

A much severer fate attended Lacy, and those who had to share his fortunes. In consequence of an order issued by the governor of Mataro, calling upon the peasantry on pain of death to assist in the pursuit, the fugitives were forced to take refuge in a farm-house, whose proprietor was base enough to betray them soon after their departure for the frontiers. Intimidated by the above peremptory mandate, and strictly enjoined to obey it by their spiritual advisers, who had, as usual, made common cause with the servile leaders, a large party came up with Lacy and his friends, and threatened to fire on them if they did not surrender. On hearing this unexpected summons from those who had been till then regarded as friends, the general came forward, and with great calmness replied, that he was ready to do so, but would not deliver his sword, or be taken alive except by a military officer. The dignified manner in which Lacy expressed himself, had such an effect on the infatuated peasants that many of them instantly retired; a few, however, calculating on the reward which had been offered for his apprehension, persisted in their demand and a violent altercation ensued: this was proceeding to extremities, when an officer and file of soldiers appeared, and put an

and other public bodies. To increase the joy of this excellent officer, he found Madame Milans and her children only waiting his arrival to complete their own happiness.

end to the dispute; on Lacy's presenting his sword, the former refused to accept it, observing in a respectful tone, "the weapon cannot be in better hands, General; your Excellency must therefore excuse me from taking it." Having at length surmounted his scruples, the prisoner was conducted to Blanes, and thence escorted to the Citadel of Barcelona.

Tried by the commission for the persecution of the patriots, the General was condemned in the same illegal way as Porlier, and might have been executed with as little ceremony, were it not for his popularity, and consequently a fear, lest the garrison would have interfered to prevent the execution of the sentence. Of all those acts which have rendered the reign of terror memorable, the subterfuge adopted for the purpose of sacrificing Lacy is that the most worthy of execration. It was while one universal cry for mercy ascended the throne of Ferdinand, in behalf of this unfortunate chief, that the ministers ordered him to be conveyed to Majorca, under pretence of commuting his sentence into imprisonment. Reaching that island on the 30th June, he was shut up in the castle of Bellver, and had been only four days in confinement, before Algarre, the Judge-advocate, who officiated at his trial, presented himself to the unsuspecting victim, read his sentence, and notified that it would be carried into execution at five o'clock on the following morning! It was no wonder if this abrupt announcement of his last hour,

when he might perhaps be indulging the fond hope of once more embracing his wife and child, or that he might yet live to see Spain free, occasioned a severe shock : the hero, however, is said to have speedily recovered from the first impulse of horror, so natural at such a moment, and tranquilly observed, " I was not prepared to hear this sentence, but since it must be so, I will be ready." Thus betrayed, and condemned to suffer at a distance from his relatives and friends, the death of Lacy was embittered a thousand-fold ; yet do all the details which have transpired relative to this sad event, concur in proving that it exhibited a rare example of unaffected courage and manly fortitude.

The few hours of preparation afforded to Lacy were occupied in drawing out a will in favour of his wife, and giving directions relative to the education of their only child, who was recommended to the protection of that country which his parent had so faithfully served. A slave to his professional duties, and incessantly called upon to make pecuniary sacrifices in support of freedom, the General had scarcely any property to bequeath.

Prompted by more zeal than prudence, the friends of Lacy have recently taken great pains to prove that he died a staunch votary to the catholic faith, conforming to all its ceremonies. A number of depositions, describing those circumstances which took place just before his death, have been circulated, to confirm these unimportant assertions. It would, per-

haps, be more flattering to his memory, had the original reports remained uncontradicted. Like Porlier, the hero of Catalonia also attached more importance to the practice of virtue than to the forms of religious worship, so that when surrounded by the band of priests that usually flock to the aid of the condemned, in Spain, as well to discover their secrets as to prepare them for Paradise, Lacy is said to have betrayed some doubts as to their means of consoling his wounded spirit, smarting as it was under the impressions created by the conduct of his persecutors. Minutely versed in the history of his country, the general could not forget that nearly all its misfortunes had originated in superstition or fanaticism; and when he recollected that those who now came to preach peace and good will belonged to a class which had invariably opposed the progress of liberty, how could the dying hero possibly reconcile the mild and amiable doctrines of Christ with that misplaced devotion, which could as readily denounce a patriot to power as it offered absolution to the most degraded criminal? There is in fact every reason to believe that, although Lacy was incapable of giving offence to his spiritual guides, who were doubtless honorable exceptions to the mass, by an open expression of his sentiments, he, at least convinced them, that his hopes in futurity were derived from a much more exalted source than the elevated cross and consecrated wafer. In other respects, few could have less need of ex-

ternal consolation than one whose whole life had been marked by a scrupulous regard for the obligations of morality and virtue; while his magnanimity and personal bravery in an hundred combats, bore testimony to the indifference with which he could meet the final hour.

The only advantage enjoyed by the Catalonian chief over his illustrious rival in the lists of fame, was that of being shot, instead of suffering the more ignoble fate of Porlier. Here is good ground for inferring that his enemies thought even this indulgence a great favour; though it is clearly proved they dreaded the consequence of a public execution. Conducted to a ditch of the castle, at five in the morning, accompanied by a priest, and a file of soldiers destined to terminate his existence, the death of Lacy presents more the character of a midnight murder than a judicial decree carried into effect for the purpose of a salutary example, the object of all punishments under a government of law and justice.

The biography of Lacy is more varied than that of his heroic predecessor, while it possesses somewhat stronger claims to the sympathy of Englishmen. Descended from Heldebert de Lacy, who accompanied William I. to our shores, and was created Count of Lincoln after the conquest, the branch from which the hero of Catalonia sprang, passed over to Ireland in the reign of Henry II. and continued there as Counts of

Ulster above two centuries : stripped of their fortune by the rapacity of succeeding Viceroy's, and ultimately persecuted for their religious opinions, four brothers, of whom Lacy's father was one, sought refuge from persecution and political disabilities in Spain about the middle of the last century : like most of the Irish outcasts, they were received with open arms here. Patrick de Lacy, had obtained a commission in the regiment of Ultonia, exclusively destined for the reception of his countrymen, and died at the camp before Gibraltar, in 1780, leaving a widow and two children, one of whom died while yet an infant. Luis the eldest, who was born in 1775, entered the army at the early age of fourteen, and served with distinction during the fruitless contest between this country and the French Republic in 1795 : promoted to the rank of captain not long after, he proceeded to the Canaries, where he soon became an object of jealousy, owing to the freedom of his opinions, relative to the system pursued by the Prince of Peace. Placed on a scanty half-pay, unwilling to witness abuses which he had no means of correcting, and animated with an ardent thirst to acquire knowledge, Lacy left Cadiz in 1802, travelled to Barcelona on foot, passed some days in the society of his old companions, who happened to be quartered there, and having procured testimonials of character from the colonel, prosecuted his way almost penniless through France to Bologne, where Napoleon

was organizing the army of England. Having tendered his services, Lacy was first accepted as a private in a regiment of infantry; he soon attracted the notice of his Colonel, who advanced him to the rank of serjeant: when, however, his story came to the ears of the emperor, he was immediately presented with a captain's commission in the Irish brigade, then forming at Morlaix, under the auspices of Arthur O'Connor.

It was during his stay in Brittany, that Lacy married Mademoiselle de Guerneur of Quimper, (his surviving widow,) who accompanied her husband to the Netherlands, when the brigade formed part of the force sent to repel our ill-fated and worse combined expedition to Walcheren. This amiable woman is now at Madrid, and occupied in superintending the education of her child, in 1813, who bids fair to emulate the virtues of his lamented father.

Appointed to command the regiment in 1808, Lacy soon after received orders to join the army in Spain, under Murat, and was here on the fatal 2nd of May; but perceiving the tendency of public opinion in favour of independence, our hero did not for a moment hesitate between the duties of patriotism and those of personal gratitude.

Proceeding with all possible dispatch to Seville, where the authorities had already begun to organize a national force, Lacy's first appointment was that of captain in the regiment forming part of Cuesta's division. This was a preliminary step to

his being named commandant of the Ledesma Battalion, which he had himself created. During the disastrous campaigns of 1809 and the following year, Lacy was destined to see all the fruits of that patriotic feeling, which had impelled the people of Spain to take up arms, lost by the weakness or incapacity of the generals who had been selected with so little discrimination to lead the respective corps. Transferred to the regiment of Burgos, he was particularly distinguished at the battles of Aranjuez, Ocaña and Almonacid: Lacy also gave extraordinary proofs of his military talents on the plains of La Mancha, and in defending the passes of the Sierra Morena.

Called to assist in the defence of Cadiz, Lacy headed all the sorties so successfully made from the lines of La Isla, in 1811, and took a most active part in the battle of Chiclana. Having by his gallantry and superior skill attracted general attention and esteem, he was at length appointed to the chief command in Catalonia, for which he sailed in June of the above year, and soon after landed near Tarragona, the first object of his solicitude; for he had not only the mortification to find that strong hold in the hands of the enemy, but the army completely dispersed, and the whole province in a state of the utmost confusion.

Lacy's re-organization of the Catalonian army, amidst difficulties of every kind, in the face of a powerful enemy; his successful incursions into the French territory, where he had levied contri-

butions and procured supplies, when none could be had at home, will bear an advantageous comparison with the most celebrated exploits of the revolutionary war: when it is added, that during the time he remained in Catalonia, not more than a year and eight months, Lacy was victorious in seventy-six actions, and sustained only one reverse, that of Altafulla, fought without his consent, some notion may be formed of his claims to the title of an able general.

On the military arrangements of 1812 taking place he was sent to command the army of reserve in Galicia, and shortly after named captain-general of the province: in which situation he remained, to the great satisfaction of the inhabitants, until the return of Ferdinand, when, like all those who had contributed to the glory of their country, he was also deprived of his well-earned honours. Having retired to Catalonia, Lacy took up his abode in the small town of Vinaroz; here he remained to witness the degradation of Spain, and the accumulated sufferings of his fellow soldiers, until 1816, when he was appointed second in command to Castanos; but prevented by ill-health from doing his duty. It would be an injustice to the patriotism and public spirit of this distinguished character, to suppose he had not contemplated the necessity of making some effort in favour of freedom long before his visit to Cadetes. The anxiety of Lacy to co-operate in an measure that presented a chance of removing suc

innumerable evils as those brought on by the servile faction, was well known for some time previous to the project conceived in 1817: it is therefore only to be regretted that, when such a man formed the resolution of drawing the sword he did not receive greater support; for with the enterprising spirit of Lacy, his popularity and great talents, it has never been doubted that, if properly seconded by the garrison of Barcelona, the triumph of liberty would have been consummated.

I cannot conclude this account of Lacy's catastrophe without adverting to the conduct of Castanos: as already observed, this officer is said to have done all he could to prevent the hero's arrest in the first instance, and that he joined his supplications for mercy to those of others who addressed the throne. Upon the whole, public opinion is by no means favourable to the captain-general. Those whom I have consulted on this delicate question, are unanimous in agreeing, that as the professed personal friend of Lacy, and more than any other general of the Peninsula enabled to estimate the immense services he had rendered during the war, Castanos ought to have saved his life, however great the sacrifice might have been to his own personal interests. If he had, his name would have lived in the grateful remembrance of posterity, those from whom his authority was derived would be spared the perpetration of a horrible crime, and Spain the loss of her bravest patriot.

The inhabitants of Barcelona have lately vied with those of Corunna in doing justice to the remains of their departed chief; conveyed there in June, they were honoured with a triumphant funeral, at which the whole population, garrison and public bodies, united in paying a last tribute to his virtues and heroism. Like the ashes of Porlier, those of Lacy have also been deposited in an urn, and inscribed with an appropriate epitaph; it now forms one of the most conspicuous monuments in the Campo Santo of that beautiful city.

Although the regular course of my narrative has been interrupted by the foregoing details, in which I have endeavoured to gratify any curiosity you might feel with regard to the object of them, I trust it is unnecessary to apologize for the digression. It has hitherto been the practice to raise splendid mausoleums, and blazon forth the most minute actions of men, whose whole lives have presented little more than a series of aggressions against the liberties and happiness of mankind; it would surely be the height of injustice to omit those qualities which serve to exalt human nature while they impel the wise and good to labour in a cause too often espoused from the sordid motives of selfishness and personal ambition.

LETTER X.

Project of Reinforcing Morillo.—Failure of San Carlos in Procuring Transports in England.—A Squadron is Purchased from Russia.—Tatischeff and Ugarte.—Scheme Interrupted by the Cruelties of Elio at Valencia.—Policy of Ferdinand and his Ministers.—Renewal of the Expeditionary Plan.—Appointment of O'Donnell to the Chief Command.—Some Account of this General.—His Conduct in 1814.—Reconciliation with Lacy, and Promises of Support.—His Project for re-establishing the Constitution.—Proposition of the Patriots Rejected.—Dissimulation of the Count and his friend Sarsfield.—Arrest and Imprisonment of the Colonels on the plain of Palmar.—Reflections Suggested by the Proceedings of Abisbal.

Madrid, October, 1820.

NEITHER the daily encreasing embarrassments of the court, assailed by conspiracies at home and the voice of public opinion abroad, nor its poverty and total loss of credit, were sufficient to deter those who surrounded Ferdinand from persevering in the preposterous design of reinforcing Morillo; at a time too, when every hope of success had vanished in Venezuela and New Granada, owing to the victories of Bolivar and his generals. The mere fact of wishing to regain colonies, to which they had no means of conveying the troops necessary for their conquest, proves to what ridiculous extremes the follies of these men were carried; while it serves more than volumes to

illustrate the prevailing system of government. San Carlos, the Ambassador in London, having failed in his efforts to procure vessels from the British ship-owners, who, very properly adhered to the independents, recourse was had to the Russian Envoy, Tatischeff, whose amazing influence here has been noticed in a former letter. As this was derived from his blind deference to the insane projects and criminal views of those in power, he lent a willing ear to the present application: unmindful of the deep disgrace which must necessarily attach to his master, for thus openly favouring a new crusade against freedom, the idea of adding a trifling sum to the imperial treasury, and gratifying the avarice of his creature, Ugarte,* who was charged with preparing the expedition, seems to have absorbed every other consideration, and a squadron was provided, on terms highly advantageous to Russia.

It was while forced loans, exorbitant taxation, new imposts on foreign commerce, and such other measures as corruption could devise, were carrying on for the above unhallowed purpose, that the

* There cannot be a greater satire on the servile government than the advancement of Ugarte from the humble office of a street porter, to be the head of the Camarilla, and confidential adviser of Ferdinand. It is not amongst the least of those curses which attend legitimacy, that fools and villains often succeed in obtaining its protection, when the wise and virtuous are treated with scorn or neglect.

oppressive conduct of Elio at Valencia occasioned some interruption to the scheme, by obliging the officers of the garrison there to form a plan, which, in removing the tyrant, should afford another chance of relief to the friends of liberty. Destined like the rest to be foiled, at the moment of execution, Elio gladly seized the opportunity of completing what he had commenced in 1814: after putting the gallant leader, Colonel Vidal, and several of his companions to an ignominious death, their bodies were exposed on a gibbet, as objects of terror to the peaceful inhabitants. Not satiated with the blood of so many victims, more than two hundred individuals of both sexes were arrested and thrown into the dungeons of the inquisition by order of this modern Attila, who is further described as having personally assisted in applying the tortures of the holy office to numbers, with a view of discovering the accomplices of Vidal, and spreading dismay amongst the patriots generally.

The disposition of Ferdinand and his advisers, while the horrors of Valencia were perpetrating, may be readily inferred, from their allowing the author of them quietly to retain his command. Acting throughout the terrific drama as judge and executioner, neither age, sex, nor condition escaped the sanguinary minister of vengeance, whose order of the day, issued previous to sacrificing the patriots, deserves to be recorded as a specimen of legitimate rule in the nineteenth century, and to

furnish another proof of what the people of Spain were doomed to suffer under its agents.*

When the cruelties of Elio had somewhat subsided, giving place to that deceitful calm which usually results from violence, Ugarte hastened to renew the expeditionary scheme, still more favored than before by the continued reverses of Morillo and turbulent temper of the army, which rendered it necessary to accelerate the preparations, since many of the disaffected regiments would thus be removed from the possibility of giving future uneasiness. As the ships purchased from Russia were already on their way to Cadiz, the period of embarkation was fixed for the autumn of 1819.

Most of the troops intended for the New World had been collecting for some time in Andalusia, and the temporary command given to Abisbal, a name so intimately connected with the history of the last six years, and more especially those events which led to the re-establishment of freedom, that it cannot be passed over in silence. Of all those who have appeared on the political stage of Spain, within the above epoch, the character of Henry O'Donnell, Count Abisbal, is unquestionably the most wavering and enigmatical. The immediate descendant of a family driven from Ireland by the same causes which expatriated that of Lacy and so many others, the Count, much more

* This atrocious document will be found in the appendix.

highly favoured on the score of fortune than the hero of Catalonia, had the reputation of being nearly his equal in military knowledge and personal bravery, qualities which he frequently displayed during the war of independence. It was however just after the laurels of O'Donnell had fresh gathered in the field of honour, and while the liberales conceived they had not a more staunch supporter or determined friend, that the army of reserve under his command followed the baneful example of Elio's corps, and declared in favour of despotism against the constitution. Whatever might have been the motive which induced the Count thus to sacrifice such dearly earned fame, and the interests of his country, it is certain he retained his honours and emoluments in 1814, while his nomination to the board of general officers for re-organizing the army, proved he had become a favourite at court. Like all those who vacillate in their political principles, a variety of anecdotes are in circulation, relative to the subsequent conduct of Count Abisbal; the few particulars I am about to relate, were communicated to me previous to my arrival here, and as they have been in a great measure confirmed by respectable testimony since that time, there is the less reason to doubt their authenticity.

That O'Donnell was not sincere in his adherence to Ferdinand, is evident from the correspondence he is said to have entered into with the confidential attendants of Charles IV. in 1815, for the

avowed purpose of restoring the old monarch and converting him into a constitutional King. Having, on his return from the French frontier, met Lacy here, they made up a misunderstanding which had occurred some years before, and solemnly engaged thenceforth to co-operate with each other in the great work of national regeneration. Appointed Captain-general of Andalusia, soon after, the Count was one of those who urged Lacy to strike the first blow in Catalonia, promising faithfully to support the attempt with all the troops under his command at Cadiz and its vicinity. Notwithstanding his famous order of the day, on the failure of Porlier, which once more shook the confidence inspired by his recent professions, Abisbal took great pains to manifest his wishes in favour of a change, when in addition to his former appointment, he was named commander in chief of the expedition, towards the end of 1818. One of the reasons now alleged by the General, for the vehemence with which he expressed his opinions, and called upon the officers to join him in proclaiming the constitution, arose from his anxiety to atone for having, through false zeal and misplaced loyalty, contributed to its suspension in 1814; difficult as it was to confide in the promises of one who had so often varied, the Count gave such proofs of sincerity on this occasion, that he at length succeeded in making converts of the most sceptical. The prospect which now opened before O'Donnell was truly flattering; he had re-

covered the esteem of his fellow soldiers, and was about to obtain immortality, by leading them on to the goal of freedom : a day being fixed for proclaiming the constitution, the duties of all those who were destined to participate in the sacred enterprize were traced out, and confidential agents selected to prepare the minds of the soldiery. As the time of declaring themselves approached, the patriots, justly apprehensive of the evil consequences which could not fail to result from having the civil administration in the hands of a military chief, proposed that a provisional junta of government should be appointed until the cortes could be assembled. The Count is said to have been quite indignant at a proposal, which seemed to call his own talents and patriotism in question, and expressions are attributed to him, which if ever uttered, certainly justify the determination of the officers not to act, nor proceed in the design on any other terms. The General and his second in command, Sarsfield,* also the intimate friend of Lacy, are supposed to have, from that moment, renounced the project. This

* This officer is descended from Lord Lucan, who espoused the cause of James II. in Ireland, where the name of Sarsfield is still familiar, as the hero of a popular national drama, called the battle of Aughrim, or the fall of St. Rath, in which Lucan endeavoured to sustain the interests of his master against those of William III. The Spanish general served with Lacy and O'Donnell during the war, and until the 8th July, 1819, he was

intention, however, was carefully concealed. It having been previously arranged, that the troops should encamp at Port St. Mary's, and the 15th July appointed for carrying the plan into execution, O'Donnell called his friends together, and informed them that, as there was every reason to believe the whole scheme had been discovered by the court, it would be impossible to wait so long; he had therefore determined to fix the morning of the 8th, for effecting the object in view, and hoped this would be equally agreeable to their wishes. The communication was most joyfully received, and no suspicion entertained of the intended change on the part of their leader. Orders were accordingly issued for the regiments to assemble on the plain of Palmar, near Xerez, at which town Sarsfield was quartered with the cavalry. The General himself left Cadiz on the evening of the 7th, causing those of the inhabitants who were in the secret, to inform the people that he was going to proclaim the constitution, and would return the following day to perform the same office amongst them; alleging that as

considered as one of the best officers and bravest men in the Peninsula. But no virtues or talents, however great, can avail those who betray public liberty: an axiom which is amply proved in the present case; for ever since the part taken by Sarsfield in the transactions of the above day, his past glories are blasted, and his very existence almost consigned to oblivion, or remembered only to be contemned.

the army had unfortunately destroyed it in 1814, the first cry of liberty should emanate from the camp, so as to efface the errors of that melancholy period. Nothing could exceed the joy evinced by all those who heard this piece of intelligence, and preparations were immediately commenced to receive the expected deliverer of his country. Landing at Port St. Mary's, O'Donnell placed himself at the head of some infantry stationed there, and proceeded with them to join the main body, while Sarsfield led on the cavalry from Xerez. The troops were drawn out and had already gone through the usual evolutions, when the second in command, and Abisbal, appeared at the same moment, advancing in opposite directions; expectation was at its height, and both officers and men congratulating each other on the joyful event which would soon terminate the reign of terror. It is, however, evident, that the parties who accompanied the General and his friend, had been taught their lesson, for on Sarsfield perceiving him, his first movement was to ride rapidly along the line, followed by several squadrons of horse, exclaiming *Viva el Rey!* This ominous watch word being repeated by the Count and his party, it soon became general, nor was it until he had summoned the colonels around him, and told them they were prisoners in the King's name, that the patriots would credit the evidence of their senses. It would be vain to attempt describing the astonishment and indignation excited by this extraordi-

nary proceeding ; but, before there was sufficient time, either to express their sentiments on such treatment, or appeal to the troops, each of the prisoners, fifteen in number, including the flower of the patriot chiefs, and heroes of La Isla, were hurried off under escorts, and confined in the neighbouring castles. This act, which requires no comment as it speaks for itself, did not secure to Abisbal the confidence or favour of the Court; for, although well received on his arrival here, he was immediately called upon to resign his command, and Count Calderon, a name till then scarcely known to the army, appointed his successor.

Whatever civilities may have been shown to the Count on his return from Andalusia, they did not continue many days ; he had doubtless rendered an important service to the servile faction ; but O'Donnell must have known that gratitude was not amongst the number of their virtues. On the other hand, although ministers were fully aware of the part he had taken in preparing the revolt, yet they resolved to keep up appearances, until a favorable opportunity occurred for bringing home the charge, or gratifying their resentment. The Count was thus placed between the fear of punishment and those self reproaches arising from having betrayed the patriot cause ; not to mention the loss of an occasion which scarcely ever recurs a second time to the most highly favoured individual. There are some acts in public life which cannot be justified, I apprehend the above

is of that description :—O'Donnell is said to defend his conduct on the plea that neither the state of opinion, nor the nature of the preparations in other points of the Peninsula, were favorable to the enterprize; and that under these circumstances, a civil war, instead of national freedom, might have been the result of his projected attempt. In contemplating that endless variety of causes which govern human actions, reasons are seldom wanting to palliate whatever depends on the mere discretion of men in power; without pretending to decide on the degree of guilt or innocence attributable to the Count, truth obliges me to say, that his defence has not satisfied the people of Spain, nor exonerated him from the charge of personal ambition. It must be confessed that the experience of present times is peculiarly well calculated to remove those doubts, which have hitherto induced men to hesitate between the fear of anticipating public opinion, and taking advantage of an auspicious moment for restoring the liberties of their country.

The sentiments of the nation had been expressed in such various ways, their sufferings were so multiplied, that no risk, however great, of future and contingent evil, could be fairly put in competition with the certain benefits of a successful effort in favour of freedom: deeply as this truth is engraven on the minds of the most superficial observers in these days of improved political knowledge, it cannot be matter of surprise that neither his

brilliant services during the war, nor recent exertions, had removed the fatal impression made by Abisbal's conduct on the plain of Palmar, and which is increased by a very general conviction that he might have marched in triumph to the capital. However poignant the feelings of the Count may now be, at having thus rejected the most glorious, the most exalted boon ever tendered by fortune, it cannot but produce a salutary effect on others; for I defy any future patriot in whose hands the destiny of his country are placed, to reflect on what Henry O'Donnell has lost, without persevering in what he undertakes, or perishing in the attempt!

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalif
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

LETTER XI.

Repugnance of the Soldiery to Embark for South America.—Orders given to Calderon.—Cisneros sent to Superintend the Departure of the Expedition.—Preparations Suspended by the Yellow Fever.—The Troops are Collected at Las Correderas.—Joy of their Meeting.—Renewal of Former Ties.—Motives which Justified the Projected Revolt.—Panegyric on the Chiefs.—Soldiers and People.—Appointment of Leaders.—Quiroga, Riego, and Galiano.—Anecdote and Eulogium on Bertran de Lis.—Day of Rising Fixed.—Constitution Proclaimed at Las Cabezas de San Juan.—March to Arcos, and Arrest of Calderon, &c. Riego Proceeds to Bornos, and Returns with the Regiment of Arragon.—Is Elected General.—First Use made of his New Dignity.—Intended March on Medina.—Arrival of a Messenger from Quiroga.—Some Account of his Proceedings.—Check at the Cortadura.—Campana and the Priesthood at Cadiz.—Entrance of Riego into Xerez, and Junction with the Army of La Isla.—Letter to the King, and other State Papers.—Military Operations which Followed.—Riego Departs with the Flying Column.—Unexampled Heroism of this Officer and his Followers.—Their Dispersion.—Events at La Isla.—Arco Aguero, and Lopez Banos.—Approach of Freyre and his Troops.—Sorties made from La Isla, and Intrepidity of the Patriots.—Correspondence between Freyre and the Patriot General.—Suspension of Hostilities.—Heroes of La Isla Invited to Cadiz.—Massacre of March 10th.—Actors in that Bloody Scene.—The Constitution is Proclaimed in Galicia, Zaragoza, and Madrid.

Madrid, October, 1820.

ALTHOUGH the inexplicable conduct of O'Donnell may have suspended, it did not destroy the hopes of the patriots, much less diminish their repugnance to embarking for the New World, in which so many thousands of the army had already perished, either by the sword or the effects of climate. Re-

garded as anti-social and impolitic from its commencement, the South American contest was only profitable to those, who, like Ugarte, made it an object of speculation and plunder. But were all the other causes which rendered this unnatural war obnoxious set aside, it would be enough to mention, that the Spanish soldiery felt the weight of their own chains too acutely, willingly to aid in fettering others.*

One circumstance connected with this event deserves particular notice. On the officers and men of the independent garrison perceiving the ragged and destitute condition of their new friends they immediately subscribed a proportion of pay, amounting to seven thousand dollars, for their relief. The merit of this generous act was greatly enhanced by the many privations to which the patriots had themselves been exposed, owing to the stagnation of commerce incident to the revolution. In other respects, the reception of the Spaniards, by all classes of the inhabitants, proved their interests were considered the same; and that an opportunity like the present was only required to show how cordially the subject-many of both

* The above opinion was fully exemplified in the case of La Trinidad, a frigate composing part of a small squadron despatched to the coasts of Chili and Peru early in 1819; for on reaching the latitude of the river Plate, the crew and troops rose against their officers, and carried her up to Buenos Ayres, where they were received with open arms, and incorporated with the national force.

hemispheres could fraternize when left to the impulse of their own feelings.

Notwithstanding the well known sentiments of the army, Calderon received positive instructions to hasten his departure, and the minister of marine, Cisneros, had even repaired to Cadiz to superintend the embarkation. While, however, the instruments of despotism were preparing to execute the orders of the court, an event occurred, which, though calamitous in itself, was yet destined to bring about the dawn of freedom just as the despair of the patriots seemed to have reached its acme, and when hearts less tempered with heroism would have sunk under such accumulated reverses.

The colonels were not many days in confinement before it was announced that the yellow fever had broken out at San Fernando. This horrible scourge having first attacked the inhabitants, soon forced its way to Cadiz and infected the military, who, together with the former suffered dreadfully from its ravages during the following three months. One of the immediate effects attending this visitation, was that of putting a stop to the expeditionary arrangements; and it shortly after became necessary to withdraw the troops from La Isla, so as to separate them from those points most exposed to the epidemy. Las Correderas, a salubrious spot near Alcala de los Gazules, was therefore chosen, here many of the regiments were assembled towards the end of August; nor is it surprising if the first ebullition of joy at this

unexpected meeting was succeeded by a renewal of those ties which had been drawn closer by a sense of mutual calamity. It was in truth impossible for the patriots to look back on that series of persecution, suffering and disappointment which had so long afflicted Spain, without feeling the necessity of a change; and if the recollection of the past was not enough to influence their determination, the usual barbarous mode of trying state offences had commenced against their leaders, who, if not liberated, might ere many weeks be transferred to the *presidios* of Africa; on the other hand, tyranny and oppression had attained that point, at which the most bigotted advocate of divine right and passive obedience could no longer dispute the propriety of resistance. Those who may be hereafter led to reflect on the insurrection of La Isla, or make it a rule of action for themselves, will not only keep in mind the motives to revolt, but also recollect that it was not until the army and all Europe were convinced that reform could never proceed from within, and that the future was pregnant with still greater evils than those already experienced, they finally resolved to shake off the yoke. This resolution once made, it is but justice to add, that their firmness throughout the struggle, and unexampled moderation when the victory was achieved, have furnished history with her brightest page, while they entitled the actors in this memorable drama to the choicest blessings of liberty. In whatever point of view

this event is considered ; whether as it regards the intrepidity of the chiefs, persevering constancy of the troops, or zeal and enthusiasm of the people, it would be extremely difficult to find a parallel in the annals of any other nation : and though deprived of that halo which time and distance throws over the heroic deeds of other days, it is not the less worthy of admiration, or interesting as a subject of useful meditation to the patriot, philosopher and statesman.

As the plan of rising had been arranged previous to the removal of O'Donnell, the great object of the patriots was to conceal their design, and supply his place with a leader whose former conduct afforded somewhat better guarantees for being faithful to the cause. Antonio Quiroga had been amongst the most zealous members of the secret societies, and from his character for steadiness, as well as being the senior colonel arrested on the 8th of July, was unanimously elected to the envied post of general in chief. As Quiroga remained a close prisoner, the glory of commencing the enterprize was reserved for Rafael de Riego, one of those rare meteors destined by providence to appear on the political horizon, and cheer the friends of human liberty, when venality and corruption seem to have destroyed every hope of its restoration. This officer had joined the camp at Palmar some days before the arrest took place, and would have probably shared the fate of his friends, were it not for a severe illness which

obliged him to retire to Bornos, where he continued till the 10th of November, when he was called on to take a part in the conferences of Las Correderas. Being still in a state of extreme debility, the admirers of Riego observe that the impulse which liberty alone can give enabled him to encounter and surmount the formidable difficulties he had to vanquish. Persons who participated in the honours of the insurrection, have assured me that his exertions were altogether incredible, and such as leave him scarcely any time for sleep or refreshment: but in communicating a portion of his own unconquerable spirit to others, this extraordinary man may be said to have ensured the success which crowned their subsequent efforts.

Having organized an extensive correspondence with the provinces; received assurances of support; and made such other arrangements as the magnitude of the enterprise required, the next point was to fix the day of rising. None could be more appropriate than the commencement of a new year; it was therefore determined that the second epoch of Spanish regeneration should date from the first of January, 1820.

While Riego and his friends were completing the military preparations, and concerting the escape of Quiroga, Arco Agüero, chief of the staff, and his companions, shut up by Abisbal, another individual appeared on the scene, who merits the title of the civil, as Riego does that of the military hero of the revolution. I allude to Antonio

Alcala Galiano, one of the most eloquent men in Spain. The court having long wished to rid itself of this powerful orator and resolute patriot, had named him Secretary of Legation at Rio Janeiro, and he went to Gibraltar under pretence of procuring a passage. No sooner, however, had Galiano entered the gates, than all his thoughts were turned to the means of saving his country; having engaged the exiles who happened to be in that fortress to hold themselves in readiness, he repaired to Cadiz, and in unison with the principal merchants there, provided the funds necessary for defraying the expences of the projected movement, after which they adopted such measures as were most likely to ensure the co-operation of the garrison and the inhabitants.*

The artless yet heroic manner in which Bertran de Lis speaks of the fortitude displayed by his son, and of their interview just before the moment

* In noticing those capitalists whose lives and fortunes have been devoted to the grand work of restoring public liberty in Spain, I cannot omit the name of BERTRAN DE LIS, of Valencia, as having mainly contributed to the triumph at La Isla, by his liberality in supplying large sums of money for the use of the patriot forces. Although this truly public spirited individual had often been called upon to assist the court during the reign of terror, neither his zeal nor exertions in favour of freedom were relaxed. One of his sons, a youth of eighteen, was amongst the victims of Elio's ferocity in 1819. Young de Lis suffered with Vidal, disdainingly to accept the proffered mercy of his persecutors, and evinced unexampled greatness of mind to the last.

of execution, takes his auditor back to the best days of Grecian and Roman lore, and would melt the most insensible. Quiroga is the intimate friend of the Valencian patriot, and resides in his house. It is hoped he will pardon this involuntary departure from his modest injunction, but it could not be avoided without concealing an example which may in some future day operate as a most salutary example to others.

These important matters settled, it was finally decided, that Riego with the battalion of Asturias, which he commanded in second, stationed at Las Cabezas de San Juan, and the Seville regiment at Villa Martin, should march on Arcos, the head quarters of Calderon, while Quiroga proceeded at the head of two other regiments, those of Spain and the crown, from Alcala, the place of his detention, to the bridge of Suazo, thence to La Isla, and passing along the Cortadura, so as to reach the walls of Cadiz by day-break, when the gates were to be instantly thrown open.

The fact of Riego having to open the campaign of freedom while labouring under the effects of a recent indisposition, in the midst of a severe winter, when the roads were rendered almost impassable, surrounded by above twelve thousand men, of whom only a small part had from motives of prudence been made acquainted with the intended plan; and finally, his doubts as to the sincerity of some who were to assist in the first operations, should be considered in order fairly to ap-

preciate the merit of his undertaking. It was in the face of these formidable difficulties, that orders were issued for the battalion of Asturias to be drawn out at an early hour on the 1st, when after a spirited address from Riego, on the sacred duty they were about to perform, he proclaimed the constitution of 1812, amidst the acclamations of his companions in arms and the inhabitants of San Juan, who had assembled to enjoy the glorious event.

Owing to the time occupied by the election of Constitutional Alcaldes, and some other arrangements, it was late in the afternoon before the regiment could leave Las Cabezas: proceeding in the dark, over cross roads broken up by the rains, which even now fell in torrents, it arrived within a short distance of Arcos at daylight on the 2nd, after a most harassing march of more than twelve hours. Instead of meeting the corps from Villa Martin, as previously agreed, Riego was informed that it had, from the ignorance of its guides, taken a wrong direction, and could not therefore be expected to join for some time. This unlooked for disappointment was the more irksome from the battalion being exposed to the view of the garrison of Arcos, twice as numerous, and strongly posted; whereas Riego's men had been under arms nearly twenty-four hours and were quite exhausted with their march. To increase the dilemma, every possible method had been tried to preserve the fidelity of the troops at

Arcos, and fears were entertained lest the civil authorities might persuade the people to join them.—It was while the officers and men were ruminating on the danger of their situation, and when many began to relinquish every hope of success, that Riego, who had advanced to reconnoitre the force at Arcos, suddenly returned, and ordered the drum to beat to arms, repeated his instructions to those appointed to arrest Calderon and his staff, entered the town preceded by the band playing a popular air. Having posted a part of the regiment on a rising ground close to the barrier, and occupied the market-place with a few companies, the arrest of Calderon, Salvador, his second in command, and the whole of the staff, was effected in less than an hour after. The fears of Riego were in some degree realized by the main guard firing on the party which was about to enter the residence of the commander in chief; this was, however, returned and two of the aggressors were killed on the spot. On hearing the report of musquetry, Riego rushed forward to ascertain what had given rise to it, but before he reached the head-quarters, Calderon had surrendered his sword, and together with the rest of the staff were confined in his own house. Not a moment was lost in proclaiming the political code, and electing local authorities. The decision and presence of mind shown by Riego on this critical occasion, is above all praise, and proves that he was fully aware of the momentous consequences

which were involved in the mode of conducting the attack on Arcos. Had this failed there was an end to the hopes of pursuing the enterprise, and it required no common share of resolution to persevere, when it was found that not more than half the number calculated on were present. The next object of Riego, was to dispatch an express to Quiroga, informing him of what had been achieved.

As the Seville regiment did not arrive until these measures were completed, the honour of first proclaiming the constitution belonged to that of Asturias, but as this arose from mere accident, it created neither anger nor jealousy, so that their junction under such happy auspices was a source of the utmost gratification to both parties. After transferring the prisoners to a place of greater security, the attention of Riego was turned to gain over the troops found at Arcos; this he effected, though not without some persuasion, for Calderon had taken infinite pains to prevent their defection. Still ignorant of Quiroga's movements, the time could not be better employed than in collecting such battalions as were quartered round the neighbourhood. A previous understanding had been established with some officers of the regiment of Bornos, but whose colonel was known to be hostile; neither this circumstance, nor the excessive fatigue he had undergone, prevented Riego from selecting a detachment of three hundred men and marching to that place. Having halted within a

few hundred yards of the town, and proceeded alone to the entrance, Riego was met by some of his friends, to whom he communicated the result of his labours at Arcos ; the tidings spread with rapidity through the Battalion, which assembled immediately, and was in less than an hour on its way to head-quarters, leaving the colonel to his meditations, and the command of some convalescents recently recovered from the yellow fever. On reaching Arcos, the party was received with loud shouts of long live Riego and the constitution. A general muster taking place soon after, the officers and soldiers expressed their admiration of Riego's heroic conduct still farther, by unanimously investing him with the rank of general in chief. He thanked them for this proof of approbation, and promised to leave nothing untried to merit their future confidence. The first use Riego made of his new dignity, was to cause all present, including the civil authorities, to swear fealty to the constitution.

The efforts of Riego had as yet been crowned with all that success which was due to his resolution and gallantry : but being sufficiently versed in the theory of revolutions to know, that those who draw the sword should not only throw away the sheath, but never relax in their exertions till the object in view is achieved ! The non-arrival of any intelligence from Quiroga gave him the greatest uneasiness, rendering it a matter of doubt whether it was best to proceed towards La Isla, or

remain at Arcos. Thus situated, he consulted the officers, and after a short deliberation, it was decided that if no account came within a given time, the four battalions, of which their force now consisted, should march on Medina, so as to make converts of the troops there, and the neighbouring town. That the intermediate hours might be usefully employed they agreed to mix with the soldiery, and explain the motives of the rising, point out its necessity and the advantages which would accrue to themselves, as well as the nation, from the event.

The time fixed for marching having arrived, it was found that owing to the state of the roads, and the difficulty which must attend crossing the Majeceite, the troops could not reach Medina. Riego therefore resolved to take the direction of Xerez, which, if it did not tend to increase his numbers would at least enable him to intercept the communication between Seville and Cadiz, and thus procure supplies of money to pay the men.* The regiments had, however, scarcely quitted Arcos, when the anxiously expected messenger arrived, bringing details of the progress at La Isla, and a letter from Quiroga, desiring that Riego should join him with all possible dispatch.

It now appeared that the same causes, which

* When Torres, the intendant or commissary-general, arrested at Arcos, was summoned to give up the money in his possession; all that could be found for an army of 15,000 men was eleven thousand dollars!

rendered the march from Arcos to Medina impracticable, prevented Quiroga's moving before the afternoon of the 2nd. An officer and party sent on earlier in the day, had succeeded in disarming the advanced posts at Portazgo, and occupied the bridge of Suazo. Setting out with the regiment stationed at Alcalá, Quiroga was joined on his way through Medina by the other battalion, and after marching all night over a road in which the soldiers were often knee-deep, did not reach the bridge of Suazo till nine o'clock on the next morning, above six hours later than he had calculated upon. It was not amongst the least of those inconveniences attending this delay, that several detachments which had come up from different points, not finding the General-in-chief at the place appointed, thought the plan must have failed, and therefore returned to their quarters. Fortunately for Quiroga and his friends, none of the civil or military authorities were on the alert, so that San Fernando was occupied without opposition. The first measure of the patriot general after proclaiming the constitution, was to secure the person of old Cisneros, and all others who were likely to impede the success of the enterprise.

As the exhausted condition of the troops would not admit of pushing with the main body, Don Jose Rodriguez advanced at the head of four companies to surprize the first lines of La Cortadura. Received with a volley of musquetry, by which

three of his men fell, instead of returning the fire he withdrew. This untoward event, at once convinced Quiroga that the golden opportunity had been lost and Cadiz put into a state of defence: his conjectures were but too well founded. Campana the governor, had been secretly informed of the projected attack, and lost no time in taking the steps necessary to counteract its success. Amongst other precautions, the pay of the garrison was more than trebled, while the Bishop and priesthood were directed to represent the patriots as being only intent on massacre and plunder.

This early and unexpected check, so discouraging in itself, was however counterbalanced by the arrival of Riego's messenger, whose communication relative to the events at Arcos, consoled the General-in-chief for the failure on his own side. As a totally new turn was thus given to the operations on both sides, Quiroga determined to wait the junction of his able second in command before any other measures were adopted.

The hero of Arcos and Las Cabezas was not idle, having directed the escort in charge of Calderon and his staff to bring up the rear, he proceeded towards Xerez, which place the division entered early on the 5th, and was received with the utmost enthusiasm by the people, from whom a knowledge of the recent occurrences had been carefully concealed. After those mutual congratulations, so natural on such an occasion, Riego, who had ascended the telegraph communicating

with La Isla, and announced his arrival, repaired to the town hall, where the principal inhabitants were already assembled to hail him as their deliverer. This interview was followed by a request from the General, that the populace might be summoned to attend the election of Municipal Authorities; these being named and sworn to maintain the political code, it was proclaimed in due form. The interchange of signals amongst the patriot forces produced an electric effect on both sides; when Quiroga drew out his men, and stated the approach of their companions, they rent the air with frequent *vivas*, and no longer remembered the failure at La Cortadura. Anxious to reach San Fernando, Riego pushed on to Port St. Mary's the same night, and was welcomed by great numbers of the people, who vied with each other in providing quarters and refreshment for the troops. An important acquisition was made soon after the patriots arrived here, by the sudden appearance of Arco Agüero, O'Daly, and some other distinguished officers, who had just escaped from the castle of San Sebastian, in which they had been confined ever since the arrests at Palmar. Their liberation was due to a patriotic merchant of Cadiz, named Imbrecht, aided by Don Rafael Montes, who had been charged with their safe custody.

The morning of the 6th was devoted to thanksgiving and prayer; this ceremony, performed in the open air, and during which the people and soldiers were indiscriminately seen, expressing their grati-

tude to heaven, and imploring its protection, has been, not inaptly, contrasted with the mummery of priests and inquisitors, whose chief delight had hitherto been derived from collecting the citizens to walk in the procession of some saint, witness the reception of a novice, or celebrate an Auto de Fé! The above act of true religion being terminated, Riego and his friends, including all the inhabitants, went to vote at the election of Alcaldes, and proclaim the constitution.

It was intended that the battalions should sleep at San Fernando on the 6th, but, owing to the heavy rains, it became necessary to halt at Puerto Real, whence Riego conducted the prisoners, and was followed next day by the main body. I need not dwell on the meeting of the patriot corps, nor say how much their pleasure was heightened by the difficulties which attended their first efforts. The conduct of all those who had embarked in this sacred cause, was, in every respect, worthy of free men. Instead of giving way to expressions of vengeance, or vowing the retaliations so richly merited by their oppressors, both officers and men seemed exclusively engaged in congratulating each other on being thus placed in a situation to act with more efficacy, and reiterating their determination not to abandon the enterprize until liberty had triumphed.

When mustered, it was found that the utmost strength of the national army, in rank and file, did not exceed five thousand men, consisting of seven