

a military government, regularly as well as vigorously administered.

The province was in a miserable state; though the population had increased from the end of the Succession war till the beginning of Charles IV.'s reign, it had diminished since that time, owing to causes which have not been explained. There were 150 deserted villages in it, and nearly 400 in which a few houses were all that remained, . . . this, not in consequence of the existing war, but of the preceding decay. Yet before the invasion, Aragon exported corn, wine, and oil to Catalonia on one side, and to Navarre on the other: to that export the war had put an end; fields, and vineyards, and oliveyards, had been laid waste; and an enormous consumption of sheep by the armies had almost destroyed the only kind of cattle which in that country could be depended on for food. It had been drained of money also both by the national and intrusive governments: before the siege of Zaragoza, three millions of francs had been remitted to Seville; and the spoils of the suppressed convents to the amount of a million *reales* and 3000 marks of silver had been afterwards sent to Joseph's treasury at Madrid. Very many families, and among them all the wealthiest, had emigrated, taking with them all the specie they could collect, . . . the miserable remains of their fortunes. Trade had suffered in the same degree as agriculture; there were no manufactures left; and from a province in this condition, which in its best times paid only four million francs to its native government, eight millions were to be raised for the annual pay of the troops alone. Suchet began by levying an extraordinary contribution per month, which more than doubled in amount the tax in ordinary times; the mode of collecting was prepared for him by a regulation of Philip V., who as a punishment upon the three provinces of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, for their

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State of
Aragon.

System of
the French
general.

CHAP. adherence to his opponent the Archduke Charles, had subjected
XXXVIII. them to a property tax, taking from them the privilege which
1811. they had formerly possessed of taxing themselves. It might
have been thought impossible to wring this additional impost
from a ruined people ; but the hoards of prudence, of selfishness,
and of misery are opened at such times, and what has been
withheld from the pressing necessities of a just cause, is yielded
to a domineering enemy ; and Suchet, while he insisted to the
utmost upon the law of the strongest, and regarded no other
law, had clear views of the policy by which obedience to that
law is to be facilitated or conciliated. No compunction with-
held him from any crime which he deemed it expedient to com-
mit ; but he would do good as well as evil, and perhaps more
willingly, when it accorded with his purpose ; and worldly
wisdom producing the effect of better motives might under other
circumstances have made him a beneficent ruler. He abolished
monopolies by retaining which nothing was to be gained ; he
sent for his wife from France, to conciliate the Aragonese
ladies by her means, and their husbands by theirs ; he employed
the influence of those priests who followed the example of their
traitorous archbishop ; and he purchased with offices in the
revenue department and in the police the ablest of the Spa-
niards whose souls were for sale. Among them was Mariano
Dominguez, who having held the office of military Intendant
under Palafox during the siege of Zaragoza, lived to be praised
by General Suchet for the eminent services which he rendered
to the French. He was made corregidor of that city ; and it
is said that under his administration, not a single murder
occurred there during eighteen months, though before the war
the annual average exceeded three hundred. In no situation
does a man seem so cut off from repentance, as when he can
reconcile himself to his own dereliction of duty by the good

that he may do in an office which he has accepted as the price of his integrity.

The money which Suchet raised for his military and civil establishments was presently expended in the province, to the immediate benefit of the people upon whom it had been levied. The troops were paid every five days, the civil officers regularly received their salaries, and what they received was necessarily spent in the country. Suchet took care also to purchase there whatever it could supply for the clothing and equipment of the troops, paying for it at once from the contributions; and the active circulation which was thus occasioned, if he may be believed, made the inhabitants themselves sensible that they were gainers by such taxation. He repaired the dykes, the sluices, and the great basin at Mount Torrero which had been destroyed during the siege; the canal was thus again restored: preparations were made for conducting water into the city and erecting fountains there: the hospitals and the bull circus were repaired; bull fights, the national sport and the national reproach, were exhibited; and by these means.. and by his refusal to send the treasure of Our Lady of the Pillar to Madrid, notwithstanding repeated orders to that effect, he endeavoured to gratify the Zaragozans, while he erected works about the city to secure it against any sudden attempt. Buonaparte's orders were not so safely to be disregarded as those of the Intruder; when, therefore, Suchet was instructed to confiscate and burn all the English goods which could be found in Aragon, the general remonstrated against so impolitic a measure, and proposed instead, to levy a duty upon such goods of fifty per cent; but Buonaparte hated England too vehemently to be capable of receiving any advice which opposed the indulgence of that insane passion, and Suchet found it necessary to search the

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*Good effect
of paying
the troops
regularly.*

*Memoires
du Mare-
chal Suchet,
1. 302.*

*British
goods burnt
at Zaragoza.*

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Memoires,
1. 306.

*Prepara-
tions for be-
sieging
Tarragona.*

warehouses, and make a bonfire of what he found there, in the *Plaza Mayor* at Zaragoza, taking care however that the search should be as perfunctory as he could venture to make it, and leaving colonial produce untouched because it happened not to be specified in his orders.

But the Spaniards were a people whom no length of time could reconcile to an usurpation by which they felt themselves insulted as much as they were wronged and outraged. Though his political sagacity was equal to his military skill, and though he was placed in a part of the peninsula where the Spaniards never received the slightest assistance from their British allies, even in Aragon he felt the insecurity of his position, and deemed it an advantage of no trifling moment when he could discover a manufactory of arms among the mountains. The Spanish frontier is that upon which France was least provided with military establishments; but the want of stores, which in other quarters could be drawn abundantly from the arsenals of Douay, Metz, and Strasbourg, was supplied here by the treacherous seizure of Pamplona before hostilities commenced, and by the subsequent capture of Lerida, Mequinenza, Tortosa, and Col de Balaguer. In this respect the war had abundantly furnished its own means; nor was he deficient in numbers for the siege which he was about to undertake, the army now under his command consisting of more than 40,000 men, notwithstanding its daily waste, and the great losses it had suffered. The Italian division from 13 or 14,000 men had been reduced to five or six; but with the population of France, Italy, and the Netherlands, at his disposal, and of those states which, under the name of confederates, were actually subjected to the French government, Buonaparte thought that no war could thin his armies faster than the conscription could recruit them; and under his officers he

well knew that men of any nation would soon be made efficient soldiers. Suchet found it better to make the regiments of different nations act together than to keep them in separate divisions; they were more likely thus to be influenced by a common feeling, and less liable to be affected by the proclamations in Italian, German, Dutch, and Polish, as well as Spanish and French, which General Doyle addressed to them, inviting them to abandon the unjust service in which they were engaged. Suchet provided also for their wants with a solicitude which made him deservedly popular among his men. He saw that the commissariat department was better administered by military than by civil agents; and having placed it therefore wholly in their hands, he adopted the farther improvement of giving to each regiment the charge of its own cattle, convoys of which from Pau and Oleron were constantly on the road, protected by a chain of fortified posts from Canfranc and Jaca to Zaragoza. It was found that by this means the cattle were better guarded and more easily fed; that the movements of the army were not impeded by them; and that when the soldiers reached their bivouac they were no longer under the necessity of marauding for their food. This general was as little subject as Massena to any visitations of compassion; but he knew that a system of marauding must in the end prove as fatal to the army which subsisted by it, as to the inhabitants who were the immediate sufferers.

But the people whom he protected from irregular exactions were under an iron yoke; they were to be kept down only by present force and the severest intimidation; and Suchet prepared willingly for the siege of Tarragona, because he saw that the only serious losses which the Spaniards sustained was when they defended fortified places with a large military force. Their armies, when routed in the field, collected again as easily as they were dispersed; but from Lerida, Mequinenza, and Tor-

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Memoires,
2. 17.

*Manresa
burnt by
Macdonald.*

March 30.

tosa, no fewer than 800 officers and 18,000 soldiers had been sent prisoners into France. He desired therefore to attack a fortress which would be regularly defended, as much as he dreaded to encounter a civil defence. While he was preparing for the enterprise, the news of Massena's retreat raised the hopes of the Spaniards, and made their desultory parties every where more active: in proportion as they were elated, were the invaders exasperated. A considerable force under Marshal Macdonald moved upon Manresa. Sarsfield and Eroles were on the alert to harass its movements; and they attacked its rear at Hostal de Calvet, about an hour's distance from that city: many of the Manresans were in the field. The disposition of the inhabitants was well known, and perhaps Manresa was marked for vengeance, because it was the first place in Catalonia which had declared against the French; and one of those journals also was printed there which contributed so greatly to keep up the national spirit. Upon whatever pretext, . . . for pretexts are never wanting to those who hold that every thing ought to succumb before military force, . . . orders were given to burn the city: it was set on fire in the night, and between seven and eight hundred houses were consumed. The very hospitals were not spared, though an agreement had been made between the Spanish and French generals, that they should be considered sacred, and though that agreement was produced by one of the physicians to General Salme, and its observance claimed on the score of honour and good faith as well as of humanity. It availed nothing; the wounded were taken out of their beds; the attendants plundered; the building sacked and set on fire. It was by the light of the flames that Sarsfield and Eroles attacked the enemy at Hostal de Calvet; their orders were that no quarter should that night be given; and in consequence of many who surrendered (for in this partial action the Catalans had

greatly the advantage) one man alone was spared. The commander-in-chief, Campoverde, accused Macdonald of having in this instance broken his faith, as well as violated the received usages of war; and he issued orders that his troops, regular or irregular, should give quarter to no Frenchman, of what rank soever, who might be taken in the vicinity of any place which had been burned or sacked, or in which the inhabitants had been murdered. Subscriptions were raised for the relief of the Manresans; and, as in every case where intimidation was intended, the effect of this atrocity was to render the invaders more odious, and give to that desire of vengeance with which the Spaniards were inflamed the dreadful character of a religious obligation.

Macdonald was at this time meditating an attempt upon Montserrat, the possession of which place would be of great advantage in the operations against Tarragona. But the Catalans were not idle. Looking to something of more permanent importance than could be achieved in desultory warfare, Rovira, who from the commencement of the struggle had so distinguished himself as to be honoured with the particular invectives of the French, had long projected schemes for recovering from the enemy some of the fortresses whereof they had possessed themselves, and these schemes he proposed to the successive generals in the principality, all of whom, till Campoverde took the command, regarded them as impracticable. Rovira, however, was not deterred by ridicule from prosecuting plans which appeared to him well founded; and Campoverde at length listened to his representations. He had established a communication in Barcelona, which, like other attempts of the like nature, was discovered; and five persons, two of whom were women, were condemned to death for it, but only one, Miguel Alzina by name, fell into the enemy's hand, and he was executed upon the glacis of

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*Scheme for
the recovery
of Barcelona
frustrated.*

CHAP. Monjuic. The sentence charged him with having conspired to
 XXXVIII. betray that fortress and the place of Barcelona to the Spaniards :
 1811. this he had done, and in suffering for it, felt that he was dying
 April. a martyr to his country's cause : but he was charged also with
 having intended to poison the garrison ; and that any such pur-
 pose should have been sanctioned by the commander-in-chief,
 under whose sanction the scheme was formed, or that it should
 have been communicated to him, or even formed at all, is not to
 be believed. Of the persons who were acquitted of any share in
 the conspiracy, two were nevertheless ordered to be sent into
 France, and there detained till the general pacification of Cata-
 lonia ; and one, who was niece of Alzina, to be confined in a
 nunnery, under the special observation of the vicar-general and
 of the prioress, who were to be responsible for her.

Rovira had concerted a plan also for surprising Figueras : it
 was conceived in the spirit of more adventurous ages, and there-
 fore, some of those persons who felt no such spirit in themselves
 called it, in mockery, the Rovirada ; to better minds, however,
 it appeared so feasible for men like those who had undertaken
 it, that Martinez, the commandant of the division of Ampurdan,
 was instructed by Campoverde to join him in the attempt.

Figueras.

Figueras is a little town situated in the midst of the fertile
 plain of Ampurdan, eighteen miles from the French frontier.
 Some centuries ago it was burned, and its castle razed, by the
 Count of Ampurias, in his war with Jayme I. of Aragon ; but in
 the last century, Ferdinand VI. erected there one of the finest
 fortifications in Europe, which he called, after his canonized
 namesake and predecessor, the Castle of St. Fernando. It is
 an irregular pentagon, the site of which has been so well
 chosen upon the solid and bare rock, that it is scarcely possible to
 open trenches against it on any side ; and it commands the plain,
 serving as an entrenched camp for 16,000 men. As a fortress

it is a masterpiece of art; no cost was spared upon it, and the whole was finished in that character of magnificence which the public works of Spain continued to exhibit in the worst ages of the Spanish monarchy. But an English traveller made this prophetic remark when he visited Figueras in the year 1786, "Every such fortress requires an army to defend it, and when the moment of trial comes, the whole may depend on the weakness or treachery of a commander, and instead of being a defence to the country, may afford a lodgement to the enemy." No where has that apprehension been more fully verified than in the place where it was excited. Figueras was surrendered to France in the revolutionary war, by corruption or by treason, more likely than by cowardice; for the governor had behaved bravely at Toulon. After the peace he returned to Spain, was delivered over to trial, and condemned to lose his head; but the punishment was commuted for perpetual exile. When the place was restored, after the treaty of Basle, some ink spots still remained upon the wall, where an officer, in honourable indignation, had dashed his pen, either determining not to sign the capitulation, or in despair for having borne a part in that act of infamy. And now Figueras served as a strong hold for the invaders, having been one of the four fortresses which Godoy delivered into their hands as the keys of Spain, before Buonaparte avowed his profligate design of usurping the kingdom.

Rovira, who was a doctor in theology as well as a colonel, and regarded the contest to which he had devoted himself as a holy war, fixed upon Passion week as the fittest time for the attempt: there could be no season so proper for it, he thought, as that on which the church was celebrating the sufferings and death of Christ*! Accordingly, on Palm Sunday he assembled

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Townsend's
Travels, 1.
p. 81. 3d
edition.

Attempt
upon Fi-
gueras.

April 6.

* Diario de Manresa, April 20.