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MANIFESTO
OF THE
SPANISH NATION TO EUROPE.
[CONCLUDED.]

Thus, after having exhausted every thing that perfidy contains most vile, and atrocity most odious, these insolent sophisters still dared to speak of constitution, laws and reformations: and not being able to show any title whatever, either just or apparent, for their usurpation, they wished to gild it over, by giving themselves the specious name of public reformers.——But a nation of twelve millions of souls does not require tutors. And, great God, what tutors! The same persons, who, after having constituted themselves the defenders of rights and principles, only boast of trampling them under foot, both within and without France. Who are these instructors? They are persons who have never made a law, which they have not abrogated; never a Constitution which they have not destroyed; never a government, which they have not rendered infamous and corrupt; persons, who have committed & suffered cruelties without end, to establish a liberty, which they knew not how to enjoy, have finished their career by becoming the vile instruments of the most insensate ambition that has ever existed in the world, from the days of Tamerlane, until the present time.

The last chapter of their history, the last exploit of their heroism, is to deceive a good King, who, confiding in a security, which not even the free-booters of the desert would dare to invade, puts himself into their hands, and is immediately stripped of his crown, deprived of his Liberty, and his very life threatened. Then, because of the people owing to a love for their king dissenting to so unjust an usurpation, they suddenly give the signal for slaughter and spring like tygers upon their guests and friends. And, these people belong to a nation which called herself civilised! and these are the persons that proclaim themselves the heroes of Europe! They are a banditti, not warriors, savage monsters, not men; against whom every means of vengeance, and every way to extermination, however horrible, however unexampled, are authorised in equity and in justice.

The Spanish nation, thus insulted in the persons of her Princes, thus sold in her confidence, and so unkindly recompensed for her hospitality, suddenly cried out aloud, and ran to arms in a body, in order to defend her liberty, and chastise those barbarians. In vain did the advocates of the usurpation bring before their eyes the immense power of the tyrant, the great discipline of his troops, their unparalleled dexterity in mischief. Men, who being so inhumanly treated, can coolly calculate on the risks of vengeance, are either cowards or traitors, and in either cases are wretches. But even the calculations of egotism badly agreed, on this occasion, with the infamy of suffering. What, said the good men, will it avail us, if, seduced by the love of peace, we should now remain silent, and should receive the yoke which is presented to us. Will we, for this reason, cease to suffer the rapacity of these plunderers of the globe, who are come to deprive us of the riches, which we have accumulated in our country by a century of peace? Will we cease to be the vassals of a subaltern, a petty king, placed here to communicate to us the decrees of the tyrant? Will, in short, our youth cease to be dragged to foreign countries, to plunder and cut the throats of nations, who have done them no injury, as we here see the wretched conscripts of Italy and Germany? No: since a sacrifice of blood is absolutely necessary, it is better to offer it as a Holocaust to our country, than to the ambition of a tyrant. It is better to struggle and die within sight of our parents upon the bank of the Tagus, the Gaudalquiver, and the Ebro, than to go and stain with blood the frozen and remote borders of the Vistula and the Danube.

Having taken this generous resolution, the provinces armed, proclaimed anew the king to whom they had sworn obedience, and sallied forth to meet the phalanxes of the French, which were already extended throughout them. Nothing could resist their impetuosity in the beginning: twenty-three thousand men the flower of the French army, headed by one of their best Generals, are routed in the plains of Balen, and forced to surrender themselves prisoners. Valentia receives at her walls the attack of Moncey, and drives him to the centre of the French army then established at Madrid. Farther on, the Catalonians, notwithstanding that the fortresses of Figuras & Barcelona were occupied by the enemy, make within sight of them a vigorous insurrection; Manresa and Gerono are the rocks upon which the divisions sent from Barcelona to reduce them, split, and also the graves which opened to receive them. In short, Sarragossa, open on all sides, without any other defence than the breasts of her inhabitants, resists the anger of Napoleon, who like a demon of hell, fulminated from Bayonne desolation and destruction upon an hitherto harmless people, whose sole crimes was their loyalty to their king. The shells, the balls, and all the warlike instruments sent there, were taken from our magazines of Pampelona, and the ammunition made by us for our defence, having been treachously sold and perfidiously seized, served, Oh horror! to our destruction, and was discharged against Spainards.—But the Arragonese, who undertook the defence of their unprotected city, when fortified towns, under the same circumstances, might have surrendered with honor, the Arragonese then saved their capitol, which points out the blood in its streets by inscriptions of victory, and the ruins of its houses by splendid tropies.

In fine, the French repulsed on all sides, shamefully took to flight, and encamped on the banks of the Ebro.—Protected there by the fortresses, which they at first seized so perfidiously, they waited for the reinforcements which Napoleon promised them, and with them returned to the contest, in hopes of better success. The Spanish nation, of character and principle, free from the falsehood of the French, does not dissemble to Europe, that in the second epoch, she was not so much favored by Providence as in the first. Our troops have paid a tribute to their experience, and in consequence of the successes at Espinosa, Burgos and Tudela, the enemy again took possession of the capitol. With their accustomed arrogance, they were already shouting for victory, as if the whole monarchy were comprehended within the precincts of Madrid; and if credit can be given to their fallacious accounts, our troops are all dispersed like smoke, and Spain no longer possesses either forces to oppose her enemies, authority to direct her councils, nor resources to preserve her from annihilation.——Whereas, the government which the nation has chosen, never found more respect, more adherence, nor more zeal: at their voice the provinces have redoubled their efforts; and new enlistments, new donations, and new sacrifices immediately flocked to supply the vacancy occasioned by these losses. The French, instead of triumphing as they imagined, instead of spreading through the country, to plunder and lay waste, according to custom, find themselves surrounded by other armies, and forced to re-unite, in order to try the chances of new combats. Let the tyrant be undeceived; however, numerous his intrigues, however great the advantages he may gain over us, he will never deprive us of the hatred to French dominion which fires the breast of every Spaniard, nor of the indefatigable perseverance, with which we will hasten to repair the caprice of fortune.

Such was the origin of the war, which the French, now prosecute in Spain: a war commenced in a most barbarous manner, without an explanation, without preparation, without a pretext: in which, as if we Spaniards did not belong to a civilized people, no rule established by the law of nations among those which are so, is observed. In order to point out to the world the justice of our cause, we have no necessity to recur to our subtleties of public law, nor to diplomatic cavils about articles of treaties. Th[e] peaceable traveller, who is treacherously attacked by his companion, converted into an assassin, needs but a few words to justify his defence:—the law of nature prescribes it, instinct advises it, fury and vengeance administer it. We saw ourselves robbed of our Princes, attacked within our houses, our laws and institutions threatened; we saw those very persons, who were received and entertained like guests and friends, within our hospitable walls, stain them with the blood of the inhabitant and profane them with the violation of the mothers and daugthers, who suffered all the excesses of the brutality within sight of their half murdered fathers and husbands; children nailed to the bayonets, and carried in triumph like military trophies: the sanctuary of the temples sacrilegiously plundered, and bathed with the blood of their defenceless priests, murdered within them. Thus injured, thus attacked in this unheard of, this cruel manner, what other alternative remained to us, but to defend ourselves, and by death to triumph? We must have been still more base than what the tyrant can wish us, to forget what were our ancestors, what we were ourselves: we were unwilling to appear unworthy of them, to be the contempt of Europe, or the minions of Napoleon.

After having trampled under foot every principle of equity and justice, he wishes also to change at his caprice, the meaning of the words: he call us insurgents and traitors; and, as such, excludes us from the conferences of peace, which he has so insidiously proposed to England. But under what pretext, or with what right does he deprive the Spanish nation of its character of Potentate? Is it, forsooth, by that which is given to him by the renunciations of Bayonne, taken by force and evidently null? But the design of seizing and usurping the throne of Spain, was irrevocably determined, and commenced in its execution before these renunciations were made, and even before the memorable events of March. The documents which accompany this Manifesto, the originals of which the Supreme Junta keep in their possession, evidently prove it, and deprive our enemies of that miserable subterfuge, invented to fascinate the unwary. Insolence and effrontery created by power and fortune, in him, who recognizes no other law than force, could alone call insurrection, a resistance against so unjust aggressions, and give the name of rebellion to an obedience to the laws and authorities of the country. But no one in Europe believes it, and no one but a madman can deny, that this universal and magnanimous opposition is the will of an entire nation, which aspires to defend its honor and independence. How else, explain this political phenomenon, as astonishing as it is singular, that almost in one day, with the same spirit, in the same manner, and under the same form of government, so many different provinces should rise, without previous preparation, without any communication whatever among themselves? How explain the establishment of the central government, to which they all so anxiously contributed: which tranquilly exercises its authority, in the name of the detained Monarch, and is equally respected and obeyed, in times of trouble and affliction and in those of glory and success.

In vain do the French, in their servile Gazettes and contradictory accounts, describe us as delivered up to the horrors of anarchy, and agitated with the fanatic convulsions of an exaggerated liberty. They looked upon us as vile and abject slaves, they found us to be men, and they call us rebels. But let the impostors know, that Spaniards only live for their king and country: that their sole ambition is to effect the liberty of the one and the independence of the other; that their only intention is to maintain the fundamental laws of their Kingdom, which Napoleon wishes insolently to overthrow. Let them know, that we are neither fanatics nor madmen; and that, in the same manner as we have resisted the shameful servitude, which they wished to impose upon us, we will be able to appreciate the political intrigues which, step by step, have led France to the feet of the execrable despot, who now oppresses her.

But this dreadful contest in which Spain has by herself engaged, does not interest her alone. Sovereigns of Europe, insulted and derided nations oppressed and tyrannized over by the French, will you look with indifference upon the only opportunity which is offered to you, of recovering your power, of revenging your injuries, of re-establishing the equilibrium which has cost you so many combinations, such torrents of blood? The power and ambitious designs of Charles V. and his son made you unite to restrain them, and you were at length enabled to preserve the political liberty of Europe, which was threatened by them. The pompous ambition of Louis XIV. called forth the same exertions; and notwithstanding half a century of triumphs and victories he was at length obliged to yield to the nations united against him. Another tyrant, still more terrible, has oppressed some, subjugated others, and insulted all of you. And will you not renew those noble efforts to avert danger and to shake off slavery?

For fifteen years the ambition of the French now agitates and destroys Italy. Become the theatre of a most bloody war, she has seen all the fruits of the prolonged peace which she had enjoyed, vanish from before her: every sublime monument which the genius of arts had deposited in her land, carried off to satisfy the pride of one, who is unable to imitate them: the limits and equilibrium of her different states, broken and destroyed; herself destined, like us, to be divided into provinces, to satiate the ambition, recompense the iniquities, and content the unbridled luxury of these ravagers of the world.—Listen, Italians, to the voice of a nation, with which, in other times, you were so intimately connected: recal to your minds the days when your banners, your troops being united with ours, we humbled the pride of France on the banks of the Garelliano, and in the plains of Pavia. Spain claims not the power she then possessed over you. To an union she loudly calls you, and with her to liberty. Make such regulations as will render you respectable: oppose another barrier to the ambitious progress of this Collossus; and Spain, seconding your efforts, will bless the day when she can salute you as an independent, great and powerful nation.

Switzerland has to deplore the same evils, the same insults, and perhaps still greater losses. Her liberty and the simplicity of her manners supplied the deficiency of fertility and the roughness of her soil. Happy with her independence and her virtues, notwithstanding her poverty, she envied not the most powerful and opulent nations. Her vicinity to France has been her destruction: war has ruined her, as it has Italy. Converted into a barrack for soldiers, despoiled of the riches, which the industry and economy of the inhabitants had amassed in some of her cities, and become the play thing of French intrigue, the venerable laws of her confederation, respected by time and by men, have on a sudden been overthrown, to receive in their stead a constitution, made at the will of France. Of what avail is the vain name of Republic, which the condescension of the tyrant still permits her to preserve? Her precarious situation leaves to the Swiss no other alternative to maintain the name and independence of Helvetia, than to unite with those nations which aspire to preserve themselves from the destructive vortex of French ambition.—If their poverty has till now prevented their being reduced to a kingdom, and given as a present, to some relation or favorite; to morrow they will be the spoils of some insolent wretch, who may wish to trample under foot the liberty and glory which sixty battles purchased to their ancestors.

Holland can by no means emerge from the contempt and ignominy into which she is plunged. Destitute of navigation, commerce and colonies, deprived of her constitution and her laws, forced to acknowledge and give the title of king to a man who posseses neither virtue, talents nor glory, she must either basely consent to be entirely struck out of the political world, or must appeal to the just, the holy insurrection, to which every thing invites her. The whole of Germany has seen her system of confederation overturned by intrigue, her liberties invaded, the emporiums of her commerce plundered, and her cities desolated by a cruel war. The small states of that part of the world have enjoyed a momentary satisfaction in seeing the great humbled; but when these shall have entirely disappeared, who will be able to preserve them from the destruction to which they are hurrying! The political barriers, which existed between their interests and those of France, are already removed by the monstrous confederation of the Rhine. The chief of that confederation, more oppressive, more powerful one hundred times than the former chief of the Germanic empire, will make that alliance, like all those concluded between the week and the strong, a contract between a slave and a tyrant.

Is it possible that Austria can any longer doubt as to the path she is to pursue? Can the misfortunes of the last war, the offspring of surprise and intrigue, not of skill & valor, deter her from entering those lists, in which she has contended with so much inflexibility, fought with so much glory? After having engaged in three great, three bloody wars for the aggrandizement of her power, the acquisition of glory, will she cease to exert herself, when upon her exertions her very existence depends? Let her remember with what perfidy Napoleon lulled to sleep Prussie, in order to humble her at Ulm and at Austerlitz. Let her bring to mind, how he availed himself of the inactivity of Austria, that upon the plains of Jena, the fate of Prussia mind end in extermination. His fortune he has founded upon the division of these two powers: he has weakened the one, destroyed the other, and heaped contumely upon both. Those rivalships must now cease. It is time to discover that France, the natural enemy of all nations, cannot be restrained except by a coalition of them all. If Austria wishes to avenge her insults, to repair her losses, and preserve her political existence, the present is the time to effect it, whilst the attention of the enemy is diverted in such distant quarters. Formerly united with Spain, they together checked the impetuosity of this ever restless, ever ambitious people.—Spain now invites her to war against the common enemy, and invites her with the energy, the eagerness of a nation mortally wounded in her honor, and threatened with destruction. They will both struggle for their existence. If Spain is destroyed, Austria sinks.

Russia, trusting to the immense extent, to the remoteness of her territories, can, in all appearance, live without fears, and treat upon a footing of equity with the oppressor of the other powers. But when she shall have suffered him to aggrandize himself with the spoils of the rest of the continent, when her indifference or bad policy shall have permitted the empires of the West and South to be united under one authority, then she will have to add to the destruction of her commerce, the degradation of submitting to the commands of Napoleon. Let not the emperor Alexander confide either in promises or treaties, which are no longer complied with, than whilst it is the interest of the parties, nor to demonstrations of friendship, which perfidy can always command. Let her contemplate the fate of three Sovereigns, the most intimate friends of that vile man.—Let the ruin of the Supreme Pontiff, who sanctioned his exaltation, the degradation of the king of Prussia, who gave him his preponderance in Germany, and his perfidy to the king of Spain, who sacrificed every thing to his designs, be a lesson and a warning to those who can still trust to his insidious caresses. Europe recognizes in Alexander a heart both generous and magnanimous. Why shall a monarch of his principles and virtues unite with a tyrant so iniquitous, so unjust? Why shall he become the accomplice of his crimes and usurpations? Why shall he contribute by his indifference to the destruction of the Spanish nation? Spain has not offended him: with her preservation is interwoven the glory of his empire, and together with Russia, she was destined to preserve the political equilibrium of Europe.

Yes, Princes and nations of the continent: your preservation depends upon ours, and Spain defends as much your cause as she does her own. The open insolence of the French in all their violations, has put an end to the calculations of statesmen. That great continental system, which is always on the lips of Frenchmen, appears in every action, and threatens you with destruction. Already, has the ambition of Napoleon swallowed up Italy, Holland and Switzerland, and converted those states with