, with firm sincerity and good faith, a conduct friendly and impartial. The Spanish Americans, had a right to demand and receive, a reparation consonant to the injuries they had so long sustained; and the fraternal voice of the Cortes, ought to have resounded to the furthest shores of Columbia, and their accents ought not to have been equivocal. They ought to have been pure, sincere, and just, and as emanating from the hearts of unbiassed patriots. The more they were blended with feelings of affection and sensibility, the more effect they would have produced in the quarter to which they were

directed; and the more interest they would have excited in those, who, for the first time, heard the voice of reason and justice. The situation of Spanish America, and the outrages there committing, opened a wide and interesting field for deliberation, as involving some of the choicest interests of their common country, on which it was impossible to decide well, without unprejudiced coolness. They ought to have left the helm, to the guidance of reason and disinterested philanthropy.

Every people have a right to be well governed, they have also, defined interests as well as rights; and it is the sacred duty of the general legislature to whom they belong, to attend to these points. The imagination, when warmed by discontent, often bestows on a good which is withheld, advantages much greater than the reality would justify, or reason warrant; but certainly in the pretensions of the Spanish Americans, there was nothing that amounted to more, than the just feelings of human nature. Their repeated applications to the legislature at home, for redress and reform, had been treated with neglect and disdain; till at last, reason and experience forbade them, to continue their confidence. Long after the invasion of the French, the American bosom still glowed with ardent affection; every section was interested for Ferdinand, and every inhabitant was indignant at the treachery he had experienced. All, beheld the political birth of Spain, with sincere gladness; they thought their own, was equally at hand. But, still, they beheld their old systems continue, and their old privations and restraints, were still the same. They still beheld themselves governed by an arbitrary chief, whose powers were not only deemed contrary to the common principles of liberty, but had be-

come an engine of oppression, alike galling and vexatious. They appeal, and are treated with disdain. In the bold and determined language of freemen, they manifest their wrongs, and seek that legal and consistent remedy within their reach, and war is declared against them. The Cortes of Spain assemble, under professions which revived their hopes, and again their great and pressing claims, are treated with contempt. They arm in their own defence, and are condemned as rebels, and even the animated manner in which they repel aggressions, furnishes additional motives to Spain, to perpetuate the horrors into which she had inconsiderately rushed. Influenced by vindictive passions, the agents of Spain, recur rather to artifice and force, than to the guidance of reason; and their hostility was consequently exerted in a cruel and insidious policy, which unfeelingly doomed individuals to chains, and involved them in ruin, without having any tendency to effect any national object. They only sought to indulge a malignant and unprofitable revenge, till at last, every remnant of affection, was torn asunder.

The Cortes calmly beheld this storm, which had long been gathering, burst upon them with a fury which spread desolation wherever it reached; and they heard of scenes of the greatest misery and suffering, without being moved. They looked, with cold composure, on a war, which took its origin in nothing less than a flagrant violation of the most sacred rights, and even in an infringement of national justice. Not once, was a cordial disposition manifested, to enquire into, or strike at the root of these evils, or to establish, why they ought to continue. Error is the portion of humanity, the Spanish Americans might have erred; if so, their error ought to have been

made manifest, before they were wantonly butchered. The shocking barbarities committed, added motives of resentment and humanity to those of national interest, and were the Cortes alone deaf to these calls? I, again, leave the impartial of the whole world, to judge of those horrors which must follow the licentiousness of a soldiery, spread through a rich and feeble country; and I again ask them, whether that profusion of blood and treasure, must not be condemned as idle and useless, when expended for an object, that could be attained, in a more safe and humane manner? It was not a cruel and destructive war, that could put an end to those political divisions, which, besides poisoning the source of human felicity, annihilate those sweet affections which attach members of one common country to the other; and which, bringing debility to the state, plant the most deadly hate, where nature, and a similarity of language, origin, and early habits, had sown the seeds of harmony. This was not the way to revive those natural sympathies, nor was this a plan, likely to enkindle any latent spark of attachment, that might linger in the bosoms of those, who so lately prided themselves on belonging to Spain.

The contest of Spain with her ultramarine provinces, certainly exhibits one of those singular cases of popular delusion, which infecting first the national legislature, afterwards spreading through many blasses of the community, and gaining strength by its extravagance, points out the fatal consequences, which follow a deviation from those sure and moral principles of rectitude and moderation, which ought to actuate us in our conduct to fellow-beings. Influenced by the contagion of party feeling, the war in Spanish America, took that colouring at

home, which the monopolists of Cadiz sought to give it; and the asperity which so frequently mixed in the debates of the Cortes, was a certain index of the growing exasperation they felt, on the dread of losing their gains. In popular governments, the representatives of the people, may, generally, be considered as a mirror reflecting the opinions of their constituents; but, the Cortes, rather reflected the passions of the trading interests, amongst whom they had taken refuge; and their deliberations were decided, by principles, which could not exist, unless under the dominion of blind infatuation. The conduct of the Spanish government, relating to the ultramarine provinces, may, consequently, be considered, rather as the effort of a party, than the free, regular, and deliberate act of the nation, who may certainly be pronounced as perfectly ignorant of the question, of the real grounds on which the war has been continued, or the immediate and chief points of the contest. Neither can Spain, generally, be acquainted with the extent of that rigid and compulsive system, to which the Spanish Americans have been subjected, or with the horrors to which they have been exposed. Scarcely masters of their conduct, the Cortes were, indeed, sometimes, impelled by a furious multitude; but it was on so important an occasion as this, that they ought to have vindicated their own rights, in order to do justice to a suffering party, and to evince their sincerity and zeal. But in fact, they were not disposed to extend their salutary influence to Spanish America, or be the means of introducing such political principles and practice, as might tend to the improvement and regeneration of her inhabitants, and remove from their shoulders, the galling weight under

which they had long groaned. War was the only means to which they chose to resort, and Neros were commissioned to enforce unconditional subjection, by burning the towns of an unoffending people, and pouring desolation over their ravaged plains.

§ With what truth, and with what justice, might not the Spanish Americans, then, have addressed themselves, in the following manner, to the government of the Peninsula, and to all those who contributed to the horrors by which they were surrounded.—The first discoverers and settlers of this vast country, brought with them, and transmitted to their posterity, all the privileges and immunities, that, at any time, have been enjoyed by the people of Spain. These were secured to them, on the faith of kings, and sanctioned by the most solemn legislative acts. Yet we, their descendents, strenuously manifest to you, that, gradually, by the despotism of our kings, as well as by the corruption of their ministers, we had been divested of the enjoyment of our charters and prerogatives, till at last, we had been dragged into a system of government, that could be compared to nothing else, but a degraded state of vassalage. That we have long complained of our restraints and privations, but they have been aggravated, by pointed contempt and disdain, notwithstanding which, we have not failed to evince our sincere allegiance, and the veneration we had to our rightful and unfortunate monarch. That, bent down by oppression, and fatigued by the domestic calamities by which we were harassed, we conceived, that in moments of peril and uncertainty, the administration of our own concerns, was safer in our own hands, than in the grasp of arbitrary despots; and that by virtue of our own inherent rights,

and in accord with the example of our sister provinces of the Peninsula, we changed our form of government, without varying our allegiance, or ceasing to be liege and faithful subjects of the same monarch, to whom we always belonged. That, in so doing, our object was to promote our own security, and to remove the galling shackles by which we were bound. That for this, a cruel and devastating war, was declared against us.

That, whereas, the power, but not the justice, the vengeance but not the wisdom of Spain, the same which, of old, nearly stripped this country of its primitive population, now pursues their guiltless children and the other races, who, in the course of time, have been blended with them. And whereas, this land on which we now live, was purchased by the toil and treasure, or acquired by the blood and valour of our venerable progenitors, who in many cases, shared their fortunes with the daughters of its ancient possessors, to us they bequeathed the dear-bought inheritance; to our care and protection they consigned it, and the most sacred obligations are upon us, to transmit the glorious purchase, unfettered by undue power, and unclogged by galling shackles, to our innocent and beloved offspring. From fatal experience, we begin to know the value of those precious rights, for which our forefathers lavished their blood and treasure, which they handed down to their descendants, but which, our invaded laws, could no longer secure, The time is now come, when a boundless continent, inhabited by seventeen millions of people, can no longer submit, to have their being at the arbitrary will of a licentious minister, or basely yield to the despotism of European chiefs, bent only on their own aggrandizement,

and our debasement. We ask no more than a form of government, suited to our circumstances, and congenial to our wants. We do not seek to cease to be subjects, but we will, no longer, be the tools of arbitrary power. We revere the land from whence we derive our origin, but we cannot, unmoved, behold the sacred inheritances we have derived from nature, thus snatched from us. We have beheld our charters, which ought to have served as a sacred barrier against the encroachments of tyranny, mutilated and trampled to the ground; and we now seek to replace them, on their ancient basis. We only demand the right of being governed by our own assemblies, in the articles of taxes and internal police—a right we have never yielded up. We ask no more, than that practical equality, which our ancient laws, reason, and even recent edicts, give us the authority to claim. We ask for just and equitable laws, but we assert, that no man is bound, in conscience, to obey any; in the formation of which, he has not given his consent, in person or by representative. We cannot but express our concern, that in praying for the interposition of the Cortes of Spain, in favour of our violated rights, and to relieve us from our galling burdens, we have not met with that attention our situation and services deserved, and we further declare, that the rigorous prosecutions by information, which we have so often witnessed amongst us, are insupportable grievances on the people. In short, we solemnly avow, that the war carried on against us, is a war of aggression, and that the justice of our resistance, consequently, cannot be questioned, as far as self-preservation and indispensable necessity, can furnish motives to take up arms. We deplore the horrors and ravages, by

which we are surrounded, but they did not originate with us. As citizen-soldiers, we know, and approve the cause for which we are fighting. We lament the calamities, by which the bosom of our common country, is rent, and the course of barbarity, practised against us. We appeal to that God, who searcheth the hearts of men, for the rectitude of our intentions: and, in his holy presence, we declare, that we are not moved by any hasty symptoms of anger and revenge; so, through every change of fortune, we will adhere to the same determination, of laying down our arms, as soon as our freedom and happiness are safely secured, and properly guaranteed.—

§ The object of the preceding details, has been to place the Spanish American question, in a proper point of view, and to state, from the best attainable data, the origin and causes of those unfortunate dissentions, which have, so long, desolated the South Columbian continent. In carrying my reader through the various stages of this complicated dispute, and after giving him an idea of the degraded state in which the inhabitants of that country, had been kept, I have particularly endeavoured to convey a just conception of the redress sought, and the manner in which it was denied. I have pointed out the defects of that constitution, which, from being ill-balanced, can never be permanent; manifesting that, though in its formation, the Spanish Americans have not had an adequate part, they are, nevertheless, warred upon, because they refuse to give it, an unmodified admission. I have proved the war carried on against them, to be a war of aggression, to have orignated in a manifest violation of principles of right and equity; and I have stated, that it is accompanied by horrors, which chill the feelings of

humanity. These elucidations were necessary, to a fair view of the question; and I will now proceed to prove the necessity, nay, the bounden duty, in which both Spain and England stand, of allaying these feuds, by the rationalmeans of mediation, and not by a continuation of horrors. It will also appear, that from the commanding attitude of the latter, as well as to enhance the general triumphs of peace, she is particularly called upon, at the present moment, to use her most strenuous exertions, to stop the ravages of civil war in a country, bound to her by a sacred alliance, and formerly, the object of her repeated offers and warm assurances. That it is time to put an end to devastations, which have already spread widely in this fair portion of the globe, which have converted the seat of quiet, improvement, and riches, into scenes of carnage, anarchy, and destruction; and have, besides, reduced the inhabitants to the greatest distress. I shall found my arguments on the grounds of humanity and justice, and then support them, by collateral considerations of policy and expediency.

It cannot but afford rational and sincere satisfaction to the benevolent mind, that in Europe, a period has been put to a long and arduous contest; that the great effusion of human blood is stopped, and that a more splendid scene opens on the view, which, like another morning-star, promises the brighter era of a new day. England had long risked her existence, for the preservation of her station in the scale of empires, and has, at last, by rescuing millions from the hand of oppression, laid the foundation, it is to be hoped, of a great and lasting peace. Arrived at the close of this anxious struggle for the liberties of mankind, she cannot but look around and feel

regret, that in any other quarter of the world, however distant, the same horrors yet continue; and having already extended the olive branch over convulsed Europe, she must naturally reason, that it will not be less honourable and less just, to spread the blessings of peace and regeneration, over Spanish America, There, as lately in Europe, the ocean has been ruffled by a long and tremendous hurricane, and it is impossible for the waves to subside on its agitated expanse, unless the discordant winds are first lulled into harmony and quiet. Whilst in this quarter of the globe, all is harmony and peace, in the West, war yet rages, under the most savage form. And can England, loaded with the blessings of all Europe, be unmindful of these horrid scenes, in Spanish America?

Spain, also, by this time, having gained her object, and succeeded in freeing her territory from invasion, is particularly called upon, at the present hour, to feel towards her sister provinces of America, that sympathy for their distressed condition, with which she lately sought to inspire England, and the rest of the world. Warned by a superiour voice, it now becomes her, with calm judgment and impartial feelings, to review the causes of these unfortunate dissentions, of which, if the grounds are found on her side, and emanating from a want of liberality and just redress, it is her duty and her interest, to relinquish a war now carrying on for an object, unjust and inconsistent; and which, even if attained, can only be preserved, with great difficulty and expence. Above all, it is an obligation both sacred and pressing, to exchange the sword for the olive-branch, and instead of incurring fresh expences, in prosecuting hostilities, both unnatural and

ruinous, she is bound to look to her own reform, to organize her own government, to retrieve her own credit, and especially, to remove that anarchy and confusion, with which she is secretly devouring within herself. The great body of the Spanish people, is fatigued and worn out by complicated calamities, experienced during their long and harassing invasion; and instead of weakening herself by those fresh equipments her papers already announce, and the monopolists of Cadiz so intemperately urge, Spain is called upon to use measures of conciliation, and on a solid and lasting basis, to re-establish those brotherly and amicable relations, which reciprocal interests, and a mutual bond, produce between kindred states, who by a fair and equal interchange of good offices and sincere fellowship, seek to promote the happiness, prosperity and security of each other. The situation of the Spanish monarchy, and the experience of the past, require, that the various parts of the empire, should have their respective interests, so justly defined and appreciated, that justice may be rendered to all. In ascertaining the various rights of each, the supreme authority ought to be enabled to apportion out the respective share of burdens, which public exigence may require, and that quantum of free enterprise, whereby the interests of one portion of the community, may not be sacrificed to those of the other. Spanish America, standing on an equal footing with the mother country, is entitled to the fair reward of industry and personal sacrifice, and to such a governing system, as may promote her happiness. This requital, she has a right to demand, and she ought to obtain it, in defiance of private influence or arbitrary power. The very essence of every political compact, is, the reciprocity of

advantage, conferred and received, by each part of the united body. The advantages Spain receives from her union with Spanish America, are great and manifold; the latter, is conquently, entitled to a full requital. As an integral part of the empire, and equal in every sense, the inhabitants of the ultramarine provinces of Spain, have a right to sue for all those privileges and enjoyments, which those of the Peninsula can boast, and considering that the due administration of government, is the strongest cement of all communities, it belongs to them to insist on receiving such a one, as may raise them from their late abject condition, promote personal freedom, and invigorate all the operations of agriculture and commerce. Scattered on an extensive surface of country, with an intervening ocean, the inhabitants of Spanish America, are possessed of the right of having within themselves, the means of redress and appeal, and particularly, a check on arbitrary power; since from the bad administration of government, more detriment results of the people governed, than if the plan was in itself defective. If therefore, the present cruel and rash hostility of Spain, is intended to prevent this reasonable and just restoration of rights, it is an iniquitous league against liberty and justice, and the high minded generosity of the British character, can never applaud it, or continue to behold it with cold indifference.

It may, perhaps, by some, be thought too late to enquire into the justice of the grounds and principles, on which the war waging against Spanish America, commenced; or to take this general review of the subject. It certainly is, if Spain will no longer listen to reason, and if England refuses to embrace the opportunity now before her, of putting an end to scenes, which the mind cannot contemplate, without emotion. The war carrying

on by Spain against her offspring, is like the arbitrary and imperious interference of a father, attempting to meddle and dictate in the private affairs of a son, who has long ago, laid aside the trammels of minority and dependence, and who has already grown to man's estate.—The people of Spanish America, may at least, rest their justification in the assurance, that through their deputies in the Cortes, as well as by the repeated offers of their insurrectional chiefs, they have made every effort for some rational and equitable compromise, and that if these horrors still continue, it is not they who are to blame In the complication of distress, to which Spanish America has been reduced, mutual sacrifices must be made on all sides; a disposition to lay aside jealousy and ill-will, must be manifested, and a liberal basis of perfect reciprocity, must be established. This is the moment for the establishment of just and equal principles, and whilst England contemplates with satisfaction, the benefits which the close of a tremendous revolution in Europe, insures to the world, she cannot, without an impeachment of her justice and humanity, consent to the prosecution of an unjust war, accompanied by horrors, equal to those of the tomahawk and scalping knife, which stained the contest with North America. If also, peace is not restored between Spain and Spanish America, in an honourable and consistent manner, it is much to be feared, that the rich harvest of success, and the means of national felicity, which the former has obtained through the perseverance and exertions of England, will be blasted and rendered abortive. And what is the state of warfare, which does not admit of explanation and adjustment, if the parties are only cordial?

After the hostilities which have now been carrying on

for more than four years, between European and American Spain; after the numerous examples of cruelty and revenge, which, during that time, have occurred; after all the bitterness of party spirit, has poured itself out into severe invective, and such a general exasperation has been excited, it cannot be expected, that Spain by herself, will ever be able to tranquillize her injured and irritated American provinces; and much less, can it be thought, that in her present exhausted state, she can reduce them by force of arms. It is not to be supposed, after a war, in which human passions and prejudices, have been let loose and roused to the highest pitch of phrenzy; that the distrust, inveteracy, and hostile feelings of individuals, will easily subside; or that men, who have so long been goaded with the spur of ingratitude and injustice, will soon stifle their resentment, and forget the recent wrongs and insults, to which they have been exposed. Alive to the oppression of such a system of policy and of government, as that of which an outline has been already presented; one, that with regard to the Indians, has made the interval that has intervened since their conquest, little else than a blank and dismal void,—a series of cruelty, drudgery and hardships; and with regard to the Creoles, was illiberal, cramping and tyrannical, how can it be imagined, that such a people, who have been driven to the extreme of asserting their rights, and arming in their own defence, will again sit down under new aggravations, and suffer their chains to be rivetted afresh? How can it be expected, that those who have seen their loyalty insulted; who have felt the horrors of an unjust war waged against them; who have beheld their most solemn capitulations not only infringed, but

their violation sanctioned by the organ of government; and who behold the yet reeking ruins of their burnt towns and ravaged plains, can place confidence in their oppressors, trust to their offers, or receive terms, unless through the mediation of a third power? During the crisis of so great a political spasm, as that which now convulses the Spanish American people, how can it be expected, that social order can be restored, by those hands which are so deeply tinged in blood; or how can this people be made contented and happy, unless it is, by firm and efficient laws, being secured and guaranteed to them? And in the actual posture of affairs, can this be effected by Spain alone?

Although, in the course of this exposé, general allusion has been made, to the cruel and inhuman war now prosecuted by the agents of Spain, against the inhabitants of Spanish America, little idea can be, nevertheless, entertained, by the British public, to whom this appeal is made, of its extent, and of the complicated calamities, with which that unfortunate country overflows. Under the plea of reducing *insurgents*, every species of excess is committed; and particularly in New Spain, it nearly amounts to a war of extermination, one, that in the annals of history, is unequalled in cruelty and wanton havoc.—Yet the Spaniards begin to find, that opinions, deep-rooted as they are in the minds of the people, cannot be extracted by the sword, or overawed by scaffolds and persecutions. This is a war of *brigandage*, worse than occurred in St. Domingo, and with the exception of blood hounds, bears every feature of the cruelties the French exercised there, against the coloured natives, of which, they afterwards felt the dreadful retaliation Fire

and the sword are alternately, applied; parents are murdered by their children, and brothers by the hands of brothers. It were, here, possible to paint scenes, at which human nature would recoil. Alas! of what crimes is not man capable, when the torch of civil discord is once lighted up, and all the endearing and social ties which sweeten life, are made to yield to phrenzy and political fury! A respectable letter, dated Mexico, February 18, 1811, observes, "*the unheard of cruelties are such, that posterity will suppose them fabulous.*"

Great, however as are the horrors, and immense the surrounding ruin that has been occasioned, their details seldom or ever meet the eye of the British public, from our prints containing only partial extracts from those of Cadiz, in which, for the most part, the occurrences of Spanish America, are mutilated or misrepresented.—These horrors, are, nevertheless, confessed in the Mexico gazettes, in private correspondence from that city, and frequently, the most horrid butcheries, constitute the boasts of Spanish chiefs, in their despatches to the viceroy. It would not be possible, here, to detail the numerous and extensive cruelties committed by the Spaniards, since this inhuman war commenced, or to enumerate the scenes of devastation. But I have conceived it my duty, to subjoin a variety of facts, that may at least explain the nature of this warfare, and evince in what manner it is carrying on. Those relating to Mexico, are taken from government gazettes, printed in that city, and indeed all are substantiated by corresponding documents, principally obtained through Spanish channels.

In examining the grounds on which so many cruelties have been committed in Mexico, the proclamation of

Viceroy Venegas, deserves the first place. The following are extracted articles:

1st. "All rebels who have resisted the king's troops, are criminals, and subject to a military jurisdiction."

6th. "All insurgent chiefs, in whatever number they may be, are to be shot, without allowing them more time, than to prepare for death in a christian manner."

10th. "Ecclesiastics taken with arms in their hands, to be executed in the same manner."

Article 2, authorises the division or detachment making prisoners, to execute these orders. The scenes which this and similar orders have given rise to, in such a country as the one to which I allude, are such as would disgrace the annals of a Tiberius.

Dn Ignacio Garcia Revollo, in his despatch to the viceroy, dated Querétaro, November 23, 1811, recommends Serjeant Francisco Montes, "as deserving the grade of an officer, for amongst other gallant actions, *he killed one of his own nephews, who making himself known to him, received for answer, that he knew no nephew amongst insurgents.*"

Commandant Bustamante, in his despatch to the viceroy, dated Zitaquaro, October 23, 1811, recommends Mariano Ochoa, a dragoon, "*who in pursuing the insurgents, had a brother who knelt to him to beg his life, which he took, with his own hand.*"

When two such acts as these, become the boast of a despatch to a viceroy, I leave my reader to judge of the other atrocities; but of these, history has no parallel.

General Truxillo, in a similar despatch, boasts, that he admitted a flag of truce from Hidalgo, composed of

various persons, in front of his line that was drawn up, and having received from them a banner of the Virgin Mary, "*he ordered his soldiers to fire on the bearers, by which means, he expected not to be troubled any more with them.*" The persons composing the flag of truce, were thus, all murdered. Even the Cadiz papers, cried out against this atrocity.

General Calleja, informs the viceroy, that in the affair of Aculco, he had one man killed and two wounded; but that he put to the sword, 5000 seduced Indians, and that their total loss amounted to 10,000. *The most of these were Indians, kneeling for mercy!* The same general entered Goanaxoato, with fire and sword, where 14,000 old men, women, and children, perished, and this, because the insurgent army had taken up its quarters there, and, by a timely retreat, had escaped his fury. In his despatch, he adds, "*To-morrow and the following days, I intend to shoot a quantity of the criminals who have been taken of the insurgent army, of all grades, even up to a brigadier.*" This measure, was afterwards approved by the viceroy himself. Calleja soon after, received from the Cadiz Regency, the grade of *mariscal de campo*, and the viceroy the cross of Charles III. as remunerations for this distinguished service.

In the action of Zamora, all the prisoners were, also, put to the sword.

Feliu, deputy in the Cortes for Lima, speaking therein on the proposed mediation of England, observes, "that in order to prove the tyranny with which the inhabitants of Mexico, are treated, it would suffice to present some of the measures, daily taken by the governors in that country." He adds, "I will here only mention the 2d

and 11th articles of the proclamation, issued by Brigadier Dn Joze de la Cruz, on the 23d February, 1811. Article 2, imposes the punishment of death, on all persons of every class and condition, who within twenty-four hours, do not deliver up all the arms of which they may be possessed, including axes and knives. To forbid any one to carry on their persons, even a small knife, has been before seen; but to deprive people of knives for their domestic use, under the penalty of death, is what even Murat did not do in Madrid, or has been before heard of. Article 11, orders, that a tenth of all the inhabitants shall be shot, of whatever town or city; that may be known to have given provisions to an insurgent, or where any intercourse has been had with them, even between a father and his son:" and, " if thus," subjoins the deputy, " a faithful father, attempts to bring back a wandering son, is he, on this account, to die? Well and good; but is it not the extreme of barbarity, that for this same reason, the tenth of a whole town is to be shot?" These were the arguments, the American deputies brought forward to urge a mediation, whilst England, with all her weight of influence and services, was merely asking a favour.

Had these been threats only consigned to paper, had they been the hasty breathings of revenge, but barren in deeds, they might, perhaps, have been overlooked by the politician, who considers the highly increased degree of acrimony, which had been infused into the dispute, and the general character of the nation from whom they issued. But when we see the terrible terms and latitude of such decrees, carried into full and frequent effect; when we see threats, horrid in their wording,

still aggravated by the inhuman manner in which they are executed, and when we, at the same time, reflect what this unfortunate people is contending for, the politician, as well as the moralist, and the philosopher, cannot but shudder and exclaim, with the venerable Las Casas, speaking of the first conquerors, "*that these are not men, but devils in human flesh.*" This threat of General Cruz, was executed in two towns on the Lake of Chapala, where he shot every tenth inhabitant, and then burnt their dwellings, for having harboured the insurgents, when, possibly, they could not resist.

This same General Cruz, thirsting as it were for blood and destruction, had already burnt the town of the Irapuato, in which the insurgents had resisted his attacks, and made a public parade of shooting six priests; in short, wherever he went, indiscriminate murder, fire, and desolation, followed his footsteps. The prisoners who are not put to the sword, in cold blood, were sent to perish in the dungeons of Mexico, or in those of St. Juan de Ulua.

Captain Blanco, in July, 1811, announces, "that as soon as he entered Matehuala, and the insurgents saw they were attacked on all sides, and the havoc made amongst them, they fled into the fields, but his troops eager for blood (encarnizada) pursued, till they found no more to pursue.

Dn Caetano Quintero, 29th August, 1811, says, "that in the attack of Amoladeras, which lasted two hours, no quarter was given."

Commandant Villaescusa, 21st December, 1811, observes, "that the rebels of Sn Ignacio, headed by an ancient officer, hoisted a flag of truce, and their chief lieutenant Hernandez, having expressed a desire to parley with

Montaño, chief of the Opata Indians, a Spanish soldier named Manuel Ramirez, feigned he was the person, assuring Hernandez, that if he would advance in front of the lines, without arms, he would do the same." On their meeting, Hernandez was treacherously murdered.

General Cruz, in his letter to Hidalgo, 28th February, 1811, says, "that many thousands of men, taken by the king's troops, were then groaning, in prisons, waiting their last end." Yet few were taken in the field of battle, or otherwise apprehended, they being, in general, shot or hung on the spot.

General Calleja, from Zitaquaro, which he had just taken, after a stout resistance, writes the viceroy, *that he will make it disappear from the face of the earth*; and in conformity to this resolve, he issued a proclamation, whose articles, in substance, are as follows.

1. That all the property, public or private, belonging to the inhabitants of this town and jurisdiction, shall be confiscated to the crown, and the Indians deprived of their privileges.

2. Likewise the property of all those Spaniards, who have joined in the insurrection, or were absent when the king's troops entered.

5. This faithless and criminal town, that three distinct times, has resisted the arms of the king, being to be rooted up, burnt and destroyed, the inhabitants of every age and sex, shall leave it within six days.

6. All the individuals and families who may leave this town, shall have a certificate, bearing their name, descent, number of each, and day of their departure, it being well understood, that whoever may be found without this certificate, or remain in the town, longer than the time prefixed, having no weighty impediment

to allege therefore, shall be treated as a rebel, and shot, &c. &c.

The above passages, principally extracted from official despatches and Mexico gazettes, will convey a good idea of the nature of the warfare, now carrying on in New Spain. It is not only because such scenes occur, that the feelings of humanity recoil, but because they should afterwards constitute the public boast of a commander of a division or detachment. A lieutenant commanding twenty-five men, can shoot his *insurgents*, and then pride himself for so doing, in his report to his commanding officer. To such a pitch has the phrensy at last risen, that clergymen, chaplains of regiments, friars, &c. are now shot and murdered, with no more ceremony, than laymen, notwithstanding this is not only against the canons, but also, in direct opposition to the constitution of the Spanish monarchy. During the revolutionary struggle of North America, politeness and respect, uniformly accompanied the acts of the contending chiefs. Lord Cornwallis, always addressed General Washington by the title of Excellency; and humane and personal attentions, were never forgotten. But here, men who have recurred to the only means left them of asserting rights, which in the abstract must be deemed just, are murdered like banditti, and treated as vagrants. It is melancholy in the extreme, to behold the deadly animosity that has thence arisen, and to contemplate such scenes as result, from indiscriminately putting men to death, whom the chance of war has left in the hands of the victor, and consequently, at his mercy.

It would not be possible, with any degree of accuracy, to point out the extent to which this havoc of hu-

man lives, has been carried, or to convey an exact idea of the general destruction that has been occasioned. The author of the Revolucion de Mexico, has taken some pains to add up the results of an irregular file of fifty-nine daily gazettes of that city, for the years 1811 and 12, principally containing various despatches of commanders, acting in different quarters of the viceroyalty. These few gazettes alone, officially, confess 25,344 insurgents killed, 3556 prisoners, besides 697, shot after surrendry. And this is in addition to a variety of vague terms, such as *the field of battle was covered with the slain—heaps of dead covered the plain, &c.*—to which no numerical amount could be given. I would here ask my reader, to figure to himself, what would be the results of a regular file, complete, from the time the war commenced, up to the present day, that is nearly five years; since, in the fifty-nine numbers above alluded to, the most bloody actions are not contained, and many detached affairs, were never made the subject of a report. With regard to destruction, scarcely a farm is left standing, the cattle, beasts of burden, and implements of agriculture, have all disappeared; and the ravages of two contending armies, have desolated, the hitherto safe and peaceful dwellings of the Mexican people. Agriculture, mining, and commerce, are all at a stand.

The following is an extract of a letter written from Mexico, under a recent date, by a person of whose respectability I can vouch, and it is, also, found in El Español for last February, No. 45. It gives a very good idea of the state of New Spain, and it deserves the more credit, from its author being a person of high station and repute.—" All the commanders of detachments arrived

from Spain, as well as the aids de camp of Venegas, have become rich. Some of those who arrived a year and a half ago, are masters of 80 to 100,000 dollars. T. and C. have had to give considerable securities, before they could leave the kingdom. The first, in consequence of an enormous complication of charges; and the latter, for having robbed a large quantity of money in Guardamino, besides jewels, cattle and produce, belonging to a farm through which he passed with his troops. The simple fact of a merchant being found to be his security, for a sum larger than 80,000 dollars, proves that he has them; and if this is the case, where have they come from?—But why talk about things of such little consequence, when others might be mentioned, which rend the heart. The plague is, at present, desolating this kingdom, wherever the insurrection has left men to be killed. * A. has received a letter from Mexico, in which it is said, that 25,000 persons have been buried without the walls, besides many who have been buried in private; and it adds, that on calculations by no means exaggerated, the loss of the whole kingdom, during the last three years, amounts to *one million of persons.* Two years and some months ago, N. wrote me, that the insurrection was then supposed to have cost 200,000 persons, and at that time, the war was no more than a shadow of what it has been since."

And can the British public, hear of these horrors, and

* The plague in Mexico, originated from the privations incidental to the war, want of provisions, crowded dungeons, &c.; the same as did lately at Dantzic, Dresden, Konnigsberg, &c. owing to their sieges.

still be unmoved? Can the British government behold, with calm indifference, and without an effective effort on their behalf, this unheard of mass of destruction, amongst its faithful and unoffending allies! Can England still look, with obstinate composure, on such a scene?—These accounts to some, may appear magnified, yet they no more than correspond to the result of the Mexico papers I can produce; and they will be found confirmed, through channels which cannot be suspected. When a general can boast in a public report, that with the loss of one man and two wounded, he left 5000 natives extended on the field of battle, it cannot be supposed he was fighting against armed men, but that he had fallen on bands of unarmed Indians, who had collected round the banners of their just rights, but who had nothing to present in their defence, than their naked breasts. Can this be likened to any thing else, than to the entry of Cortes into Mexico? Does not this equal the horrors of an Alva, in the Netherlands?

The editor of El Español, in his last number for April, remarks, "that the war between Spain and her ancient colonies, still continues, under the most shocking symptoms. The Spanish people of the other hemisphere, are still murdering each other, with the greatest fury; and as it happens, in similar cases, the war is carried on, divested of those laws and rules, which diminish its evils, amongst civilized nations. The governors and chiefs, sent out by Spain, are horribly satiating themselves in the blood of that unhappy people, making a parade of cruelties, which even in the most barbarous nations, would excite horror. In one of the last despatches from Mexico, the general, after giving the details of the action, says,

with the most terrific indifference,"—"*Two hundred prisoners are now in the act of being shot, by way of example.*"—Yet this is the confession of a Spaniard, here on the spot, and with whose liberality and veracity we are well acquainted.

§ Nor are these scenes, alone, confined to the viceroyalty of Mexico. Other sections of Spanish America, present similar ones, which if possible, exceed them in horror. Those of Caracas, merit a particular review. I cannot better describe them, than by giving the substance of General Bolivar's manifest, respecting the conduct of General Monteverde and the agents of Spain, dated Valencia, September 20, 1813.—The united provinces of Venezuela, in conformity of their manifest, dated July 30, 1811, containing a full detail of the urgent motives which drove them to such a measure, that is, after war, under every species of aggravations, had been waged against them, by the Cadiz Regency, declared their independence of the mother country. They organized a provisional government, and a desultory war was carried on against them. On the 12th of March, 1813, Caracas, and several other cities of the interiour, were visited with a most dreadful earthquake, which left the former in ruins, and spread consternation throughout the provinces. The clergy, irritated at being deprived of their privileges and immunities, by one of the articles of the new constitution, (that is, they were made subservient to the civil law,) in the confessional and in the pulpit, preached, that this calamity was a signal vengeance from God, for having separated from the mother-country. General Monteverde, at the head of a handful of Spaniards, advanced from Coro, and encouraged by the distress and consternation, so ge-

nerally spread around, and in secret understanding with many Europeans in the capital, marched forward. Most of the inhabitants, were then dispersed in the country, many had fled to the woods for shelter, and all were terrified at the horrors and murders, committed by the agents of the Spanish chiefs, in the progress of their march.

Such was the situation of Venezuela, when on the windward coast, the negroes, both slaves and free, were revolutionized and set loose on the inhabitants, to spread through the country, all kinds of violence and plunder. The towns of Guatiri, Calabozo, and San Juan de los Moros, thereby witnessed the greatest horrors. Many of their peaceful inhabitants, were murdered without more ceremony, than being ordered to kneel down, and others were whipped in the public squares. Thus, Caracas in ruins by a most dreadful earthquake; to the East, alarmed by the black banditti let loose on its defenseless inhabitants; and on the West, threatened by an army, whose numbers had been swelled by fanaticism and seduction, and seeing the only troops of the confederation commanded by a chief who never possessed the public confidence, was under the necessity of capitulating, with General Monteverde, in San Mateo, on 25th July, 1812.

The basis of this ratified convention, was, that the lives, property, and persons of every citizen, should be held sacred; that no one, should be persecuted for the past; general oblivion and amnesty were, in short, granted. No sooner was Monteverde in possession of the town, and the revolutionary troops disarmed, than he put some inhabitants in dungeons, others in irons, and public stocks; parties of dissolute soldiery, were

sent out to different parts of the interiour to collect more; most respectable persons were torn from the arms of their wives and children; many, bound to horses' tails, were led on foot into town, exposed to the scoffs and mockery of the troops; and persons were placed over the victims as keepers, who had been tried during the administration of the late provincial government. Property was seized; outrages and insults, were heaped on many individuals of both sexes, many were cast into hot and damp dungeons, resembling the black-hole at Calcutta; the streets were crowded with unhappy wives, crying out for their husbands, mothers for their sons, and sisters for their brothers. Monteverde and his fellow islanders, the Canarians, feasted on such a spectacle, and rejoiced in the humiliation of the Creoles. Enfuriated by bloody fanaticism, and thirsting for plunder, the Spanish troops, every where forgot the dictates of humanity, and to the desolation caused by one of the severest visitations of nature, every thing that can be committed by a dissolute and uncontrolled soldiery, was added. In this manner, more than 1500 individuals, were thrown into dungeons, though they had rested their personal security, on the faith of a solemn capitulation, regularly exchanged and ratified, and which they considered as binding, even amongst the most uncivilized nations. *

* It can scarcely be thought, that the achievement of the above horrors, was made the subject of a British bulletin, the following is a copy.—

" *Downing-street, Oct.* 5, 1812.

" By accounts from Curacoa and St. Thomas, dated the 5th and 28th August, it appears the City of Caracas capitulated to the Royalist

The walls of the dungeons, into which these unfortunate victims were indiscriminately huddled, were in many places, rent with the late earthquake, and those of La Guira and Puerto Cavello, were a foot deep in water. from being situated near the sea. Some persons were shut up in pontoons and castles, generally without food and medical aid, and this in the hot season of the year. Some were manacled to negroes, to laugh to scorn the equality the late government had proclaimed; others, under a burning sun, were put with their heads in the stocks, in the public squares; and in short, every refinement in cruelty, was practised, as vengeance on some, and to extort money from others. In the night, some were taken out of their cells, and were no more heard of; others were found stabbed in the streets, on the high roads, and in their own houses. Nay, European Spaniards, were heard to cry out, that all the partizans of the revolution, were to be exterminated, and the ignorant and fanatic populace, were led to believe, that the earthquakes would not cease, till they were all extinct.

The above statement is extracted from a public document, addressed to all the nations of the world, and its contents, are more than confirmed, by eye-witnesses who have lately visited London. If my limits permitted me, I could here add, the reports of a French gentleman and of two Englishmen who were on the spot; and, certainly,

Army, under General Monteverde, on the 28th July, and that La Guira surrendered at discretion on the 21st.

"General Miranda is closely imprisoned at the latter place. The greatest distress has been experienced at the Caracas."

Can this be called strict neutrality?

their details exceed those just stated, in their strength of colouring, and in the mention of scenes, which the mind cannot contemplate without the keenest emotion. Many appeals, have been made to the British commanders on the neighbouring stations, to endeavour by indirect means, to stop these and the successive horrors which have followed, but to no effect. They have always answered, that their instructions, "*prohibit, in so pointed a manner, all interference between the contending parties on the main, that they conceive, that no case whatever, can warrant a departure from them.*" Yet can it be considered just, that these horrors and atrocities should be carried on, with the very resources, England has given in trust to Spain, to use against a legal enemy, and to free her territory from invasion? Several pieces which have been printed, assert, that whilst the strictest care was taken to hinder any of the revolutionary parties, from getting even a musket, the governor of Curaçoa supplied General Monteverde with arms. Yet, when Caracas fell, in the manner just described, that same island was not allowed to be an asylum to some most respectable individuals, who were flying from scenes of carnage and desolation. Amongst the sufferers of Caracas, were eight individuals of great respectability and talents, who were put on board a ship, in irons, and sent to Cadiz. They were confined in the hold, during their passage. Amongst them, was the venerable canon of Chili, who by his humane attentions, had made himself known to Lord Camelsford and others, who accompanied Vancouver, in his voyage to the South seas. In vain, did these unfortunate victims, plead the amnesty of a solemn capitulation, it was of no avail.—They implored the humanity of the British minister in Ca-

diz, they were unheard. At length on the 10th of April, 1813, the Cortes decreed, *that it was derogatory to the majesty and dignity of the national congress, to validate a capitulation made with malignant insurgents*; and these sufferers were thus sent to drag a miserable existence, in the prisons of Ceuta. Their friends, indignant at such a breach of national faith and humanity, used every exertion to aid in their escape, which they effected to Gibraltar, where they were delivered up to their persecutors, bound hand and foot, according to recent accounts, from Madrid. I have mentioned these particulars, relating to eight respectable individuals, comprehended in the capitulation made between Generals Monteverde and Miranda, above alluded to, in order to introduce the correspondence, which took place between the governor of Curaçoa, and General Bolivar, in the month of September, 1813, on the subject of some demonstrations made by the first, in favour of suffering Spaniards.—From the great length of these letters, I have placed them in my Appendix, under the head of I, and I now ask the question, whether in cases of this kind, the Creoles are not equally deserving of the interference of our officers, as the Spaniards, who are the aggressors?

§ But, of all the scenes of horror ever before heard of, perhaps the one which has just occurred in Caracas, is the most shocking. The manner, in which the Creoles of that country, were treated by the Spaniards, on their entry, has been just stated, in language by no means corresponding to the reality. These excesses were so great, and from them such fatal consequences were anticipated, that even the audiencia, a court that is composed of Europeans, and has always been one of the stoutest pillars of Spanish tyranny, in America, sent over to the government

at home, a strong remonstrance respecting the conduct of Monteverde and the impolitic horrors committing in Caracas, which may be found in No. 39, of El Español.—Such proceedings, could not fail to excite indignation, and exasperate the minds of an outraged people. The neighbouring section of Santa Fè, which had also asserted its independence, sympathized with the sufferers of Caracas, and resolved to march a force to their relief. Bolivar, at the head of a small band, penetrated from Carthagena by land, a distance of 600 leagues; his numbers increased, as soon as he reached the confines of Venezuela, and he, eventually, regained the country, from which he had lately emigrated, and which had been the tomb of so many fellow citizens. Monteverde retreated to, and shut himself up in Puerto Cavello. He had in his possession, about three or four hundred Creole prisoners. Bolivar sought to effect an exchange for those Spaniards he held, and consequently sent several flags of truce, with proposals. The Spanish commanders of Puerto Cavello, refused to treat with *insurgents*, and threw the bearers of the proposals and flags of truce, into dungeons. At last, Bolivar sent a Spanish officer whom he had taken, but he was again refused, and the commander of La Guira, brought on the ramparts of Puerto Cavello, four Creole officers, whom he had shot in front of the lines of the revolutionary army, and then sent their names, with a threat to continue the same scenes, to its commander. Exasperated at such conduct, Bolivar ordered all the Spanish prisoners, instantly to be shot, which was executed; whereby, upwards of 1300 persons, were murdered in cold blood.—The particulars of this enormous scene, as well as of the horrors now committing, by the armed negroes in the province

of Caracas, will be found in the words of an eye witness, in my Appendix, under the head of J. I feel the greater confidence in inserting this document, from the known abilities and experience of the writer, who has been an eye witness of what he describes. So interesting was this statement of facts considered, that it has been sent to one of our ministers and the Admiralty, by one of the commanders of a station in the West Indies, from whence I have just received it.

However, the most alarming, as well as the most distressing of all the appendages of this unnatural and bloody contest, is, the measure lately resorted to by the agents of Spain, of revolutionizing, freeing, and arming the negroes in Venezuela. Out of a kind of desperation, some of the greatest cut-throats, were commissioned to collect a black banditti, in order to put the whites to the sword, and to carry plunder and violence through all the provinces. In the preceding document, marked J, to which allusion has been just made, a minute account is given, of the manner in which these slaves have been freed and organized into a horde of savages, pouring desolation wherever they go. The full and able manner, in which the fatal consequences that will, eventually, result to our West India islands, from rendering these provinces of the main, the theatres of horror and licentiousness, similar to what has so long deluged the French part of St. Domingo, preclude the necessity of any further remarks in this place; but the present situation of Caracas, now interests every British planter, merchant, or creditor connected with the West Indies, and all are imperiously called upon to arrest this flame of insurrection, before it reaches their own property. With these facts before them, can the ministers of England still

continue to look on with indifference, and can their agents still answer, that no case whatever, will warrant their interference?

In order the better to explain the nature of the war carried on by this black banditti, I here present a copy of one of the commissions given to Captain Joze Rufiño Jorralba, by Boves, one of the chiefs charged with freeing and arming the slaves of the provinces of Caracas. It is translated from the Caracas Gazette, No. 13, for November 29, 1813, and was found on the person of the said Captain Jorralba, when taken a prisoner.—

Don Joze Boves, Commander-in-Chief of the Windward Army, &c. &c. &c.

"By these presents, I commission Captain Joze Rufiño Jorralba, to collect all persons fit for the public service, and placing himself at their head, that he may pursue and follow up all traitors, and punish them with death; it being well understood, that no more time is to be granted to them, than is necessary to say a creed, in order to recommend their souls to their Creator: and directing, at the same time, that all property taken from such traitors, shall be divided between the soldiers who defend the just and holy cause; and the merit thereby acquired by each individual, shall be recommended to the Commander General of the province; and I further require and charge all commanders of His Majesty's troops, to aid him in whatever may be necessary."

(Signed) Joze Tomas Boves.

Head Quarters, Gayabal,
Nov. 1, 1813.

Could it ever have been thought, that the nineteenth century would have witnessed such a commission, given by an individual known only by his crimes, to a captain placing himself at the head of a band of armed negroes? The *traitors*, herein alluded to, are the Creoles, the owners of their country, and the objects of Spanish vengeance from the time of its discovery. The *holy cause*, is pretty well depicted in the description of Monteverde's entry into Caracas, and as may be collected from the contents of the preceding pages. It amounts to a furious and bloody despotism, trampling on every right, and sporting with human life. I leave my reader to judge of the consequences, of a captain commanding a black band, just freed from slavery, by the incentives of plunder and licentiousness, being empowered over the lives of individuals, scattered over a wide and defenceless country, thus leaving them at his mercy, and their property at his will. Some of these results, are also depicted in Document I. But this is not all. As a refinement of cruelty, those who escape the murdering steel of this black banditti, have their ears or noses cut off, or are marked with the letter F (for Ferdinand) on their faces, in the same manner, as they brand cattle, or as the Dutch brand their slaves at Surinam, on the arm.* What monsters, have not been generated, from this unnatural contention!

And does not this remind us of the horrors of the tomahawk and scalping-knife, which once covered the western frontiers of the United States, with so many

* Letter from a respectable commercial house, dated St. Pierre, Martinique, Jan. 30th, 1814; and confirmed through many other channels.

horrors? Does it not also call to our recollection, the speech made by the venerable Earl Chatham, when Lord Suffolk, then Secretary of State, contended in the House of Peers, for the employment of Indians in the war. "Besides its policy and necessity," his Lordship said, "that the measure was, also, allowable on principle, for that it was perfectly justifiable, to use all the means that God and nature had put into our hands."

The indignation of Lord Chatham was moved, and he suddenly rose and gave full vent to his feelings, in one of the most extraordinary bursts of eloquence, the pen of history ever recorded.—"I am astonished," exclaimed his Lordship, "shocked to hear such principles confessed; to hear them avowed in this house, or even in this country. My lords, I did not intend to have encroached again on your attention, but I cannot repress my indignation. I feel myself impelled to speak. My lords, we are called upon, as members of this house, as men, as Christians, to protest against such horrible barbarity. *That God and nature had put into our hands!* What ideas of God's nature, that noble Lord may entertain, I know not; but I know, that such detestable principles, are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What, to attribute the sacred sanction of God and nature, to the massacres of the Indian scalping-knife! to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, devouring, drinking the blood of his mangled victims! Such notions, shock every precept of morality, every feeling of humanity, every sentiment of honour. These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon the right reverend, and this most learned bench, to vindicate the re-

ligion of their God, to support the justice of their country. I call upon the bishops, to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn, upon the judges, to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your Lordships, to reverence the dignity of your ancestors, and to maintain your own. I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country, to vindicate the national character. I invoke the genius of the constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls, the immortal ancestor of this noble Lord, frowns with indignation, at the disgrace of his country. In vain, did he defend the liberty, and establish the religion of Britain against the tyranny of Rome, if these worse than Popish cruelties and inquisitorial practices, are endured amongst us. To send forth the merciless cannibal, thirsting for blood!—And against whom? Your Protestant brethren; to lay waste their country; to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name, by the aid and instrumentality of these horrible hell-hounds of war! Spain, armed herself with blood-hounds, to extirpate the wretched natives of Mexico, but we, more ruthless, loose these dogs of war against our countrymen in America, endeared to us by every tie that should sanctify humanity. My Lords, I solemnly call upon your Lordships, and upon every order of men in the State, to stamp upon this infamous procedure, the indelible stigma of public abhorrence. More particularly, I call upon the holy prelates of our religion, to do away this iniquity; let them perform a lustration to purify their country, from this deep and deadly sin. My Lords, I am old and weak, and at present unable to say more; but my feelings and indignation, were too strong, to have

said less. I could not have slept this night in my bed, nor reposed my head upon my pillow, without giving this vent to my eternal abhorrence of such enormous and preposterous principles."

And will not the feelings of every Briton, who sees the recital of these horrors, correspond with the above words of Lord Chatham? Nay, will not the true Spaniard, equally revolt, on beholding such scenes, and in listening to the enumeration of horrors, which the pen refuses to trace? Not horrors, inseperable from a state of warfare, but enormities, which nothing but wickedness could invent, or barbarity execute. Enormities, not only committed, but afterwards boasted of. Spanish America, even by the confession of Spanish writers, during its conquest, was the grand repository of plunder, and a monument of ever living crimes. Three centuries afterwards, their recital makes us shudder, and we scarcely believe man could be so degraded. Yet, greater enormities are now committing, and we are still silent. I say greater, because this contest, is between Christians and fellow-citizens. By the general conventions of mankind, the afflictions of war are softened and relieved, but, here they are aggravated by every thing infernal, which the malice of the heart, can suggest. Alas! and for what is not the Spanish government answerable in the conduct of its agents? Do these ever remember, that when they gain a victory, their banners are crimsoned with the blood of fellow-citizens; and that it is the duty of morality, as well as of religion, to diminish the calamities of war? When the prisoners on both sides, are respectively murdered in cold blood, when a war of extermination is thus provoked, when the slaves of a country are

armed for the murder and plunder of their masters, and when besides these outrages, the human invention is racked to find out new and additional torture, what are the consequences that may not be expected? Can we look for less, than to behold that country a heap of ruins, which is still bound to us by a treaty of alliance, and which we have deluded by our former promises? And what can Spain say to these her agents, who have been the causes of all these horrors, ravages, and disasters? Can she expect, that no dreadful punishment will follow at the heels of such offenders; or can she suppose, that the tide of war and vengeance, will not be rolled back upon them, with aggravations, like those of which they have been the inventors.

§ Mexico and Caracas, however, are not the only sections of Spanish America, that have witnessed scenes, such as those, of which an outline has just been given. The march of Goyeneche into Upper Peru, has been attended with similar instances of cruelty and vengeance, though on a smaller scale. In Cochabamba, upwards of a hundred persons were murdered in cold blood, some with tortures, and one was quartered. La Paz, Potosi, and Oruro, had to weep over excesses equally great. Their crime, also, was common with the rest of the inhabitants of the insurgent provinces; that is, it consisted in a resolve to seek within themselves, that redress, which was denied them at home. The stages, through which the contest in Buenos Ayres and Chili, has gone, being more generally known amongst us, they are passed over for the sake of brevity. On the 2d August, 1810, forty persons of the first families, were destroyed in cold blood in the prisons of Quito, by the dissolute soldiery of

Lima; and the inhabitants of the same city, were fired upon, and murdered in the streets, in the same cruel manner. In November 1812, Governor Montes, entered the city of Quito, abandoned it to pillage, according to his own letter of 11th of same month, and detached parties of soldiers, to pursue those who had fled, even the bishop and nuns. Those who remained, and they without having made any resistance, were placed in lines, and every fifth person shot, as appears from the pastoral letter, dated 31 March, 1813, of the Bishop of Epifania, governor of the bishopric of Chili, himself an European Spaniard.

Such is the gloomy picture of the horrors now committing in the various sections of Spanish America, and at which, human nature has so much reason to shudder. Horrors, committing against the unfortunate inhabitants of that country, not because they have revolted against their lawful sovereign, not because they have leagued with the enemies of Spain, but because they have demanded those rights, which the laws accord them, and that amendment, which from imperious circumstances, they required. In what I have here adduced, I have not been guided by any hearsay and conjecture; all can be supported by abundance of positive, consistent, and admissible testimonies. Most of the instances of cruelty and slaughter, here brought forward, are taken from official papers, mostly Spanish gazettes; and to them I could add hundreds more, were I to descend to individual cases. Many of these same facts, have resounded in the saloon of the Cortes; some of them are taken from the speeches of Alcocer and Feliu, on the mediation question. Detached cases, however, by no means, warrant

general conclusions; but, in scenes like those, I have here sketched, all Spanish America, shares.

And is it not, then, time to put an end to such a vast and fruitless effusion of human blood, and to staunch the horrors of so destructive and protracted a war? Does not the recital of such enormities, committing by fellow-countrymen, fill the heart of every friend of his own species, with terror and alarm, and chill every feeling of humanity? Have not sufficient victims, been already immolated on the altars of vengeance; have not sufficient towns and cities been plundered and destroysd, and have not sufficient families been ruined? Prisoners, as we now see, in Mexico and Caracas, are no longer made, but butchered on the spot, where they have thrown down their arms, or mutilated by practices, that would even disgrace the Algerines. At length, also, in one section,* the agents of Spain, have resorted to that most dreadful of all alternatives, that of freeing and arming of slaves against their masters, and which, besides bringing local ruin, will eventually spread destruction to the neighbouring settlements. To let loose hordes, worse than fierce and irresistible Tartars, on the scattered and defenseless natives of a feeble country, is renewing the menacing horrors of St. Domingo, and turning those regions into a lair of wild beasts, which providence had destined, to be the seat of man's happiness and enjoyment. The pro-

* In addition to what is occurring in Caracas, the Junta of Popayan, in 1811, in a letter addressed to the Junta of Santa Fe, observes, that the inhabitants had resolved to form a Junta, in consequence of Tacon, governor of that province, offering to give freedom to the slaves, on condition of their falling on the white Creoles.

vinces of Caracas, contain about 60,000 slaves, besides a large proportion of free persons of colour, and if the Spanish Americans, roused by the injuries inflicted upon them, and driven to extremes, should retaliate, and also arm their servile bands, in defense of freedom, can it be expected, that an European Spaniard, will be left in the country? If we recollect, such a plan during the North American contest, had its advocates and panegyrists, even amongst ourselves; but, we had not, then, before us, the example of St. Domingo.

In whatever light this inhuman and bloody contest is viewed, it would seem, as if the agents of Spain, were attempting to secure a new conquest, by the extermination of the Creoles, in like manner, as they did with the primitive Indians. The nations of Europe, have often shuddered to hear, that the Russians put 30,000 Turks to the sword, in Ismail; and that Buonaparte, made away with his sick in Egypt, and will they not be equally shocked, at those scenes just depicted? Will they not shudder at those enormous details, which so often fill the columns of the Spanish American prints; acts, not committed against enemies, but against neighbours, countrymen, fellow-brethren and relations? Even the manner in which they are announced by their perpetrators, and the boasts by which they are often accompanied, tends to heighten and aggravate their reality. The venerable Las Casas, when he beheld the carnage inflicted by the first conquerors, on the helpless and innocent Aborigenes, ventured to predict, that God would some time or other, punish Spain for her savage cruelty in the new world; and might not the same prediction, be now applied to the instruments of those enormities, committing on the same soil? Can these

cruelties ever be forgotten; will they not be remembered, even to the third and fourth generations, and will not England, equally, share in their stigma? When the injured and unredressed inhabitants of that ill-fated quarter of the world, enumerate the assurances formerly made them, by the ministers of England, and when they now see troops sent against them, armed with British muskets and accoutrements; when they behold them equipped in British cloathing, and that indirect aid is given them on the other side of the Atlantic; that British officers insult their cause, and consequently their sufferings, and at home, hear that no effective measure is carried in their behalf, what can be their conclusions? Nay, what are the impressions, these facts have not already excited?

The more the grounds, on which the existing dissentions between European and American Spain, are examined, the more manifest will they appear, to have originated in a wish to impose unnatural chains on the inhabitants of the latter; and the means to effect this, to which the agents of Spain have resorted, will be equally found derogatory to the honour, inconsistent with the interests, and hostile to the liberty of their fellow countrymen. They have been impelled by a blind infatuation, treating reason as criminal, and stimulated by a rancour, which made them forget they were contending with men. Language will scarcely afford terms of greater outrage, than that, by which the Spanish Americans have been addressed; nor can the imagination figure to itself any thing more affecting, than the scenes, to which they have been repeatedly exposed. The horrors of the Wyoming settlements, as described by Mr. Gordon, in Mexico, have been often witnessed. And let me ponder here to

ask, what Spain has, hitherto, been able to effect by all her menaces, numerous and ferocious as they have been, or by all her murders, bloody and unnatural as they have been experienced? Has the desorder, she sought to remedy, in any way, abated? Mexia told the Cortes, "that if, instead of 4000, they sent out 40,000 Spaniards, they might then, perhaps, be able to boast being the second conquerors; but so small a number, at the same time, that it evinced the weakness of their resources, served only to embitter the minds of the people against the Europeans, and implicate the honour of the national congress, who, by this means, sanctioned a war, that, hitherto, might be considered as a war of the viceroys." "Is it not," said deputy Alcocer, "a terrible thing, to send troops out, which we want so much at home, and when we even require an English garrison in Cadiz? To equip them against brethren, with the very same succours, they have themselves liberally sent over to us, for our defence against the French! To arm them with the very arms and cloathing, which the British have supplied us with, to fight the enemy at home; and which they would, by no means give against America, for whom they are now mediating"

Such, was the strenuous language, by which the American deputies sought relief for their suffering country; such were the arguments, on which they founded their claims. But the order of the day in Cadiz, was war, and the danger immediately before them, was forgotten for a distant object. Motives of interest and revenge, urged them on, even the common soldiers, seemed to join in the enthusiasm displayed, they anticipated scenes of plunder and pillage. But, when officers, rushing through thick

and thin, have been able to make rapid fortunes, in the manner of which some examples have been adduced, we need not wonder, that there was such a readiness to go over to the scene of action. It was an old principle of tyranny, for an arbitrary monarch, to attempt to beggar his subjects into submission, but Spain seeks to murder hers into subjection. She seems to endite a whole people, as if she would proceed against the criminal conduct of a few individuals. Are, then, the feelings of millions, thus to be insulted? The manner in which Spain has, hitherto, legislated for Spanish America, more particularly since her own revolution, has been by sending over an armed force; but can there be any thing more inconsistent, or more unjust, than for the head of a political union of equal communities, to insist on, and enforce a measure, the justice and expediency of which, has not been proved by the representative body of all? If resisted, and if the act is proved both illegal and vexatious, can there be any thing more criminal, than for such presiding power, thus arrogating to itself, the authority confided solely for the purposes of general welfare and defence; instantly to proclaim rebellion, beat to arms, and put the offending parties, under the ban? Will they not soon discover, that a government which treats a claim of liberty and equity, as an offence of high treason, is a government, to which submission is equivalent to slavery? Did the conduct of the Spanish Americans, in point of law and right, amount to a criminal rebellion, it would only warrant and authorize the presiding power, to apprehend and bring the culprits to condign punishment; but it would not give its agents, the right of rushing into indiscriminate murder and desolation, thus confounding innocence with guilt. The pre-

sent coercion of Spain, is a qualified hostility carried on against 17 millions of people, rather than the punishment of rebellious subjects. It is rather a war to exterminate, than to promote the slow solemnities of justice.

§ So extensive, and compared with Spain, so populous a country as Spanish America, is not to be treated as a mean dependant, who may be neglected without damage, or provoked without danger. It is not a partial, narrow, and occasional system, that is suited to the government of 17 millions of distant people; and if their complaints against the late exercise of authority, have been founded, they have a right to be heard, and amply redressed. It is unjust, in the extreme, thus to sport with so large a mass of the feelings and interests of the human race. It is not from theory, or a wanton spirit of innovation, that the Spanish Americans have complained of the badness of those principles, by which they were governed. They fairly judge of them, by actual grievances, against which, to the despotic monarchs, and to their arbitrary ministers, they had often remonstrated, in vain. Their ideas of misgovernment, did not originate in any hasty or wicked propensity to change; but, in the badness of the existing constitution of things, and in fatal experience. They, forcibly, felt the truth of that established axiom of politics, that in large bodies, the circulation of power, is always weakest at the extremities. They experienced the galling and vexatious hardships, of having no local check over the acts of despotic chiefs; and the misery and degradation of a people, who have no redress, but a distance of 2000 leagues. Placed as they were, remote from the first mover of power, they shared all its defects, without enjoying any of its advantages. They conceived

it unjust to be governed by laws, interpreted at the will of judges who were estranged to them: and in the formation of which, they had no part. They considered it illegal to be stripped of their property by the arbitrary edict of a premier, and still more so, for that property, to be squandered on a corrupt court, or in prosecuting wars in which they had no interest, and this without any account being rendered in to them of its disbursement.—In short, they judged it inconsistent, not to be allowed to legislate and administer in their own concerns, since this has always been held, as the immutable condition and eternal law, of every extensive and detached empire.

These are the principal grounds of complaint which Spanish America, urged, and to refuse her justice and redress, Spain has had to subvert those very principles, on which she has founded her new constitution; and to prove that the inhabitants of her ultramarine provinces, ought not to be free, she has had to recur to base stratagem and force; and even to depreciate those very blessings, for which she herself has been so long fighting. That they may not be free and equal, she has had to say, they are incapable of being so. To shew that these benefits, are incompatible with the condition of dwellers under the tropics, the votaries of Spanish subjection, have had to laugh to scorn, the very principles in which Spain now glories, and to borrow invectives from the works of a Paw. It was putting the Spanish Americans, under the trammels of an abject minority, to suppose that their liberty was more secure, when placed in trust of a distant body, having only the shadow of a general Cortes, than when given in charge to themselves. Were Spain fifty times stronger than she is, it would only be lawful, to govern a distant

but equal part of her empire, in one way; and that is, according to the principles of right reason and justice. For this, she is answerable to the world at large. This lesson, also, she might learn from the fundamental precepts of sound policy. Allegiance is the inseparable companion of happiness and content. Precipitated as Spain now stands, into a destructive warfare, if she seeks to conciliate, she must previously concede. If she adopts this plan, she must first ask herself, whether the ultramarine provinces, in fact, possess a practical equality with those of the Peninsula; and whether they enjoy all, the laws grant, and their happiness and prosperity require. If not, it is her duty to see that all is fully guaranteed to them; and whilst every tie of gratitude and interest, lead her again to cement their connection, she will find this can only be done, by removing the grounds of difference.—Peace, implies reconciliation, and where a violent and acrimonious dispute has preceded, mutual concessions must be its forerunners. Peace, as Burke said, ought to be sought in the spirit of peace, and laid in principles, purely pacific.

A superiour power, may offer peace to an inferiour one, without implicating its honour, and without losing in the eyes of the world. Nay, the offer itself, is often construed into magnanimity; and at least, it is never dishonourable, or too late, to correct an error. If Spain continues to prosecute this unjust and unnatural war, without checking that flood of acrimony that has been let loose, she shews to the world, that she spurns all laws, both human and divine; that she is no longer bound by any of those ties, which link man to his fellow species; and, in the future, she can behold nothing, but clouds and

darkness. If, however, by leaving this contest to the more sober issue of moderate and healing councils, she approves of conciliation, many days of peace and prosperity yet await her. It is not by force alone, that Spain can preserve her altramarine provinces, in a just and profitable connection, unless as Burke said, fighting a people, be the best way of gaining them. She may subdue them, for the moment; and again enforce the trammels of dependence, but she cannot, in her own weak and divided state, retain a numerous, scattered and growing people, in a condition so contrary to the feelings of human nature, particularly, where they have so many advantages of climate in their favour. An armament such as Spain can fit out, is not a victory. After such confident hopes, as those under which Spain entered on her transatlantic war; after such wanton boasting, and such great exertions, when so little effective has been done, it is reasonable to conclude, the plan must be wrong. The desultory excursions of the Spaniards from the capital of Mexico, together with all their horrors, have had no material influence on the issue of the war, or produced any thing decisive. They have, rather, only tended to protract the attainment of a just and reasonable object, and more strongly to irritate the Creole mind, as will be seen by the public document I shall presently subjoin. In short, no universal effort, can be made to secure success, for when the insurgents are defeated in a cold climate, they fly to a hot one, where it is dangerous for the Spaniards to advance. The road to Vera Cruz, is still closed, and cannot be travelled but with an escort of 3000 men. The insurgents are in possession of Acapulco and the best mines and provinces; the Junta of Sultepec, only forty leagues

from Mexico, long stood its ground there, then removed to Zitaquaro, and lastly to Chiltapatzingo, where a general congress is forming; and, in short, to that pitch have things risen in New Spain, that 20,000 stand of arms, would decide the fate of the Mexican empire, and, for ever, sever the sceptre of the Spaniards. The situation of Caracas, has already been explained.

The forces, Spain is able to employ on the other side the Atlantic, may perhaps suffice for partial conquest, or for the tenure of some particular points and districts. They may produce great ravages and distress, but in a country so extended, so mountainous, and so resolved, it is impossible they can ever effect perfect subjection. In the invasion of Spain, we have seen the plains and fortresses in the hands of the enemy, but the mountains and roads, were possessed by the guerrillas. Does Spain, then, seek to organize those contending against her, into a regular banditti; yet this is one of the extremes to which they will fly, sooner than be unconditionally subdued. It is difficult, in New Spain, to make any correct estimate of the numbers of the insurgents; but it is a fact, that there, the Spaniards, when all the troops lately received from Spain, are mustered, cannot make up, more than 24,000 men. Their antagonists are indeed very numerous, but they are not organized, they fight under every disadvantage, many with bows and arrows, clubs, slings, lances, &c. and only few with muskets, and these principally taken from their enemies: but, yet they are resolved to gain their point. New Spain contains about 64,000 *gachupines*, or European Spaniards, and can it be expected, that notwithstanding their influence, the concentration of their power, and the successful manner in

which they can wield the anathemas of heaven, and the brands of discord, that they can turn the opinions of nearly 7 millions of people, penetrated with the justice of their right? Or, viewing the subject on a larger scale, can it be supposed, that 17 millions of people, situated at a distance from the arm of power, and this in a weak and languishing state, with an intervening ocean of 2000 leagues, particularly after the inveteracy which has been excited, can be held prostrate at the feet of those very Cortes, who have disdained their claims and appeals; or that they will now tamely submit to have their fetters again rivetted? Conciliation, might, long ago, have restored tranquillity to the ultramarine provinces, if redress had preceded; a mild and temperate conduct, might, gradually, have allayed those irritated feelings, which injuries had provoked; but war, blockades, ravages, and massacres, can never produce so desirable an event. England, by an early and energetic display of her influence, and Spain by the exercise of moderation, might have prevented the many horrors which have been generated; and it would seem impossible, that the services of the first, and the injuries of Spanish America, should not have been able to rouse all parties to a sense of duty and humanity, and urge them to put an end to so criminal an enterprize.

Civil wars, which have had for object, a most just redress, have, indeed, sometimes ended in a worse despotism than that attempted to be removed; and such, decidedly, would be the state of subjection brought upon the Spanish Americans, if they did not now succeed. But independent of that dread, there is too great a fund of energy in the country, to submit to an alternative so

fatal. Treachery, bigotry, and inconsistent measures, did indeed restore Caracas to its old masters; but, the cruelty of the Spanish general, the approved violation of a ratified and solemn capitulation, and the sufferings of the deluded inhabitants, brought on the heads of the perpetrators of so many crimes, the punishments they deserved. This example, also, will serve as a beacon to the other sections, and teach them, how far, they are to rely on the plighted faith of the agents of a nation, which has already inundated their country with horrors. Were the partizans of the cause of redress and reform, less unanimous in their object, they might, perhaps, get tired of anarchy and distress; they might despond, and seek repose after so many scenes of turbulence and bloodshed, but in that case, they are sensible they must resign their rights as men, and even drag chains, more strongly rivetted, than their former ones. But so general is the persuasion, that their cause is just, that new armies rise up to replace those in the act of defeat; and new energies seem to be inspired by discomfiture. The ardour of the natives, is unabated, though for want of arms, the contest is unequal; and every region of New Spain, by the confession of Mexico prints, burns with the same ferment. General Rayon, in his letter to the bishop of La Puebla, says, "The Americans, now know their rights, and they will either die, or establish their own interiour government in the name of Ferdinand VII, to whom they have sworn allegiance, and in whose name the national Junta governs." But, in the mean time, torrents of blood are flowing, and destruction and desolation, on every side, rear their ghastly heads.

§ In order that a more perfect idea, may be entertained, of the pretensions of the Spanish Americans, as well as of the sentiments excited by the cruel warfare waged against them, I have conceived it highly illustrative, to subjoin, in this place, a translation of the manifest addressed by the National Junta of Sultepec, in March, 1812, to the European inhabitants of the American continent. It is as follows;

" Brethren, friends, and fellow citizens,

" The holy religion which we profess, sound reason, humanity, affinity, friendship, as well as all the other respectable bonds, which strongly unite us, in every manner by which the inhabitants of one common country, who revere the same monarch, and live under the same laws, can be united; imperiously call upon you, to give an attentive ear to our just complaints and pretensions. War, that cruel scourge, that devastator of the most flourishing kingdoms, and perpetual spring of misfortunes, can produce us no good, let whatever party be the conqueror; to whom, when the conflict is over, nothing will remain, but the malign complacency of his victory. But he will have to lament, for many years, irreparable losses and evils, in which, perhaps, may be comprehended, the dreaded event, of some foreign power, out of the many ambitious of possessing this precious portion of the Spanish monarchy, instigated by ourselves, and availing itself of our disunion, coming to impose the law upon us, at a time when we may be unable to avoid it; and whilst we, at the same time, phrenzied by a blind fury, are butchering one another, refusing to hear or to examine our reciprocal rights, without know-

ing what are our views; and whilst you, on your part, are obstinately bent on calumniating us in your judicial proceedings and public papers, founding yourselves on an affected mistake, and absolute unwillingness to ununderstand the grounds of our intentions."

"With equal disdain, you have outraged the principal American nobility, manifesting by your acts and deeds, that you have declared war against them, and what is still more sensible, against the venerable clergy. You daringly call yourselves lords, beyond whom there is no appeal, masters of lives and property, judges of the living and the dead, and, to prove it, you spare neither assassinations, conflagrations, nor excesses of every kind; even daring to trouble the ashes of the dead, by digging up the bodies of those, who have died a natural death, in order to judge them. You have committed the cowardly baseness, to set a price on the lives of men, by hiring secret assassins, and by offering large sums of money, in proclamations, ordered to be published in every part of the kingdom, to any one, who would murder determined persons. To such a height, did this shameful instance of criminality rise, one reprobated by every right, and which will be scarcely credited by posterity. Horrible enormity, unexampled in the annals of our history! as contrary to the spirit of christian morality, subversive of good order, and opposed to the majesty, decorum, and circumspection of our wise laws, as scandalous, even to the most ignorant people, who know how to respect the rights of nations and of war. You have had the temerity to arrogate to yourselves, the supreme power, and, under the name of our august king, to command, proudly and

despotically, over a free people, who know no other sovereign than Ferdinand VII., whom each one of you pretend to represent, by atrocious acts, which the king, himself, would never have done, or permitted, even when the case in question, was opposed to his sovereignty. The acts, which, in your conscience, you know to refer, solely, to individuals, you treat with as much severity, as if they related to the king himself. You pretend to concentre in your own private persons, the sacred duties of religion, of the king and country; dazzling the ignorant by these names, so often profaned in your mouths, accustomed to falsehood and calumny. You have vilified yourselves in the eyes of the sensible world, by attempting to confound this cause, which is purely of the state, with one of religion. And, for this detestable purpose, you have impelled many ministers of Jesus Christ, to prostitute, in all their parts, the functions of their holy ministry."

"How can you combine these iniquitous proceedings, with the severe precepts of our holy religion, and with the inviolable integrity of our laws? And to whom, unless it is to the sword, can we now recur for justice, when you who are parties, constitute yourselves into judges, accusers, and witnesses; at the same time, that it is disputed, whether it is we, who constitute the true American nation; whether you are legitimate authorities, in the absence of our monarch, or intrusive and arbitrary ones, who seek to appropriate to yourselves, a jurisdiction which you have not, and which no one can confer on you."

"This long list of great enormities, deeply imprinted on our hearts, would be a terrible incentive to our fury,

impelling us to avenge them, even with the last drop of European blood existing in this country, if our religion, more pure in our hearts than in yours, our humanity, and the natural suavity of our character, did not lead us to incline to reconciliation, rather than to a continuance of a war, whose issue, whatever it may be, can never promise us more happiness than peace, considering your situation and circumstances."

"Likewise, if you impartially enter into account with yourselves, you will find, that you are more Americans than Europeans. Scarcely born in the Peninsula, and at a tender age, you were transferred to this land; in it you have passed the greater part of your lives; you have adaptedour customs and manners; been naturalized to the benign temperature of our climate; contracted binding connections; inherited large fortunes from your wives, or obtained them by your labour and industry; having, also, children and fixed property. Few of you, have any correspondence with your ultramarine relations, or even know the fate of your fathers, since you left the mother country—and, did you not, all, form the resolution not to return there? What, then, is it, retains you from feeling an interest for this kingdom, in which you ought to act the part of natives? Is it, perchance, the dread of being injured? If we have carried on hostilities against Europeans, it has been by way of reprisal, and, because they first commenced them."

"The system of insurrection, was never sanguinary; in the beginning, the prisoners were treated kindly, and with decency and decorum. Many of them, were pardoned, notwithstanding they were perjured and unfaith-

ful to their words of honour; availing themselves of this our benignity, to bring upon us every evil, being afterwards, even our most atrocious enemies. Till you, yourselves, began to open the door to cruelties, you were treated in a manner, very different to that in which you acted to us. For your happiness, rather than for our own, we should be desirous to terminate dissentions, which are causing scandal to the whole world; and preparing us for misfortunes, which we may experience from some foreign power, when we cannot avoid them. Wherefore, in the name of our common fraternity, and the other sacred bonds, which unite us, we, in the most tender manner, beseech you to examine with attention, and wise and christian impartiality, the plans of peace and war, founded on evident principles of public and natural right, which we now propose to you, on behalf of humanity; in order that, by choosing the one that may suit you most, the advantage of the nation, may always be consulted. Let the national character be our judge, and let us be guided by those urgent circumstances, under which America is now groaning."—

The plans of peace and war, which accompanied this manifest, have already been referred to, and are contained in my Appendix, under the head of G. And after the feelings have been roused and irritated, as in the manner expressed in this document; after such instances of recrimination, after the Spaniards on their part, treat every overture with disdain, and the Creoles behold themselves inundated with blood and vengeance, how is it possible, for these parties to come together, so as to adopt some basis of accommodation, unless it is through the medium and interposing influence of a third power? When the

mediation question was agitated, the Spanish deputies in the Cortes asserted, that in New Spain, no organized authority existed wherewith to treat, for the insurrection consisted of nothing, but parties of banditti infesting the roads. Whereas, the best organized, and the most generally acknowledged Junta, had stood its ground from the beginning, received the obedience of all provinces divested of a Spanish force, and the manifest I have just quoted, together with Document G. and others which I could still bring forward, might prove, that the national Junta, consisted of men, possessed of talent and energy, but yet, disposed to relieve suffering humanity, and ready to enter into arrangements, by which tranquillity might be restored.

And can the ministers of England, still behold this universal and all devouring flame of civil war, already spread to the shores of the Pacific, and feel no sympathy for a suffering and injured people? Can the allies of those very victims, can they who till now, have always felt a sympathy for their degraded condition, and have been melted at the perusal of their conquest, hear of and behold these horrors, and this inhuman and unnatural warfare, without feeling a corresponding anxiety for their melancholy fate? Can we any longer, thus witness, the bloody convulsions and long suffering of a people, who have appealed to us, and even implored the common sympathies of mankind at large? Is humanity, then, no longer, an appendage of the British people, when not one of their public organs, has ventured to step forward in a case like this? Spanish America, presents a large and extensive mart for British commerce, and are the patrons of our mercantile interests,

yet, silent? And, where are our philanthropists? When the slave question, was agitating in this country, every body was alive to the discussion; and clubs were enthusiastically formed, to patronize the interests of natives of Africa, who were deprived of their natural liberty. And what was the motive of all this? It was a noble, generous, and laudable principle of humanity, that will ever do honour to the British character, and cast a consoling gleam on the labours of the promoters, of the measures adopted. And are the Indians, and other inhabitants of Spanish America, less deserving of our regard? We, there, interfered for the welfare of a few thousands, condemned to labour for the profits of another, but still possessed of many conveniences to beguile their toil; but here, we see many thousands, annually, nay monthly, put to the sword, butchered, inhumanly tortured and mutilated, and not a sigh accompanies their sufferings. And, in time, what will not the fatal consequences of this exterminating war; shall we wait without interfering, till not a White or Creole, is left standing? The proportion on an average, of the Indians and casts, to the Whites and Creoles, is about six to one; if therefore, the latter become debilitated and extinct, and the former become armed and warlike, possessed as they are of the idea, that their lands and property have been usurped by the Spaniards, may they not regain them, by a retaliation, bloody and extensive? Is it for this, that we are waiting?

§ In order that the feelings, which have been excited in the bosoms of the Spanish American people, may not be unknown, I hereto annex an extract of a letter, from one of the first characters in Mexico, dated Feb. 18, 1811,

and to it, I could add several more from the other sections.—"It would be impossible, minutely, to explain to you, the present state of this kingdom, but you may, perhaps, be able to form some adequate idea of it, when I say, that it is such, as the most deadly enemy of Spain, might wish it to be. Destruction in every quarter, and of every thing, in such manner, that let who may conquer, both parties will be ruined. However *I can never forgive the British, for remaining cold spectators of a struggle, the consequences of which, whatever they may be, cannot fail to prove fatal to them; nor will they, hereafter, be able to plead, as an excuse, that they were deceived, by the reports sent over by the Mexican government*; for, in like manner as Diogenes' merit was seen through the rents of his cloak, so is it equally manifest, that the Americans are resolved to have another form of government, adopted in these dominions, in order to free them from the great inequality, with which the hungry place hunters and merchants from Spain, seek to treat them. And if the British (a circumstance here unknown), have not been wanting in good will, but that their exertions have been disdained by the Cortes, they ought to be certain, that the wounded pride and anger of the latter, would only be momentary, for they would soon be reconciled, on seeing the arrival of pecuniary succours, which, if the actual state of things continues, never can be the case."

Such sentiments were current and general, in 1811, even amongst the moderate characters of Spanish America, but they are much more pointed in the mouths of those, who, to political motives, add prejudice, resentment, and national pique. Such, do they resound in every section. Will the government of that generous

nation, add they, do nothing for us, under circumstances which are to decide whether we are to be men or slaves; and do they abandon us in our momentous struggle, who so lately told us, in the most official manner, that even independence would be consonant to their wishes; and whose friendship was pledged to us, by the positive and repeated declarations of their ministers and agents? Do they laugh at our misfortunes, whose very assurances emboldened us to seek redress, on a basis not only conformable with their honour, but in strict accord with our own laws? Do they behold, without even the cold sentiment of pity, our villages and towns, in ruins and in flames; our slaves armed against us for murder and pillage, our citizens mutilated in the most inhuman manner, dragged from their homes and wives, and buried in Moorish dungeons and loathsome pontoons? They, who even promised us a shield against similar horrors, if we would join in rebellion against our lawful sovereign, and now, we only seek a just and equitable redress? Are we not deserving of the common sympathies of humanity, or of strong remonstrances and firm stipulations, on the part of that nation, which even lately, when our parent state was supposed in danger, through its naval commanders on these stations, made us the most pointed overtures of support and protection, if we would only not follow her impending fate, or listen to the instigations of the French? Are we deserving of no acts of kindness from that nation, whose subjects, on our hospitable shores, have found the means of acquiring wealth, by trading in the products of our genial soil, and by supplying our wants? And are all our testimonies of loyalty, our succours in the common cause, nay all our privations, de-

serving of no return, from the nation which has so long witnessed them, when we seek nothing derogatory to its honour or dignity?. Unfortunately for us, as well as for the great hopes we might at some future period, realize on the great continent of Spanish America, such is the language reechoed, from one extreme to the other of that desolate country, and great the consequent odium attaching to the British name, in regions, where late it was covered with the sincerest blessings.

On the most powerful grounds of humanity, therefore, and under the hopes of stopping the continuation of so many horrors, does it not behove the British government, without loss of time, to turn its attention to the distressed state of Spanish America, and see to the relief of that valuable country, before it becomes a heap of ruins? After such a long chain of impolitic acts, as those committed by Spain, in this important business, if we wish her well, if we are still bound by the tenour of our treaty, ought we not to seek to inspire into her, sound and sober councils, to allay the acrimony of both parties, and above all, to see that the world is no longer scandalized by enormities, which would stain the annals of the most barbarous nation? If the Spanish Americans, stand as culprits in the eye of the law and of justice, let their crime be established to the whole world, but, if they are not, let them be treated as men and fellow-beings, for whom every nation feels an interest. If criminal process cannot be established against them, if from distance, obstinacy, or from any other reason, justice cannot be enforced in a consistent manner, what other safe plan remains, but conciliation?

§ Two ways alone, can ever reestablish the authority

of Spain on the other side of the Atlantic, and the time is now come, for her to make her choice. The one is by conquest, and the other by conciliation. The first, must leave Spanish America, a heap of ruins, and the tomb of a great proportion of its inhabitants. This must be by achievements, similar to those of a Cortes and a Pizarro, or by a protraction of such scenes, as are described in the preceding pages. And of what use can the country, then, be to Spain, or her allies? The iron sceptre once again established, and a foreign flag, no longer waves in the ports of South Columbia, which in the possession of the drones of Europe, would be closed against general enterprize. Of what will the revolution of the Peninsula have served, if Spanish America returns to its old degraded state? And humbled at the feet of Spain, will not this bethe case? But even to effect this conquest, does not Spain recollect, that it is not foreign strength she consumes, but that of her own vitals. And again, has she armies sufficient, and also fleets to cover her enterprize? In short, is her conquest secure? She ought, also, to be mindful, that if force fails, conciliation is no longer within her reach? An impoverished and defeated violence, and reiterated acts of vengeance, no more can seek for fraternal feelings; and, besides, is she not answerable to every civilized nation of the earth, for the torrents of blood she thus spills? If this destruction was the penalty of rebellion, she might be more at ease; but are seventeen millions of inhabitants, to be treated as criminals, because a handful of European strangers, armed and possessed of power, seek to hold them in subjection, and again labour to impose upon them, a dismal and cold uniformity of servitude? What, is Spain no longer tinc-

tured with humanity? Little has she profited by her own late adversities, if she is not, now, anxious to soften the miseries, and relieve the crying wrongs of her fellow brethren. Hitherto Spain has, uniformly, represented the insurrections of her ultramarine provinces, as the mad attempts of faction, founded on ingratitude, partial, and headed by the most depraved; and has always endeavoured to underate the means and exertions of her enemy. But, in this, she has only deceived herself. It is often better for a nation to be wise and honest, than strong and arrogant. There was a moment, when if Spain had possessed only cordiality, and a disposition to concede what was just, all these horrors might have been avoided.—Alas, all sober feelings were stifled by the confidence of victory, and the wild hopes of unconditional submission. Calamity is but too often, the season of reflection, and the pride and arrogance of man, are of that stiff and deluding nature, not to suffer reason to have any scope, till it can be of no further service.

The other mode of restoring harmony, and, consequently, authority, is through the medium of conciliation, and it is to be hoped, when every thing is well considered, that Spain will give it the preference. It is to this, therefore, that her attention ought particularly, to be turned, as well as the efforts of those who wish her well. In order, however, to establish a sound and substantial basis, it is necessary to explore, in the most impartial manner, the real origin of these dissentions, and to start with a full determination to remedy them, if the grounds have been just, and if the fault is on the part of Spain. Most of the disputes, which at various periods, took place between England and her transmarine settlements,

were on the subject of taxing; but in the one now under consideration, the material cause, has been a weariness, and a manifest disposition no longer to endure an arbitrary and despotic power, under a complication of forms. The Spanish Americans, became restive and untractable, when they had arrived at a point of degradation, beyond which they could not go; and when their feelings, were besides, roused by local insults and aggravations. In the revolution of Spain, they beheld a propitious moment, to secure what they had, in vain, sought under their monarchs, but their fresh remonstrances, were again treated with the usual contempt. Feeling, forcibly, the weight of the evils, by which they were surrounded, and possibly by comparing their own degraded situation, with that enjoyed by their more Northern neighbours, they formed to themselves a point, to secure which they conceived it their duty to aim, as the basis and criterion of their future happiness. But, yet, there was nothing criminal in their calculations, or in the means employed to realize them. They had appealed to the liberality of legislative reason, through those channels which were open to them; supposing, that the presiding power, ought to be guided by the great principles of equity and justice; and that its acts ought to be conformable to the general sense of mankind. They invoked the spirit of their ancient laws and charters, but they met with nothing, but the narrow-minded constructions of subordinate and artificial justice. Under circumstances, peculiarly pressing and beyond their control, they seek, within themselves, that remedy, which had been denied them at home, and they are instantly declared out of the protection of the law, and are warred upon as rebels, even without being heard.

The disposition and demeanour of the Spanish American people, clearly indicated, that they sought a government, suited to their wants, and in which they might find full means of redress, and an ample check over arbitrary power. A government, in short, founded on genuine and practical civil liberty. And were they not the natural, lawful, and competent judges of what they required? Were they not best acquainted with their own wants? What they sought, was a matter of moral prudence, and natural feeling, and they acted from the impulse of fatal experience, a motive of all others, the most respectable. Time rolled on, danger stared them in the face, their dejection daily increased, no relief came to hand. Civil liberty, nevertheless, is not a thing so abstruse, as only to be found with difficulty, or so embarrassing, as not to be easily put in practice. It is a blessing and a benefit, which the Cortes sought to make the fundamental pillar of their new constitution; and they now boast, they have effected their purpose. If so, why could it not be discovered, and equally put in practice, in Spanish America? Her inhabitants sought no pompous definitions of right, nor dived into ancient books, tending to confuse, rather than, explain the social footing on which they were to stand. Their civil liberty, sighed for and demanded, was only a relief from burdens, which as men, they could endure no longer; being content to leave the perfection of their system, to more happy times. To this, it was the duty of Spain, to have conformed, and in all soberness, to have adapted and modelled her government to the character and circumstances of those, who composed the extended, but diversified mass of her empire. Government is a practical thing, and not intended

to become the speculative scheme of visionary politicians. Whilst the Cortes were making laws, and framing theories on a general scale, the countries they were intended to govern, were dismembering, one from the other. Civil liberty, besides, is not confined to one specific or precise shape, nor will one form equally suit every where. It must be modified, enjoyed in different degrees, and adapted to the temper and circumstances of every country and every community. Its form in Spain may be perfect, when on the other side of the Atlantic, it may be tyranny, or too great a relaxation. The laws for one people, must be different for another; hence the ancient legislators of Spain, varied their laws of the Indies from those of Castile, and even kept them under a separate administration. Civil liberty, also, must always be introduced by cautious experiment, and by rational and cool endeavours, particularly when it has to replace the most abject despotism. Yet being the vital spring of every state; its elasticity must not be broken, or its action obstructed. Still it must be reared gradually, otherwise it degenerates into licentiousness. Whilst it abhors the ruthless hand of arbitrary power, it only flourishes, where society is on a perfect equipoise.

To determine, however, the case in question, with a precise and firm judgment, it is necessary for the government of Spain, to divest itself of all those irritated feelings, which have so long rankled. To produce a profitable reconciliation, and, at the same time, consistent with the dignity of all parties, much is yet to be done; but those in power, ought not to shrink from the path of duty, because it is thorny and rugged. Hitherto, Spain has acted with precipitation and rashness, for if this had

not been the case, she would never have forgotten, what her ultramarine provinces had so long suffered and yet endured. Had her impulse been just and equitable, she would never have spurned at their urgent call for redress, and she would then have endeavoured to destroy the sting, instead of sharpening and envenoming it still more. Unfortunately, for her, she however considered liberty as a negative idea, and that the man born on the other side the Atlantic, had inherited no rights from his ancestors; nor acquired them, from the hand of nature. Still clinging to those ancient principles of despotism, which had brought ruin and degradation on her own children, she conceived that whatever property a transmarine subject enjoyed, was the alms of his government; and that even his life, was held at its favour and indulgence. If he dared to call these principles in question, or doubt the supremacy of the power which acted conformably to them, war with all its horrors, was the award of his contumacy.

Alas, the legislative spirit, as well as the honour of Spain, appeared totally perverted by a spirit of faction, that in all affairs relating to Spanish America, has never been divested of full influence. Nay, the natural feelings of men, appear to have been distracted and deranged. Every progressive step has been by trampling to the ground, some main principle of justice, or some chief maxim of wise government. Forgetful of her own future happiness and safety, Spain seemed to be impelled by no other desire, than to sacrifice her adversaries; and whilst she fought for liberty at home, she was struggling to effect its total eclipse, on the other shores of the Atlantic. Whoever has fully considered the origin and pro-

gress of these dissentions, has patiently accompanied me through their stages, and has beheld, deliberately, the grounds on which the Spanish agents have acted, will readily acknowlege, that they made no established quality of human action, the rule of their justice; or ever considered, that nothing is true and permanent security, but the common interest of all. They never reflected, that while they were rushing into a headlong course of violence and oppression, to destroy the liberties of their distant brethren, it was uncertain, how soon their own might be undermined: for it was easy to apply the tendency of those principles, which they sought to enforce in one section of the monarchy, as well as in the other. This is always the case, where blind infatuation becomes the moving lever, and where faction and party, act as a film, that renders the object in view, dark and undistinguishable. Yet, where were those traces of generosity, humanity, and dignity of mind, of which Spain has been so proud to boast? Have they, in this case, slumbered, or are they no longer found in the national character? Even a common war, particularly in modern times, suspends the rules of moral obligations, and even puts them in danger of being totally abrogated. But the civil discords of which a review is now made, have struck deep into the minds of the people, vitiated their natural feelings, corrupted their morals, and perverted every relish for equity and justice. Nay, of men, they have made savages; in such manner, that even the names of affection and of kindred, have been converted into fresh motives of hatred and revenge.

When, therefore, the communion of a country, has been thus dissolved, by the phrensy of civil contention;

and whilst the hostile mind is still in full vigour, and, indeed, daily increasing under a worse form; when mutual massacres and revenge,are the weapons to which each resort; and above all, where a deadly distrust has been engendered, can peace be ever restored, by the parties themselves? How are these mortal adversaries to come together, for explanation and adjustment? Who can inspire into each, mutual confidence? So far, we have beheld Spain, rushing on in her unnatural career, not satisfied with distracting her sister provinces, and filling them with blood and slaughter, but even endeavouring to tear up with practical liberty, all the foundations of human society, even degrading and prostituting religion, and pulling down the pillars of equity, justice, and order. And are not these facts, daily, before the eyes of the other party; do they not form the basis of those very remonstrances, I have already quoted? In an affair of this complicated and irritated nature, can Spain then, consistently, become her own judge? Nay, is not this act, in itself, wrong and odious; is it not an injustice, of all others, most vexatious and galling? Can any thing liberal, be expected from a nation, that has, hitherto, confounded the lamentable occurrences of civil dissentions, springing solely from the hardships of the people, with the most deadly crimes of high treason? Can the Spanish Americans expect justice at the hands of those, who have overturned their rights and franchises, without a specific charge or even a hearing. Can they look for any thing humane and liberal from those, who have been so often imbrued in their own blood, and who have been so frequently glutted with the plunder of their defenceless property?

Likewise, when a people who have suffered so long and so much, as those of Spanish America, and have been insulted and inflamed by such repeated aggravations, before they lay down their arms, they require some satisfaction to their feelings, more than a theoretical speculation on law, such as the constitution offered them, but which could bring them no practical good. They have a right to expect something more substantial, as their guarantee, than the word of a Viceroy or Captain-General. Nay, after fatal experience, will they not look for more, than the verbal assurance of a restored monarch? Of what nature that satisfaction ought to be, it behoves the government of Spain to consider well, if she aspires to the conversation of a vast, disconected, and infinitely diversified empire, whilst it is, at the same time, distant and generally convulsed. The existing war, has now lasted near five years, but the controversy is of an old standing. It is the same that has caused every commotion in Spanish America, since its settlement, and will, hereafter, agitate it, if the proper remedy is not now applied. Some of the partizans of Spanish violence, assure us, that this enmity now existing, arose from the resistance of the ultramarine provinces, which have been alienated, by their own obstinacy. They further argue, that if they could only be induced to surrender at discretion, all sort of regard and indulgence, would be shewn them. But who, is to be the guarantee of this? Under the Cortes, they have the example of Caracas, and under their ancient kings, they have that of Tupac-Amaru, and of many others. And, besides, who is to be answerable to them, for the future abuse of power, when at the same time, it is bound by no compacts, nor restrained by any terror?

When they are disarmed, will they not equally become the victims of their despotic rulers, as they have hitherto been? And, when the case is more closely examined, do not these very same people, already, denominate the present war, with all its afflicting horrors, as a lenient and merciful proceeding; and consider the massacres of unoffending thousands, as a seasonable chastisement inflicted on rebellious adversaries? Do they not pronounce all these exquisite refinements of cruelty, by which the unhappy natives are tortured and put to death, as warrantable practices, authorized by a state of war?

No, any peace between Spain and Spanish America, with subjection as its basis, can be nothing but a sullen pause from arms, or a meditation on fresh revenge. The history of the country itself, will bear me out in my assertion. It will be like a wound, closed, but not healed, that will soon fester, with renewed rancour, The state of the two countries to which I allude, has no example in the annals of history; aud this arises from the character of the people, and the peculiar circumstances of the case. If the inhabitants of Spain, could once be brought to look impartially at their own interests, as individual citizens, they might then comprehend the hardships of their fellow brethren in America, and urge their government to some rational stysem of compromise. But, alas! we find that at home, they are little more than a blank, and the deposition of the Cortes by an armed force, proves the fact. Spain ever was, and particularly now, may be considered as a military government, in which civil power is very subordinate. Such a government is deeply interested in a continuance of its despotic system over America, for every inferiour officer there beholds a

fat Viceroyship, Captain-Generalship, or some other command, with which to renumerate his services, and increase his fortune. And how many hungry mouths, has not Spain now to fill, after her past campaigns? Left to herself, Spain will consequently, attempt to affiance her accustomed power, on the degradation of her American provinces, in defiance of every principle of right. This, is in fact, the interest of those who have lately governed, as well as, of those who are about to govern.

When one community, is in any degree, subordinate to another, particularly, when this subordination has been produced by force, and not by consent, the danger most to be dreaded, is, that the arrogance, extreme pride, interest, or self-complacency of the ascendant, in all matters of mutual controversy, will decide in its own favour, whenever an opportunity offers. This is, unfortunately, the case, even under governments of a more perfect nature than that of Spain; for power in whatever hands it may be, even in conformity to a corrupt principle in the nature of man, is rarely so strict, and so delicate, as to put just limitations on its own extent. Can it then be expected, that when Spanish America is humbled, either at the feet of the Cortes, or of Ferdinand, that equitable justice will be administered to her? Can it be expected, that those who have preferred interest, and the paltry views of a mercantile faction, to the substantial good of their country, will then be more liberal? If Spain is left to herself, will not force, either open or disguised, be the means by which she will attempt to re-establish her power; and of this, can any thing but degradation be the consequence? Can it produce one single benefit of a lasting nature, either to herself, or to the world at large?

Bodies, when connected by so unnatural a bond, as mutual hatred and distrust, can never expect long to remain in a good understanding.

Besides, the obstinacy which has hitherto marked the conduct of the Spanish Government, relating to the affairs of Spanish America, a strange incongruity has also been noticed. Caracas, Mexico, and Buenos Ayres, have uniformly been treated as rebellious sections, and that, as has been fully manifested, for erecting Juntas, under legitimate motives, and then persisting in their continuance. The Juntas of Chili and Quito, on the other hand, though exactly similar, were actually at one time, recognized by the Cadiz government. The Spanish Americans, have generally been held in the light of rebels, yet Spanish chiefs have capitulated with them; in the beginning exchanged their prisoners, and had direct intercourse with them. And after so much inconsistency and injustice, will Spain of herself, learn to vary her measures? Governments, have sometimes been seen to issue such baneful laws, as to injure a community, but that of Spain rashly declared a war, that could not fail to dissolve hers. The timely repeal of an obnoxious tax, and an explanatory declaration, respecting the legislative authority of England over the North American colonies, would at one time, have produced confidence and restored tranquillity; and how much the cabinet of St. James's had to regret this not being done, has been already shewn. And could not Spain here adopt a most interesting lesson? To restore mutual confidence is the first step to be effected, this alone can remove all difficulties, and reconcile all those contradictions occuring in the complexity of an inveterate and rankled dispute, out of which, in one

section, an exterminating death war, has originated, *and in all the others, a deadly hatred and hostility, of which no adequate idea can be given. Little would have sufficed in the beginning; it then would have been sufficient to have conceded partially, if it had only been done with sincerity and a good grace. But, after an accumulation of soreness, jealously, and distrust, and particularly under such clashing pretensions and irritated passions, as those which now actuate both parties; how can it be possible, for any compromise to be affected, unless through the benign exertions of a mutual friend? It is not by deciding the suit, but by adjusting the difference, that peace can be restored and maintained. The parental affection, in the bosom of whose authority, the Spanish Americans were wont to repose their privileges, and almost every thing else they had dear on earth, has become estranged and hostile, and it is not by repeated and indiscriminate slaughter, made against the universal sense of justice, that it can again be reconciled. Civil war in the annals of no nation, ever produced scenes, such as those Spanish America at this moment presents; and Spain herself, ought to be ashamed, at the sad spectacle which her affairs and conduct, in that quarter, exhibit to the scorn of both Europe and America. Nothing has yet been subdued, either by love or terror. The Spanish forces have indeed some cities, fortresses, and the ground on which they encamp; but around, is anarchy and confusion. They spread a devastatation of the worst of

* In Caracas, where as before shewn, the prisoners have been mutually murdered, the war is carried on, *a mort*, prisoners being no longer made. The public acts are also signed, *3d year of the Republic, and 1st of the death war. (Guerra a muerte.)*

kinds, but they do not enlarge the sphere of authority, or make its basis the more substantial. Hitherto, Spain has trusted to arms and the machinations of discord; but by this time, she ought to have learnt, that at such a distance, love and affection are the only secure holds, to which she can resort. She ought also to recollect, that if defeated, the mass of her weakness and violence, will then appear in its full light; and besides her broken power, she will have the scornful censures of the rest of Europe. A moral and conscientious man, is cautious how he deals in blood; and if so, ought not nations equally to feel for the murders of unoffending thousands? Man, also, remembers that he is amenable to the most dreadful of all tribunals, on the other side the grave; and though nations cannot be thus judged, their leaders ought, nevertheless, to know, that they are equally answerable for that abuse of power entrusted to them; and above all, no nation is totally unmindful of the opinion of the rest of the world.

Can England then who has so long been the upright and envied arbiter of all her neighbours, and who has just effected so much for the repose of Europe, continue to behold these disasters, and these enormities, with which Spanish America is bent down, and not make a strong, an energetic exertion in behalf of suffering humanity? Spain has still before her, a road intricate, dark, and full of perplexed and treacherous mazes, in which, if she has no helping hand, she will eventually be lost. And can any one better than England, aid by her advice, or illumine by her councils? It is certainly a delicate thing to interfere in a domestic quarrel; but yet, as things stand, there is no remedy, unless we wish to see Spanish Ame-

rica become the general tomb of its inhabitants. This delicacy is increased, by the peculiar character of the nation most interested; but still we have found, that a tame subserviency has always increased the evil. Hitherto, in our affairs with Spain, we have not met with that success our purity of intentions deserved; this was because we were thwarted by faction, betrayed by specious friends, and slandered by avowed enemies. We have had to deal with a people, who cherished not only the principles, but even the prejudices of their ancestors; yet this was because they conceived them right. There are questions, of the most objectionable nature, when fairly laid before the Spanish people, and with their objects sufficiently guaranteed, to which even the most prejudiced have assented, and afterwards have experienced the benefits. There are cases, also, of such a plain and manifest nature, as to admit of so positive a demonstration, that even so the blindest cannot be mistaken. In this number, most assuredly, was the proferred mediation of England, and it was lost by nothing but the interpretations of the Cadiz prints. The war with Spanish America, as may be fully collected in the course of this exposé, originated with the governments of Spain, and not with the people; to them its grounds were, and still are, as strange as a problem of Euclid. In them, there is still a great fund of affection towards their distant brethren; and they cannot, besides, divest themselves of the common feelings of men. They have minds, and these are open to conviction. Between the two countries, there ever existed a cordial fraternity, and one party never can forget the sufferings and services of the other. On the other side of the Atlantic, the tide of popular regard, had long continued to set to-

wards the mother country, and it did not take a contrary direction, till war was declared by the Cadiz government, and one unjust and impolitic act, was added to another. But that government, as well as all the others to which it gave origin, have been thrown down, and Spain herself has pronounced their illegality. Would it, then, be difficult, to cause the corresponding flow of affection from this side, to enter its accustomed channels? After the chequered scenes to which they have been exposed, within these last six years, the Spanish people must be sensible, that to continue a war of this nature, is only exposing their arms to the possibility of disgrace, betraying their own weakness, and lessening the public confidence. They must be aware, besides, that this is a long and tedious means, also uncertain, and that it must eventually lead to the destruction of all parties. To erect a new empire on the ruin of their fellow brethren, must be opposed to the honest hopes of a people, however deluded they might have been; and were they only once sensible of the real situation and sufferings of the ultramarine provinces, and fully acquainted with the history of the past, I am not afraid to affirm, that on a basis well guaranteed, they would be grateful to any power, that would extricate them out of the dilemma in which they now stand.

It is not only to individuals of every class, but also to nations, that a continuation of so fruitless, hopeless, and unnatural a civil war, as that waging between European and American Spain, must be an object of affliction and regret. No one can fail to feel deep sensations of grief and emotion, at its miserable consequences; and, in his heart, condemn the unjust grounds on which it com-

menced. England ought also to be proud and happy, in being now possessed of such a combination of means of relief, such as is rarely obtained by the most fortuitous circumstances, or the most strenuous of human exertions. And is she not answerable to the whole world, if she neglects them? I have endeavoured, in the course of this exposé, to lay before my readers, not only the nature of this warfare now carrying on, but also the extent of the havoc it has produced. I have further pointed out, in what particular stages, the interposition of the British government would have been effectual, and I will now ask, if all these ravages and horrors could have been foreseen, and if they could have been prevented, by merely giving offence to five illegal Regents, and creating in the Spanish people a temporary disgust, would the object not have been worth running the risk? It was a faction of monopolists we merely had to overcome; but would not the Spanish people at large, when they were fully enlightened on the subject, even have been grateful for our accomplishing a peace? As the Mexican letter already quoted, observes, would not even the Cortes have been reconciled, on receiving remittances of money and other aid from Spanish America, which could not be the case, as long as the war continued? Would not Ferdinand, now he is returned, if he is only actuated by those humane and just principles hitherto attributed to him, have felt more grateful to us, on finding his monarchy in peace and prosperity, than now divided by discord, and the best half in a state of ruins? Would he not have felt more satisfied, that the dictates of justice and equity had been followed, than that his unworthy agents and representatives, should now be charged with the murder

of a million and half of his meritorious and unoffending subjects? And would not England have felt more satisfaction in saving the lives of these, and in sparing their country from universal desolation, than in fawning to a faction, and being subservient to the policy of men, who were dissolving that very community they were placed to defend and consolidate? She could effect the nomination of Lord Wellington, as Generalissimo, as before-stated, a measure fifty times more objectionable; and when interest and humanity pleaded in behalf of the injured and oppressed, means were no longer within her reach. Viewing the matter on a smaller scale, the Govenor of Curacoa, as will be seen at the latter end of document I. was informed by General Bolivar, that the Spanish chief of Puerto Cavello, refused to exchange the few American prisoners he had, comprehended in a solemn capitulation, for 4000 Spaniards taken in action, and from the conduct pursuing, it was evident that the murder of all must soon result. Yet, as an agent of England, he could apply to the Americans for the release of those Spaniards, who had brought all these calamities on themselves, but he could not induce the latter to abide by a sacred capitulation, by which all he sought, would have been obtained. An active and energetic demonstration, on the part of the British Commanders in the West Indies, would have prevented those horrors detailed in document I. would have saved the lives of several thousand unfortunate victims, sacrificed in cold blood; in like manner that an early attention to the rising dissentions in Cadiz, would have been a barrier to all the disasters which have been generated therefrom. If so, individuals ought not to be ashamed, that on this, as well

as the other side of the water, they have zealously endeavoured to anticipate all this to the Ministers at home, and to their agents abroad. But to wish well to Spanish America, even consistently with the honour and interest of both Spain and England, now appears to be a crime, when lately, large sums were expended on inconsistent expeditions to that country, and in exploring the foulest sources of information.

The menial, with equity on his side, when contending to escape oppression, is an object worthy of the respect of every one; and is not an entire nation, with whose sufferings and degradation we have so long sympathized whilst struggling against the most despotic and unjust acts, deserving of the regard of England? Can she be deaf to the calls of an interesting people, whilst the unfeeling arm of a dissolute soldiery, pours out, in torrents, their innocent blood, and carries fire and desolation amongst the peaceful dwellings of their unoffending clans? Can she behold, with unconcern, her ally, resorting only to measures inevitably tending to prolong a war, which already makes humanity shudder? Can she, any longer, divest herself of an anxious and watchful solicitude, for the welfare of a people, whom both interest and nature have made so deserving of her protection? After such carnage, havoc, and destruction, must not England be convinced, that the plan, so far, adopted by Spain, is wrong; and that the means employed to carry it into execution, are illegal, unwarrantable, and opposed to every sense of humanity and reason? Is it not now evident, that to recriminate, is not the way to reconcile; and that to rail at rebels, even if the Spanish Americans merited that name, is not the way to subdue them? To

carry on all these excesses, are not the most fundamental of the Spanish laws themselves, trampled to the ground? The most express statutes of the Indies, forbid the person of an Indian, even when taken in rebellion, and with arms in his hand, from being hurt, till brought before a legal authority; but, here, we see them wantonly murdered in thousands, even whilst kneeling for mercy. The distressed situation of Spanish America, and the horrid aggravations under which it daily increases, at this peculiar moment, presents a subject, highly deserving of the contemplation of the thinking part of our community; and it becomes a question, which every Briton ought to ask, whether the dawn which now brightens on the old world, ought not to remove the gloomy clouds which overhang the new one? The conduct of Spain to her ultramarine provinces, has been equally hostile to the maxims of reason and justice, as well as opposed to the common rights of mankind; and no policy whatever can warrant transactious which are flagrantly unjust. It is not only England, but the whole world, that is interested in the cessation of the horrors committing in Spanish America, though, as the ally of Spain, England is the most interested. If, by her treaty, she is withheld from this act of justice, it is an engagement, made contrary to the common feelings of mankind, and obvious policy, and it now operates as a league, against the most sacred rights of an unoffending people. But if this treaty was made with the Spanish monarchy, it is binding to all its parts; and all are equally deserving of a participation of the objects for which it was formed. If so, is not Spanish America entitled to some share of that sympathy, we have so long lavished on Spain? Yes,

and the impartial mind must be lead to conclude, that the dictates of humanity, and the imperious calls of justice, urge us, at this propitious moment, to labour in a most strenuous manner, to put an end to the bloody and unnatural warfare, with which, that unfortunate country is now desolated.

§ In the preceding division of my subject, I appealed to the good sense, humanity and justice of the British government, as well as to the generous and sympathetic feelings of the people of England, by laying before them, a brief sketch of the nature and extent of the horrors and enormities committing in Spanish Columbia, urging a mediatory interference, that might staunch so many wrongs, and put an end to such an useless and wanton waste of blood and treasure. It now remains for me, to bring forward those arguments of policy, which support my assumed premises, and to examine the grounds of expediency, which interest the minister, merchant, and politician.

In extending our views to the other side of the Atlantic, the mind is filled with pleasurable wonder and astonishment, on beholding the situation, extent, and varied resources of that immense continent, ranging from the Mississippi to Cape Horn, and washed by two great oceans. Gifted with the choicest bounties of nature, if we examine its numerous and diversified productions, we shall discover luxuries which deceive the burden of life, substantial food and drugs, which support and prolong it; and if we refer to our imports, besides coin and bullion, we shall see we are indebted to it, for most of those manufacturing materials, which invigorate the springs of our national industry, and extend and animate

some of the most interesting branches of our foreign and domestic commerce. This is not a desert, such as our North American settlements were, in the time of Charles the Ist, and where the indigenes retired, to make room for the white population. This continent, contained several great and extensive empires, before it was discovered by Europeans; rich, fertile, and highly civilized; in which, the population became partly blended with the conquerors and settlers. And certainly possessed of so many advantages, it bids fair, at some future period of time, to become an assemblage of powerful states, equally rich and flourishing with many kingdoms of Europe. Mexico, in particular, according to the recent and faithful delineations of Humboldt, presents advantages, unequalled in any other section of the earth. In ceralia, it is the richest country under the sun, abundant in leguminous and bulbous plants, and besides, affords, every article of West Indian, Asiatic, and European production. It possesses the convenience of whale and other fisheries, on the South seas; and from its Atlantic ports, grains and meat may be supplied to the West Indies and Europe, and hemp and ship-timber, may be had for our navy.

Nor are these advantages confined to the kingdom of New Spain. Every other section, in some measure, partakes in them. Peru might supply us with cotton, wine, oils, &c. Chili can present us with wheat, hemp, and flax, and from the partial intercourse we have had with other sections, we have already learnt the nature and value of their exports. This great mass of advantages, has, indeed, hitherto, been of little or no benefit to the world at large, or even to their own possessors; but still they

exist, and it only requires a benign combination of circumstances, to call them forth. Roused from the lethargy of many ages, freed from the shackles which a false policy had imposed on agriculture and trade, and placed under the auspices of a benificent, enlightened, and liberal government, Spanish America divided into two empires, would soon emulate a stage of strength and grandeur, scarcely surpassed, in ancient or modern history.

In thus taking a general view of this interesting and comprehensive subject, so many are the powerful considerations which rush upon the mind, that it would be impossible, in such confined limits as these, to individualize them all. Yet the hopes of the enlightened merchant, and the real interests of the nation, at this propitious moment, demand that they should be maturely weighed, and deliberately examined. Standing, as we do, at the happy close of one of the most momentous struggles that ever occurred in the annals of history, by which an enormous debt has been accumulated on the shoulders of our children; it behoves us to lay that solid groundwork, for present as well as future enterprize, that may ensure its reduction, and compensate for the heavy burdens, with which the present generation has been loaded. Nay, it becomes of the greatest importance to the whole state, to seek new sources of intercourse and trade, and especially to improve every opening, which under all emergencies, we can controul. The commercial prosperity, and consequent strength and greatness of England, have long been the envy of the European continent; and notwithstanding the favourable issue of the war, who can insure, that it will not again become the

same? Commerce, also, amongst ourselves, has always been looked upon as the very heart-blood of our national existence, and the cause and essence of our greatness. And, where can we look for its increase, or combine its progressive growth, with such secure prospects, as in a country, yet in a virgin state, affording the products of all the zones, besides precious metals, and even already, opening to us a large consumption of fine and coarse goods?

I am induced to take this survey of the resources of the continent of Spanish America, not only for the purpose of supporting the tenour of my arguments, on the grounds of policy; but also, to correct many prejudices, which exist in the public mind, with regard to Spanish American trade in general. No sooner was the British standard displayed on the shores of La Plata, than Sir Home Popham, wrote his circular to the principal manufacturing towns, to urge the shipment of goods, inducing them to believe, that full scope was open for their enterprize. The grounds, on which these invitations were made, were extremely fallacious, and produced the fatal losses, thence experienced. Notwithstanding Buenos Ayres is the key to Chili, and great part of Peru, as well from its geographical situation, as from the facility of travelling the pampas, and the difficulty and delay of doubling Cape Horn, it, nevertheless, ceased to such, as long as the town was held in a hostile manner by the British; interiour communication being cut off. Buenos Ayres and its districts, cannot be reckoned to contain more than 130,000 souls, and this was the whole then held under control. Our consumption of goods, was, therefore, limited to that quantum of population, for the

inner provinces, instead of organizing relations of trade, and sending their mules loaded with dollars, and their boats with productions, were actually collecting troops to repel us ; nay, forces were even marching from Lima, and communication with the points in our possession, was held treason by the Spanish chiefs. Under impressions very different from these facts, it was, that our merchants vied with each other in extensive shipments, at heavy freights and great expences. Their cargoes, were, moreover, ill assorted for the market, and to such an excess, that at any other time, they could never have been consumed. The entire importations into Buenos Ayres, from the mother country, were never rated at more than five millions of dollars, including many of her own productions, and we are calculated, at that time, to have shipped there, nearly that quantity of pounds sterling in dry goods and hardware alone; most of which were in opposition to the taste of the country; and of many articles, even the use was not known.* This was the worst of the sections of Spanish America, for an excess of dry goods, in consequence of the supplies that come down from the manufacturing districts of Cochabamba, where cottons suitable for the Indians and lower orders, are made. This temporary glut, will, however, be of essential service, by increasing the future consumption of British articles, for these, by their cheapness, being then

* As an instance of the want of judgment, with which cargoes were selected, I can quote the fact of a merchant, who, on seeing blankets sent out, supposed they must want every thing else used in a cold climate, and he consequently shipped a large assortment of *warming pans*. When seen by the people of Buenos Ayres, they asked whether the British dressed their victuals in them.

thrown into the market, were gradually purchased by the natives, who were thus taught new wants, and had their own manufactures greatly supplanted. These beneficial effects are already becoming visible, for encouraged by the better systems of the new government, Buenos Ayres, that formerly imported five millions of dollars, in foreign articles, last year, exceeded twelve, and the returns have, also, doubled. Who would have thought that coals and English fire grates, would become articles of export to La Plata; or, that by our intercourse, we should have taught the inhabitants the use of many conveniences and wants, before unknown to them; and that, in so short a time, we should have contributed to more than double their imports? This instance, alone, tends to shew, how much the resources of that country, might be improved, and how extremely deserving it is, both of the attention of government, and of our mercantile interests.

The great avidity, with which the British merchants pressed forward to reap the rich and tempting harvest, which they supposed was then open to them, was the great cause of their misfortunes, and they also suffered, greatly, from the extravagance and dishonesty of their agents, many of whom became rich, whilst the owners were made bankrupts. But the fault of all this, was not in the trade of the country, but in the manner in which those speculators, mistook a large and sudden flood of untried benefits, which they then supposed would rush on the world, without considering the actual state of the country, to which they were sending out their goods. We then commenced a trade with an isolated point, and in consequence of our losses, we threw the whole blame in

a sweeping manner, on the whole of South America. Yet when we come to examine the imports from Europe, consumed in the various sections, we shall find, that no other quarter of the globe, presents so favourable a prospect, or such a field for the enterprize of man.

§ Notwithstanding the degraded state in which Spanish America has so long remained, the want of encouragement, and the extortions and shackles of government, the total European imports, by Humboldt, are estimated at 59,200,000 dollars, independent of contraband trade, as per following scale.

Humboldt's Statement of entire importations into all Spanish America.

	Dollars.
Captain Generalship of Havana and Puerto Rico	11,000,000
Viceroyalty of New Spain, and Captain Generalship of Guatemala	22,000,000
Viceroyalty of New Granada	5,700,000
Captain-Generalship of Caracas	5,500,000
Viceroyalty of Peru, and Captain-Generalship of Chili	11,500,000
Viceroyalty of Buenos Ayres	3,500,000
Total annual importation to Spanish America	59,200,000

59,200,300 dollars, at 4s. 6d.—£13,320,000 sterling.—

And, is this a trade, not worth the attention of the British government; one, that by the Spanish Custom House returns, under every disadvantage, independent of contraband trade, which is known to amount to at least one half, and at the low proportion at which the sections are rated by Humboldt, exceeds thirteen millions sterling? In the preceding scale, Buenos Ayres is only rated at 3,500,000 dollars, and its regular estimation on the spot, exceeds five millions; so that, when we come

to consider the immense smuggling trade, to which every facility was given by the corruption of the guards; and which was not only carried on from the different West India islands, but also in the English and United States whaling expeditions to the South Seas, and from the frontiers of the latter, to the inner provinces of Mexico, it is a very fair estimate to lay down the total annual consumption of Spanish America, in imported articles, at eighty millions of dollars, or sixteen millions pounds sterling, a calculation in strict conformity with the very best authorities. Still, can I aver, from my own experience, as well as from official Spanish documents, that not one-third of the inhabitants of that immense country, have hitherto been in the habits of wearing imported goods. By an official report in my possession, out of the seven millions of inhabitants contained in New Spain, it appears, that only one million used foreign cloathing, from its being too dear for the poverty of the remainder. Indeed the Indians and casts, are kept in so degraded a state, that they have not the means to make the purchase, and are obliged to content themselves with rags, and the coarse homespun cottons and woollens, they themselves manufacture. It has been calculated, and with sufficient accuracy, that on an average, each inhabitant of the United States, consumes, yearly, £5 worth of British manufactures; yet a trade to a warmer country, is more profitable, from a larger proportion of fine goods entering into the consumption. The state of war in which Spanish America had been long kept, and the dear rate at which its inhabitants were obliged to purchase their cloathing, drove the lower orders to the expedient of manufacturing their cotton and wool; on

which occasion, a native writer observed, that they were indebted to England, by the war she carried on against them, for having taught them to supply considerable part of their own cloathing.

Thus our own impolicy, added to the monopolies of the mother-country, principally gave rise to the establishment of manufactures in Spanish America; and the cessation of these causes, and the creation of a rivalship in prices, quality, and imitation, would, consequently, render their continuation useless, and we might, eventually, secure the entire consumption of seventeen millions of people. The natives of Spanish America became manufacturers, from necessity, for it cannot be supposed, that a people, possessed of extensive and fertile regions to cultivate, and a comparatively thin population, would adopt a sedentary line of life, from choice. No, they have only done it, because the productions they might raise, were of no value from the want of trade; and being possessed of the raw materials, they recurred to home manufactures, from not having wherewith to purchase imported goods. These manufactures, are, besides, unaided by machinery and art, of course, they will die away, when better and cheaper goods come into competition; and when that period arrives, the consumption of Spanish America, will exceed one hundred and eighteen millions of dollars, and rapidly increase as new wants are created.

The United States, have, hitherto, been very great suppliers of goods in their sister continent, this being a trade in which the British merchant has had little share. In the year 1805, twenty millions were exported from England to North America, alone; and our united exports, westwards, that year, did not exceed twenty-three

millions. In 1808, after the intercourse with the United States, had been interrupted, five millions only were exported to that country, and eighteen millions to the Spanish main and the West Indies; from which it appeared, that out of the said twenty millions imported from this country by North America, thirteen millions were destined to supply the Spanish shores of the Atlantic; and, indeed, it is a fact, that only half our exports to the North American market, are consumed there, the remainder being reshipped, and sent to the Spanish main, to procure valuable returns. In 1809, seven millions were exported to North America, and nineteen to the Spanish settlements and West Indies; and in 1810, our total exports, westwards, reached twenty-eight millions, from which it may be concluded, that by proper management, the trade to Spanish America might be made the most valuable of any we have, might yet be considerably increased, and is, of consequence, deserving of the most serious consideration; for it might also be rendered the most secure. In the year 1802, Cadiz alone received from all Spanish America, 54,742,033 dollars in precious metals, and 27,096,814 do. in colonial productions; a sum equal to the total imports of England, in 1790, which did not exceed eighteen millions sterling.

Such is the import trade and consumption of the united sections of Spanish America; such are the improvements of which both are capable; nor are the returns less interesting, being composed of the richest productions of nature, besides forty-two millions of dollars in coin, which might be easily increased. This is therefore a connection of the greatest possible importance to

the mercantile interests of the British empire, and will, in future, be of great political consequence in the affairs of Europe. We have, hitherto, beheld the shutting up of one continent against us, as the precursor of ruin; the opening, therefore, of another, with such valuable resources, ought to be an object of national gladness. Our existence, as a nation, depends on our commerce, this requires peace, it, therefore, behoves us to quench the flames of war, wherever we can promote the pursuits of agriculture and trade; more, especially, in the regions out of the reach of those, who only lately were our common enemies. The history of commerce, in this country, records no instance of calamity, so severe and so extensive, as that we have lately experienced, and, on the other hand, it is universally acknowledged, that we can only relieve the burdens which have so long rested on the people, but when our manufactures and trade increase, in a corresponding degree. Whoever has viewed Spanish America, with a careful eye, will readily admit, that its long neglected regions, contain more resources than any other section of the globe; and besides its great and increasing consumption of goods, and valuable territorial productions, it, alone, affords precious metals to the world. Constant and adequate supplies, will make the people agricultural; when they have wherewith to go to market, their wants will increase, and to England might devolve a large portion of their supplies. If there is a country, in the world, that by its trade, can ever retrieve our pecuniary wants, if we ever, in time, hope to wipe away the enormous debt we are entailing on our posterity, or alleviate the burden already pressing upon us, for its support, this is the only region under the sun, where

the adequate resources, are in embryo. Yet, whilst we behold our parliaments and statesmen, busied in regulating the India trade, that only amounts to six millions yearly; whilst we see their time and talents, absorbed in questions of infinitely minor import, this, alone, is buried in profound silence; this, alone, is supposed undeserving of notice. A comparative view of the Spanish ultramarine provinces, with the British possessions in the East Indies, will further elucidate their importance, even in their degraded state, and prove, that though the population is so much smaller, they, nevertheless, afford more net revenue, than even our choice regions in Asia.

	Spanish America.	English possessions in Asia.
Extent in square leagues of 25 to the equatorial degree...	460,000	48,300
Population	17,000,000	32,000,000
Gross revenue in dollars	38,000,000	43,000,000
Net revenue in dollars	8,000,000	3,400,000

As these valuable provinces have hitherto, stood, little or no trade has been carried on, excepting in partial ports of the Atlantic; but the whole of the interiour of Peru and Mexico, great part of the shores of the Pacific, as well as many other sections, are perfectly in a stagnant state; for besides the ravages of war, what speculations can be expected from local merchants, when they are not certain, for a month together, to whom they are to belong; when in their present unsettled state, they

are ignorant whether the fate of Poland awaits them, whether they are to be delivered over to the fury and revenge of the Cortes, or of Ferdinand; or whether they are to become an English colony; and when, at the same time, they are daily exposed to the ravages of a dissolute armed force. The trade of Vera Cruz, alone, is estimated at five millions sterling, per annum. For the three last years, it has been suspended, from the roads being in possession of the insurgents, and has therefore been a blank to the enterprize of the world. Under circumstances so precarious, then, the native merchant cannot be expected to adventure; and though many of the above dreads, at first sight, appear imaginary, they, nevertheless exist; for the ultramarine provinces have in vain demanded of the Cortes, what was to be their ulteriour fate, in case the Peninsula was lost. England has also maintained a profound silence, whilst the first Regency to whom they appealed, told them, *they were to belong to the mother country, even in the worst event of fortune.*

The actual uncertainty of things, has thus destroyed all confidence nor can it be expected, that men, whose peculiar character, is precaution, will put their hidden treasures into circulation, when they have the example of forced loans before them; extremes to which the viceroys of Mexico, and other sections, have long been driven, and when they are, at the same time, fearful, that at no distant period, they may be transferred, by sale or contract, to some European power, who may have the most to throw into the scale, when a general pacification comes to be agitated. Thus it is for the want of confidence, as well as from extensive ravages,

that the trade of Spanish America is ruined; whilst on the other hand, all her resources are drying up and destroyed.

The facts I have just stated, are of such a nature, as not to admit of a contradiction, they are founded on an intimate acquaintance with the countries to which they refer, and are confirmed by every intelligent native and traveller. Humboldt, marks the great improvement of which these countries are susceptible, but instead of attacking the principles on which they have been governed, (the falsity and injustice of which, are universally acknowledged) he confines himself to a collection of facts, and the proving of what commercial importance, the relations of Europe will become in Spanish America, whenever she is freed from the fetters of an odious monopoly, disadvantageous even to the mother-country. A connection, therefore, with a country like this, is of the utmost consequence; for besides its rich and almost virgin resources, in proportion as it is raised from degradation, its inhabitants would prosper and be happy, and bound to us by the tie of gratitude, whatever be the future convulsions of Europe, we might in them find a community of steady friends.

In order to render the preceding view of the trade and resources of Spanish America, more strong and forcible, I have annexed an estimate of our imports and exports to Spain, for a given period of years, which, though it cannot be taken for a fair and permanent criterion, will, nevertheless, point out the great transcendency of the one over the other:

An Account of the Official Value of the Imports and Exports of Great Britain, from and to Spain and the Canaries, in each of the undermentioned Years.

Years.	Imported into.		Exported from.			
	England.	Scotland.	England.		Scotland	
			British Produce and Manufactures	Foreign and Colonial Merchandize.	British Produce and Manufactures.	Foreign and Colonial Merchandize.
1800	701,307	2,882		3,382		
1801	590,832	4,784	454,618	65,421	1,256	542
1802	786,878	21,953	1,040 092	349,990	8,932	801
1803	910,055	22,112	579,543	209.158	525	4,162
1804	887,742	11,237	770,936	224,561	3,200	120
1805	891,76S	24,401	29,015	81,611	754	
1806	710,816	12,666	37,154	36,153	1,754	
1807	926,489	6,669	25,862	79,542		
1808	560,275	16,828	630,972	240,500	4,435	12,794
1809	896,801	11,619	1,746 788	555,240	109,669	1,631

§ The exports of Spanish America, by the custom-house returns, amount to 69 million dollars, in precious metals and territorial productions; and certainly, little would be requisite to double them. The annual coinage of all the sections, is calculated at 42 millions of dollars; and beyond doubt, the liberty and security of mercantile relations, would have a prodigious effect on the precious metals, extracted from the mines, not only from the consequent cheapness of iron and mercury, but also, from the improvements of the mechanical and chemical parts of obtaining and preparing the ores. It is a fact well

established, that the most expensive, as well as the most laborious part of mining, is the draining of the mines, and the bruising and amalgamation of the mineral; operations which are now performed by weak and defective machinery. Consequently, the introduction of the steam engine and new apparatus, would not only reduce the expence, but would also double the annual produce of the mines. The hands thus disengaged from an unhealthy labour, might be turned to the cultivation of the soil. The application of the steam engine, to draining and working the mines in Spanish America, is an object of infinite consequence to the Spanish government, and that of England is, also, greatly interested in its promotion. Besides relieving humanity, it is to a commercia people, highly advantageous to have the coinage of country doubled, with which we have any relations, ana the liberal manner in which this point has been attended to, in a late case, is extremely honourable to the heads of office. The coinage of Spanish America, by the restoration of peace and the steam engine alone, might be more than doubled, and from 42 millions it might be raised to 100 millions. According to the observations of Humboldt, the prosperity of New Spain, for example, has increased considerably within few years, notwithstanding the defects of the colonial regimen; what therefore might not be expected, by a change of system, and the introduction of the discoveries and improvements of art? If, according to the same authority, the precious metals obtained, have tripled in 52 years, and sextupled in 100; what an immense augmentation, would not this branch of public industry and revenue receive, by liberal plans, and especially, by security in the ma-

ritime communications? According to an official report in my possession, the following is the state of the mines in Peru.—

Gold mines in an active and working state			69
Silver ditto	ditto	ditto	784
Quicksilver ditto	—	ditto	4
Lead ditto	ditto	ditto	12
Copper ditto	ditto	ditto	4
Total active Mines in Peru, in 1793			673
Gold mines abandoned for sundry reasons			29
Silver ditto	ditto	ditto	588
Total mines in Peru, exclusive of Quito and Buenos Ayres.			1490

In the following statement, few gold mines are stated as abandoned, this is because they are, generally, found in horizontal layers; but of the silver mines, nearly always worked by a perpendicular bore; no less than 588 are left inactive, principally because they are filled with water. This scale may convey a good idea of the number of mines, abandoned in the other sections, from similar motives; in fact, whenever the elevation of the mine, has not admitted of a side horizontal bore, for the purposes of draining, as soon as the water has reached a certain level, the mine has been abandoned, and the labour of years, as well as the expenditure, often of millions, have been swallowed up in one general inundation. This has been the case with the celebrated mines of Pasco, in Peru, for the draining of which arrangements have been made, with a zeal and perseverance, that do the greatest credit to the abilities of their promotors. It is

also, extremely fortunate, that coal has been discovered, for, otherwise, from the dearth of fuel, the application of machinery, would have been useless.

The suspension of intercourse with Europe, has, al ways, produced in Spanish America, an incredible scarcity of the most necessary articles of labour, and has occasionally raised the prices of iron, from four dollars, to sixty and 100, per quintal; and of steel, from twenty-five dollars, as high as three hundred and twenty-five ditto. Under such circumstances, mining, and, of course, agriculture, had to stand still. Quicksilver, an article of such importance, that New Spain alone, consumed 16,000 quintals, annually, has always been held as a monopoly of the crown, and the quantity the mines have produced, has been in proportion to that of mercury distributed. To render the ultramarine provinces, more dependent on Spain, it was not lawful to work the quicksilver mines found in America, as has been before stated; a means adopted to secure the allegiance of the country. But, though America has, hitherto, been a tributary to Europe, for the supply of this essential article, this cannot be the case, as soon as more enlightened systems and liberal regulations are adopted, of which even Spain would be the gainer, for she would not then have to expend in a foreign market, an annual sum for a supply, that is, besides, liable to many contingencies. Peru contains four quicksilver mines already discovered, of which the most famous, is Huancavelica; and Mexico has several others, whose united produce, whenever they are put into operation, will supercede the necessity of importations of mercury from Spain and Carniola. What a field of industry and enterprize, even in this single

branch, opens on the world, but particularly on England, when these odious restrictions are removed, and the relations of friendship and intercourse are cemented, by stipulations of a liberal and permanent nature?

§ The increase of population, under a regular and stable government, capable of securing interiour and exteriour relations, would, in like manner, increase in rapid progression, and soon raise the strength of Spanish America, to a respectable height. According to the calculations of Humboldt, the population of New Spain, ought to double itself in nineteen years, so that if peace is once restored to Spanish America, and a paternal government created, one that may secure it from internal convulsions, and favourable to emigration, to what a degree of splendour and improvement, will not that country rise? Under the operation of causes less favourable, we have seen these calculations verified in the United States; which present both to England and Spain, the results of a grand experiment, in their power to realize, by the regeneration of Spanish America. In 1774, the exports from the United States, then British Colonies, were £3,607,000 sterling; and in 1799, they reached 72,663,332 dollars, or £15,925,021 sterling. From 2½ millions, the population, has, also, risen to near 7. The independence of the United States, in point of trade, has been more profitable to England than their submission; for prior to Mr. Jefferson's plan of destroying the trade of the union, Great Britain exported more goods of her own growth and manufacture to that country, than she did to the whole of Europe. And has not Spain an infinitely greater scope for advancement, in her immense and diversified continent of America? For this, it is not necessary to create an absolute independence, she has only

to alter her plans, to remove her restrictions and monopolies, and to establish a paternal and beneficent government, suited to the wants of an extensive, diversified and distant range of country, abounding in commodities, for which Europe presents an eager demand.

But this is not all, the free cultivation of the vine and olive, the growth of the mulberry, the distillation from sugar, rice, and the grape, the exportation of flour, the increase of the plantation of sugar, cotton, tobacco, as well as of many other productions, and the working of the mercury mines, will, one day, not only add to the circulation of trade, but will become more inexhaustible sources of wealth, than the united mines of gold and silver. Spanish America, appears, at some future time, to be destined to supply us with wine, oils, and raw silk, for which we are so dependent on the continent of Europe; as well as flax seed, for which Ireland has to recur to the United States. Ship timber, of the finest quality, can there be had in any quantity, as well as hemp. In short, in a progressive manner, will increase the agricultural and metallic productions of a country, that has, hitherto, been almost as a blank to the rest of the world; and, consequently, its consumption of merchandize would be doubled, thus affording to the supplying channels, a safe and ready market for manufactures, larger than any single section of the globe, presents. France is calculated to have taken from us, annually, no more than 7,600,000 dollars in goods, and the section of New Spain alone, affords a vent for not less than twenty millions. But it is not ourselves alone, who would be benefited, by the opening and amelioration of Spanish America. Our West India islands, will also, greatly

participate in the benefits. During the absence of supplies of flour from the United States, Jamaica has been supplied, in a precarious manner, with provisions from Haiti, according to the late report of its assembly. Yet in the neighbouring sections of New Spain, the finest in the world for cerealia, this article, has been rotting in the warehouses.

And, if such is the picture of the resources of Spanish America, if such the brilliant prospect capable of being opened on the world, can either the people or ministers of England, feel indifferent as to its present misfortunes or future fate? Do not both interest, policy, and humanity, strongly urge us to look, with anxious, eye, to the present state of this ill-fated, but interesting country? Have its long sufferings, no hold on the sympathy of a people like that of England, or have we, entirely, forgotten the inhabitants of those distant regions, at the details of whose conquests, we have so often felt emotion, and over whose history, we have so frequently shed the tear of sensibility? Lord Grenville, in his late admirable speech on the East India question, thus expressed himself with regard to Spanish America.

"A free trade with India, a free trade with China; with the Eastern islands, the latest acquisition of British valour; and through them, with the rich kingdoms of South America; a country hitherto indeed barred against us, as much by the monopolies of its parent government as by our own, but now at last by the course of events, no longer within the controul of man, opened, in every case I trust infallibly opened, to the commerce of the world."

"What a scene does this present to our imagination! We are told that when the Spanish discoverers first overcame, with labour and peril almost unspeakable, the mighty range of mountains which divides the Western from the Atlantic shores of South America, they stood fixed in silent admiration, gazing on the vast expanse of the Southern Ocean, which lay stretched before them in boundless prospect. They adored, even those hardened and sanguinary adventurers adored, the gracious Providence of Heaven, which, after the lapse of so many centuries, had opened to mankind so wonderful a field of untried and unimagined enterprize. They anticipated in prophetic enthusiasm, the glory of their native country, the future extent of its sovereignty and power, and the noble prize presented to its ambition. But theirs was the glory of conquest, the ambition of war, the prize of unjust dominion. As vast as theirs, but infinitely more honourable, far higher both in purpose and in recompense, are the hopes with which the same prospect now elevates our hearts. Over countries yet unknown to science, and in tracts which British navigation has scarcely yet explored, we hope to carry the tranquil arts, the social enjoyments, the friendly and benevolent intercourse of commerce. By the link of mutual interest, by the bond of reciprocal good will, we hope to connect together the remotest regions of the earth; humble, and weak, but not rejected instruments of that great purpose of our Creator, by which He has laid, in the reciprocal necessities both of individuals and of nations, the firmest groundwork of all human society. Let this be our glory, and what conqueror will not have reason to envy it?"

The fervid imagination, either examining the researches of a Humboldt, Molina, or Depons, would, likewise, there, court scenes, vast and romantic; would admire the sublime outlines, which nature has bestowed on the Andes and other places, and worship the powerful hand of a Creator, in their varied mineral and vegetable productions. We venerate the remains of Greece and Rome; Spanish America, also presents fragments, of an infinitely curious nature. We know all this, as it were, by hearsay; we have, in those secluded regions, sources unexplored, to which our most important interests are allied, and yet it would seem, as if we scarcely remembered that they exist. Hitherto, our writers complained, that this immense and diversified country, was closed to their researches; yet we have been six years in alliance with Spain, and our government has not promoted a discovery of a philosophical or commercial nature. The late government of France, was eager to avail itself of every means of obtaining information; and aided and supported the exertions of travellers, to whom the world is so much indebted. But the government of England, with infinitely better opportunities, beholds these pursuits, with an eye of indifference. Yet, would our expeditions there, have ended as they did, or our merchants have been so duped, if we had known any thing of the country? Would not a scientific and exploring expedition to Peru, be deserving of the promotion of the Regent of England; might we not be ambitious, that a knowledge of, at least, one section of that great continent, was due to our exertions?

In whatever light we view the great sections of Sp nish America, sentiments of the deepest interest are ex-

cited; nor can the British heart be divested of sympathy. We there behold an extensive continent, rich in every thing that ministers to the wants or luxuries of man, yet wretched from the time of its settlement, in consequence of the degraded system, by which it was governed; and now, desolated by extensive murder, conflagration, pillage, and all the scourges of an unnatural war. Though distant, we are yet bound to its fate, and disengaged from the great contest in which we were so lately plunged, not a moment ought to be lost, in affording it relief. Nay, many of our vital interests are implicated in its future welfare; nor do I hesitate to say, that if the great body of the British people, were sufficiently enlightened on this snbject, they would, with a firm and decided voice, pronounce the necessity under which England, at this moment stands, of causing the blood flowing between brethren to cease, and the furrows of anarchy and civil war, to be closed. The affections, also, of seventeen millions of people, cannot be indifferent to us; yet with the prejudices existing against us, and if after giving peace to Europe, we abandon them, what will not be their reflections, and what their feelings? Our former captures and attacks on their shores, are not forgotten; and there may yet be cases, in which the animosity of Spanish America, may be seriously felt. If the equipoise of power, should be ever again broken, let us hope never to have the inhabitants of that country, as our enemies.

Our present hold on Spanish America is of a most fragile nature; for though we may have effected a partial overthrow of the prejudices which existed in the Western continent, against our manufactures; though we

have, in some measure, succeeded to rival French and German goods, this has been attained through necessity, and not from preference; nor could we ever, at the prices to which our goods have risen, particularly linens, successfully support a competition. Our Scotch and Irish imitations of the above description of goods, are not altogether devoid of success; but the practical merchant must be fully sensible, that they would not long stand their ground, were the old continental channels again opened, and supplies congenial to their wants, would greatly enter into the political calculations of the Spanish Americans, if ever they are enabled to fix their own destinies. This is a tie of a much stronger nature, than would at first, be conceived; and added to the rest, might be successfully handled to our exclusion, and at a future moment, might lead us into hostilities with a country, that, by care, could be converted into a safe and plentiful harvest.

The only means of severing this bond, would have been, to have acted with a just and firm dignity, when called upon by one half of a monarchy, with which we were equally allied: to have helped in the relaxation of the oppressive system, of the otner; to have urged for redress, where it was due; to have prevented, by a timely interposition, the horrors of a cruel and desolating civil war; to have listened to the voice of justice; to have improved the display of loyalty and fidelity early evinced; to have consulted our lasting, instead of our temporary interests; and, in short, to have thereby added to this bond, the double one of gratitude. The Spanish Americans, not only conceive themselves linked to the continent of Europe, by their old relations, connections,

and supply of suitable goods; but also, by that being the great mart for their territorial productions, which, it is not in our power, to consume. But yet, happily for England, much is still within her reach, if timely and proper measures, are only adopted. These consist, in procuring for Spanish America, the peace its inhabitants so much require; and aiding them to establish a government suited to their wants, on which they may found their future welfare and prosperity.

§ Having borne so great a portion of that war, which has secured the throne of Spain to its rightful possessor, and restored peace to the continent of Europe, it is natural for Great Britain, to seek some remuneration to compensate for her great sacrifices, and the burdens which have rested on her people. In the exhausted state of the Peninsula, no other than opening the trade to Spanish America presents itself; and from the memorials forwarding from the chief manufacturing and trading towns, it would appear that this is generally expected. Hitherto, the Spanish cabinet, has manifested no disposition to relax the rigour of its pretensions, on this important subject; nor has it evinced a friendly attachment to this country, corresponding to the demonstrations made in its favour. That hostility to us, coeval almost with the landing of our troops in Spain, may have been considerably diminished, by the important events just achieved; but, though diminished, it is not subdued; and under the present smooth exteriour, there is concealed a mass of enmity, which, though it may not intrude on the superficial observer, will, hereafter, be extremely active in its rancourous workings. But yet for this, the British government is not to despair, or fail to

solicit a boon, due to us in gratitude; essential as a means of pacification; within the right of the ultramarine provinces, as integral parts of the monarchy; and, moreover, advantageous to Spain herself. On these four grounds, it is, that England has now to found her claims of remuneration; and as no trade can be carried on with a country in a state of warfare, divided by discord, and divested of ever kind of confidence, conciliation, on a liberal basis, must be the forerunner. As shewn in the body of this work, to obtain one, is to obtain the other; and if ever, it is in the enthusiastic moments of Spain, that this is to be effected. Her general conduct, during the period of our long and sincere co-operation, furnishes no foundation for a hope, that the remembrance of past services, will long continue; much less since the recent changes which have taken place. The king is not surrounded by our friends, and if faction is allowed to gain his ear, we shall be frustrated in our views. To the British government it is of the greatest importance, to keep the public mind of Spain, in a correct and straight line; and not to suffer it to be warped by misrepresentations, circulated by our enemies, to cause a wrong impression, and who, if they could, would divest all our services of merit, because interest and jealousy are the levers of their conduct. To this party, England has long acted with tame subserviency, but she has not on that account, inspired more grateful sentiments. She has claims of a loud and imperious nature, and both interest and humanity call upon her, to establish them in a strong and imposing manner. Instead of bending to the servile and the depraved, let her promote her interests, with the people at large.

Of the four grounds, on which I have stated, England may demand a free trade to all Spanish America; the three first, are sufficiently explained in the general texture of my preceding arguments. The one asserting, that this will be advantageous, even to Spain herself, requires some further discussion, as being the principal one, on which England has to rest her claim, and use in order do away the prejudices, which may still linger in the minds of the mass of the Spanish people.

If the great sections of Spanish America, are in future to be kept in the same degraded state as that in which they have been, since their discovery, the fruits of a revolution, through which Spain has passed, as well for her own improvement, as to throw off the yoke of an insidious enemy, would not only be lost, but most of the sacrifices made, will have been fruitless. Also, if so great a continent, as that we owe to the enterprize of Columbus, were to afford no more benefits to the world, than hitherto obtained, mankind would scarcely have to felicitate themselves on its discovery. Spain, as it were, built her happiness on the exclusive possession of a country, of whose resourses a faint outline has been given; and, unmindful of that permanent truth, that commerce and industry are the best mines of a people, she rather stifled than promoted, the pursuits of agriculture and enterprize. The bond, by which she governed was jealousy; this sprung from a sense of weakness she was ashamed to avow, whilst, if her plans had been liberal, and her political and economical systems, enlightened, with such resources, and with such an empire as America, she might have become the most powerful of the states of Europe. Ever needy, and always dependent, she was

possessed of resources incalculable, which she trembled to call forth, least they should excite the envy of her neighbours, whose attacks she was too weak to repel. Hence, generated a system of monopoly and exclusion, which, whilst it rendered her ultramarine provinces debased and enslaved, prevented that mutual exchange of commodities, alone capable of improving the bountiful gifts of nature, and adding revenue to her own crown. In short, Spain adopted the erroneous and extravagant plan of treating a whole continent, more populous and infinitely larger than herself, as a *colony*; and for this she had not only to sacrifice the most sacred rights of its inhabitants, but she had even to trample to the ground, one of the most fundamental laws of nature. On these principles, she sought to enrich her own government and its dependants, by impoverishing a distant half of her monarchy; thus rendering its inhabitants more unhappy than if they had been born on a sandy desert, for in vain did they behold precious fruits around them, which it was unlawful to pluck. Almost the only nation possessed of precious metals, these were scarcely landed on her own shores, than they were paid over to foreigners, to whom she had been even indebted for credit.

This illiberal and dastardly plan, it was, that first created a clashing between the interests of American and European Spain; and the oppression necessary to enforce and sustain it, rendered it still more galling. At one time, it was not only foreigners who were restricted, but even Spaniards; and certain trading ports, enjoyed the monolopy of receiving ships from the other side of the Atlantic. The great gain centering in the hands of a few, served to prolong this unequal system of trafic, and even-

tually organized that strong party, which during all our late transactions, beheld us as rivals, and also closed every avenue, by which justice could be had for a suffering people. At one time, Seville held the monopoly, then Cadiz, other ports not being privileged, till the time of Charles III. These parts consequently became the very focus, where enmity reigned against us, and Spanish America; for early sensible that nothing but a free trade could relieve her wants, she had adopted this essential measure of cloathing her inhabitants, and giving value to her territorial productions. A system of monopoly so cramping and confined, thus served to enrich a few, at the expence of many; and means were always found, to interest the ministers in its support. That equilibrium, which commerce ought to keep with the wants and industry of a people, was destroyed; and general prosperity became absorbed in the gains of a few, and these, also, often foreigners, who retired to their own country, when their fortunes were made. Flattered with the brilliant prospects America presented, every one was anxious to embark in the general adventure; whereby few capitals were laid out in tillage at home, and in improving the many benefits the genial soil of the Peninsula would afford to industry. Even the government supported the infatuation, supposing that the contingencies of a distant but lucrative trade, and the digging of gold and silver out of the bowels of the earth, were the safest means of obtaining riches. Thus, a state of war always produced a general stagnation, and disproportionate fortunes, destroyed the equipoise of society. The prices of every thing lost their level, and extreme and bloated riches, or squalid poverty, were all Spain presented

to the eye of the traveller. The government, in the mean time, was deluded by a fact it never sought to develope, and this was, seeing that the trade to Spanish America was the chief branch of its support, all others being extremely subordinate, it judged it, alone, deserving of encouragement.

Insensible of that positive axiom, that trade is always disadvantageous, when unaccompanied by manufactures and agriculture, Spain was cherishing a trade, to support which she was indebted to the industry of others, unaware that it is the just equilibrium of all these branches, which render a country rich and peopled. Instead of leaving the choice of pursuits to the citizen, she left but one road open, and impolitically closed all the rest. Thus she sacrificed the rights and views of a whole society, to give a preference to a detached part. It was by a long chain of inconsistencies so great, that Spain, surrounded as it were by light, had become the darkest nation of Europe; and with the most resources, had become the poorest. But what was worst, she was under a different impression; she was insensible of this glaring fact. But it is time, if she wishes to profit by past adversities, for Spain to become sensible of her late errors, and try to remedy them. From the present era, she ought to seek a new existence. She ought to vary a system, that has uniformly brought upon her misery, dependence and depopulation. Above all, without wandering from my object in view, she must remove her extravagant and oppressive system of custom-houses, her trade laws must be established, equal in Spain and in America; and in both, the greatest freedom ought to reign. Local and personal monopolies, ought to be destroyed. Instead of

embarrassing commerce with heaps of old regulations and laws, disproportionate duties, and clashing prohibitions, would it not be better to relieve it from all its shackles, by establishing one general, substantial, and clear system, founded on permanent, reciprocal, and well defined grounds. Guided by the principles of justice and wisdom, the Spanish government would find this due to the ultramarine provinces in point of right, and the best means of insuring their tranquillity and consequent security. Divested of prejudice, and grateful for the exertions in her cause, Spain would likewise feel this due to her ally, and moreover, she will be the first to experience the wonderful benefits of fixing her own national interests, on a solid basis, subject to no contingency. A new era must now necessarily break on the Spanish monarchy of both hemispheres, and the rise, if not the independence of Spanish America, is one of those inevitable events, against which, human wisdom would in vain attempt to provide. As it is for the first of these cases, that the preceding reflections are adapted, let Spain be ambitious of inspiring those sentiments of gratitude, which alone can consolidate her union; and may England also, be ever mindful, that there is as much satisfaction in aiding to regenerate a continent, as in rescuing one from tyranny.

But to descend to more minute particulars. The enlightened age in which we live, has considerably changed our ideas of the government of distant possessions, either as integral parts, or dependent colonies. The grovelling and jealous plans of the European *metropoles*, are now proved, only to have rendered their colonies subservient to individual aggrandizement, and to fatten a

short-sighted and corrupt government, at the expence of its subjects. To render them united, it is now seen they must be prosperous and contented, and so identified must their feelings be with those of the mother-country, and incorporated their wishes and wants, that they must consider her sway is to their advantage, and consequently bear it with sentiments of satisfaction. Spanish America can never be happy under restrictions, which render her productions of no avail, and Spain can never be rich and great, till these are adequately called forth. The opening of a free trade might, by Spain, be viewed under the following heads.—

1. Those who have hitherto been accustomed to wear national goods, from routine, will continue to use them, as long as they are as good and cheap as foreign ones; and if these outrival them, the capitals employed in home manufactures, may be then laid out on agriculture, with more advantage to the state.

2. It promotes not only the exportation of cottons, and a variety of other raw materials, but it gives an additional revenue, to the king, as well as the subject.

3. By this means, productions are raised to equal the imports, and coin it thus retained.

4. The progress of civilization and the increase of population, will ever be in a direct ratio, with agriculture and trade.

5. This is the only means of introducing into secluded countries, arts and science, and creating a future navy.

6. By this means, contraband is destroyed, and the entire dues of the king come into his own coffers, without exorbitant expences.

To be convinced of the preceding facts, Spain has only to examine the beneficial results of breaking up her system of *flotas*, and the advantages she has derived from the reforms of a Galvez. A passive trade, has ever been considered as the death of a state, and Spanish America, presents the most melancholy confirmation of this truth. Her inhabitants, have, hitherto, been the miners of the whole world, they have been, for three centuries, digging gold and silver out of the bowels of the earth, and after all, what better are they for it? No experiment, could prove the advantages Spain herself would derive, from throwing open her trade, better, than what resulted from the removal of some of her restrictions in 1778. The port of Cadiz, was violently opposed to this measure, but what was the result? In that single year, as many ships were fitted out, as had been in the five preceding ones. In that same year, Spain shipped to America, in articles of her own growth and manufacture, 28,236,620 rials; in foreign goods, 46,669,236 ditto, and the duties thereon were equal to 3,770,964 rials. The returns for this amount, were 74,559,256 rials, which paid in America 2,924,884 ditto in duties. In the 1784, national goods to the amount of 188,049,504 rials, were shipped to America, and in foreign goods 229,365,984 ditto; an increase equal to five times, on the last sum; and six on the first. The duties collected on this amount, were 17,164,880 rials, by which the revenue gained 13,393,836 ditto. The duties on exports from America, this same year, reached 50,632,632 rials, shewing an advance of 48,704,768 ditto, equal to 17 times what they were in 1778. Yet this was the effect of only a partial removal of restrictions, what may

not then be expected, when complete freedom is granted, and when the agriculture of Spanish America, is carried to the pitch of which it is susceptible?

In the course of this exposé, frequent allusion has been made, to the jealous manner in which the Cadiz merchants have, uniformly, opposed all attempts to open a free trade with Spanish America. It was the same in 1778, and they considered the opening of other ports, as productive of their destruction. Yet at that period, they shipped to America, 50,209,960 rials, per annum, in 1784 they exported 86,914,632 ditto, and in 1792, 272,000,000 ditto; nevertheless, this experience has not sufficed to destroy their errors and prejudices.

It would take me too far out of my way, to enter on details, in order to prove the great advantages, which both European and American Spain derived from these salutary measures, though of a very confined nature; suffice it to say, that from the above period, both received a new existence, by the proportionate increase of their trade, navigation, agriculture, &c.; and the crown, in a particular manner, was benefited.

In establishing a foreign trade, it is not here attempted to destroy that of Spain. The Peninsula, produces many articles which foreigners cannot supply, these ought not to be interfered with, as long as they are adequate to the demand. Indeed, prejudice will always give them a preference. By the manner, also, in which the duties are regulated, such distinctions may be made, as not to be onerous to either party. But if the Spanish Americans are equal in rights, they ought to be equally allowed to navigate to any part of the world, in their own bottoms, and to cloath themselves at the same rates,

as the natives of Spain. And as long as both countries belong to the same sovereign, is it not the same for him to receive his dues, on one side of the water, as on the other? Spanish America cannot cloath herself with the manufactures of Spain, and has consequently to recur to foreign channels. Why then are her natives to pay for their necessaries, four times dearer than those of Spain, when this is a measure only favourable to a few individuals? What would their boasted declarations of equality avail, if this were the case? This is a double monopoly, for the level of the prices of their productions, is thereby destroyed.

If, then, a free trade to Spanish America, on a liberal, well defined, and well guaranteed basis, would be a means of tranquillizing that desolated country; would promote its conservation; is due to it, as an integral and equal part of the monarchy, and would even be advantageous to Spain herself, what objections can she have, to grant it to England, as a remuneration for past services? After the war of Succession, the French were allowed it; and in consequence of the services rendered to King Philip of Spain; the assiento trade, and several other valuable licences, were granted to England. And are the modern Spaniards less liberal? Spanish America, is, also, stated to consume about ten millions of dollars, in East India goods; what an additional field might not be here opened? If banks were established in Lima, Mexico, and Buenos Ayres, connected with that of England, what an influx of precious metals might not be promoted?

§ A connection with Spanish America, consequently, is of that interesting nature, that nothing ought to deter the British government, from embracing every opportu-

nity to secure it. It is, moreover, now fully proved, that nothing but the councils and guarantee of England, can give repose to that unfortunate country, and at a future period, preserve it. Considerations of the moment, induced us, as it were, to turn our backs on exertions, which we could not but respect; and independent of other circumstances, the governments of the various sections, have been of so fluctuating a nature, as rather to decrease, than inspire confidence in the ministers of England. But, this is not the fault of the cause, in which Spanish America has embarked. Her inhabitants now fight in defence of the most just and honest rights, as well as in the most holy cause, in which the sword was ever drawn. Though, in some instances, they have been the dupes of individual ambition, and in others, the tools of blind fanaticism; this, however, is no stigma on their general undertaking. It is not, on this account, less virtuous and less honourable, nor has it been from principle or conviction, that England has been ashamed of the means employed to carry it through. It is not because the powers of Europe, have given them no sympathetic aid, that they have not deserved it. Every nation, that has, hitherto, sought to throw off the shackles of oppressive dependence, has found support, in one way or another. Without it, perhaps, their own attempts would have been frustrated. We have had before us the examples of Switzerland, Holland, the United States, &c. Not that I would urge the government of England to act towards Spain, as she did to us, during the North American struggle. No, the order of the present day, is generosity and magnanimity; and instead of separating, I would aid to connect the ultramarine provinces still

closer to Spain; but I would see, that the bond was rational and just, and capable of giving to an extensive and diversified continent, the means of its own happiness and prosperity. Having said this, my reader, may, perhaps, wish me to say more. The subject before me, is almost inexhaustible; and although I have already swelled my volume to double the limits I at first proposed, I am, nevertheless, involuntarily impelled to hazard a few speculations, on what I consider the best means of giving permanent quiet, happiness, and prosperity to Spanish Columbia, in a way consistent with the honour and dignity of Spain, and the interests of the rest of the world.

§ All legislators have agreed, that a body of political laws, to be sound and durable, must, in all countries, grow out of the character, situation, and habits of a people; they must be adapted to their peculiarities, and incorporated with their customs and usages. To establish a government on any other grounds, were to destroy the salutary effects it was intended to promote, and to prepare materials for the constant return of anarchy and confusion. In considering, therefore, what species of government, is best adapted and most suitable to the state of society in Spanish America, it is necessary to examine its component parts, the general stages of mental improvement to which it has arrived, as well as the climate, and the leading features of the inhabitants.

The Spanish Americans, in general, cannot be said to have received any other political education, than that which agrees with the establishment of a monarchy. In vain, should we there seek for that essential union of circumstances, which is necessary for the formation of a Republic. The principles of democracy, implicate many

complex, and some highly refined ideas, neither suited to the taste, nor within the general comprehension of a class of inhabitants, so backward in every species of literature, as are all the lower orders of the continent to which I allude. Its forms, also, are too simple for a nation, so long accustomed to pomp, pageantry, and show; of consequence, its adoption would be incongruous, where the habits and customs are so opposed, where public virtue does not abound, and where, in short, the political education is not congenial. The Mexicans, more than any other people of America, are accustomed to see the chief authority, surrounded by the show and parade of courts, and would not, easily, be reconciled to the simplicity and moderation of any opposite form. Any other species of government, or any other principles, would not therefore, be consonant to their wishes, or accord with their habits; and it is generally allowed, that all governmental establishments, to be lasting, require the support of public opinion, for this has ever considered as the firmest basis, as well as the strongest sanction of moral law.

To effect a revolution in the governing systems of Spanish America, consequently, can never be completed with success, unless the laws, and also the manners and customs of the people, are made congenial to the new order of things. If the old ones remain, they will continually clash; at each moment, they will be remembered and regretted, and should a favourable opportunity occur, a restoration would be sought, by those most immediately interested, and whom the change had most materially affected. At once to alter the laws, manners, customs, and habits of the people of that country, firm and

deep-rooted as they are, is a work too dangerous and too gigantic, to be accomplished, but by a series of years, and by the preparation of a successive generation. A Republican form of government, would, under the prevalence of opinions they could not discard, sit awkwardly on the shoulders of the Spanish Americans, and they would, continually, sigh for its removal. The histories of England and France, afford two striking instances, to bear me out in the truth of the above assertions. On the restoration of Charles II., the Republican form of government expired, without a groan, and was changed, without a struggle; because the usages, laws, and manners of the people, had been left untouched, and that interval had produced a forced and dishabitual state of things. The instance in France, has been recently before our eyes, and does not require comment. In countries, therefore, where education and principles are so much opposed, democracy cannot prevail, unless established and supported by a force, capable of insuring subjection.

One material impediment to the establishment of a democracy in Mexico, at least, is the great disparity of fortunes amongst the inhabitants of that kingdom. Humboldt tells us, that besides the advantages of population, New Spain has still another very important one, which arises from the enormous mass of capitals in the possession of the proprietors of mines, and in the hands of persons retired from trade. The absence of a monarch, would tend to give an undue preponderance to the influence of this rich class of citizens, and produce a tyrannical aristocracy, the worst of all governments. Besides, if in the form of government, it should be found necessary to give any share to the inferiour classes, in order to guard

against the inconvenience just stated, it might be feared, for the want of this third power destined to produce and to support the political equilibrium, that the struggle between these two opposite parties, would be attended by the most fatal consequences, and eventually, end in anarchy. In New Spain, there are a great number of persons who hold titles, immunities and distinctions, the whole of which class, would, consequently, be opposed to any new order of things, which might tend to level and confound them with the other classes of the community. It is for this reason, that they stand neuter in the present struggle.

The formidable influence of the clergy over every part of the population, and especially over the Indians, who constitute the inferiour class of New Spain (there being few blacks in the country), has never been so strongly demonstrated as in the present events and revolutions of Spanish America. It may easily be imagined, that they would not be favourable to a governmental structure of a republican form, as it sooner or later, would reduce their ascendency to very narrow limits; whereas, should they be enabled to withstand encroachments aimed against them, in the reverse of the case, and in the course of time, the clergy would, themselves, become the administrators of law. For example, supposing the Indians of New Spain, or of any other section, are allowed a part in the general body of the representatives, proportioned to their numbers, an act of justice, it would not be possible to prevent, as they would, consequently, elect ecclesiastics, from their greater influence and talents, the number of the latter, would, in that case, form a third or more of the whole body of dele-

gates. If to these are added the ecclesiastics who would, for the same reasons, be deputed by the other classes, it becomes evident, that they would soon possess a very disproportioned influence over the operations of government. In whatever form of government, therefore, to be proposed for New Spain, or indeed for any other part of the Spanish American continent, the ascendant power of these two bodies, must, in a particular manner, be calculated upon, for every where, their influence is great. The great cause of no insurrection having yet taken place in Lima, has been, that there, also, are to be found titled characters and great slave holders, who are fearful of losing their property in the confusion that must necessarily ensue, in case of insurrection. This inaction in the capital, has not arisen out of content, or a preference to the present system of things, for in Upper Peru, where the same causes do not exist, there has been as much movement as in any section of America; and in Lima, not long ago, notwithstanding the great caution of the inhabitants, there was a conspiracy, in which eight hundred negroes were implicated. The influence of the clergy in Caracas, has in a most particular manner, been evinced; for as soon as they were divested of their privileges and immunities, by the eighty-fourth article of the new constitution, they abandoned the cause, and have been the chief contributors to its late overthrow.

The stages at which the insurrections of Spanish America now stand, as well as the language which has been hitherto used by the new governments, by no means prove, that in the different sections there is a strong or decided disposition in favour of democracy, notwithstanding many of their features have been of that cast. The

chiefs, who have been in general, charged with the new powers, finding nothing in the old legislation of Spain, that would apply to the new system of things, have sought information in French political writers, so that, gradually, their systems would have become prevalent amongst the people, without their having an opportunity of judging of the merits of any other.

By the newly constituted chiefs, also, the position of Spanish America, was, in many respects, thought to resemble that of the American provinces in the North, at the time of their separation from England; and without a proper discrimination, they judged that the same measures would produce the same success. It is, however, well known, that amongst the higher and powerful circles, as well as amongst those who consult more than the momentary good of their country, the general opinion is, that a limited and well equipoised monarchy, is the only government suited to their wants; nay, there even exists a great prevalence of superstitious opinions, in favor of its establishment. It has been proved, that this has been the favourite idea of the Indians of Peru, that they have uniformly wished it; and it was an attempt under Tupac Amaru, to re-establish the ancient throne of the Incas, that at one time, inundated that great portion of the Spanish dominions with blood, and filled it with confusion. The Indians in general, and the same may be said of all the other inferiour classes, have no other idea of a social body, than that of king, nobles, and commons; indeed king and government, are synonymous terms, to at least, four-fifths of the Spanish American population. Such is the force

of custom, and such the general tincture of prejudices, which have arisen from the long depressed state in which these countries have been kept, and the want of a general circulation of liberal ideas.

These facts are not only deducible from the situation of society in Spanish America, but also tend to prove, the very great influence which must rest in the hands of the upper classes, all of whom, as I have before stated, both from opinion and interest, are decidedly opposed to the establishment of democracy. The republican language of the revolutionary Juntas, consequently, proves no more, than the particular ideas and opinions of individuals, who by their talents, and the public confidence, have been called upon to exercise, for the time being, the first duties of the magistracy; and whose libraries contained no other than French and Latin works; of course, such systems and such ideas as were contained therein, were applied to existing circumstances. But even the facts which may be deduced from these applications, and the circumstances they have given rise to, amount to irrefragable proofs, that there was little disposition on the part of the people, at large, for so violent a transition, as that of from despotism to democracy; and, as it were, from a state of abject slavery, to the extremes of freedom. The caution observed in the beginning by the Junta of Caracas, and the reserve and precautions, still practised by the governments of Buenos Ayres, fully evince, that a total and radical overthrow of the ancient and habitual principles, is very far from according with the general state of society in Spanish America. The overthrow of the government of Caracas, which has been so wrongly attributed to the Spanish arms, was no other

than the reaction of the people, who by the wild introduction of a system of government, in the extreme democratical, and of consequence, uncongenial to their wishes, abondoned a cause, on which they previously entered with cordiality, under the hopes of seeking redress, which all were sensible was wanted. Yet they despaired, as soon as it was discovered, that their chiefs were preparing systems beyond their comprehension; and, against which, they entertained long and inveterate prejudices. It is the abstaining from the premature establishment of similar systems, in the other sections, that helps to consolidate their cause; and it is, as I have before observed, this dread of democracy, which yet keeps so many of the upper classes, neutral. There is attached to the Spanish character, and that of the Spanish American equally partakes of it, something of grandeur and majestic pomp, that is opposed to the simplicity of republican manners; they conceive nothing grand or dignified, to be attached to any other form, than monarchy. It would require the evolution of ages, before the natives of Spanish America, could acquire sentiments congenial to the Swiss cantons, to the Republics of Holland, or of the United States; notwithstanding the chiefs of the late insurrections, have not been, sufficiently, sensible of this existing fact.

In proposing, therefore, after the present dissentions are removed, to give permanent comfort and happiness to so large a portion of the globe, as the great sections of Spanish America, constitute, it will naturally occur to the umpires of their fate, that to insure stability by adequate and sound establishments, it is, in the first place, necessary, for the reasons already stated, to examine

with the greatest scrutiny, what form of government is most congenial to their wishes, and suited to their wants. Applying, therefore, the relative terms of happiness and misery to human beings, it is first necessary to consider well, the capacity and disposition, as well as the habits of thinking and of feeling, prevalent in the majority of the classes whose benefit we are desirous to promote, before we lay the basis of a work, which if opposed to their wishes, and not consonant to their wants, they, themselves, would be the first to pull down. In conformity then, to the general principles of human nature, and in union with the circumstances and sentiments of the major part of the community in Spanish America, a Republican form of government, would not only be incongruous, but also obnoxious. Nay, I could even support my argument, by a parallel taken from the recent occurrences of Spain.

The objects of all governments, and the purposes of every legislation, have been well defined, as intended to shield the weak, from the oppression of the strong, the peaceable from that of the lawless; and by securing private property and personal freedom, to promote industry and establish the collective strength of the national community. But, if, in the establishment of such government, the genius and disposition of the people are not consulted, eternal clashings will occur in its administration, and combustibles will accumulate and produce explosion. A congenial system of government, guaranteed and upheld by public opinion, converts the selfish, as well as the social passions of our nature, into the firmest bands of peaceable and orderly intercourse; changes the sources of discord, into principles of quiet; it disciplines

the most ungovernable; refines the grossest, and even exalts the most sordid propensities. In short, it becomes the perpetual fountain of all that strengthens, preserves, and adorns society; it nourishes the individual, and perpetuates the human race. If I am not mistaken, a short survey of the history of all ancient and modern revolutions, would strongly elucidate the fact, that those only have been successful in their issue, which have had for object, no very considerable transition from the old, to the new order of things; and in which, by varying only a small part of the social edifice, its other essentially component parts, have been left to stand. The example of the United States, therefore, will not appear applicable to the present situation of the Spanish Americans, for this most material of all reasons, that the former had been accustomed to another colonial regimen, had been educated under other circumstances, had reached a different stage of mental improvement, were composed of a different race of men, and were, in short, fitted by habits, customs, and dispositions, to the form of government they succeeded to establish.

If I were inclined to support my premises with traits of history, I would look to Ireland, which I have before quoted as a corresponding parallel to the situation of Spanish America. Sir John Davis, shews beyond a doubt, that it was a refusal to grant to the Irish, a communication of those rights we ourselves enjoyed, that caused their conntry to be five hundred years in subduing; and after the vain and useless projects of a military government, it was discovered, that nothing could make our sister island English, but a practical participation in our own forms of legislature. Hence, Mr. Burke asserts,

that it was not English arms, but the English constitution, that conquered Ireland. This it was, that made her the great and flourishing country she now is, and instead of a disgrace and a burden, she thus became our principal strength and most glorious ornament. To produce the same results in Spanish America, owing to distance, and a variety of other reasons already explained, were impossible, unless a monarch, or some other corresponding power, equally resided there. For the king of Spain, to have two beings, is, also, alike impossible. But yet Ferdinand has brothers, and there is likewise his uncle Don Antonio.* Spanish America, might be divided into two great empires, New Spain ranging as far as the isthmus of Panamá, and the rest incorporated under one sceptre, as far as Cape Horn. Let branches of the royal family of Spain reign there, in a permanent manner, let them only be attached to the soil. Let their title be king, or viceking, the name is indifferent, as long as they have a congress, or parliament, as a check and support; the form is nothing, as long as the establishment is lasting, Let a new confederation be created between Spain and these two new empires; such a one, as shall at all times, be more profitable to the mother-country, than a state of degradation and dependence; such a one, in short, as will give her both additional strength and increasing riches. Let the relative footing and duties of each, be well defined and mutually guaranteed, and let England be the promoter and protector of this confeder-

* The Infante Don Francisco de Paula, has been excluded from the succession, by the old Cortes, on the vague report of his being the son of Godoy. He is, indeed, extremely like him, but the fact was never established judicially.

ation. Would it not be a more noble and more honourable boast, than the late one of the Rhine? What minister would not consider this, as the fairest title to glory, and the most deserving of the veneration of posterity? When the beneficial results of such a confederation, were experienced, would not this be a means of binding both European and American Spain, to our interests for ever? Nay, I will ask, under every circumstance, is there any other way of raising the latter from degradation; or creating an adequate establishment that may provide for the comforts and prosperity of an interesting people, consistently with the dignity of the parties most immediately concerned, and the interests of the rest of the world?

Self interest, and the safe and sober measures taken by the individual for his own aggrandizement, constitute the chief impulse which directs the industry and views of every branch of the community; and in general, a regular adhesion to these principles and to this guide, will, most effectually, promote and secure the advantages of society at large. The individual, beholds with dread, the prospect of a great and desirable gain, wrenched from him; and with equal regret, ought a whole nation to see the means of its own elevation lost. It ought to feel an instinctive alarm, at the marring of a bright and lasting dawn, serenely opening on its most valuable branches of enterprize. Yet nothing can realize this prospect, but a restoration of peace; and nothing can retain it, but systems of a liberal and permanent nature. After the experience of the past, let us look to the future. Whilst the daring spirit of the British merchant, has extended our commercial relations to both extremi-

ties of the globe, Spanish America is the only country with which we have no regular connection; let us, at least, in an honourable and dignified manner, secure this rich harvest to our posterity, on whom we have entailed so many burdens. Let us ensure to them and to ourselves, the good will of a distant continent, on whose friendship we may, in future, rely. In promoting the happiness, let us be ambitious of the gratitude of seventeen millions of people. We have the means in our hands, let them be improved. Let us aim at a confederation, to which we are urged, both by interest and glory.

In our superabundant population, and in the great decline of the means of subsistence, from the increasing dearth of provisions, many families are scarcely able to maintain themselves, and either from these motives, urged by the views of speculation, or under the influence of political or religious opinions, leave their native country, in order to seek a new sphere for their exertions. Others, again, seek an asylum from misfortune, and many of the Northern inhabitants of the continent of Europe, fly from the turbulence of war. The United States, have hitherto been the receptacle of all these classes of persons, and it is an undoubted fact, that they have there greatly helped to the increase of population. We find it impossible to hinder emigration from Ireland, and would it not be better for them to go in search of homes, to a country, allied to us as would be Spanish America, under the project I propose, where their descendants may be our friends, instead of our enemies; where they may be occupied in the cultivation of those articles, we require for our manufactures; where they

may aid to their consumption, and where in short, if we lose them out of our own bosom, we are at least sure, that they are not gone to augment the number of those, who at one time or another, may grow to our dread, and prosper to our disadvantage. This is not a country, that requires the aid of slaves to till it and make it flourish; it asks not the African inured to a scorching sun, but it possesses regions, suited to the labour of the European in general. There, the soft and effeminate Italian, may find a congenial climate, as well as the hardy highlander of Scotland. How easy would it be for England, to collect and convey there, the sober and industrious overflowings of the population of Europe; those, who when the strength and fury of conflicting passions have been spent; those who when appalled by surrounding slaughter, and tired of scenes of horror, may wish to go in search of the peaceful abodes of industry, quiet, and repose. Then, may they have these regions to receive them, with open arms; then, may they add to the glory of these new empires, and whilst war wages on the continent, whilst distress and dismay stare its inhabitants in the face, the ocean and this great portion of the globe, may be declared inviolable, and enthroned on the watery element, England may stretch her immortal trident, and there, at least, bid the tempest be still.

§ If therefore, an over delicacy on the part of England, has been the cause of a prolongation of the horrors already sketched; if from a want of energy, and by a tame subserviency to Spain, the calls of humanity, prudence, and interest, have been unheard; is it not time, to ponder on the distressed situation of Spanish America, and as a compensation for our past neglect, nay, as a re-

turn for the unprovoked aggravations we ourselves once brought on the heads of its inhabitants, and also to retrieve our honour, is it not time to fix the principles and basis, essential to the restoration of peace? As before inculcated, Spain is a party, under irritated and partial feelings, and consequently, cannot be her own umpire. By her conduct, and by the hostile, cruel, nay inhuman, instead of conciliatory measures, pursued, she has hurled the arrow of defiance at every hope of reconciliation, by her own means; and oppression and narrow-minded policy, have completed that baneful structure, of which political hatred, the clashing of interests, and the deadly spirit of monopoly, first laid the foundation. As before clearly proved, for Spain to affiance her sway in the manner she now seeks, it must be on the ruin or degradation of a forsaken, but unoffending people. Yet still, her object is not secure. She may, for a while, rivet and prolong the chains of despotism; from her fortified places, the illusion may yet be maintained, and harrassing expeditions may be fitted out to carry discord and havoc amongst the persevering natives. Spain may, yet, use further exertions, and send out more troops, till the whole country is wrapped in a wider, and still more bloody waste of anarchy and slaughter; but in all, or either of these cases, does not the philanthropic mind stand appalled; does not human nature shudder at such devastations, murders, and enormities; and does not the united voice of humanity and of policy, call aloud for the cessation of such multiplied evils?

The Spanish Americans, also, who have beheld all their efforts of redress, treated with disdain; who see the sacred rights they have inherited from their forefathers,

trampled to the ground; and their *natale solum,* covered with ruins, and deluged with the blood of its natives; who behold that very constitution the agents of Spain have been planting with the bayonets point, now revoked and held up to public scorn; who have before them, nothing but the prospect of a worse degradation, than that they before experienced; and who, in short, see that they have only to trust to an inconsistent and faithless people, will consider that the Rubicon is passed, and conceiving that they are authorised by every law, human and divine, to persist in their enterprize, will render their insulted country a tomb to all Europeans; and arming the coloured natives, and, as in Caracas, declaring a general death war, and rushing into dreadful retaliation, they will render their unfortunate country, a blot in the works of the creation. Nay, do we not already see, that the weapons of each are sharpening for mutual slaughter, and that a general war-yell, resounds through the untilled valleys and demolished towns of New Spain, Caracas, La Plata, Santa Fé, Chili, Quito, &c. and that it is soon likely to spread to Peru, Guayaquil, and Guatemala, the only points, where the Geslers and Verres of Spain, have been able to insure control.

Gradually, as the spirit of animosity has flamed wider, and as local wrongs and unheard-of outrages, have impelled to resistence and firm-set purposes, the Spanish Americans have taken their stand; and sooner than return to their old degraded state; sooner than again suffer their chains to be put on, by those very hands, which have torn to pieces their rights and charters; which have so long rent the bosom of their country with anarchy and a mercenary civil war; and are, besides, crimsoned with

the blood of so many of their fellow-citizens and relations, they are resolved to perish in the struggle, and, at least, transmit to their posterity, the records of those just endeavours, which ought to have insured them, the respect of even their enemies. Roused, as they are, to a sense of that degradation on which Spain seeks to found their subjection, no danger, nor no species of sufferings, will make them acquiesce to flagrant acts of injustice. Nay, neither England, nor any other just nation of the earth, can wish them to change so respectable a resolve. They ask but what the laws accord, and what reason warrants; and they ought to rest assured, that the strength of nations, consists far less in masses of men or rich treasures, than in the impulse given them by patriotism, and the conviction of a just cause.

But, to what fatal consequences, will not such a spirit of *acharnement* lead? Nay, we have to calculate, whether these consequences will not, equally extend to us? The Spanish Americans consider, that justice is on their side, that they have in vain sought redress and offered equitable terms, and yet nothing but butchery and devastation awaits them. They behold all this, without an effective exertion on the part of England, with whom they are, equally allied; and who lately made them so many proffers of friendship and protection. It is not to Spain alone, that the blame of this is wholly laid, England partakes therein, till at last, an indiscriminate odium will confound the names of both.

The experience of the past, ought, particularly, to make us look to the future. Though the horizon now before us, is serene, we know not what unfortunate accident, may tend to ruffle it; but against such events, we

ought to be prepared. If ever the transmarine provinces of Spain, are again subdued, and brought under their ancient system of oppression, either by force of arms or by capitulation, no influence or power, whatever would get them to rise, and again embark on so calamitous an ocean, as that on which they have been so severely buffeted. Very peculiar circumstances, have urged them to their present measures, but should they not succeed, they would carefully avoid a renewal of scenes, like those they have, so often, witnessed; they would shudder at the massacres, conspiracies, and counter-revolutions, to which they have been exposed; and even deprecate the blessing to which they now aspire, had they again to wade through such torrents of blood. An unexpected combination of events, has, lately given them an impulse of action; but should any unfortunate circumstance impede their career, and they become victims to the liberticide efforts of Spain, it would never be in the power of England again to rouse them to a bold undertaking. Though we have effected peace, there still exists a continental policy, supposed to be opposite to the interests of islanders possessed of a maritime power; and should the same ideas, we unfortunately imbibed by the Spanish Americans, we are preparing a woeful inheritance to our children, if they are ever dragged into struggles like those, out of which we have just emerged. Should that rich and extensive continent be reared in deadly hatred against us, its fate becomes linked to the future contingencies of Europe; whereby the wielding of its opinion and the guidance of its actions, devolves to those, who are our natural enemies from interest, locality and national prejudices.

But, independant of the great motives of policy, which urge us to secure the gratitude of seventeen millions of interesting people, nations, like individuals, are bound to the practice of humanity; and, certainly here, there is full scope for its benign exercise. It is now proved to a positive demonstration, that Ferdinand of himself, cannot conciliate, since he has destroyed that same constitution which might at least have served as a pretext and an illusion; unless degradation is the basis. If so, on whom does it devolve, but on England, to stop the rivers of blood now flowing, and to convert the brandished sword into the sickle and the sythe? Difficult and embarrassing as is the undertaking, every months delay renders it more so; and costs some thousands of lives. The magnitude of the combined interests is great, they cannot fail to suggest a remedy. It is only necessary for both parties to sacrifice something; this alone suffices to stop the present effusion of human blood, as well as the other calamities, which follow in the rear of this murderous conflict.

The chief object of my present endeavours, as may be deduced from the tenour of my arguments, has been, to prove the necessity of British interference, on the grounds of humanity, policy, and justice; and to adopt some plan of pacification, conformable to the circumstances, and in strict accord with the relative dignity of each contending party. This is a question of no ordinary policy, but one that embraces our most lasting welfare, as a commercial people; and it rests with the British Government, to weigh well the various interests which its issue involves. The pursuits of a large body of mercantile men, the improvement and good-will of a whole quarter

of the globe, and the consumption of one fourth of our annual amount of manufactures, hinge on the present fate of Spanish America; and even these elevated considerations of state policy and of state necessity, and to them I might, also, add those of universal philanthropy, are exceeded by the paramount calls of national justice, which imperiously demand our interference. The Spaniards, undoubtedly view every thing we do relating to them, with jealousy and distrust; this arises from old prejudices, never overcome. The conduct of Spain, in the particular point alluded to, resembles that of a man whose house is on fire, but who refuses the engine of his neighbour to play upon it, because some pique or etiquette had before made them enemies. But, impelled as we are, by so many powerful motives, and with justice on our side, we ought not to be remiss or over delicate. A conciliatory temper, must precede and prepare every plan of adjustment, and to inspire these mutual sentiments, could a more suitable person than Lord Wellington be found? An object of general love and reverence, could not fail of having its full weight and influence in conciliating the minds of all to some liberal measure. The Spanish government and people, cannot have forgotten the various scenes of toil and danger through which he has conducted them; and in contemplating the many trying periods of the war, they will equally respect his new exertions, in the cause of justice and humanity, if they are only fully acquainted with their object. Such an undertaking as this, would greatly add to the laurels he has acquired on the field of battle, and cast a consoling gleam on the many scenes of slaughter, he has had to witness. The pacificator of Spanish Ame-

rica, is not a title less honourable than the liberator of Spain; and to a soul like his, it cannot be more glorious to gain battles, than to extend to one of the most interesting portions of the globe, days of gladness, security, and peace.

And is the glory of such an achievement, a laurel of so barren a growth, as not to be worthy of the envy of a British minister; or rather, would no real satisfaction be derived from an object, attended with so many advantanges? England stands as the only umpire of this dreadful dispute, being the mutual ally of both parties; and could she ask a greater glory, or derive more real satisfaction, than to participate to Spanish America, the same blessings she has aided to obtain for Europe? Nay, could Britain hope for a greater pleasure, or could she seek a more consoling reflection, than to have been the instrument of so much good, to have converted anarchy civil dissentions, as well as all the horrors of a protracted and unnatural war, into peace, fraternity, and and firm alliance? Do acts of justice and of humanity, no longer form the boast of the British Cabinet? Long has the fate and forbearance of Spanish America, interested the whole world, except the nation of which it formed part; and when an opportunity offers of substantial relief, is England, no longer ambitious of weaving her name in the peace and regeneration of so valuable a continent, when she can do it without reproach? What association of ideas more rational and more flattering, than those which arise out of the contemplation of such a scene? By stopping the ravages of war, by causing the voice of justice to be heard, and by contributing to the future happiness and prosperity of the people of Spanish

America, we should engrave our names and embalm our remembrance, in the memories of their grateful posterity, and having helped to raise them from their old degradation and chains, we should lay the foundation of that grand edifice, they are, by nature and a multiplicity of circumstances, destined, at some future period, to rear.

FINIS.

Appendix.

DOCUMENT A.

"By virtue of an official paper, which I, the governor of this island of Trinidad, have received from the Right Honourable Henry Dundas, minister of His Britannic Majesty, for Foreign Affairs, dated April 7, 1797, which I here publish, in obedience to orders, and for the use which your Excellencies may draw from its publication, in order that you may communicate its tenour, which is literally as follows.—The object which, at present, I desire, most particularly to recommend to your attention, is, the means which might be most adapted to liberate the people of the continent near to the island of Trinidad, from the oppressive and tyrannic system, which supports, with so much rigour, the monopoly of commerce, under the title of exclusive registers, which their government licences demand; also to draw the greatest advantages possible, and which the local situation of the island presents, by opening a direct and free communication with the other parts of the world, without prejudice to the commerce of the British nation. In order to fulfil this intention with greater facility, it will be prudent for your Excellency, to animate the inhabitants of Trinidad, in keeping up the communication which they had with those of Terra Firma, previous to the reduction of that island, under the assurance, that they will find there an entrepôt, or general magazine of every sort of goods whatever. To this end, His Britannic Majesty has determined, in council, to grant freedom to the port of Trinidad, with a direct trade to Great Britain.

"With regard to the hopes you entertain of raising the spirits of those persons, with whom you are in correspondence, towards animating the inabitants, *to resist the oppressive authority of their government, I have little more to say, than that they may be certain, that whenever they are in that disposition, they may receive at your hands, all the succours to be expected from H. B. Majesty; be it with forces, or with arms and ammunition to any extent; with the assurance, that the views of H. B. Majesty, go no further than to secure to them their independence, without pretending to any sovereignty over their country. nor even to interfere in the privileges of the people, nor in their political, civil, or religious rights.*"—Puerto. de España, June 26, 1797 1997, signed THOMAS PICTON, &c. &c.

DOCUMENT B.

Copy of the Instructions, given by the Usurper JOSEPH NAPOLEON, *to the Commissary, or principal Agent, appointed by him at Baltimore* (M. DESMOLARD) *and to the others, who, furnished with his Orders, have gone to Spanish America, for the purpose of revolutionizing it.*

The object, which these agents are to aim at, for the present, is no other, than that of manifesting to, and persuading the Creoles of Spanish America, that H. I. and R. M. has solely in view, the giving liberty to a people, enslaved for so many years, without expecting any return for so great a boon, other than the friendship of the natives, and the commerce with the harbours of both Americas; that, to render South America, free and independent from Europe, His said Majesty offers all the necessary assistance, of troops and warlike stores, having agreed with the United States of North America, to accommodate him therewith.

Every commissary, or agent in chief, being acquainted with the district to which he is deputed, and also with the character of its inhabitants, will have no difficulty in selecting proper persons, to give them the needful instructions for persuading the people, and pointing out to them, the advantages they will derive from throwing off the European yoke. He will make them observe, that large sums will remain and circulate in the American provinces, by suspending the profuse remittances which are continually making to Spain; and that their commerce will be increased, and their ports be open to all foreign nations. He will dwell upon the advantages to be derived by them, from the freedom of agriculture, and the cultivation of all those objects, at present prohibited by the Spanish government, for instance, that of saffron, hemp, flax, olives, vines, &c.—The benefit that will accrue to them, from the establishment of manufactures of every sort; the great satisfaction and advantages of abolishing the monopolies of tobacco, gunpowder, stamps, &c. To obtain all which, with facility, the people being for the greatest part barbarous, the agents ought to be solicitous to render themselves acceptable to the governors, intendants, curates, and prelates. They will spare no expence, nor any other means of gaining their goodwill, especially that of the ecclesiastics, on whom they are to prevail, to urge and persuade the penitents when they come to confess, that they stand in need of an independent government, that they must not lose so favourable an opportunity, as that, which now presents itself, and which the Emperor Napoleon affords them, who, they are to make the people believe, is sent by God, to chastise the pride and tyranny of monarchs, and that it is a mortal sin, admitting of no pardon, to resist God's will. They will, on every occasion, call to their minds, the opposition they experience from Europeans, the vile manner in which they are treated by them, and the contempt to which they are exposed. They will also remind the Indians, circumstantially, of the cruelties which the Spaniards employed in

their conquests, and the infamies which they committed towards their legitimate sovereigns, by dethroning them; by taking away their lives or enslaving them. They will depict the acts of injustice which they daily experience, when applying for places, which are bestowed by the viceroys and governors, upon those who are either more submissive or pay better, to the exclusion of the meritorious. They will direct the people's attention, to the superior talents of the many neglected Creoles, and people of merit, contrasted with the European public officers and ecclesiastics, which will make apparent the hardships they suffer, and will enable them to draw a parallel between the talents and merits of the Creoles, and those of the European officers. They will set before their eyes, the difference between the United States and Spanish America, the comforts which those Americans enjoy, their progress in commerce, agriculture, and navigation, and the pleasure of living free from the Europeon yoke, and being left solely to their patriotic and elective government. They will assure them, that America, once disengaged from Spain, will become the legislatrix of Europe. All agents, both principal and subordinate, are to specify the names of those who declare themselves friends and votaries of liberty; and the subaltern agents, are to transmit the lists to the principals, who will make their reports to my envoy in the United States, for my information, and that I may duly reward every individual. My agents will refrain from declaiming against the inquisition or the church, and, in their conversations, rather insist upon the necessity of that holy tribunal, and on the usefulness of the clergy. Upon the insurrectional standards or banners, is to be iuscribed the motto "Long live the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, and perish the bad government." They will, moreover, make the Indians observe, how happy they will be, when they become, once more, masters of their country, and free from the tyrannical tribute which they pay to a foreign monarch. And lastly, they will tell the people, that their said monarch does not so much as

exist in his own government, but is in the power of the restorer of liberty and the universal legislator, Napoleon. In a word, these agents must, by all possible means, endeavour to shew the people the utility which will arise to them from the government in question. The revolution having thus been prepared, and all the principal members, who are to take a share in it, in every city and province having been gained, it will be for the chief and subordinate agents to accelerate the insurrection, and give early advice to the other subordinate agents, in order that the rising may take place at the different points agreed upon, on the same day, and at the same hour, this being a very material point, which will greatly facilitate the enterprize. The principal agents, in every province of their department, and the subalterns, in the points assigned them, will win over the domestics of governors, intendants, and other persons in power, and by means of them they will poison [*envenenar*] those of this class, whom they consider as hostile to the undertaking, an operation (the poisoning) which is to precede the revolution, in order to remove all obstacles. The first point to be considered, will be, how to stop the remittances of treasure to the Peninsula, which may be easily effected, by having good agents at Vera Cruz, and the other ports of the American continent, but principally at Vera Cruz, where all the vessels arriving from Europe will be received, and their officers and crews immediately confined in the fortresses, until every thing shall have succeeded, and the revolution be in forwardness. The agents, are further directed to instruct their subagents, to transmit to them frequent accounts of the progress of the revolution; and the chief agents will communicate with the Envoy in the United States, by the channels that shall be pointed out to them. For this purpose, it will be proper to keep prepared, land-conveyances to those points of the coast, which may be deemed suitable, and where, there are always to lie ready, vessels for any emergency.

(Signed) JOSEPH NAPOLEON.

To my Envoy,
DESMOLARD.

P. S. To promote a certain object, of which you have intimation, three other vessels are preparing at Baltimore. There are now four vessels frequenting the different points of the American continent, known to the agents, who will thereby continue giving information of what may occur. The points to which they more especially resort, are New Santander, Tampico in the kingdom of Mexico, the coast of Camayagua, Truxillo, Guatimala, and the harbours of Peru, Cumana, Rio de la Hacha, Cartagena, Santa Fé, Caracas, &c. and the rest of the Costa Firme, whither also frequently sail two vessels, pretending to be smugglers from Jamaica. Desmolard, from recent advices he has received from Mexico, is confident, that the number of partisans, already engaged, is immense, and those all of the first rank; he makes no doubt, that the insurrection will take place in that realm, that the success of the scheme at Vera Cruz, is quite certain; which will be the principal point of the whole expedition; that he, therefore, keeps ready a safe conveyance to advise those in New Orleans, where all necessary succours are ready, but that he thinks even these useless, from the promises of success held out by the party in his interest, as well as from the supineness of that government, which will not take any vigorous steps when the moment is arrived; that he has, besides, secured the powerful co-operation of the Indian governors, of the Teypares of San Juan and Santiago in Mexico, and those of the provinces of Tlascala and Tepeaca, which are in the strait road to Vera Cruz, by which means, the remittances of treasure, and all correspondence with Mexico, will be cut off completely; that he has also very encouraging intelligence from California; and that those from Lima are not less so. Desmolard, from the accounts he has received, also calculates upon the principal officers of the army, especially on the garrison of Vera Cruz, and the detachment of the castle of Porote, which he will have immediately in his interest, and which is a point that will afford the means of entirely cutting off the correspondence of the

whole kingdom from Vera Cruz; and finally, that he flatters himself with the happy issue of his ulterior projects.

This copy is taken from the original in the office of the Secretary to the Supreme Junta, preserving the rights of Don Ferdinand VII. in Venezuela; and intending to communicate the present to H. E. the Admiral of the Barbadoes station, as a precaution against Napoleon's intrigues, I have signed it at the Caracas, May 31, 1810.

(Signed) J. G. ROSEIO.

Document C.

Extract of the Remonstrance, presented by the Municipality of Mexico, on the 5th of August, 1809, to Viceroy Iturrigaray, for the Assembly, of a Junta of the tribunals and Constituted Authorities in the Capital.

"Juntas of the government, and respectable bodies of the cities and kingdoms, are no more than in exact conformity to the law,* which ordains, that all arduous cases, shall be consulted with the people; and as in existing circumstances, in consequence of the seizure of the king, the sovereignty is vested in the nation, in order that its interests may be consulted, the united authorities, together with the Municipalities, which are the heads of the people, do exactly the same as would the monarch himself, for the general welfare."

"Mexico, as was manifested in her first remonstrance, had in view, the same principles as influenced Seville, Valencia, and

* Recop. de Castilla, ley 11. tit. i. lib. 6.—By the ancient laws of the monarchy, the king was not authorized to make war, without calling the representatives of the cities and towns around him.

and the other cities of Spain; and she was empowered, in like manner, as the above two faithful capitals, to do what she conceived was advisable in such urgent circumstances; the difference alone is, that the one only proposed, and the others carried their principles into execution."

"These most innocent examples, and besides necessary and useful to the public cause, point out what ought to be done to organize a governing junta, composed of the Royal Audencia, the Archbishop, Municipality, and Deputies from the Tribunals, Ecclesiastical and Secular bodies, the Nobility, principal Citizens, and Military. This Junta shall deliberate on the most weighty matters which surround us, and these shall be determined as most conformably to our interests."

"The Junta is necessary, for although we are at present, free from the urgent danger which threatened us, on the part of France; we, nevertheless, ought not, to neglect our means of defence, till we receive positive advices, which may make us perfectly easy. It is, at the same time, necessary, to fill up the immense void existing between the governing authorities and the sovereignty, by procuring to the subjects the means of their felicity, and satisfying their hearts and wishes; thus replacing those means of appeal they before had to the council of the Indies, or to the person of the king; and finally, many amendments ought to be made in the nominations for secular and ecclesiastical dignities; these being the only means, by which the kingdom, thus united, and possessed of the high faculties which devolve to it, in consequence of the absence of the monarch, may overcome all difficulties."

"This union of authorities, is likewise necessary, as being the most admirable means to reduce the opinions of all the people to one vote; which will prevent the fatal consequences which, in the interiour and exteriour, will arise from disunion, and in such urgent moments, every one will then be happy, their patriotism and wishes, will be united by love, enthusiasm and a sense of the public good."

" The city, particularly, dwells on this means, and calls to mind, the benefits and triumphs which the monarchs thereby acquired, and by which, it adds, " the nation, animated by unanimity in each kingdom, is now attempting the most heroic of deeds. All nations, convinced, by experience, of its utility, have put it in practice, and our laws establish it, as the solid barrier to save the country from dangers."

" The city, consequently thinks that the time is arrived, for adopting the same means as have been carried into effect, in Spain. The Junta, which your Excellency is to form, for the present, of the authorities, and respectable bodies, as above referred, in the mean time that the representatives of the kingdom, are assembled, will carefully examine its interests, &c."

" But the two fundamental points on which the Junta is to act, ought not to be forgotten. The first is, that the authorities retain the full extent of their faculties, in the same manner, as if the derangement which we deplore in the monarchy, had not taken place. That is, that your Excellency still hold the same power which the laws grant, and that the same be observed with the other tribunals. The second is, that in order to fill up the immense void, which exists between the authority of your Excellency and the Sovereignty, it is necessary to recur to the kingdom represented in the executive, by the authorities and bodies existing in the capital, in union with the Municipality as Metropolitan. The remonstrance proves the grounds of this demand, by the example of the guardians of the king, who, when the father dies, without having named them, are chosen by the kingdom, by virtue of the sovereignty it exercises; and insisting that all acts ought to conduce to the keeping of Mexico for Ferdinand VII. it concludes, that the present moments are not to be disregarded, because the least injury in existing circumstances, may produce the most fatal consequences."

Observation. Herein are explained, in the most official form, (this being the report of the municipality of Mexico,) the motives

and grounds for preferring the authority of a Junta, to the arbitrary power of a viceroy. To this the audiencia was opposed, with whom the Europeans all joined; and the viceroy was convinced of the necessity and legality of a Junta, by the arguments laid before him, but the measure was not carried. This was the original and principal ground of dissention, in this as in the other sections, and it is melancholy to say, has caused the sacrifice of more than a million of lives, and the destruction of some hundred millions of property, besides that of many cities and towns.

Document D.

Royal Order of the Council of Regency of Spain and the Indies.

August 31, 1810.

"Scarcely had the Council of Regency received the unexpected and disagreeable news of the occurrences of Caracas, whose inhabitants, instigated, no doubt, by some intriguing and factious persons, have committed the indignity to declare themselves independent of the mother-country, and have created a governing Junta to exercise this supposed independent authority, when His Majesty determined to take the most active and efficacious means to attack this evil in its origin and progress. But, in order to proceed with that mature deliberation and circumspection, which a matter of such importance deserved, His Majesty conceived it advisable, previously to consult the supreme Council of Spain and the Indies. This has been done; and, consequently, such measures have been taken, as His Majesty

does not doubt will answer their end; particularly since, according to later accounts, neither the capital or province of Maracaibo or Coro, nor even the interior of that of Caracas, have taken part in this criminal proceeding; but have, on the contrary, not only acknowledged the Council of Regency, but, animated by the best spirits in favour of the people of the mother-country, have taken the most efficacious measures to oppose the absurd idea of Caracas, in declaring itself independent, without being possessed of the means of maintaining its independence. His Majesty, nevertheless, has considered it indispensable to declare, as he hereby declares, that the province of Caracas, is in the state of a rigorous blockade; at the same time commanding, that no vessel shall be allowed to enter its ports, under the penalty of being detained by cruizers and ships of His Majesty; and forbidding all commanders, and civil and military chiefs of all the provinces and dominions of His Majesty, to authorize any vessel whatever to proceed to La Guira; and ordering that they do not, on any pretext, grant any permits or licences to any vessel bound there, or to any other port or river of said province; moreover, commanding, that all vessels leaving the same, for whatever destination, be captured, seized, and confiscated, and that this order may have full effect, His Majesty sends a sufficient naval force, to hinder any vessel from going in or out of the ports of said province."

"His Majesty further ordains, that all the governors and chiefs of the provinces contiguous to the one above named, hinder therein, the introduction of provisions, arms, or warlike implements; and also the exportation of the produce of their soil or industry, and that they endeavour, by every possible means, to prevent any communication with the inhabitants of said province."

"This royal resolution, does not extend to the districts of the above captain-generalship, which, refusing to follow the pernicious example of Caracas, have manifested their constant fidelity, by renouncing the project of rebellion, which only originates in

the unlimited ambition of some persons, and in the blind credulity of others, who suffer themselves to be dragged away by the ardent passions of their citizens. His Majesty has taken the most secure measures, in order completely to extirpate these evils, and to punish the authors thereof, with all the rigour which the rights of sovereignty authorise him to use, unless there is a previous and voluntary submission: in which case, His Majesty grants them a general pardon. His Majesty commands, that this resolution shall circulate in all his dominions, for the purpose of its being carried into effect, as well also as in foreign countries, in order that they may there act conformably to the measures taken for the blockade of said coasts," &c. &c.

Observation. This decree was issued, without any previous communication with Caracas, as a means to ascertain its views. It is evident, that the Regency was sorely galled by its sovereignty not being admitted, yet few months afterwards, Spain herself declared this same to have been an illegal government. The object of the blockade, was principally against the British; and was not this a ground for some demonstration on the part of a minister, independent of the unjust and impolitic act, then committing, which could not fail to bring about a cruel and disastrous war? In order, however, that the basis of the above decree, may be the better understood, I here subjoin an extract of the motives which induced the people of Caracas to confide their administration to a Junta, instead of a Viceroy (the great crime they had committed, and for which war was declared against them), but the curious on this subject, will do well to read the official details in No. 4 of El. Español.

The revolution in Caracas, broke out on the 19th April, 1810. The troops took part with the people, by which means, blood was avoided. The administration was confided to a Junta, till the votes were collected for the formation of a more substantial government: secretaries, &c. were named. On the 29th, the new government published a manifest of its proceedings. This do-

cument contains a succinct detail of the misfortunes of the Peninsula, and describes its situation as most desperate. It declares, that the object of the revolution, or rather change, is as a shelter, from the pretensions of the other nations of Europe; the intrigues of the French cabinet, and the designs which the members of the dissolved central Junta, might have on that country; to maintain political order; to sustain, as much as possible, the rightful dynasty of Spain; to relieve the fate of Ferdinand VII. in case he should be freed from his captivity; and to preserve the glory of the Spanish name, by offering an asylum to the remnants of that glorious nation.—The new government began the exercise of its functions, by acts in favour of the people. The abolition of the *alcabala*, tributes of the Indians, &c. was decreed; and agriculture and trade declared free, &c. Virtue and moderation were invoked and placed as mottos, and fraternity, union, and generosity, as guides to their conduct. Here rest the grounds of the Cadiz Regency war decree, which, together with all its accompanying horrors, drove the inhabitants of Caracas to the extreme of declaring their absolute independence, on the 5th of July, 1811, as is strongly manifested in the various acts published on that occasion. This war decree, has also wrapt the rest of Spanish America in a state of civil war, and in scenes of universal destruction. Causa quœ sit, videris.

Document E.

Answer of the Supreme Junta, preserving the Rights of Ferdinand VII. in Venezuela; addressed to His Excellency the Marques de las Hormazas, as Minister in Spain.

Caracas, May 20, 1810.

The private letter of Y. E. of the 15th of February, ult. has informed us of the measure which the Council called the Regency,

has been pleased to take, in order to remedy, as far as possible, the most weighty evils, caused by the scandalous abuse and arbitrariness, with which, during the last reign, as well as for twenty years back, the offices of European and American Spain have been distributed; whereby, the door has been shut to persons of talent, patriotism, and true merit; at the same time, that it has been open to a multitude of ignorant, depraved, and immoral persons, to the manifest injury of the interests of His Majesty and the public cause.

The Junta, which at present, governs these provinces, in the name of the King our Lord, Ferdinand VII. cannot but applaud the philanthropic views of the individuals who compose the said Council; but in doing this justice to their intentions, it would, at the same time, have wished, that the election of the means, adopted by their Excellencies to suppress these abuses, and guard against them in future, had authorized grounds for hopes, less fallacious than those which have unfortunately hitherto deceived us. Such, for example, as the hopes we were led to conceive, from the decree * issued by the Central Junta, in Aranjuez, on 26th Oct. 1810, but which that body afterwards belied, when transferred to Seville, when it acted, in this particular, as scandalously, if not more so, than the ministry of Charles IV.

Weighed down by internal despotism, more than by the onerous exactions, which, from the period of their settlement, these provinces have borne; rented out, during eighteen years, in all their branches, to the foreign house of the Welsers †; continually outraged by estranged persons, who, by the distance of the supreme power, were secure in the impunity of their crimes;

* The first decree, declaring that the Spanish American provinces were not colonies, but their inhabitants, as free and equal as those of the Peninsula, yet never practically executed.

† Charles V. granted this province to the commercial house of the Welsers, as an heriditary fief of the crown, to answer demands they had upon him. The ferocity of their agents, is minutely described by Depons, vol. 1. as well as the sufferings of the inhabitants.

ill-treated, from the administration of justice, being always confided to venal persons; and (to use the same phrase as contained in the proclamation of their Excellencies) beheld with indifference; harassed by avarice; destroyed by ignorance; and bent down under a yoke, rendered more heavy, from the greater distance of the centre of power; how many times have we not recurred to the supreme authority, hoping, that at length, our long sufferings would be recompensed by the extirpation of abuses, which could not be expected, as long as the erroneous and vicious regimen of our court lasted; and unless it was, by the punishment of all kinds of wickedness, with which the representatives of the crown, have stained themselves in all the provinces of America.

Notwithstanding the accusations against the Spanish magistrates in these dominions, were often repeated, it appeared, as if the continuance of receiving them, had, by degrees, taken from them, all kind of force and credit. Under the pretext of preserving the decorum of the authorities, and to obtain for them, submission and obedience, the Spanish court, has professed the constant policy of upholding its officers at every risk, thus rejecting our complaints, and endeavouring to appease them, by ambiguous measures, or by multiplying the trammels and the costs, in order, that the warmth of the complainants, might be gradually, reduced.

How few magistrates, have we seen, who had a true zeal for our interest; who were enlightened and impartial in the administration of justice; accessible to the clamours of oppressed humanity; moderate and prudent in the exercise of their enormous faculties; or who have not returned to Europe, bloated with the substance of the Americans? And, notwithstanding, this, when was it, that one of so many monsters, had been seen, to satisfy the severity of the laws, by receiving the punishments they deserved, even by their deposition, or by a solemn reprobation? Seldom have they met with any other chastisement, than

that of being transferred to better offices, or admonished with private orders, which scarcely served for any thing else, than to point out to them, the enemies of whom thev were to be cautious, and against whom, they might in future, level their aims, with more rancour and dexterity.

This has been the only satisfaction we have obtained, when the ministers, or supreme tribunals, have deigned to listen to us; and when time, and the great expences of the application, have not buried the clalms in oblivion, or when they have not obliged us, patiently to suffer greater iniquities.

Their Excellencies, know well these defects, and appear disposed to remedy them; let us now see, what are the measures they fix on, for so important a reform. The first, consists in asking of us, deputies for the meeting of the Cortes. We will not, in this place, pretend to repeat, what we have already manifested to the Council of Regency itself, respecting the disproportion, existing between these deputies required, and the population of America; and, also, with regard to the defective representation with which they will be vested, from being named by the municipalities, and not by the people; since the former cannot confer upon them a public character, they themselves do not possess; and, in short, respecting the little confidence which the people must place in persons, elected under the immediate influence of their oppressors.

But, for a moment, let us grant to these deputies, all the qualities necessary to fulfil their weighty charge; let us suppose, that they hold in the Cortes, that share in the legislature which belongs to them, but which they can never exercise, in consequence of their small number: from this, the most that would result, is, that our code would be rendered more perfect; so that just, wise, and impartial laws, would be established. But, where is the guarantee of their observance? Who is there to assure us, that the new dispositions of the national legislature, will be better complied with, than so many

salutary regulations with which our code abounds, but which have, in great measure, fallen into disuse? Your Excellency knows, very well, that the national sovereignty is null, and its representation imaginary, when the organization of the executive branch, does not consolidate the rights of the people, by placing barriers to arbitrariness; and that if our interiour institutions, do not preserve us from the evils we have hitherto experienced, we should have to lament the inobservance of the best laws, whenever they may be found in contradiction with avarice, pride, and the resentments of those who are sent over to execute them.

Another of the means, of which their Excellencies have availed themselves, appears in the order to which we now give answer, and is to require private information respecting the qualities of all the individuals, who hold in these dominions of the king, any ecclesiastical, political, military, and financial offices. It is, but, feebly, to know the corruption which has gangrened even the heart of the Spanish government, to anticipate good effects from a measure, that only rests on the word and good faith of the viceroys and captain-generals. We might truly say, that the capital of each of these governments, is a complete sketch of our ancient court at home, in all its intrigues; that each of the principal chiefs, is surrounded by a band of satellites, panting after grants burdensome to the people, and strongly united to the same chiefs, by the bonds of common interest; of whom the greatest part, have placed their confidence in ignorant and wicked men, incapable of guiding them in a proper manner, and accustomed to abuse this confidence for their own private ends. Black, indeed, as is this portrait, which we now lay before your Excellency, we are, nevertheless, well assured, that it would perfectly correspond, with the testimony of all the other people of America. It, therefore, results, that the private order to which we now return an answer, could not be considered in any other light, than as most dangerous instrument, in the hands of viceroys and captain-generals; since it would only serve for

the advantage of favourites, and for the ruin and discredit of their rivals, and, in short, to render worse, those very vices, it is intended to remedy.

What report could your Excellency expect from all those chiefs, who are unjustly placed in those very offices, to which the order is directed for compliance? Does your Excellency believe, they would do it, by beginning with themselves, as being unworthily elevated to the ranks they hold, by means of that very same abuse and arbitrariness, to which allusion is made? Can it be believed, that none of those from whom information is demanded, have not themselves risen by this very means, when the disorder which has uniformly reigned, has been frequent and general? Could the captain-general of Caracas, be exempt from this stigma, when he obtained the command of these provinces, whilst yet a prisoner of war, comprehended in the capitulation of Madrid, sworn to the French government, named by Napoleon for this very office, and confirmed by the intrusive monarch of Spain, in the very nomination, he has since received from the Central Junta? Would this chief, perchance, have reported, that none of the three ministers placed in the audiencia, had been raised but by leaps, being entirely destitute of the merit belonging to the high dignity of the gown, and without even having exercised the office of advocate, when, at the same time, he promoted the deposition of an auditor of war, who had served from the year 1795; and placed in his stead, an ignorant and proud person, without merit or services? Would he have denounced the inability and arbitrary conduct of such officers, who already knew no other law, than his own caprice, acting with absolute independence and sovereignty?

We repeat to your Excellency with the freedom which our sacred obligations prescribe, that Spanish America, cannot rest her hopes of amelioration, but in the previous reform of her internal institutions. Every thing else, is in vain, precarious, quimerical, suitable to produce only a momentary illusion, and

insufficient to fill the duties of the Spanish government. This alone is capable of making us bear with the privation of so many advantages and so many benefits, which can only be derived, from the beneficent influence of a degree of independence, such a one as is declared in the proclamation, which the new government of Cadiz has again sent out to us; in which, considering us raised to the dignity of free men, it announces, that in selecting a representative in the national congress, our destinies are in our own hands, and no longer depend on ministers, viceroys, or governors. An independence, obtained without the necessity of this nomination, in order to avoid the absurdity of granting to the chiefs, more right and faculty than to their constituents.

The best laws will be of no avail, as long as a captain-general can say, with impunity, that in these provinces, he acknowledges no authority superiour to his own, that his will is the law; and whilst, to make him change his tone, it is necessary to recur to a supreme power, at such a distance from us, and which is, itself, in some measure, pledged to its own acts, and the proceedings of its representatives.

Those who have been in the habits, of managing any branch of the vast dependence of the Indies, cannot fail to ratify, by interiour conviction, the truth of our assertions; and if it were allowed, or convenient, they might prove them, by innumerable facts. Let one suffice for all. The supreme tribunals, tired with listening to the clamours against the royal audiencia of this capital, find themselves under the necessity of resorting to an expedient, pointed out for similar cases, by the legislation of the Indies; but which, had been laid aside, from being defective, or from the negligence of the Spanish government.

A visiting judge arrives in this capital, cloathed with all the parade generally bestowed on such ministers, by the apparent importance of their commissions, and the specious forms so carefully conferred upon them. Hundreds of persons, hasten to

solicit reparation for their injuries, and as a dread to the magistrates, who, from venality, favour, or other motives, had scandalously trampled on justice. But what happened? Did the injured receive any indemnity? Was any magistrate deposed? This entire body of complainants, was dismissed by the visiting judge, with the truly satisfactory answer, *that the descisions of the audiencia, were irrevocable;* and before the proceedings were closed, those very persons who had caused them, were raised to offices of more importance than they before held. The treasury had to bear a considerable expence on account of the visiting judge and his clerks, he caused many injuries in the exercise of the Regency, which had been conferred on him during his commission, and the evils which gave rise to it, remained without remedy.

We hope that your Excellency, far from attributing the freedom of our language, to the motives with which, endeavours have always been made to blacken American patriotism, will do us the justice to think, that we would spare this exposition of our injuries, and would omit every reflection on the proper means of guarding against them in future, if we did not consider it useful and necessary to the interests of the Spanish monarchy, whose integral preservation to its worthy and legitimate sovereign, is the first of our vows. The language with which we express ourselves, although it may appear strong, is exactly conformable to facts, suited to the noble freedom with which a people ought to demand justice, and it cannot appear scandalous, but to the ears of those, who compare it with the ancient system of terror which they would wish to prolong. We request your Excellency to be pleased to inform your government of the whole, and believe us animated with the highest consideration to your person, &c. &c.

(Signed) JOSE DE LAS LLAMOSAS, *President.*

MARTIN TOVAR PONTE, *Vice-President.*

Document F.

Letter from the Junta of Caracas, to His Majesty George III.

Caracas, June 1, 1810.

"America remembers well, that in the first moments, whe the irruption of the French troops into Spain, and the captivity of her monarch, occasioned a dread that the Spanish sections of the new world, might be incorporated under the French yoke; your Majesty could not remain indifferent to the fate of so large a portion of the globe; and the representatives of your Majesty in the Archipelago of the Antilles, in your royal name, made us the most generous offers to contribute, by every means in their power, to the great and sole object consistent with the august beneficence of the sovereign of Great Britain, and with the honour of America."

"To proclaim the same cause as our brethren in Europe, to swear an endless odium to France, to invoke the friendship and protection of England, was the impulse of Caracas, was the lesson she gave to the other provinces of America; and such were the sentiments, unanimously manifested by the loyal inhabitants of this city; sentiments, which subsequent events, have only tended to strengthen and to ratify. In such manner, did Caracas hasten to testify her feelings of fidelity and patriotism, that even before she knew the resolution of the inhabitants of Spain, to withstand the wicked arts, and to resist the powerful armies of France; before she was aware of the benevolent and efficacious disposition of your Majesty, to save Spain and her distant dominions from the catastrophe to which they were exposed, by the very last act of a despotic and venal government; before even the descision of the representatives of the Spanish government in these provinces,

had transpired, (chiefs, so filled with respect for the ministerial forms, so dexterously employed by the usurper, that they seemed to waver in the first moments,) yet, without any antecedent of the above, Caracas listened to no other voice than that of honour, she was actuated by no other impulse than that of loyalty, nor did she proclaim allegiance to any other name, than that of her unfortunate monarch."

"Caracas has been unchangeable in these her sentiments, notwithstanding, like the rest of the nation, she was weighed down by the disorders of an administration, not less corrupt and arbitrary than that of Charles IV.; but which, unfortunately, had obtained the consent of the provinces of Spain, in hopes, that it would guide their heroic efforts against the invader. Caracas was, nevertheless, sensible, that the Central Junta, possessed no legitimate delegation of the sovereignty, for the authority arrogated to themselves by its members, and which they so scandalously abused, had neither been transmitted by the acknowledged sovereign, nor did it emanate from the great community of the Spaniards of both hemispheres. Both reason and justice demanded, that the loyal inhabitants of America, if they were really considered as Spanish citizens, should have in the representation of the nation, an influence proportioned to their importaace and population; but instead of so irrefragable a principle being observed with regard to them, in the orders given for the election of the American deputies, called to compleat the Central Junta, as well as in the recent convocation of the Cortes, nothing but an insupportable partiality was to be found, in favour of the sad remains of Spain, as well as a most painful reserve, in the very manner in which we were invited to participate in that share, which legally belongs to us, in the exercise of the national sovereignty, and which, in the actual state of things, cannot but be of the greatest consequence to the safety, as well as to the future fate of the inhabitants of the new world."

"America, has beheld in most of the measures emanating from that irregular deposit of our sovereignty, a plan concerted for her own subjection; how could she, therefore, any longer blindly confide in the justice and liberality of men, whose public, as well as private conduct, was the object of universal censure and contempt; and when, notwithstanding, the impartiality and moderation of which they boasted, and the vehemence with which they declaimed against the ministry they supplanted, they themselves have not failed to imitate its example, by delapidating the public revenue, and by equally prostituting employments and honours. For the truth of this assertion, let us appeal to the testimony of the provinces of Spain, even to that of some of the members of the Central Junta themselves, who could not behold, without indignation, or sanction by their silence, the sordid and ambitious views, by which the plurality was actuated. Let us appeal to the testimony of your Majesty's own wise ministers, and to that of the gallant generals and officers of the British nation, who have joined in the contest with our European brethren, and who have shared with them the dangers of the battle, as well as the unheard of privations they had to endure, from the malversation of the public treasure."

"In the midst of disorders so public and notorious, America, nevertheless, stifled her indignation, and gave to the world, a sublime lesson of moderation and disinterestedness. She beheld in that same unity and fraternity, to which all her wishes conspired, the only shelter that could save Spain from the tempest bursting upon her; and to this precious unity it was, that she continued sacrificing her own individul interests. Our hopes being at length foiled, the Peninsula occupied by the tyrant, and the very members of the Central Junta, shamefully dispersed and branded with public detestation, what other safe line of conduct was left for America, but to vindicate her injured rights, by disavowing all authority at home, not emanating from the real suffrage of the nation? The rights of America, had, no

security in a representation, incomplete in itself, and besides illegally constituted; one that originated in the necessity of the moment, one filled with odious obstacles and divested of all importance; a representation, in short, in itself illusive, and, which, instead of being the safeguard of our liberties, might possibly become a passive instrument in favour of ambition and tyranny.

"Under such circumstances, the inhabitants of Caracas have conceived, that they could no longer remain insensible to the danger, to which their silence and that of the other sections of America, might expose their common interests; nor could they, any longer, confide their security and future fate, to authorities constituted by a Junta which had incurred the execration of all good Spaniards, and which, were, besides, placed, by circumstances, in a degree of independence, dangerous to the administration of justice. The deposition of such authorities, has been the unanimous wish of all classes of citizens, and it has been effected with that order and concert, which will, at all times, prove the true motives of our resolution. To direct the attention of the Americans to the danger that threatens them; to exhort them mutually to tighten the bonds by which nature has united them, but which the policy of the late ministry, always endeavoured to relax; to invoke the powerful protection of your Majesty, in order to disconcert the views of the common enemy; to perfect a provisional government, which may equally guard against tyranny and disorder; to await, under the shelter of good order and an upright administration, the final issue of the tempests which now rend the globe; but more especially, to preserve these dominions entire and untouched, for the sovereign whom by oath we have acknowledged; have been the vows of Caracas; such are the duties the governing Junta of this place, imposes on itself, and such shall invariably be the object of all its acts and measures. In complying with part of these said duties, the government of Caracas, has considered it indispensably necessary, to manifest to your Majesty, its sincere dispo-

sition to concur in every measure for the general good, abiding by the free suffrage of all the parts of the Spanish nation, that may escape from the usurpation of France, and to cling to an impartial system of fraternity and confederation."

"Considering the want of a legitimate government in the Peninsula, as well as the absolute impotence of the one that exists, Great Britain by her maritime power, by her political influence, and by the philanthropic views which direct her, is the nation that appears called upon to complete the grand work of confederating the scattered sections of America, and to cause order, concord, and rational liberty, to reign therein; and we may venture to say, that nothing would be more worthy of Great Britain, more worthy of the wise government, as well as congenial to the character and personal virtues of your Majesty; and that amongst the many transcendent traits which already adorn the history of your Majesty's memorable reign, none would render this era more brilliant in the eyes of posterity, than the one to which we allude."

"We confide, therefore, that your Majesty will deign to receive, with your accustomed interest, the loyal and generous descision of the inhabitants of this country, unanimously resolved to perish, rather than to submit to the odious yoke, with which they are threatened by the French usurper. The conduct your Majesty's cabinet has uniformly observed, the efforts and sacrifices of the government, and of the British nation for the freedom of the continent of Europe, are to us the most sure guarantee of your Majesty's protection, and the best support of our hopes. May your Majesty graciously accept the testimony of our respectful gratitude, the blessings with which we will at all times pronounce your august name, and the prayers we direct to heaven for your glory and felicity."

Document G.

PLAN OF PEACE.

Natural and legal principles, on which it is founded.

1st. The sovereignty, resides in the mass of the nation. 2d. Spain and America, are integral parts of the same monarchy, subject to the same thing, but respectively equal, and without any dependence and subordination one of the other. 3d. America, in her state of fidelity, has more right to convoke the Cortes, and call together representatives of the few patriots of Spain, already infected with disloyalty, than Spain has to call over deputies from America, by means of whom, we can never be worthily represented. 4th. During the absence of the king, the inhabitants of the Peninsula, have no right to appropriate to themselves the sovereign power, and represent it in these dominions. 5th. All the authorities emanating from this origin, are null. 6th. For the American nation to conspire against them, by refusing to submit to an arbitrary power, is no more than using its own rights. 7th. This, far from being a crime of high treason, is a service worthy of the king's gratitude, and a proof of patriotism, which His Majesty would approve, if he were on the spot. 8th. After what has occurred in the Peninsula, as well as in this country, since the overthrow of the throne, the American nation, has a right to require a guarantee for its security, and this can be no other, than putting into execution the right which it has, of keeping these dominions for their legitimate sovereign, by itself, and without the intervention of any European people.

From these incontrovertible principles, the following just pretensions are deduced.

1st. That the Europeans, resign the command and the armed force into the hands of a national congress, independent of Spain, representing Ferdinand VII., and capable of securing his rights in these dominions. 2d. That the Europeans, remain in the class of citizens, living under the protection of the laws, without being injured in their persons, families, or property. 3d. That the Europeans, at present in office, remain with the honours, distinctions and privileges thereof, and part of their revenue, but without exercising them. 4th. That as soon as this state of independency is declared, all antecedent injuries and occurrences, be buried in oblivion; the most effective measures for this purpose, being taken; and all the inhabitants of this land, as well Creoles as Europeans, shall indistinctly constitute a nation of American citizens, vassals of Ferdinand VII., and bent only on promoting the public felicity. 5th. That in such a case, America would then be able to contribute in favour of the few Spaniards engaged in sustaining the war of Spain, with those sums the national congress may assign, in testimony of our fraternity with the Peninsula, and to prove that both aspire to the same end. 6th. That the Europeans, who may be desirous of quitting the kingdom, be granted passports for whatever place they may wish; but, in that case, officers shall not be allowed the portion of their pay, that might have been granted them.

PLAN OF WAR.

Indubitable principles, on which it is founded.

1st. A war between brethren and fellow-citizens, ought not to be more cruel, than between foreign nations. 2d. The two contending parties acknowledge Ferdinand VII.; of this the

Americans have given evident proofs, by swearing allegiance to him, and proclaiming him in every part; by carrying his portrait as their emblem, invoking his august name in their acts and proceedings, and stamping it on their coins and money. On him, the enthusiasm of all rests, and on these grounds, the insurrectional party, has always acted. 3d. The rights of nations and of war, inviolable even amongst the most infidel and savage people, ought to be much more so amongst us, who profess the same creed, and who are subject to the same sovereign and laws. 4th. It is opposed to christian morality, to act from hatred, rancour, or personal revenge. 5th. Since the sword is to decide the dispute, and not the arms of reason and of prudence, by means of agreements and adjustments founded on the basis of natural equity; the contest ought to be continued in such a manner, as to be least shocking to humanity; already too much afflicted, not to merit our most tender compassion.

Hence are, naturally, deduced, the following just pretensions.

1st. That prisoners, be not treated as criminals guilty of high treason. 2d. That no one be sentenced to death, or exiled for this cause, but that all be kept as hostages, for the purpose of exchange. That they be not molested with irons and imprisonment, and as this is a mere measure of precaution, let them be put loose in places, where they cannot injure the views of the party by whom they may be detained. 4th. That each one, be treated according to his class and condition. 5th. That as the rights of war, do not permit the effusion of blood, but in the act of the combat, when this is once over, let no one be killed; nor let those be fired upon who fly or throw down their arms; but let them be made prisoners by the victor. 6th. That as it is contrary to the same rights, as well as those of nature, to enter with fire and sword, in the defenceless towns, or to assign, by tenths of fifths persons, to be shot, by which the innocent are confounded with the guilty, let no one be allowed, under the most

severe penalties, to commit such enormities as these, which so greatly dishonour a christian and well legislated nation. 7th. That the inhabitants of the defenceless towns, through which the contending armies may indistinctly pass, be not injured. 8th. That, as by this time, every one is undeceived with regard to the true motives of this war, and it being unwarrantable to connect this contest with the cause of religion, as was attempted at the beginning, let the ecclesiastical orders, abstain from prostituting their ministry, by declamations, reproaches, or in any other manner, within the limits of their jurisdiction; nor ought the ecclesiastical tribunals to interfere, in an affair purely of the state, and which does not belong to them: which, if they do not do, they certainly disgrace their dignity, as experience daily proves; and expose their decrees and censures to the scorn, derision, and contempt of the people, who, in the mass, are anxiously wishing the success of the country. It being well understood, that in case the clergy are not thus restrained, we feel no longer answerable for the results that may be occur, from the euthusiasm of the people; although, on our part, we protest, now and for ever, our respect and profound veneration to their character and jurisdiction, in matters relating to their ministry. 9th. That, as this is a matter of the greatest importance, and indistinctly concerns all and every inhabitant of this land, this manifest and its propositions, ought to be published by means of the public prints of the capital, in order that the people, composed of Americans and Europeans, being informed of what interests them, may be enabled to point out their will, which ought to be the guide of all our operations. 10th. That in case none of these plans is admitted, reprisals shall be rigorously observed.

Behold here, brethren and friends, the religious propositions we present to you, founded on principles of natural equity; alarmed, as we are, at the evils which afflict the nation. In one hand, we offer you the olive-branch, and in the other, the sword,

but never losing sight of those bonds by which we are united, always bearing in mind, that European blood circulates in our veins, and that the same blood which is now so fast shedding to the great detriment of the monarchy, and this for the purpose of maintaining it integral during the absence of the king, is all Spanish. And what objection have you to examine our pretensions? How can you palliate the blind obstinacy of refusing to hear us? Are we, perchance, inferiour to the populace of a single town of Spain? And are you of a superiour hierarchy to kings? Charles III., descended from his throne, to listen to a plebeian who spoke in the name of the people of Madrid. To Charles IV., the tumult of Aranjuez, cost no less than the abdication of his crown. Is it, then, the Americans alone, when they seek to speak to their brethren, to whom they are in every sense equal, and at a time, when the king no longer can be had, who are to be answered with the fire of muskettry?

If now, when we address you for the last time, since we have often in vain endeavoured to fix your attention, you refuse to admit any of our plans, at least, we shall rest satisfied with having proposed them, in compliance with the most sacred duties, which the good man cannot behold with indifference. In this manner, shall we be justified in the eyes of the world, and posterity will not have to accuse us of irregular proceedings. But, in this case, remember there is a supreme and severe judge, to whom, sooner or later, you will have to give in account of your operations, and of their results and enormities, of all which, hence forward, we make you answerable. Remember, that the fate of America, is not decided; that the combat is not always favourable to you, and that reprisals, are at all times, most terrible. Brethren, friends, and fellow-citizens, let us embrace, and be happy, instead of mutually bringing on our heads misfortunes."

Document H.

MITA in Peru.

The *mita*, is a division of the Indians by requisition, to work in the mines. It was established in the following manner. Viceroy Toledo, was the first who caused a regular enumeration of the Indians to be made, and exclusive of Tucuman, Chili and Buenos Ayres, he reckoned in the government of Peru alone, 1,097,697 male Indians, from the age of 18 to 50, the ages at which they begin and cease to be assessible to work in the mines. He divided them into 514 allotments, or *repartimientos*, in order that they might be under the care and training of persons fixed upon, and out of the 17 provinces nearest to Peru, he assigned a 7th part of the population, that is 4733 Indians to the 132 works which had been established, but under certain regulations.

According to them, the *mitayos*, or assessed Indians, were to be chosen in presence of and under the direction of their respective caciques, in such manner, that the lot shall fall on each, once in seven years. In Potosi, the *mitayo* is only obliged to work four months. Each labourer has two others to relieve him, who serve the same space of time, and he thus has one week of labour and two of rest. In this manner, in the 32 years which intervene between 18 and 50, at which age they are exempt from this requisition as well as from tribnte, they serve in the mines 18 months.

From their native provinces, they are conducted by their own captains, the married Indians accompanied by their wives, and an exact list is made of all the effects they carry with them. No variation can be made in their destination, nor can the one to whose lot it has fallen to work in the mines, exchange with him

who is destined to work at the bruising mills. They receive 20 rials (11s. 3d.) per week. Care is taken to see that their provisions are not overrated, and they are allowed for travelling expences, half a rial for every league. The working of the mines is considered very unhealthy, in consequence of the arsenic vapours which flit in the air, and affect the chest. This is partly counteracted by the use of the *coca*, chewed as the betel nut in the East Indies. To this labour, the depopulation of Peru, is partly attributed. This requisition, has lately been abolished by the Cortes.

Document I.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH.)

Corespondence between General Hodgson, Governor of Curaçoa, and General Bolivar of Venezuela, respecting certain Spanish prisoners.

Government House, Curaçoa, September 4, 1813.

Sir,

Having been informed that many European Spaniards, are now confined in the prisons of La Guira and Caracas, in consequence of the part they took in the late unfortunate disturbances of Venezuela, and who possibly may suffer death; I have the honour to address you on this subject. Although I am perfectly sure, from the well known humanity of your character, that you will take no measure of that kind, nevertheless, as there may be persons vested with the authority, in the above places, who may not be possessed of your generous sentiments, and who may, perhaps, from erroneous principles, recur to acts

of cruelty, I esteem it a duty of humanity to intercede in their favour, and request you to grant them passports to leave the province. The brave are always merciful. I am, &c.

(Signed) J. HODGSON.

To DON SIMON BOLIVAR, &c. &c. &c.

(ANSWER.)

Head Quarters, Valencia, October 2, 1813.

Sir,

I have the honour to answer your Excellency's letter, of the 4th of September, ultimo, which I have this day received, delayed, without doubt, by causes of which I am ignorant, on its way from your island to La Guira.

The attention which I ought to pay to a British officer, aud to the cause of America, place me under the necessity of manifesting to your Excellency, the unhappy causes of the conduct, which in spite of myself, I observe to the Spaniards, who, within the last year, have wrapt Venezuela in ruins, by committing crimes which ought to have been thrown into eternal oblivion, if the necessity of justifying, to the eyes of the world, the death war which we have adopted, did not oblige us to draw them to light, from the scaffolds and horrid dungeons, with which they are covered, and to place them before your Excellency.

A continent, separated from Spain by immense seas, more populous and richer than her; subject, for three centuries, to a degrading and tyrannical dependence, hearing, in the year 1810, of the dissolution of the governments of Spain, by the occupancy of the French armies, placed itself in motion, to preserve itself from a similar fate, and to escape the anarchy and confusion which threatened it. Venezuela, the first, institutes a Junta preserving the rights of Ferdinand VII., and in order to wait the descisive issue of the war. It offers to the Spaniards desirous of emigrating, a fraternal asylum; it invests many of them with the

supreme magistracy, and preserves in their offices, all who were placed in those of the greatest influence and importance. Evident proofs of the views of union, which animated the people of Venezuela: views, to which the Spaniards, deceitfully, corresponded; most of whom, abused this public confidence by black perfidy.

In fact, Venezuela adopted the above measure, impelled by irresistible necessity. Under circumstances less critical, provinces of Spain less important than herself, had erected governing Juntas to save themselves from disorder and tumult. And, was it not equally the duty of Venezuela, to provide a shelter from so many calamities and to secure her existence against the rapid vicissitudes of Europe? Was it not even injurious to the Spaniards of the Peninsula, to remain exposed to the troubles and confusion, which were about to succeed to the loss of the acknowledged government; ought they not even to have been grateful, for our thus obtaining for them a safe asylum? Could any one have thought, that a rigorous blockade and cruel hostilities, would have been the returns of so much generosity?

Confident, as was Venezuela, that Spain had been completely subjected, and as was also believed in every other part of America, she adopted the above measure; which even, before, she had a right to have done, authorized by the example of the provinces of the Peninsula, with whom she was declared equal in rights and in political representation. The Regency afterwards was formed in a tumultuous manner in Cadiz, the only point where the French eagles had not penetrated; from whence it fulminated its destructive decrees against a free people, who, without any obligation, had maintained their relations and national integrity, with a nation, of whom they were naturally independent.

Such was the generous spirit which animated the first revolution of America, one effected without blood, odium, or vengeance. Might not Venezuela, Buenos Ayres, and New Granada, have displayed their just resentments for so much injury and

violence, by destroying those Viceroys, Governors, and Regents; all those rulers, executioners of their own species, who gratified with the destruction of the Americans, made the most illustrious and virtuous perish in horrid dungeons; who spoiled the good man of the fruit of his labour, and in general, persecuted industry, the useful arts, and every thing else, that could alleviate the horrors of our slavery?

For three centuries, did America groan under this tyranny, the worst that ever afflicted the human race; three centuries, did she lament her fatal riches which were so attractive to her oppressors; and when just providence presented her with the unexpected opportunity, of breaking her chains, far from thinking of avenging these outrages, she invites even her own enemies, by offering to share with them her gifts and asylum.

On now beholding almost every region of the new world, busied in a cruel and ruinous war; on seeing discord agitating with its furies, even the inhabitants of the cabin; sedition fanning the devouring flame of war, even in the remote and solitary villages, and the American fields crimsoned with human blood, it is natural to enquire, the cause of all this strange confusion, in this lately peaceful continent, whose docile and benevolent children, had always been an example of mildness and submission, unknown in the histories of other nations.

The ferocious Spaniard, cast on the shores of Columbia, to convert the finest portion of the globe, into a vast and odious empire of cruelty and rapine, in him may your Excellency behold the fatal author of all the trajic scenes we have now to deplore. His entry into the new world, was marked with death and desolation; he caused its primitive inhabitants to disappear from the face of the earth, and when his savage fury found no more beings to destroy, he turned it against his own children, whom he had in the land he had usurped.

Your Excellency might behold him, thirsting for blood; contemn things the most holy, and sacrilegiously trample on those

engagements which the world venerates, and which have received the inviolable sanction of all ages and people. A capitulation, last year, delivered up to the Spaniards, all the independent territory of Venezuela; and an absolute and tranquil submission on the part of the inhabitants, convinced them of the pacification of the people, and of the total renunciation they had made, of their late political pretensions. But, at the same time, that Monteverde swore to the people of Venezuela, the religious fulfilment of his offered promises, the most barbarous and impious infraction was seen; the towns were sacked, buildings were burnt; the fair sex outraged; nearly the whole inhabitants of cities shut up in caverns; the imprisonment of an entire people, being for the first time then realized. In fact, none but those obscure victims, who could escape from the sight of the tyrant, preserved their miserable liberty, by hiding themselves in solitary huts, or by living in the woods amidst wild beasts.

How many respectable old men and venerable clergy, were bound in stocks and other infamous fetters, confounded with criminals, and exposed to the scorn of a brutal soldiery, as well as of the vilest of men? How many expired, bent down under the weight of insupportable chains, deprived of air, or starved with hunger and misery? At the time the Spanish constitution was publishing, as a shield to civil liberty, hundreds of victims were dragged away, loaded with chains, to deadly and loathsome vaults, without any cause being assigned for such proceedings, nay, without even the origin or political opinions of the victims, being known.

Your Excellency may here see, the not exaggerated, but unheard of picture of Spanish tyranny in America; a picture, which at the same time, excites feelings of indignation against these executioners, and of the most just and lively sensibility for the victims. *Nevertheless, we did not then see, any feeling souls intercede for suffering humanity, nor claim the compliance of a compact, which interested the whole world.* Your

Excellency at present interposes your respectable mediation, for the most ferocious monsters, the authors of all these evils. Your Excellency may believe me, when the troops of New Granada, under my command, came to avenge nature and society so much outraged, neither the instructions of the beneficent government of that place, nor my designs, were to exercise the right of reprisal on the Spaniards, who, under the title of insurgents, were carrying all the Americans, worthy of that name, to infamous execution, or to tortures still more cruel and infamous. But seeing these tygers sport with our noble clemency, and secure in their impunity, continue, even when conquered, the same sanguinary fierceness, I then, in order to fulfil the holy commission confided to my responsability, and to save the threatened lives of my fellow-countrymen, made an effort to divest myself of my natural sensibility, and to sacrifice the sentiments of a pernicious clemency, to the safety of my country.

May your Excellency permit me to recommend to you, the perusal of the letter of the ferocious Zerveris, the idol of the Spaniards in Venezuela, to General Monteverde, contained in the Caracas gazette, No. 3: you will there discover, the sanguinary plans which these wicked people intended to effect. Being informed, before hand, of their sacrilegious intentions, which a cruel experience, immediately afterwards, confirmed, I resolved to carry on a *death war*, in order to deprive these tyrants, of the incomparable advantage which their destructive system, offered.

On my army opening the campaign in the province of Varinas, unfortunately, Colonel Antoñio Nicolas Briseño, and other officers of distinction, were taken, whom the barbarous and cowardly Tiscar had shot, in the number of sixteen. Similar spectacles, were repeated in Calabozo, Espino, Cumaná and other provinces, accompanied by such circumstances of inhumanity, that I conceive the repetition of such abominable scenes, unworthy of your Excellency and of this letter.

Your Excellency may see a slight sketch of the ferocious acts, in which Spanish cruelty satiated itself, in the Caracas gazette, No. 4. The general massacre rigorously committed in the peaceful town of Aragua, by the most brutal of men, the detestable Zuazola, is one of those phrenzied and sanguinary acts of blindness, which have seldom degraded humanity. There were seen, men and women, old and young, with their ears cut off, some skinned alive, and then cast into venemous lakes, or assassinated by painful and slow means. Nature, was even attacked in its most innocent origin, and the unborn, were destroyed in the wombs of their mothers, by blows and stabs of the bayonet.

San Juan de los Moros, an agricultural and innocent town, presented similar spectacles and equally agreeable to the Spaniards, committed by the barbarous Antoñanzas and the sanguinary Boves. Still, are there to be seen, in the fields of that unhappy country, the dead bodies suspended on the trees. The genius of crime, there appears to hold his empire of death, to whom no one could approach, without feeling the furies of his implacable vengeance.

But it is not Venezuela, alone, that has been the theatre of these horrid butcheries. The opulent Mexico, Buenos Ayres, and Peru, as well as the unhappy Quito, are scarcely to be compared to any thing else, than to so many vast charnel-houses, where the Spanish government assembles the bones of those, who have fallen under its murdering steel.

Your Excellency may find in gazette, No. 2, the basis on which a Spaniard founds the honour of his nation. The letter of Father Vicente Marquetich affirms, that the sword of Regules in the field, and on the scaffold, has immolated 12,000 Americans in one year, and shews, that the glory of the navy officer Rosendo Porlier, consists in his universal system *of not giving quarter; even to the saints, were they to appear before him in the dress of insurgents.*

I refrain from shocking the sensibility of your Excellency, by prolonging the picture of the enormities which Spanish barbarity has committed against humanity, in order to establish an unjust and shameful dominion over the unoffending Americans. Would to God, that an impenetrable veil could hide from the knowledge of man, the excesses of his fellow-beings. Oh! that a cruel necessity did not impose upon us, the inviolable duty of exterminating such treacherous assassins!

Let your Excellency place yourself, for a moment, in our situation, and then ask, what kind of conduct ought to be observed towards our oppressors? Let your Excellency then decide, whether the freedom of America, can ever be secured, as long as such obstinate enemies breathe. Fatal experience, daily urges us to the harshest measures; and even I might add, that humanity itself dictates them. Placed, by my strongest sentiments, under the necessity of being clement with many Spaniards, after having left them amongst us at full liberty, and when their heads were scarcely free from the avenging knife, they have stirred up the unfortunate people, and perhaps, the atrocities recently committed by them, equal the most horrid of the whole. In the valleys of Tuy and Tacata, and in the towns of the West, where one would have thought, that civil war could never have carried its desolating ravages, these wretches have already raised lamentable monuments of their savage cruelty.* Even women, young children, the aged, have been found skinned, with their eyes and entrails torn out; nay, one would be induced to think, that the tyrants of America, were not of the human species.

In vain, would you solicit in favour of those who are now detained in our prisons, passports for your island, or for any other point out of Venezuela. To the great injury of the public peace,

* These circumstances principally allude to the enormities committed by the armed slaves on their masters, whom till now the civil war had scarcely disturbed.

we have already exprienced the fatal consequences of this measure; for we can assert, that almost all who have obtained passports, notwithstanding the oaths by which they were bound, have disembarked on the points in possession of the enemy, in order again to enlist themselves in the parties of assassins, which disturb these defenceless towns. In their very prisons, they are plotting subversive projects, undoubtedly more fatal for themselves, than for a government, obliged to use its efforts, more to repress the fury of the zealous patriots against the seditious who threaten their lives, than to disconcert the black machinations of the former.

Your Excellency may be able to judge, whether the Americans ought to suffer themselves to be patiently exterminated, or whether they are to destroy an iniquitous race, which as long as it breathes, is incessantly labouring at our destruction.

Your Excellency is not mistaken in supposing in me, sentiments of compassion; the same characterise all my countrymen. We could compationate the Caffres of Africa; but Spanish tyrants, contrary to the most powerful sentiments of the heart, impel us to reprisals. American justice will, nevertheless, at all times, know how to distinguish the innocent from the guilty; and even the latter, shall be treated with all the humanity due to the Spanish nation.

I have the honour to, &c.

(Signed) SIMON BOLIVAR.

To the Governor of Curacoa, &c. &c. &c.

Another letter from General Bolivar to the same, dated Oct. 9, 1813, states, that in vain he had proposed to exchange his Spanish prisoners for Americans, whom, in spite of a sacred capitulation, the Governor of Puerto Cavello retained in irons and pontoons, busied in ignominious works, and afflicted with hunger and all kinds of misery. Bolivar adds, that the result has been the detention of his emissaries, their inviolable character being no

longer respected, thus basely abusing the good faith, with which they had entered the Spanish lines.

Your Excellency will have seen (he says) by my last printed inclosures, my fruitless remonstrances to General Monteverde, in order to effect an exchange, to save the lives of the Spaniards, whom he had basely abandoned to our discretion. Above all, your Excellency will be astonished, that when I had even 4000 of them in my power, he (Monteverde) not only refused to admit the proposition to exchange them for 100 and more Americans, but even never returned an answer, loading the bearer of my propositions with chains, and putting him to the hardest work.

Notwithstanding these repeated and execrable infractions, the high intercession of your Excellency, and so respectable in Venezuela, made me adopt the measure of sending proposals of exchange for the officers taken in the last actions, offering to exchange them for Americans, according to their rank and character. Your Excellency may observe, the advantages of this proposal for the enemy, whose prisoners in consequence of an anteriour law, dictated as well from necessity as from justice, were to be beheaded, whilst our people have been buried in dungeons, though covered with a capitulation which guaranteed their security. The American prisoners ought to have been set at liberty, the Spanish ones ought to have perished. Your Excellency may judge on which side clemency now rests, and on which there is a cruel obstinacy. Your Excellency cannot fail to conclude, that more humane with the Spaniards, than even they with their own countrymen, we have made every exertion to save them; but your Excellency will never believe that they have, even made themselves the executioners of their own countrymen.

These benificent propositions, were carried by Father Salvador Garcia de Ortigosa, a venerable priest, whose exemplary virtue had infused respect, even into the Spaniards. He entered as a flag of truce, and his only object was to favour the enemies prisoners and his countrymen. The audience given to this vir-

tuous emissary, and the gratitude shewn by the Puerto Cavello chief, for those belonging to his army, has been, to bury him in a dungeon, nay, he only saved his life, by tears and entreaties. I now request your Excellency to point out whatever measures can be taken with those monsters, who neither respect the rights of nations, virtue, nor honour; even self interest does not restrain their wickedness. I had been desirous of being generous, even to the injury of the sacred interests which I defend; but these barbarians are too obstinately bent on cruelty, even to their own detriment.

(Signed) SIMON BOLIVAR.

Observation. It was on the above grounds with the addition of further aggravations, that Bolivar ordered all his prisoners to be shot, as seen in the end of Document J. And let me now ask, would the name of a British officer, have been degraded, by interceding for the American sufferers in the first calamities of Caracas, since one can now implore compassion for their very authors? Humanity is the noblest feeling of the soul, and always the appendage of a British officer; but the feelings of humanity had been spared, if justice only had been obtained. The infraction of the Caracas capitulation, was the cause of all these evils; this was proved to our commanders abroad, and individuals sought to impress this fact on the ministers at home; but to no effect. Yet it is a fact, that a timely and proper interference on the part of the British government, would have prevented all these horrors. To whom, then, is not a considerable share of blame to be attached? Ample channels of information, have been open to it, but they have been disregarded.

Document J.

Remarks on the Disasters of the Provinces of Caracas, by an English Gentleman, an Eye-witness.

The extraordinary and melancholy events, which have taken place within the short space of six months, in the beautiful province of Venezuela, are, perhaps, without a parallel, even in this age of revolutions; and with regard to the consequences that may follow to the rest of South America, and to the West Indies, from the present state of things in Venezuela, makes it perhaps, the most serious and delicate subject, that ever has been laid before the British government.

It is almost impossible to obtain correct information, from the official documents, published by any of the contending parties.

The European Spaniards and their chiefs, view the natives of the country, as a desperate band of rebels, that must be subdued by coercive measures, no matter how irreconcilable those measures may be, to the dictates of humanity, and the usages of civilized nations. They assert, that any measures of lenity or persuasion to these people, does not comport with the dignity of the Spanish monarchy, and, in fact, they have reduced this barbarous and impolitic theory to practice, by a series of horrors scarcely credible, but, unfortunately, well authenticated, not by the often exaggerated statements of the natives, but by the unerring testimony of ocular proof, afforded to many respectable British subjects and other foreigners, who visited or dwell in the conntry, for commercial purposes.

The first and most perfidious act of cruelty and perfidy, (and, indeed, that which gave birth to all the subsequent horrors) was the violation by General Monteverde, of the capitulation he had solemnly entered into, with Miranda. The most important article in that capitulation, was the immunity promised to all persons who had borne arms against the Spanish monarchy, or who had held civil offices under the revolutionary government. Scarcely had Monteverde got fixed in the seat of authority, at the city of Caracas, when he indicated his intentions to set aside the capitulation, and in a short time, publicly declared it null and void. He began his dreadful system of infraction and vengeance, by seizing the person of the most distinguished Creole in the country, Doctor Roscio.—This individual had been secretary of state under Miranda, and had rendered himself conspicuous, by the splendour of his talents, in favour of his native country. Monteverde ordered him to be loaded with chains, and conducted to the public square, where he was put into the stocks, and remained there twenty-four hours, exposed to the insults and derision of the European Spaniards; from thence he was conveyed to a dungeon, until an opportunity offered, to send him and some other victims to Spain.

This outrage on Dr. Roscio, was the prelude to the tragic scenes, which immediately followed. Monteverde caused to be arrested, nearly every Creole of rank throughout the country; he then had them chained in pairs, and conducted to the dungeons of La Guayra and Puerto Cavello, where many of them perished in a few weeks, by suffocation and disease. The number of victims, thus immured in the above two places, was, at least, fifteen hundred, exclusive of those confined in the interiour of the country, and others fled for safety to an immense distance from the capital. While Monterverde, was thus openly pursuing this system of perfidy and revenge at the city of Caracas, his agents were busily employed in the same

measures, throughout every village and town over the extensive country. The catalogue of horrors, committed by the said agents, is of so long and disgusting a nature, that I forbear to detail; suffice it to say, that one of the common methods of punishing those who had been employed under Miranda, or were suspected of disaffection to the Spanish government, was to mutilate their persons, by cutting off their ears or nose.

It could not be expected that such scenes of outrage, would remain long unresisted by a people, who although they had been used for ages to habitual oppression, had recently, tasted the enjoyment of some of their natural rights.

Accordingly, symptoms of revolt against Monteverde, began to exhibit themselves in the early part of last year, throughout various parts of the province, which continued daily to augment, in consequence of the people knowing that Simon Bolivar (a distinguished native of Caracas) was at the head of a considerable force from New Granada, and advancing to their relief.

Prior to the arrival of Bolivar, in the province of Caracas, Monteverde had suffered a signal defeat, at a place called Maturin, in the province of Cumana, by a handful of men, commanded by a young man, named Marino.—Monteverde, alarmed at this defeat, and hearing of the rapid advances of Bolivar, thought it prudent to retire from the capital, and shut himself up in Puerto Cavello, and there wait the arrival of expected succours from Spain. At his departure from Caracas, he appointed a certain Colonel Fiero (a native of the Canary Islands) governor and captain-general, *ad interim;* but this individual, with a baseness and pusillanimity beyond any example on record, formed the diabolical project, not only of offering a fictitious capitulation to General Bolivar, but to precipitately fly from Caracas, and abandon at least *fifteen hundred European Spaniards to the rage of a victorious army*, and to the indignation of those Creoles, who were about

to emerge from the very dungeons and chains, under which they had been so long groaning. In order to accomplish this plan, Fiero sent a deputation to meet Bolivar, composed of the most respectable European Spaniards in the country, who had directions to capitulate on the best terms they could with General Bolivar. The latter, not suspecting any treachery, and confiding in the personal knowledge he had of the characters of the deputies, and desirous of giving a proof of magnanimity, generously acceded to such terms, as the European Spaniards had little right to expect from a victorious Creole chief. After the capitulation was signed by Bolivar and the deputies, the latter transmitted it to Monteverde for his approbation, but whether from a previous understanding between him and Fiero, from obstinacy, or from his fears that the Creoles might follow the fatal example which he had given of bad faith, in the execution of a former capitulation, be it as it may, Monteverde refused his approbation of the capitulation, declaring, at the same time, his determination never to *treat on any terms*, with the insurgents. Before this answer could be communicated to Bolivar, and while the unsuspecting deputies had been labouring to procure an amnesty for themselves, their countrymen and property, the perfidious Fiero, in union with a body of Catalans, Biscayans, &c. determined on flight from Caracas, with all the treasure, public and private, they could collect, and accordingly about the last of July, departed for La Guayra, where on their arrival, Fiero took the necessary measures to embark himself and his illustrious companions, and departed for Curaçoa, leaving behind him as before mentioned, more than fifteen hundred European Spaniards.

Immediately on the departure of Fiero, the dungeons of La Guayra were thrown open, and gave back to their country and relations, those who had survived the horrors of a year's confinement. No language can describe the affecting scene that took place, at the meeting between these martyrs to tyranny

and their respective families, much less can be depicted, the enthusiastic joy, that was manifasted by all orders of society, on their deliverance from their oppressors. Nearly at the same time, that is, on the 4th of August, Bolivar entered into the city of Caracas, in a manner which, likewise, no power of description can pourtray. During these moments of effervescence, it might have been expected, that every European Spaniard would have been sacrificed, but the principle of revenge appeared to have been forgotten, or absorbed in the general feeling of gratitude and satisfaction, which pervaded all orders of society. Not a single European Spaniard lost his life, many of them walked unmolested in the streets; but in a short time afterwards, they were arrested and confined in the prisons of Caracas, to serve as hostages for the security of those natives, whom Monteverde held as prisoners at Puerto Cavello. One of the first acts of General Bolivar, was to send a flag of truce, to Monteverde, offering to give *up all the European Spaniards* (who amounted to at least *fifteen hundred in number)* in exchange for the Creole prisoners at Puerto Cavello, who at that time, or since, were not *more than three hundred and fifty persons.* Notwithstanding this disproportion of numbers, and although Monteverde knew that the life of every European Spaniard in the cities of Caracas, La Guayra, and other places might be sacrificed (as will be seen hereafter was the case) in consequence of this refusal; still, however, he obstinately persisted in that refusal, on the simple principle, that *he would not treat with insurgents.* The fact, however, was, that Monteverde, was then in daily expectation of a large force from Spain, and flattered himself, that on its arrival, he could easily subdue Bolivar. About twelve hundred Spanish troops, did arrive in August, but they have been repeatedly beaten by Bolivar, and at this time, nearly all killed or taken prisoners. Monteverde himself, has since been so severely wounded, that he was obliged to give up the command to a Colonel

Salomon, who came from Spain with the Spanish troops. Bolivar has offered to the successor of Monteverde, three different times, the same generous proposals as were before offered for the exchange of prisoners, but Salomon, refining on the obstinacy of his predecessor, has not only refused the exchange, on any of the ordinary usages of war, but in violation of a principle held sacred even among savages, he seized the person whom Bolivar despatched to Puerto Cavello with a flag of truce, on this humane mission, loaded him with fetters, and confined him in the fortress at Puerto Cavello; and what gives the highest aggravation to this outrage, is, that the individual charged with this mission, is an European Spanish priest, named Salvador Garcia, remarkable for the urbanity of his manners, and pure character. He was particularly selected by Bolivar, for the purpose of giving confidence and respect to the mission.—This infamous act, closed all further communication between the parties on this subject, except reciprocal menaces, in case either sacrificed the lives of the prisoners of the other.—The war, now began to assume a new and more bloody aspect.—Bolivar gave no quarter in battle, nor expected any from his enemies.—Puerto Cavello was besieged by land, by the troops of Bolivar, and his flotilla strictly blockaded it by sea.—The armies under the standard of Ferdinand VII., were every where defeated, and there was every probability, that a few weeks more, would place the natives in an attitude of great strength and confidence.—At this juncture (November and December last) the *royal chiefs at Puerto Cavello*, and the *Spanish governor of Guayana deliberately formed the infernal project, of raising the slaves of Venezuela, against their owners.*—This desperate plan must have originated under the barbarous idea, that as Venezuela was lost to Spain, the latter or her agents, were resolved it should likewise be lost to the natives of the country.—To accomplish this scheme, various partizans of the Spanish government, were sent

into the interiour, to excite the slaves to insurrection, and to desolate the country.—The most conspicuous of these partizans, are, Boves, Rosette, Puy, and Palomo.—The three first are European Spaniards, the latter a negro, who has been long proscribed, as an assassin and robber.

Boves and Rosette, received their supplies of arms, ammunition, and money, from the governor of Guayana.—Puy and Palomo, received their auxiliaries, from Coro and Puerto Cavello—These desperadoes have regularly corresponded with the other Spanish chiefs at Coro, Maracaybo, Puerto Cavello, and Guayana.—Some of this correspondence, has been published in the Curacoa Gazette, and among the papers and despatches which have fallen into Bolivar's hands, the whole abominable plan is fully developed. It will be in vain, in future, for any of the Spanish chiefs of the places before mentioned, to say, that this conduct was unauthorized by them, because, without their direct aid, it never would have commenced, much less continued.—Were I to detail all the horrid excesses, committed by Boves and Rosette on their route from the river Oronoquo, to the valleys of Caracas, it would be scarcely possible to find a reader, who would believe such scenes of slaughter and devastation, credible.—Some idea, however, of the melancholy facts may be conceived, when I assert, that these monsters, in traversing a space of more than 400 miles, *left no human being alive of any age or sex*, except such as joined their standard.—Freedom to the slaves, and the pillage of La Guayra and Caracas, were the incentives that Boves and Rosette, held out to these deluded wretches.—Wherever they came to a plantation, and found any hesitation among the negroes, they compelled them, by force, to join them.—In this manner, they inundated the fertile and highly cultivated valleys of *Aragua and Tuy*, destroying the works, and burning the produce of the country, in every direction.

With this overwhelming banditti, Boves and Rosette reached the vicinage of Caracas, in the beginning of February. The former took possession of Victoria, about 12 leagues from Caracas, while Rosette occupied the town of Occumare, only eight leagues distance.—It is true, that both have since been defeated by General Rivas (the Governor of Caracas) and Bolivar, but they have been dear bought victories to the Creole troops, because the disproportion of numbers was so great, that it became necessary for Bolivar and Rivas, to sacrifice, at least, one-third of their respective forces, in order to gain a battle.

Boves and Rosette's forces, are entirely composed of cavalry, and these of the best horses and mules in the province, because they had their choice of the immense number of these animals, which abound in the vast plains laying between Calabozo and Caracas.

Boves and Rosette, have, *at least*, under their orders *seven or eight thousand men*; of these, not more than fifty persons are whites or European Spaniards, and about 100 freemen of colour.—The rest are all slaves, negroes, and samboes.—They are an athletic, hardy, and desperate horde, which will, and must inevitably increase, *unless speedily and decisively checked.*

Bolivar, may be able, for a long while, to continue on the defensive, and from the measures he has recently taken, to fortify the cities of Caracas and La Guayra, I do not apprehend there is any immediate risque, of the white inhabitants being sacrificed, but as experience has fatally demonstrated the difficulty of stopping the progress of insurrection among slaves, even under the most energetic government, is very great; it will, consequently, be rendered much more so, under a government like that of Venezuela.

If, however, Bolivar and his associates, find it impossible to resist this alarming evil, and likewise have to prepare for re-

sistance to any new force that may be sent from Spain; they will then adopt the only and dreadful alternative left them, viz. *To declare the whole of the slaves of Venezuela free, and to enjoy the same rights as the whites.*—If ever Bolivar resort to this measure, not a negro or coloured person will remain under the banners of Ferdinand VII. because, in general, they are attached to their Creole masters, and under them, would consider themselves much more secure in *their freedom*, than all the proclamations or offers to the same effect, from the Spanish government or its agents.—These are important and serious facts, which demand the immediate attention of those who are entrusted with the British military and naval commands, in these seas.—It is not, now, a question of interference, between the royalists and independents on the Spanish main.—It is, simply, whether we shall passively look on, and see the death blow given to every colonial possession in the West Indies, as nothing can be more palpable, than that if the revolt of the slaves in Venezuela, becomes general; it will take but a few years, to decide the fate of these islands, or whether a prompt interference, at this moment, *will not be the means, to arrest this system of destruction to British interests.*

I have no hesitation in saying, that a prompt and decided interference on the part of His Britannic Majesty's military and naval chiefs, in these seas, would produce the desired effect.—I am perfectly aware, that the British government, has expressly prohibited all interference; that is, the sword is not to be unsheathed in favour of either party, but it is not to be inferred, that a desire to be neutral, is to supercede the exercise of good offices in favour of humanity, or to be extended so far, as to quietly wait, until the flames of discord and insurrection, reach our own doors.

Exclusive of imperious political reasons, for the interference of the British commanders in chief, there are other grounds which

strongly urge it.—There is, at this moment, at least half a million of dollars of British property, at Caracas and La Guayra, and likewise, a considerable number of British subjects, who went to that country for commercial purposes, with the knowledge and consent of the British government. They consequently flatter themselves, with its protection to extricate themselves and property, from the perilous state they are at present in, because there is no doubt in my mind, that if Boves and Rosette were to succeed in getting into Caracas, or if a *local insurrection* takes place among the slaves in the cities of La Guayra and Caracas, not a single white person, either Creole or stranger, would escape assassination, and every farthing of property, of course, would be plundered.

If Venezuela becomes a permanent theatre of insurrection, and a consequent asylum for the Negroes of these islands, the first and almost immediate effects of such a state of things, will be experienced at Tobago, Trinidad, Grenada, and every island in the vicinage of the main. It will be likewise spread, with electric rapidity, down toCartagena and Porto Bello,converting this beautiful section of the globe, into a wide scene of devastation and disorder, in place of its continuing, as it has been (and may hereafter be much more so) a vast and indefinite market for British trade, and for the consumption of British manufactures.

Another (and surely not the least) serious motive to urge a prompt interference, is the voice of suffering humanity.

Among the tragic scenes lately committed at Venezuela, has been the murder, in cold blood, of several hundred Creoles by the Spanish chiefs at Porto Cabello, and about 1300 European Spaniards, by order, ('tis said) of Bolivar. It is also equally unnecessary, as it is painful to enquire who began this dreadful system of retaliatory vengeance. Both parties, will of course, endeavour to extenuate the horror of the deed, but no arguments or spirit of recrimination, can justify the excesses they have both committed. It will, however, be seen from the

preceding narrative, that Bolivar exerted himself in due season, to prevent a resort to this unheard of method of reprisal, but I should be doing him injustice to omit stating, the following important facts. Some time in January last, Bolivar made another effort to obtain the release of some Creole officers, who were prisoners at Puerto Cavello, and for this purpose, he sent an European Spanish officer, whom he had made a prisoner some time before, with a flag of truce to Puerto Cavello. This officer, advanced from Bolivar's lines to the out posts of Puerto Cavello, and although he then entreated to be permitted to proceed, stating that his own life was at stake on the result of his mission, still he was ordered to halt, until a few minutes afterwards, brought the decision of the commander of the royal forces, at Puerto Cavello (a certain *Istuella*, who it appears had taken the command, in consequence of Colonel Salomon having decamped) which was a refusal to admit the flag of truce, and a most insulting verbal message to Bolivar.

The next day, presented the melancholy spectacle, of four Creole officers being brought out on the ramparts of Puerto Cavello, and there, in the view of Bolivar and his army, they were shot.

The commander of the Royalists, not satisfied with the deliberate murder of these four officers, officially communicated their names, assigning their execution to be a measure of retaliation, and which he intended to follow up, by the death of every Creole in his possession.

About the time that Bolivar received this official communication, he likewise was informed of the advance of Boves and Rosette, at the head as before observed, of 7 to 8000 negroes, and committing the excesses previously mentioned.

At this time, there were 13 to 1400 European Spaniards in the prisons of Caracas and La Guayra.

Bolivar ('tis said) adopted the resolution to sacrifice the whole of these unfortunate individuals, and sent the necessary

orders to that effect, to Caracas and La Guayra. These orders were carried into such literal and prompt execution, that not more than 25 or 30 European Spaniards were spared, and these hold a precarious and miserable existence.

The writer of this, unfortunately with many other foreigners, had occular proof of the slaughter of more than 800 victims at La Guayra; they were conducted in pairs from the dungeons, to a little distance from the gates of the town, and there shot, after which, their bodies were burnt. Many perished by suffocation, as a few days previous to the execution, we saw 40 to 50 dead bodies taken out of the dungeons each day. Thus has terminated, for the present, in Venezuela, this scene of deliberate reciprocal revenge, because it is to be presumed, that as few or n oprisoners remain now on either side, none will be made in future, as a war of extermination is reciprocally proclaimed on both sides—it therefore follows from this statement.

1st. That the violation of the treaty between Monteverde and Miranda, is the origin of all the present disasters of Venezuela, and as the Cortes and Regency of Spain, have directly approved the perfidy of Monteverde, by solemnly making him captain general of the province, after they knew he had so shamefully violated the treaty in question; consequently, it is never to be expected, that the natives will ever again trust their lives and property to Spanish faith.

2ndly. As the natives are resolved to adopt any alternative, no matter however dreadful, rather than submit to Spain, it becomes the duty and certainly the policy of Great Britain, to prevent such an alternative taking place, as would involve in general ruin, (and *at no distant period*) the whole of the West Indies.

3d. Whether the Negroes are incited to insurrection, under the banners of Ferdinand VII; or are proclaimed free by Bolivar, the effects will be equally the same to Spain. To her the province of Venezuela is lost for ever, and if Spain is desirous to

retain any of her remaining possessions in South America, she ought to feel grateful to Great Britain, if, by any means whatever, she can arrest the destructive flame, before it spread so far, as to render all future attempts impotent and abortive.

4th, and lastly. The commercial and manufacturing interests of Great Britain, as well as the interests of the civilized world in general, are deeply involved in the fate of South America, and whether it shall become the seat of discord and devastation or of tranquillity and prosperity, may depend on the measures, ad interim, adopted by the British and military chiefs in these seas, and ultimately pursued by the British ministry.

With the same frankness and impartiality, which I have endeavoured to keep in view in the foregoing detail, I shall conclude, by stating such measures as I can conceive would be effectual, to check the present alarming state of things in Venezuela, and likewise afford time for such future determination, as the British cabinet may find necessary to resolve on.

1st. That a person or persons should be immediately dispatched to Caracas, by the British commander in chief, to enquire into the facts I have stated, and if it should be found, that my conclusions are correct, as to the alarming nature of the evils I have suggested, then such persons should be authorised to request, and indeed to require of both parties, a suspension of hostilities, until the determination of the British and Spanish governments, should be ascertained.

2d. Whether the previous point is refused or acceeded to by the parties, there should, at all events, be a maritime force sent to La Guayra, with orders to remove the persons and property of the British subjects from the country.

I feel persuaded (and I speak from a personal knowledge of the character and disposition of all the leading natives of the country) that on the part of the present goverment of Caracas, and the people in general, they will cheerfully assent to a suspension of hostilities, and submit their fate to the ulteriour decision

of Great Britain, but at the same time, I am decidedly of opinion, that if this salutary measure is not adopted, or if Bolivar finds himself incapable of resisting the slaves already in revolt, he will adopt the only alternative left him, to declare the whole of the slaves free, in which case, no force from Europe, much less from Spain, would ever be able to subjugate Venezuela, and the adjoining empire of New Grenada, which two provinces, contain four millions of native inhabitants.

W. D. ROBINSON.

St. Thomas, March 18, 1814.

FINIS.

GENERAL INDEX

OF THE

CONTENTS OF THIS VOLUME.

☞ *The divisions of the matter, are marked thus* §.

N.B. It has been thought better to ask the indulgence of the reader, for the typographical errors, originating out of the hurry of publication, than to burden him with an errata list.

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