

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

be allowed them, and that the officers should retain their baggage, and the men their knapsacks. Ric then required that Palafox might be at liberty to go whithersoever he pleased, with all his staff. It was replied, that an individual could never be the subject of capitulation ; but Marshal Lasnes pledged his word of honour that Palafox should go to any place he pleased ; and he specified Mallen or Toledo. Those places, Ric replied, would not suit him, because they were occupied by French troops, and it was understood that he thought of going to Majorca. Lasnes then gave his word of honour that he might go to any place which he thought best. It was demanded that all persons, not included in the garrison, who wished to leave Zaragoza, in order to avoid the contagion, should be allowed passports. Lasnes replied, all who wished it might go out, . . he pledged his word to this ; but it was not necessary, he said, to insert an article upon this head, and he was desirous of terminating the capitulation.

Ric, 231, 2.

*Farther
conditions
asked, and
refused.*

While copies of the capitulation were drawing out, the French general produced a plan of the city, and laid his finger upon the part which was that night to have been blown up, telling Ric that 44,000lbs. of powder were already lodged for the explosion, and that this would have been followed by a cannonade from seventy pieces of artillery, and a bombardment from thirty mortars, which they were at that time mounting in the suburbs. The duplicates being signed, Ric and his companions returned to lay the terms before the other members of the Junta ; and they, who had ascertained the opinion of their fellow-citizens, accepted, ratified, and signed the act. Some farther stipulations, however, they still thought desirable ; they wished it to be stated in the articles, that the garrison were to march out with the honours of war ; for, as only the written capitulation would appear in the gazettes, if this were not expressed it would not be understood. They required also, that the peasants who had been formed into temporary corps should not be prisoners of war,

urging, that they ought not to be considered as regular soldiers, and representing the injury which it would be to agriculture if they were marched away. And at the petition of the clergy, they requested that an article might be added, securing to them the punctual payment of their revenues from the funds assigned by the government for that purpose. With these proposals Ric returned to Marshal Lasnes ; the two former were in every respect unexceptionable ; the last was the only one upon which any demur might have been looked for. The French commander, however, broke into a fit of rage, snatched the paper out of Ric's hand, and threw it into the fire. One of his generals, sensible of the indecency of this conduct, rescued it from the flames ; and Ric, unable to obtain more, received a ratified copy of the capitulation, and returned to the city.

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
February.

Ric, 232—
4.

The French, by their own account, threw above 17,000 bombs during the siege, and expended near an hundred and sixty thousand weight of powder. More than 30,000 men, and 500 officers, the flower of the Spanish armies, lay buried beneath the ruins of Zaragoza ; and this is far from the amount of lives which were sacrificed in this memorable and most virtuous defence, the number of women and children who perished by the bombardment, by the mines, by famine and pestilence, remaining untold. The loss of the besiegers was carefully concealed ; it was sufficient to cripple their army ; the Paris papers declared, that one part was to march against Lerida, another against Valencia, and neither of these movements could be effected.

On the evening of the capitulation the French troops entered. They began immediately to pillage. General Laval was appointed governor. He ordered all the clergy of the city to go out and compliment Marshal Lasnes ; . . the yoke was upon their necks ; they went forth to appear at this ceremony, like prisoners in a Roman triumph, and as they went, the French soldiers

*Conduct of
the French.*

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

Ric, 235.

*Treatment
of the pri-
soners.*

were permitted to rob them of their apparel in the streets. Laval, when complaint was made to him of such outrages, observed, that his troops had to indemnify themselves for the plunder which they looked upon as certain, and which they would have had in another day, if the capitulation had not disappointed them.

When the French entered the city six thousand bodies were lying in the streets and trenches, or piled up in heaps before the churches. The people, still unsubdued in spirit, were with difficulty restrained from declaring that the capitulation was concluded without their consent, and rushing upon the invaders with the determination of taking vengeance and dying in the act. The armed peasants, instead of delivering up the weapons which they were no longer permitted to use, broke them in pieces with generous indignation. General O'Neill died before the surrender; St. Marc was one of the many hundreds whom the pestilence carried off within a few days after it. P. Basilio escaped from the danger of the war and of the contagion. He was a man of exemplary life and great attainments; and having been tutor to Palafox, and fought by his side in both sieges, remained now at his bedside, to wait upon him in his illness, and administer, if need should be, the last offices of religion to his heroic and beloved pupil. There the French found him, as they had ever found him during the siege, at the post of duty; and they put him to death for having served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength. P. Santiago Sass suffered a like martyrdom. The officers received orders to come out of the city, on pain of being shot if they remained there after four-and-twenty hours. Immediately upon forming without the town for their march, they were, in contempt of the capitulation, plundered of every thing, stripped of the devices of their different ranks, and pushed

Feb. 22.

in among the common soldiers as leaders of insurgents. It was affirmed in the French bulletin that 17,000 men laid down their arms: there were not more than four-and-twenty hundred capable of bearing them; the rest were in the hospitals, and this, with five-and-twenty hundred taken in the suburbs and during the siege, was the number which was marched off for France. Two hundred and seventy of these men, who from fatigue and weakness could not keep up the pace which their ferocious guard required, were butchered and left on the road, where their companions in the next division might march over their bodies. Augustina Zaragoza was among the prisoners. She had distinguished herself in this siege as much as in the former. At the commencement she took her former station at the Portillo, by the same gun which she had served so well; "See, general," said she, with a cheerful countenance, pointing to the gun when Palafox visited that quarter, "I am again with my old friend." Her husband was severely wounded, and she pointed the cannon at the enemy, while he lay bleeding among his companions by her side. Frequently she was at the head of an assaulting party, sword or knife in hand, with her cloak wrapt round her, cheering the soldiers, and encouraging them by her example; constantly exposed as she was, she escaped without a wound: yet once she was thrown into a ditch, and nearly suffocated by the dead and dying who covered her. At the close of the siege she was too well known by the French to escape notice, and they made her prisoner. Fortunately, as it proved, she had at that time taken the contagion, and was removed to the hospital, where, as she was supposed to be dying, little care was taken to secure her. Feeling herself better, she availed herself of this, and effected her escape. Another heroine, whose name was Manuella Sanchez, was shot through the heart. Donna Benita, a lady of distinction, who headed one of the female corps which

CHAP.
XVIII.1809.
February.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

*Treatment
of Palafox.*

*He is com-
pelled by
threats of
death to sign
orders for
delivering
up other
fortresses.*

had been formed to carry provisions, bear away the wounded, and fight in the streets, escaped the hourly dangers to which she exposed herself, only to die of grief upon hearing that her daughter had been killed. During the siege six hundred women and children perished, not by the bombardment and the mines, but in action, by the sword, or bayonet or bullet.

Marshal Lasnes had pledged his word of honour that Palafox should be at liberty to go wherever he would, as soon as he should be able to travel; in contempt of that pledge, he was immediately made prisoner, surrounded entirely by French, and left even in want of necessary food. Ric, who was ever ready to exert himself when any duty was to be performed, remonstrated against this treatment both verbally and in writing. He could obtain little immediate relief, and no redress. Arrangements were concerted for his escape, and so well laid, that there would have been every prospect of success, if he had been sufficiently recovered to make the attempt. They were not, however, altogether fruitless; for M. Lasnes having extorted from him, by threats of immediate death if he refused, orders to the governors of Jaca, Benasque, Monzon, and Mequinenza, to deliver up those places to the French, he found means to advise his brother, the Marques de Lazan, of the iniquitous proceeding, and to direct that no obedience should be given to orders so obtained. Unfortunately Jaca and Monzon had been entrusted to commanders who waited only for an opportunity of betraying their charge, and they opened the gates to the enemy. Before Palafox had recovered he was hurried away into France, a country from which and to which, while it was under the iron yoke of Buona- parte, no prisoner returned. On the way he was treated with insolence and barbarity, and robbed even to his very shirt. Buona- parte, who, feeling no virtue in himself, acknowledged none in others, had already reproached him as a coward and a runaway

in the field; he now, with contradictory calumny, reviled him for having defended Zaragoza against the will of the inhabitants. "The people," it was said in the French papers, "held him in such abhorrence, that it was necessary to station a guard before his door, for otherwise he would have been stoned. An idea of the detestation in which he and the monks of his party were held could only be formed by remembering the hatred with which those men were regarded in France, who governed by terror and the guillotine." Yet while they thus asserted at one time that Palafox defended the city against the will of the people, at another they affirmed that the Spanish troops would have surrendered long before, being perfectly sensible that resistance was unavailing after the French had entered the city, but it did not depend upon them, . . . they were obliged to submit to the wills of the meanest of the inhabitants. Any one who should have expressed a wish to capitulate would have been punished with death: such a thought could not be uttered till two-thirds of the city were lying in ruins, and 20,000 of its defenders destroyed by disease. . . No higher eulogy could be pronounced upon Zaragoza than was comprised in the very calumnies of its unworthy conqueror.

Before the main body of the French made their entry they demanded of Ric 50,000 pair of shoes, 8000 pair of boots, and 1200 shirts, with medicines and every requisite for an hospital. Several of the officers demanded for themselves double equipage and linen, curtains, pens, paper, and whatever they wanted, insisting that plenty of every thing should be supplied them, and the best of its kind, at the expense of the city. A service of china was required for Junot; and this merciless oppressor, who had escaped the proper punishment of his crimes in Portugal, insisted that a tennis-court should be fitted up for his amusement, in a city of which two-thirds were then lying in ruins, beneath

CHAP.
XVIII.
1809.
February.

*Demands of
the French.*

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

which so large a proportion of the inhabitants lay buried! Ric resisted demands which it was impossible for the city to supply. The French generals, provoked at his refusal to engage for the maintenance of their household, threatened to send in a squadron of hussars. He replied, that well they might, since the gates of the city were demolished and in their power, but that from that moment they would not advance a foot of ground till they had moistened it with French blood. Another member of the Junta, who had less courage, undertook that these ruffians should be satisfied as far as was possible. Ric, who was too true a Spaniard to live under the government of the Intruder, renounced the high office which he held, and, not being considered a prisoner, obtained his liberty.

Ric, 245—9.

Lasnes makes his entrance.

Baseness of the suffragan bishop.

Lasnes made his entrance on Sunday the 5th of March; his approach was announced by the discharge of 200 cannon, and he proceeded in triumph through that part of the city which remained standing, to the Church of the Pillar. The wretched inhabitants had been compelled to adorn the streets with such hangings as could be found, and to witness the pomp of festive triumph, and hear the sounds of joy and exultation. The suffragan bishop of the diocese, a traitor who had fled from the town when it took arms, and now returned thither to act as the instrument of the oppressors, met Lasnes at the great door of the church, and conducted him in procession, with the crucifix and the banner, to a throne prepared before the altar, and near the famous idol, which had escaped destruction. Then the wretch addressed a sermon to his countrymen upon the horrors of war! “They had seen,” he said, “in their unhappy city, the streets and market-places strewn with dead, parents expiring and leaving their children helpless and unprotected, babes sucking at the dry breast of the famished mother, palaces in ruins, houses in flames, dead bodies heaped at the doors of the churches, and

hurried into common graves without any religious ceremony. And what had been the cause of all this ruin? I repeat it," said the villainous time-server, "I shall always repeat it, your sins and your seditious spirit, your forgetfulness of the principles of the gospel. These horrors have ceased: and to whom are you indebted for this unexpected happiness? To God in the first place, who raises and destroys monarchies according to his will; after God, to the Virgin of the Pillar, who interceded for us; and in the next place to the generous heart of the great Napoleon, the man who is the messenger of God upon earth to execute his divine decrees, and who is sent to punish us for our sins. Nothing can equal his power except his clemency and his goodness! He has granted us the inestimable favour of peace; oh that, at the expense of my tears and my blood, I could render it eternal! It is fitting, O my God, that for this great and unexpected mercy, this signal mercy, we should all exclaim, *Te Deum Laudamus!* We praise thee, O God!" Such were the blasphemies which this hoary traitor uttered over the ruins of his heroic city! It is not possible to record them without feeling a wish, that some one of the noble-hearted Zaragozans, who at that hour of bitterness were wishing themselves in the grave, had smitten him upon the spot in the name of his religion and his country.

The oath of obedience and allegiance was then administered to those persons who either retained or accepted office under the Intruder's government. A superb entertainment followed, at which Lasnes and his chief officers sate down to a table of four hundred covers, and at every health which was drunk to the family of Buonaparte the cannons were discharged. The transactions of the day furnished a fine topic for the journalists at Paris. "All the people," they said, "manifested their joy at so sudden and happy a change in acclamations of 'long live the Emperor!' they were edified by the behaviour of their conquerors

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

Language
of the
French.

CHAP.
XVIII.

1809.

February.

*Decree of
the Central
Junta.*

during the religious ceremony; that ceremony had melted the most obdurate hearts, the hatred of the French was eradicated from all breasts, and Aragon would soon become one of the most submissive provinces in Spain!" At the time when these falsehoods were circulated in France, Junot issued a proclamation, declaring, that every Aragonese found in arms should be punished with death. Upon this the Supreme Junta addressed an order to their generals, requiring them to apprise the French commanders to whom they might be opposed, that every Spaniard who was capable of carrying arms was a soldier, so their duty required them to be, and such the Supreme Junta declared them: "This," they said, "was not a war of armies against armies, as in other cases, but of an army against a whole nation, resisting the yoke which a tyrant and usurper sought to force upon them; every individual, therefore, of that nation was under the protection of the laws of war, and the general who should violate those laws was not a soldier, but a ruffian, who would provoke the indignation of Heaven, and the vengeance of man. The Junta well knew," they said, "that the French, when they were victorious, ridiculed principles which the observance and respect of all nations had consecrated, and that they did this with an effrontery and insolence equal to the affectation with which they appealed to them when they were vanquished. The Spaniards were, however, in a condition to enforce that justice which they demanded. Three Frenchmen should suffer for every Spaniard, be he peasant or soldier, who might be put to death. Europe would hear with admiration as well as horror, that a magnanimous nation, which had begun its struggle by making 30,000 prisoners, was forced, in opposition to its natural character, to decimate those prisoners without distinction, from the first general to the meanest in the ranks. But it was the chiefs of their own nation who condemned these unfortunate wretches, and who, by imposing upon Spain