

with which this short address was delivered produced a talismanic effect on all present, and though interdicted from giving way to their feelings in *vivas*, nothing could exceed the eagerness shewn by each to follow their adopted chief; who, immediately issued orders for the regiment to be divided into small detachments, directing a few rounds of ball cartridges should be distributed amongst them.

While the officers were occupied in drawing up their respective parties, Porlier selected some of the most steady, to secure the person of the Captain-General, his Secretary, the members of the military commission, and a few others, known to be inimical to freedom.* This was effected without opposition, early on the morning of the 19th, while the prisoners were on their way to San Anton and Ferral; all those accused of political offences were set at liberty. After these preliminary measures were completed, a proclamation was read to the troops, and posted in the town. It congratulated the soldiery upon having formed the heroic resolution of breaking chains, more galling than any which had been forged for centuries.

* Porlier directed that the authorities should be treated with the utmost respect: and that every possible attention might be paid to their wants while in confinement. His solicitude on this point was frequently expressed in letters to the officer charged with their safe custody.

There was no necessity for telling them what had been the policy pursued since the restoration of Ferdinand VII. to a throne which had cost so many lives and such endless sacrifices.—What had been their recompense? Poverty, contempt and privations without number: to which might be added, a total disregard of the laws, persecution, imposts, forced loans, and feudal oppression.—Finally, the ruin of agriculture and annihilation of commerce! This concise and faithful exposition ended by stating, that the other provinces would not fail to follow the example of Galicia, where a supreme junta of government was to be formed until the meeting of Cortes, to which the nation looked for its regeneration.

The above address was succeeded by an elaborate manifesto, remarkable for its perspicuity and eloquence. In this paper, evidently drawn up by the hand of a master,* the proceedings of the servile faction, and general state of the nation, were detailed in language, at once pathetic and argumentative. The views of the patriots being set forth, a retrospect is taken of what the Cortes had done, and of the still greater improvements anti-

* Porlier is said to have been assisted in preparing these spirited and well written documents, by an auditor of military account named Santario, a disciple of Jovellanos, who had been persecuted and thrown into prison at Corunna, after the return of Ferdinand.

icipated from the king's return. These are contrasted with the system of tyranny which succeeded, and the persons who surrounded Ferdinand described in their true colours. The acquiescence of the monarch is attributed to the habitual influence exercised over him from infancy. It was owing to his listening to the counsellors of former days that the Cortes were destroyed ; hence the renewal of public abuses, persecution of the patriots, disorder of the finances, and consequent misery of the army. Hence too, the venality of government, as shewn in the sale of places, bribery and corruption of its members, also the degradation of Spain, which instead of being respected, was despised and contemned by all Europe. Yet, had these evils been produced by men, who but six years before deserted their master and betrayed their country ! The arrest, trials and condemnation of the members of Cortes, are characterised as proofs of unexampled cruelty and injustice, a proper tribute is then paid to the purity of their intentions and irreproachable conduct as legislators. After alluding to the numerous benefits they had conferred on Spain, even during a period of war, an affecting contrast is drawn between the late and present state of the kingdom. Notwithstanding a year of peace, says this important document, our finances are more embarrassed than ever, and the public credit extinct ; while the brave defenders of their country are left naked, barefooted and unpaid. As to the la-

bourer, he is loaded with his former imposts; the artisan impeded by new obstacles, and commercial men paralysed. Our colonies more irritated than before, their deputies seized, and promises made to them broken. On one side prisons, and on the other vengeance. The manifesto closes with an appeal to the nations of Europe, whose governments had not only recognized the legitimacy of the Regency and Cortes during the war, but entered into solemn treaties with the former, and otherwise courted the alliance of Spain. England, Russia, Sweden and Prussia are more particularly mentioned. Alexander is called magnanimous, and England, rich and happy by its constitution, is represented as having witnessed with horror the destruction of the Cortes and violence used towards its members. Under different circumstances this appeal to the people of England would not have been made in vain: as it was, every generous mind glowed with sympathy, and prayers were offered up for the success of Porlier; and but for the iniquitous intrigues which impeded his progress so soon, the circulation of a paper like the foregoing, could not fail to have produced a powerful effect on the whole nation.

After collecting all the troops in the principal square, and proclaiming the constitution of 1812, the whole, headed by the General, and preceded by bands of music, playing patriotic hymns, marched round Corunna, amidst cries of *Viva el Rey por la Constitucion!* and the liveliest demon-

strations of joy on the part of the inhabitants, who fully participated in the feelings of the soldiery. The evening of the 19th closed with serenades, and a brilliant illumination.

While the garrison of Ferral, about fifteen hundred in number, were on their march towards Corunna, and another detachment had set out from Vigo to join the patriot standard, Porlier continued with unceasing activity to prepare for ulterior operations. Letters were addressed to the Municipality and religious communities, stating what had occurred, explaining the motives for his conduct, and inviting them to concur in his views for the good of their common country. The replies were such as might be expected from persons whose existence depended on the continuance of tyranny and oppression: they excused themselves on pleas which are never wanting to men, threatened with the loss of their pensions or places. But as the General knew the disposition of the parties, he felt the less disappointment at their refusal, nor did it affect him in the least: on the contrary, every additional impediment only served to increase the confidence of Porlier, who continued to display a presence of mind, knowledge and activity, fully equal to the arduous task he had undertaken.

The remainder of the General's arrangements for securing the constitutional system, by restoring the municipality and other authorities displaced in 1814, being completed, a detachment of eight

hundred men were selected to march towards Santiago, where the troops only awaited the appearance of Porlier to declare themselves.* The command of this column was given to Colonel Arechabala, who set out from Corunna on the night of the 21st, with orders to halt at the small village of Carral, a distance of six leagues, and which he reached early on the following day. Porlier arrived soon after, and when the troops had been sufficiently refreshed, he led them on to Ordenes, another village within two leagues of Santiago, to which place an officer had been despatched with copies of the proclamation and manifesto, also a letter addressed to Ortega, colonel of the provincial grenadiers forming the garrison. No answer being received, it was decided that the column should sleep at Ordenes, and continue its march the next morning.

In order to account for the silence and inactivity of Ortega, it should be observed, that from the first moment of the rising, the monks and clergy at Santiago left neither prayers, entreaties nor bribery untried to dissuade the officers and men of the grenadier battalion from espousing the sacrilegious cause of the rebels. Where the threat of excommunication and an assurance of eternal

* It was concerted that in the event of the troops at Santiago being sent against the patriotic column, they were to join the ranks of the latter, immediately on coming up with them.

torments in the world to come had not the desired effect, gold, a still more potent stimulus, was liberally applied; and funds which had been accumulated since the king's return, or only appropriated to the wants and luxuries of the priesthood, were now advanced for paying the troops; with so many weapons of intimidation and corruption, it cannot be matter of surprize that the patriotic intentions of the soldiery were turned aside. While Pesce, the governor, also an alien, was occupied in cutting ditches at the entrance of the city, and adopting other means of defence, consecrated emissaries were sent to tamper with the troops at Ordenes. In addition to the means so successfully employed at Santiago by these persons, they persuaded the non-commissioned officers and part of the men that Porlier really contemplated an attack on their fellow soldiers of the grenadier battalion. They could not have touched on a more vulnerable point; and there being no means of contradicting this absurd calumny, it spread with rapidity through the whole column, and thus led to their betraying the cause of freedom. The serjeants having assembled secretly about eight o'clock, one of them, named Chacon, expatiated on the enormity of drawing their swords against countrymen and friends; dwelling with particular emphasis on the horrors of civil war, and those other phantoms with which the priests had filled his imagination, he concluded by declaring that the only way to avoid the threatened dangers, was to arrest

the officers, and give them up to justice. So well had their spiritual advisers prepared the minds of these infatuated men, to violate the oaths and protestations of fidelity made only three days before, that the proposal of Chacon, monstrous as it was, met with little opposition, and after some farther deliberation, he was from his seniority appointed to direct the meditated treason. A watch word being fixed on, it was decided that a cordon of sentinels should be placed round the village to prevent escape. Matters were thus arranged by half past ten, when the serjeants sallied forth headed by Chacon, and rushing into the inn where Porlier and his companions were still at table, called upon them to surrender in the King's name. As the cry of *Viva el Rey, y a las Armes!* was heard outside some moments before the traitors entered, it gave several of the officers time to seize their swords and put themselves in an attitude of defence; a violent struggle ensued, during which a few pistol shots were exchanged, when the general perceiving that none of the soldiers appeared, it occurred to him that they were not privy to the design, he therefore leaped from a window calling upon those around to follow; but sentries had also been planted close to the house, so that either to rally the men or escape became impossible. There being no alternative, the patriot chief and his companions yielded to their fate: most of the serjeants having formed a guard to watch the prisoners during the night, they were handcuffed and

marched to the dungeons of the Inquisition at Santiago on the following day.

The astonishment of Porlier and his officers at this inexplicable and untoward event, could only be exceeded by the joy it created amongst the priesthood of all classes, and colours, at Santiago,* where the first ebullitions of joy and self-congratulation were followed by a solemn thanksgiving, and chaunting *Te Deum* in full choir, after which ceremony a sermon was preached on the inevitable damnation attendant on rebellion!

News like the above was not long in reaching Corunna, and though it produced a very different sensation there, thousands having expressed the sorrow and shame caused by such an unexampled piece of treachery. The troops left to occupy the

* Santiago is the Capital of Galicia, and has long been a grand focus of bigotry, superstition, and priestcraft. Besides the Inquisition and its train of attendants, there are not less than thirty convents here, though the population does not exceed twenty-five thousand souls. The tutelar saint, better known in England by the name of St. James of Compostela, has the reputation of gaining the battle of Clairgo, against the Moors, in the eighth century: he is also said to have occasionally appeared in the skies after his death, particularly whenever a victory was achieved over the Saracenic Invaders of Spain. Hence the popularity of his shrine, which has however greatly diminished of late years; but it is still one of the richest in the Peninsula; which sufficiently accounts for the immense number, of both sexes, who embrace the religious and monastic life at this place.

town. were insufficient to make a stand, if ever so well disposed. Previous, however, to the authorities being reinstated, Don Antonio Peon, a Captain of Infantry, forming part of the detachment, determined not to expose himself unnecessarily to the consequences of an arrest, prevailed on a considerable number to join him, and seizing a standard, the whole party marched out of Corunna to the sound of drums, just as the Captain-general and other functionaries were liberated from San Anton.

Such was the termination of an enterprise, to which its authors were driven by motives the most irresistible. It deserved a better fate; and if successful, would have saved years of anguish, slavery and suffering to a generous people. Had not Porlier partaken so much in the sanguine temperament of his countrymen, and confided less in the promises of support from persons surrounded by men bred in all the arts of hypocrisy and deception, he would not have advanced towards Santiago, but maintained his position at Corunna, thus affording sufficient time for the other provinces to rise, of which no doubt could be entertained had the patriots been assured of success in Galicia.

The failure of Porlier is not amongst the least instructive lessons to be gleaned from the history of the last six years; nor was it thrown away on Quiroga and his heroic companions. Taught wisdom by experience, they secured an impenetrable

asylum in La Isla, and their glorious efforts were crowned with success.

Conducted to Corunna in chains under a strong escort on the 25th, and shut up in the common receptacle for malefactors, no time was lost in commencing the trial of the patriot officers. Although every rule of justice required that a special commission should be named on this occasion, the persons who had been employed for the prosecution of the liberales received orders from St. Mara to prepare the act of accusation. An order to the same effect reached Corunna two days after from the court. This directed that Porlier, and those of superior rank who had acted with him, should be tried, and their sentence put into execution within the time prescribed by martial law. As to the subalterns and others, their trial was also to proceed, but the sentences were not to be carried into effect, until the royal pleasure was known.

With the exception of his proclamation, manifesto, and some letters intended for various public bodies and individuals, upon whose co-operation he calculated, no documents of any importance were found amongst the papers of Porlier.*

* Although so short a time at El Carral and Ordenes, a number of letters were despatched by the General from both the places in every direction, calling upon the authorities, in different Towns, to proclaim the constitution. Amongst the papers seized at Corunna, was found a note to his wife, dated at Ordenes just after his arrival, and of which the following is a translation.

Agreeable to the gothic mode of legal procedure in Spain, Hiremon, the Fiscal, prepared several interrogatories, which he read to the General in prison. The first of these, after recapitulating the treasonable acts of the prisoner, in raising the garrison of Corunna, and placing the authorities, under arrests, accused him of marching to Santiago at the head of an armed force, with intention to attack the troops stationed there. The conclusion of this interrogatory is no bad illustration of what an attorney-general of those days could say to prove his loyalty. It states, that, "if the culprit still retains a particle of gratitude for *the best of kings, Ferdinand VII.*, he will instantly disclose his plans and name his accomplices, so as that the innocent nation may escape the perilous consequences arising from his silence!"

To the above, Porlier replied, that so far from having conspired against the King, every possible respect was shewn for his sacred person, not only

" My dearest wife : you are I trust already at Corunna ; nor ought you to be absent from it for an instant. I have got thus far, and shall to-morrow present myself before Santiago, where I hope something will be done ; although there is not complete security, what I chiefly observe is the excellent disposition of the peasantry. I understand they are cutting ditches, and taking other steps to prevent our entrance into Santiago ; we shall soon see the result of these matters. But do not be apprehensive of danger, as I shall run no risk without great probability of success. Adieu my beloved ; write often, as I am most anxious to hear how you are."

in addressing the soldiery, and when referring to him in the proclamation, but by proclaiming his name throughout Corunna on the morning of the 19th. With respect to the conspiracy, he had taken no part in it, since an officer and guard were placed over him to watch his conduct. Entreated to assume the command, on reaching Corunna he found the garrison in a state of complete insurrection, so that all he did in such a crisis, was to prevent disorder and the effusion of blood; for which purpose, he cautioned the troops to maintain fidelity to the King, and observe the most exact discipline. As to the arrests, if not sanctioned by him, they would have been effected by the soldiers tumultuously. When arrested, the Fiscal was reminded of the respect shown to the authorities and humanity of their treatment. The assertion of his intention to attack the garrison at Santiago is positively denied; in proof of which, no order whatever to that effect had been given: on the contrary, every hostile appearance was avoided, even to there being no ammunition supplied. There was nothing, in fact, to induce a belief that such a measure ever entered his thoughts. With regard to those who were privy to, or concerned in, the rising, he expressed a hope that his Majesty would be pleased to appoint some person who could hear what he had to say on the subject generally. As the authorities by whom his trial was instituted were also in power when the events in question occurred, they could not

interfere without a violation of justice : being no less responsible than himself, if not much more so, from their having had the management and command of the military. It would therefore be impossible for Government to obtain a thorough knowledge of the business, if his request was refused. Finally, it was incompatible with every rule of law, to be at once prosecutor, culprit, accuser, and judge.

In reply to a subsequent interrogation, the general read an article from the military ordinances, which bore particularly on his case ; and expressly forbid a sentence being passed by those concerned in the charge advanced against any individual, and whose own conduct was thereby liable to be called in question.

Notwithstanding the formidable objections of Porlier, the Fiscal, who communicated them to the commission, was desired to proceed. Another of the prisoner's replies stated, that when invited by Castenera to accompany him to Corunna, all the officers of the Lugo regiment were assembled to receive him : on his appearance, they exclaimed with one voice, that such was the cruelty of their treatment and hardship of their condition, they found it impossible any longer to bear up against it, they had therefore resolved on executing the arrests, to which end, a general understanding had been established with the garrisons of Ferrol, Vigo and other places.

Don Jose Paredes having excused himself from

becoming counsel for Porlier, on the plea of his being a member of the commission, his refusal was admitted on the 29th, when the objections of the prisoner were also formally set aside, and a resolution made to conclude the trial without farther delay. The general was, however, allowed to select another counsel, and the Fiscal was sent to notify the indulgence. Porlier took this opportunity of stating that he was degraded before any judgment had been pronounced, alleging that though labouring under such ill health and extreme debility, he had been thrown into a dungeon hitherto reserved for assassins, and highway robbers; that he had been stripped half naked* and loaded with above fifty pounds weight of irons, a proof the Fiscal and commission had overlooked the fact of his holding the rank of a general officer. Were it not for these illegal aggravations, Porlier would have chosen Miramon to defend him, but as it was, he begged to name an old friend, Colonel Miranda; and ended the conversation by expressing a hope that the commission would allow him the rights and privileges accorded by the ordinances. Notwithstanding this unanswerable appeal, all he could obtain, was a truckle bedstead and straw mattress.

* According to one of the innumerable barbarisms of the old Spanish law, those accused of treason, murder &c. are obliged to take of their clothing from the waist downwards.

There being no probability of granting the general's request relative to the appointment of a person from the court to hear what he wished to communicate, he added the following particulars to his previous declarations on the 29th. To afford a clearer idea of the insurrection and its real authors, and at the same time justify my own conduct, it should be recollected that all the troops received pay on the 19th, without any funds having been drawn from the royal treasury for that purpose: hence it must follow, that Don Andres Rojo,* the person who issued it, knew by whom this money was advanced; and as these funds were provided before my arrival at Corunna, the parties who supplied them were doubtless the original promoters of the rising.—It is also notorious, that for some time before this event, the officers of the garrison at Ferrol openly refused to perform the duty there, in consequence of which a trial had been instituted. This circumstance furnishes a strong presumptive proof that they had an interest and were even concerned in the general wish of restoring the constitution.

The last declaration of Porlier was made on the

* Although there is no doubt but that a considerable part of the money thus provided, came from the patriotic fund collected amongst the members of the secret societies, Rojo's name deserves to be mentioned in the proud list of Spanish citizens who have sacrificed their all in support of liberty.

1st of October. Its chief object was to reiterate his former request, that some one in the confidence of his Majesty might be named to hear what he had to disclose for the general good of his country. But as the commission had not thought fit to consult the King, he was now prepared to impart his final wishes to Pesce, the governor of Santiago : this application being equally unsuccessful, a third was made with no better effect. The unwillingness manifested by the judges, at a time when such requests are scarcely ever denied, was attributed to a consciousness that Porlier had it fully in his power to compromise the principal authorities, if not themselves, as already intimated. One of the motives alleged by the officers and soldiers for throwing off the yoke, was the peculation and plunder of the funds destined by government for the support of the army. Those who knew the generous nature of Porlier could not suspect him of any disposition to injure even his enemies, and from some circumstances which transpired a few hours before his death, the communication he wanted to make only related to the perturbed state of the kingdom, extent of the association in favour of freedom, and consequent danger to the monarchy, if timely reform did not emanate from the proper source.

Although the sentence was drawn out on the night of the 30th, the commission did not assemble to examine the cause and hear the defence, before

the 2nd of October. The latter was extremely concise and altogether inadequate to the importance of the cause, or means of the counsel, who probably felt the inutility of a more elaborate appeal in favour of one whose destiny seemed to have been previously sealed. No attempt was made to exculpate the prisoner. After admitting that the circumstance of Porlier's being seduced to commit the alleged crime did not evade the law, Miranda grounded his prayer for mercy on the distinguished services of his client during the late war, and solicited that the sentence might not be put into execution before the pleasure of his Majesty was known ; above all he insisted on the necessity of allowing the general an opportunity of declaring those particulars which he considered as essential to the interests of the nation. The defence being concluded, it only remained to confirm and pronounce the judgment of the court. It was accordingly read, and merely stated that the charges of treason and rebellion having been fully proved, the prisoner was liable to the pains and penalties awarded in such cases ; he was therefore sentenced to be publicly degraded, and suffer death by hanging.

There being no appeal from this sentence, it was carried into effect on the following day at half-past eleven o'clock. The last and only act of indulgence solicited by the unfortunate general, was a remission of that part of the judgment

which related to his being degraded, so that the victim was suffered to ascend the scaffold in plain clothes.

The firmness and dignity shewn by Porlier, from the moment of his arrest to the hour of execution, cannot be too much admired, particularly when we reflect on the excessive fatigue and anxiety attendant on his exertions between the 18th and 22nd, not to mention the dissipated state of his health previous to the rising. His declarations were delivered with the utmost perspicuity and calmness. That his characteristic strength of mind did not fail him even to the last, is proved by a circumstance which took place the day before his execution. When the Fiscal came to that part of the sentence where the word traitor occurred, the countenance of Porlier became suddenly flushed, and darting a look of fire at Miramon, he exclaimed: "*Traidor! diga usted, el mas fiel servidor de la patria!*"*

Though the condemned hero had sufficient fortitude to spare his wife, and himself, the agonizing pangs of a final separation, he wrote to her frequently during the trial, and twice on the day before his execution. These letters were such as might be expected from one who felt much more regret on account of a woman, to whom he was tenderly attached, than for his own fate. He

* Traitor! rather say the most faithful servant of his country!

called upon her to recollect how often his life had been already exposed in the service of his country, and that it was now about to be sacrificed in the same cause. Alluding to the mode of his death, he observed, that, however terrific to a guilty mind, it was glorious to him, since he suffered for the sake of Spain! Conducted to the chapel in which it is customary for those condemned for death to pass the three days grace allowed, previous to their execution, at seven o'clock on the evening of the 2nd, Porlier dictated his will to a notary, who attended for this purpose, and gave dying injunctions with as much composure, as if they had related to the most ordinary concerns of life. Having bequeathed whatever he had to leave to his wife, Dona Josefa Queipo de Llano, daughter of the house of Toreno, and named several individuals to whom he was desirous of being affectionately remembered, he addressed the notary in the following words: "I also enjoin, that, when circumstances permit, my ashes may be removed from the spot they are laid when I am dead, to one more agreeable to my wife, and being deposited in a plain cenotaph, she will cause the following inscription to be engraved on it, together with my age and day of my death. *"Within are contained the remains of JUAN DIAZ PORLIER, formerly a general in the armies of Spain. He was always successful in whatever he undertook against the ex-*

ternal enemies of his country, and died a victim to civil dissensions :--men alive to glory ! respect the ashes of an unfortunate patriot !" This act performed, he signed with an untrembling hand, and directed that the attested copy, and the key of the coffin containing his body, should be presented to his wife as soon after the fatal hour as her frame of mind would bear such an offering.

The remainder of the night was passed in meditation and prayer : alike a stranger to that bigotry and superstition, which has been at once the curse and scourge of Spain, the prayers of Porlier were those of a man who had conformed to the tenets of Christianity rather by acts of virtue and benevolence than exploded rites and idle ceremonies ; endowed with the most estimable qualities of the head and heart, this martyr to liberty could look back on his past life with complacency and towards the future with confidence. A friend of mine who resided at Corunna and saw the hero suffer, describes the day of his execution as one of general and heartfelt sorrow. There was something peculiarly affecting in the last scene of this mournful drama. Impatient to reach the place of execution, Porlier walked much quicker than is usual on such solemn occasions, and was observed to mount the scaffolding erected under the gallows with great alacrity ; when the final prayer ended, and just before the rope was affixed round his neck, he drew a white handkerchief from his breast, and holding it up to his face as if to absorb

a last tear, he consigned it to the priest, with a request that it might be given to his widow!

A part of the troops whom he had but a few days before led under the banner of freedom, were condemned to attend the execution, and thus experienced the double mortification of witnessing the effects of their treason, and an end to all present hope of liberty or improvement.

All the former actions of Porlier's life corresponded exactly with the last days of his earthly career. Though descended from an ancient family, of which a branch had for a long period settled in the Canaries, he was born at Carthagena in South America, where his father held a high public situation. Brought up under the auspices of his uncle, Antonio Porlier, Marquis de Baxemar, and Minister of Justice under Charles IV., he served as a midshipman in the battle of Trafalgar. When, however, the cry of independence spread through the Peninsula in 1808, our hero was amongst the first to obey the call of his country; and having joined a regiment stationed at Valencia, his gallantry and enterprising spirit were first displayed in the vicinity of that city: an affair in which he defeated a body of the enemy's troops, with a very inferior force, took many prisoners and led them in triumph to the Junta of Asturias, obtained for him the rank of Colonel. Soon after this event, he formed a Guerilla corps, of which he became the leader, and distinguished himself in a series of brilliant actions. It was during

Porlier's exploits in Asturias, that he acquired the title of *El Marquesito*, or little marquis, a surname by which he continued to be known ever after. His retreat from Santender, closely pursued by a corps four times more numerous than his own, excited great admiration, and placed the military reputation of Porlier on a level with that of his most popular competitors. So highly were his merits and services appreciated by the Regency, that he was appointed Captain-general of Asturias, where he remained until the return of Ferdinand.

With respect to the alleged crime for which Porlier was cut off in the prime of life, if the motives that impelled him to obey the impulse of patriotism, and call of his suffering countrymen, are entitled to praise, the moderation with which he conducted the enterprise is no less worthy of applause. Notwithstanding those innumerable causes of irritation and revenge, which had been operating on the officers and soldiery ever since the return of Ferdinand, not a single excess was committed from the beginning of the insurrection till its termination, as truly stated in the general's declaration; the arrest of the authorities only had the effect of preserving them from those insults which their administration had been but too well calculated to excite. So anxious was Porlier that the part taken in the enterprise by his companions should be spontaneous, that in the course of the deliberations which preceded the defection at Ordenes, he plainly intimated that those who

did not feel conscious they were acting rightly for the good of their country, had only to say so, and they should be at liberty to depart.

It is no trifling addition to the merits of this lamented chief, to say that history scarcely furnishes an instance of forbearance and moderation equal to that displayed throughout this insurrection. The effects of such conduct has been most salutary in all the subsequent efforts of the patriots, and it will not be lost on posterity.

Although low in stature, Porlier was extremely well made, had fine dark eyes and a most expressive countenance; he gave many proofs of great military talents, and his activity in the field was unequalled. He was remarkable for the vivacity of his manners, frankness* and generosity. With him, patriotism was not an empty sound or sterile profession; as a proof of which, nearly the whole of his limited fortune had been devoted to the relief of his persecuted and suffering countrymen,

* Porlier is said to have, on some occasions, carried this rare virtue rather too far. The Marchioness de Matarosa, mother to his wife, a proud and haughty woman, who, like many of the Spanish aristocracy saw no merit when unconnected with title-deeds and nobility, was very anxious to know what were his pretensions to the honour of an alliance with her family. "Tell the Marchioness," said Porlier to the person employed to perform the office of negotiating this important point, "that I wish to be informed whether her daughter is to be married to me or my parchments, if to the latter, they may both go to the deuce, for he sooner I quit them the better."

whether they languished in the prisons of Spain, or sought refuge abroad. One of the charges that led to his condemnation in 1814, was founded on the interception of a letter, in which he directed a merchant of Bilboa to supply the pecuniary wants of an exiled patriot who was expected there from France. But Porlier's liberality was not confined to Spaniards; it extended to the unfortunate of every country; and more than one Englishman was indebted to him for assistance in the hour of need. He was, in fact, warmly attached to us as a nation, so that the sympathy excited by his melancholy fate was doubly merited. At Corunna, the feelings of the English residents were still more unequivocally evinced, the whole number having put on deep mourning an hour after his execution.

I have, in a former letter, had occasion to mention that the Bishop of Orense made an eloquent appeal to Ferdinand in favour of Porlier's compansions; however creditable this intercession may have been to the venerable prelate, it is supposed that the lenity shown towards the offenders arose much more from fear than humanity. Aided by the kindness of their English friends, several of the officers were enabled to embark for the United Kingdom. Where the conduct of others tends to make us so unpopular abroad, it is extremely gratifying to be able to bring forward instances of this kind, which serve, in no inconsiderable degree, to retrieve the national character,

and keep it from sinking altogether in the eyes of the foreign nations.

The spirit of persecution which brought him to a scaffold, did not end with the hero's death. Excluded from the rites of christian sepulture, his body was buried in an obscure corner of the public cemetery.

The notary who drew up the will became an object of persecution, and after a process which continued six months, sentence passed against him, annulling the instrument, which was represented as subversive and contrary to the rights of the throne! In consideration, however, of the advanced age and character of the culprit, he was only admonished, on pain of incurring the utmost rigour of the laws, in case of a second offence.

Porlier was affectionately attached to his wife; she was not less so to the best of husbands. I will not attempt to describe the harrowed feelings of a young desolated woman, bereft of her natural protector, in the flower of life, while all the fervid sympathies of our nature are yet in full activity, and we still look forward with joy and hope to years of untasted felicity. As if, however, it was not enough to exercise every species of indignity towards her husband, the forlorn situation of Madame Porlier was greatly embittered by the cruel means adopted with regard to herself. After confiscating the whole of the general's property, she was placed in a convent at

Betanzos, and remained there in a state of indirect imprisonment till the re-establishment of freedom. Soon after this event Madame Porlier was invited to abandon the cloister, and reside at Corunna, where she continues to receive all those attentions, no less due to her misfortunes than the eminent services of her late husband.

The final bequests of Porlier were fulfilled towards the end of August. A cenotaph being prepared, all the authorities of Corunna, civil and military, repaired to the spot where his remains had been laid; disinterred and placed in their new receptacle, the gallant Espinosa, who has been so highly distinguished during the recent events in Galicia, pronounced an eloquent and energetic panegyric on the virtues and talents of the fallen hero: pointing him out as a fit model for those who preferred the liberty of their country to tyranny and oppression. From this the procession proceeded to the principal church, followed by the whole population; here the service closed with a requiem composed for the occasion, after which the cavalcade, preceded by the cenotaph, borne on a funeral car, was conducted in mournful triumph through all the streets in which the hero had proclaimed the constitution five years before. On reaching that part of the Campo Santo, on which a more conspicuous spot was chosen for depositing the urn, a second service and funeral oration was delivered

by the officiating chaplain of the garrison, after which the ceremony ended.*

However gratifying this testimony to departed worth may have been to the friends and admirers of the patriot chief, who witnessed the scene and participated in the painful recollections and heartfelt sorrow it excited for his untimely fate, I am led to believe it was only a prelude to still higher honours, which the national congress intends to confer on those who, like the hero of Corunna, were sacrificed on the altar of their country's freedom. Yes! the statue of JUAN DIAZ PORLIER deserves a pre-eminent niche in the projected pantheon; nor can Spain too highly prize or dearly cherish the memory of a man, who, though branded with the epithet of traitor and rebel by her oppressors, yet knew how to brave an ignominious death with composure, rather than quietly live to see his fellow-citizens wear the chains of slavery.

* That two names so dear to their countrymen should be still further perpetuated, the principal square and public walk of Corunna have been named after Porlier and Acevedo, whose fate bears a sad analogy to that of his heroic predecessor.

LETTER IX.

Alarm created at Court by Porlier's Insurrection.—Errors of the Patriots and Cause of their Failure; their Effects on the interest of Liberty.—Measures of Ferdinand and his Ministers.—Exile of Ballesteros and El Empecinado.—Motives for dismissing Escoiquiz, de Castro and their Friends.—Treatment of British Residents.—Disposition of the Garrisons of Cadiz and Oviedo.—Abisbal's Order of the Day.—Projected rising in Granada, detected by the Bishop and Priesthood: its Authors punished.—Attempt of Richart; his Trial and Execution.—Project of Don Luis Lacy, denounced when on the point of being carried into effect: Attempt of the General and his Friends to escape.—General Milano and others succeed; Lacy is taken; he is tried and condemned at Barcelona: conveyed to Majorca and shot.—Biographical Sketch of the Patriot Chief, and Honours paid to his Memory.

Madrid, September, 1820.

THE consternation of Ferdinand and his ministers, on hearing of the events at Coruña, and its neighbourhood, was such as might well be expected on the part of men who felt that their own cruelty and oppression had alone caused the revolt; while, however, the serviles of every class were trembling with guilty fear, lest the hour of retribution had really arrived, a far different sensation was created in other places, especially at Cadiz, Barcelona, Valencia and Zaragoza, where every heart beat high with hopes of speedy emancipation; meetings were even held, to concert means for obeying the call of Porlier, and had the banner of freedom only waved a few days longer in Galicia, his heroic example would have been followed throughout the Peninsula.

From the facts already adduced, relative to the

sufferings of the people and persecution of the patriots, I need scarcely add, that both were most anxious to throw off the yoke; but, on the present occasion, as in former instances, there was, unhappily, a want of that understanding, not only with regard to their means, but as to the precise period of rising, which would have afforded the best chance of success, by rendering the movement simultaneous at different points. This capital error, common to the friends of liberty in all ages and countries, has been peculiarly fatal to Spain. Another impressive lesson was also taught by the failure of Porlier; it furnished an additional proof, that isolated attempts in favour of freedom generally tend to strengthen the hands of despotism. No sooner, in fact, had the panic passed away, than the reign of terror, suspended for a short interval when the first messenger arrived here, was renewed with more violence than ever, as if Ferdinand and his advisers were ashamed of being detected in governing with justice and moderation! It has been truly observed, in alluding to the insurrection, that had not the King been totally inaccessible to the dictates of reason, and his ministers the most incorrigible of mankind, they must have profited by such a warning. Instead of retracting their steps or changing the existing system, one of the first measures resorted to, after the patriot general's execution, was the dismissal of the celebrated Ballesteros, a Minister of War, and his exile to the Alhambra of Granada. El Empeci-

nado, though living in the greatest retirement since his abrupt departure from this, a year before, was also sent to the castle of Monzon in Arragon. These acts of severity were also followed up by others, inflicted on all those who happened to excite the suspicion of the court, or had been previously marked out for punishment. As to the disgrace of Ostolaza, De Castro, Escoiquiz, and their immediate dependents, it evidently arose rather from a desire to get rid of them, than any disapprobation of their conduct while in power, since those who succeeded them were no less hateful to the nation; the truth is, a plausible pretext had been wanted to make these persons feel, in their turn, the almost certain effects of serving the cause of tyranny, and, in conformity to the well known maxim of legitimacy, the subject-many were flattered with a change of rulers, which, in reality, rendered their condition worse, by making oppression somewhat more tolerable.

Bésides the rigorous treatment of those suspected of being favourable to the design of Porlier, the generous proceedings of our countrymen resident at Corunna exposed them to the payment of a forced loan, levied in consequence of their aiding the escape of Porlier's followers. Lest these precautions, suggested no less by pusillanimity than revenge, should be insufficient to awe the people, fresh instructions, addressed to the Captains-General and military commissions, enjoined still greater severity and vigilance in pursuing the secret societies.

The feeling of indignation excited by the fate of Pórtier was so strong, that the garrisons of Cadiz and Oviedo manifested a determination to avenge his death, and they would have most probably realized the threat, were it not that the same machinations which frustrated the hopes of the patriots at Corunna operated with equal effect in other places. Abisbal, who commanded at Cadiz, issued a pompous order of the day, in which he reminded the soldiers of their allegiance, eulogized Ferdinand, and ended by menacing those who transgressed the Ordinances, with all the rigours of the law.

The failure in Galicia was no where more deeply regretted than at Granada; here, the patriots took immediate steps to prevent the recurrence of a similar disaster; a new insurrection was organized upon principles which were much more likely to insure a prosperous issue. Count Montijo,* the Captain-general, to whose zeal and patriotism the secret associations were chiefly due, directed the intended rising, which was to take place on a fixed day and hour, in all the garrisons

* The efforts of Count Montijo in organizing the secret societies, and propagating the above plan, sufficiently atone for the mistaken views entertained by him on the King's return. Although he was then amongst the number of those who, in appearance at least, warmly espoused the interests of the faction, his subsequent conduct requires that a veil should be drawn over opinions, which according to some, were assumed for the purpose of getting into power, and be thus placed in a situation to promote the cause of freedom.

of the Peninsula. This plan, from which the most auspicious consequences were anticipated, was nearly matured, when the never-failing enemies of freedom, headed by the Archbishop, discovered the whole scheme, and denounced its authors to government. An extensive seizure of papers, and numerous arrests followed this new triumph of the clergy: additional measures of coercion were adopted with regard to secret societies, and the aid of the holy office being required, the Grand Inquisitor readily acquiesced in the wishes of the Court, so that this dreadful tribunal henceforth became, exclusively, an engine of political persecution.

While such strenuous efforts were making to keep down the spirit of revolt in the provinces, a conspiracy of less magnitude than that of Corunna, but which might have led to important results, was detected under the very eyes of the Court. Its leader, Don Vicente Richart, a lawyer and literary character, who had served in a Guerilla corps, succeeded in collecting several individuals and was making proselytes amongst the soldiery. Besides many persons of inferior note, the names of two general officers, O'Donoju* and Renovalles,

* There is little doubt but that both O'Donoju and Renovalles were remotely concerned in Richart's affair; but the proofs of their participation were too vague to admit of a sentence against either. The former from having great interest at court, suffered no ill effects from the change. As to Renovalles, after several fruitless attempts to promote a rising in favour of the constitution, he escaped to London, where his services were offered to the Venezuelan Government.

appear to have been connected with the plot, of which the precise object was not clearly ascertained; some saying that it had the assassination of Ferdinand in view; while others, particularly Richart himself, maintained that he merely intended to watch a favourable opportunity, when the King left the palace to surround his carriage, and prevail on him to restore the constitution. Funds to an inconsiderable amount had been furnished, and some progress made towards carrying the design into effect, when one of the party, supposed to have been bribed by the ministers, betrayed his companions on condition of being pardoned. The talents and resolution displayed by Richart before the judges only served to aggravate his alleged crime. Indifferent to the fate which awaited him, the chief care of the accused was to make his example act as a stimulus to others. Richart defended his conduct on the broad principle of public utility, which, according to his arguments, rendered it a sacred duty on the part of all those forming the social body, to aid in rescuing their fellow men from slavery; and, as the system of tyranny, established after Ferdinand's return, had become intolerable, he considered himself bound by every tie, moral and religious, to assist in effecting the regeneration of Spain. The necessity of performing this duty was the more deeply impressed on his mind, since he felt assured that it might be accomplished without having recourse to any greater act of violence than the one proposed. The prisoner alluded

to his past services, his patriotic publications and private life, to prove that neither motives of interest nor ambition had influenced his determination: when led to the scaffold, the demeanour of Richart was such as became a votary of freedom; firm and resigned, he died bravely, and instead of indulging in the voice of complaint, his last words are said to have been a fervent ejaculation for the deliverance of his country. Though it is not very probable that the contemporaries of Richart will decide how far the infliction of death is justified in cases wherein the sufferers are driven to rebellion by the excesses of government, the time must come, when this important question will be argued more dispassionately than it can amidst the jarring interests and despotic doctrines which now prevail; but, even in the present day, it is difficult to withhold our sympathy and applause from those, who, like the subject of these cursory remarks, seem to consider life itself a worthless gift, when put in competition with public liberty. Only one of the conspirators suffered with their leader, the rest, about twelve in number, were sentenced to fine, exile and imprisonment.

Had it not been for that fatality which seemed to attend every new attempt of the patriots to regain their freedom, it would be impossible to name one amongst them, who, from his talents or popularity, had a better chance of success, than Don Luis Lacy. This celebrated chief, to whose gallantry and military skill Catalonia was indebted for its liberation from the French army

in 1812, had excited the jealousy of the servile faction on Ferdinand's return, and was even doomed to a species of exile* in the very province which had witnessed his most brilliant triumphs. Having, in the spring of 1817, visited Caldetes, a village on the sea coast near Barcelona, for the purpose of drinking its mineral waters, Lacy there met some old friends and kindred minds, with whom it was natural to deplore the wretched fate of their common country, and not less so to confer on those means by which its liberties might be restored.

Although the result of former efforts in favour of freedom were sufficient to deter ordinary men from exposing themselves to the fate of Porlier and Richart, it seemed only to stimulate the patriots of Spain. In the present case, a number of circumstances concurred to render it probable that a well-combined plan would be attended with success. Lacy had long been regarded as one of the best officers in the Peninsula; he had won the affections of the army, and was, above all, the staunch and enlightened advocate of

* Whenever the political opinion of any officer did not accord with those of the court, or his popularity prevented an open persecution, it was usual for the Minister at War to assign a fortress for his residence, and here he remained under the inspection of the governor, until the suspicions which led to his exile were removed. Lacy was ordered to Catalonia, on his removal from the Captain-Generalship of Galicia, and continued to reside there with little intermission, till the period of his visit to Caldetes.

liberty. General Milans, Lacy's companion during several campaigns, together with his brother Don Rafael, a retired colonel of cavalry, were amongst the friends he found at Caldetes: both these meritorious characters placed themselves at his entire disposal; while Don Jose Quer, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Tarragona regiment, stationed at Arens del Mar, a small seaport in the vicinity, undertook to ensure the co-operation of that corps. Though the continued enormities of government were such as to justify a belief on the part of Lacy and his coadjutors, that even a partial movement would be followed by the whole army, it was not until he had communicated with the different garrisons, and received positive assurances of support from all those in Catalonia, that he consented once more to raise the standard of independence. Matters being thus arranged, the 5th of April was named for carrying the project into execution; considering the state of public opinion, and the abilities of those engaged in the enterprise, sanguine hopes were indulged that fortune would be more propitious than heretofore: these hopes, however, were cruelly disappointed; for when on the point of being realized, two Subalterns, named Appentel and Nandin, formed the design of betraying the patriots: this act was rendered the more atrocious, from the traitors having been indebted to the bounty and protection of Lacy, while Captain-general; a fact which alone had induced Quer to employ

them as his chief agents in gaining over the regiment. When informed of the meditated rising, the first step of Lassala, the colonel, was to hasten to the officers' quarters, and ask them whether they were prepared to shed their blood in defence of the King? On being answered in the affirmative, the battalion was immediately assembled on the Parade, where, the servile chief contrived by flattery and promises to dissuade the men from following two companies, which had already marched under Quer and his friend, Don Antonio Oliver, to join the leaders at Caldetes. As it was too late to bring these back, the utmost Lassala could do, was to despatch emissaries after them to induce their return by the assurance of a liberal reward, and such other offers as were most likely to detach them from Lacy. The remainder of the corps was then conducted to an adjacent height, there to await events, and be removed from the probable consequences of having their loyalty shaken by the inhabitants, who appeared extremely anxious to second the views of Lacy and his friends.

On reaching Caldetes, the two companies were warmly greeted, and after a short harangue from the General, who received them in full uniform, the whole party repaired to the country house of Don Rafael Milans, close to the village, where they remained in a state of great perplexity till day-light, when they were joined by some officers from Barcelona and Mataro, who fully confirmed

their fears that the plan had been discovered. There being no time to lose, they held a consultation, in which it was determined not to relinquish the enterprize while a single soldier remained: as the men seemed disposed to act, it was decided that they should proceed towards Mataro, and if not seconded by the garrisons or peasantry on their march, they could at least gain the frontiers and pass into France.

Creditable as the above resolution was to the patriots, the commencement was too disheartening to afford any hopes of success: they had accordingly been only a few hours on the road, before the agents employed by Lassala prevailed on the soldiers suddenly to turn round, and take the direction of Arens del Mar, leaving Lacy and his companions to their fate. It was in vain that Milans and the other officers expostulated with them on this unexpected defection; their fears had been so worked upon by Cuero, the principal emissary, that neither entreaties nor remonstrances had any effect: it therefore only remained for the leaders to provide for their own safety in the best manner they could.

A general had been sent in the meantime from Barcelona by Castaños, to co-operate with Lassala in quelling the insurrection, although the former is said to have given secret directions, that no obstacle should be opposed to the escape of Lacy; this did not prevent measures from being taken to arrest both the patriot general and his followers.

Various parties were detached in pursuit of the fugitives, who proceeded by different roads; some directing their steps towards the French frontier, while others endeavoured to reach the coast. Quer and Oliver owed their escape to the forbearance of an officer named Cabrera, who, in the true spirit of patriotism and humanity, kept aloof till assured of their safety; when he entered the house in which they had slept the preceding night, and seizing their swords and uniforms, sent these to Lassala as proofs of his vigilance. The latter having gone in person to secure Milans, could find only his wife and daughter, who were despatched under an escort, as hostages to Barcelona, while the General himself, accompanied by two infant sons, whom he was determined not to leave behind, after a series of adventures, which would form no bad episode to a romance or melo-drama, reached the small fishing town of Badalona and embarked for Gibraltar, whence he sailed to Buenos Ayres, there to serve the cause of South-American independence, until happier circumstances should enable him to re-visit his native country.*

* Although Milans was thus unable to share the glory of personally aiding the heroes of San Fernando, he had the consolation of being eminently useful to the cause of freedom in the New World, and was received with acclamation on his return to Barcelona, a few weeks ago, when the event was celebrated by rejoicings and addresses of congratulation from the municipality