

and without bloodshed, by means of the great ascendancy of the commander over the minds of his troops; but the

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his name, however, is so intimately connected with the history of the last eight years, and more especially with those events which led to the re-establishment of freedom, that it cannot be passed over in silence. A sketch of this general's biography, in which a different colouring is also given to some of the occurrences above related, is drawn by Mr. Blaquiere, and possesses considerable interest; particularly as at this period (1823) he holds a chief command in the patriotic armies of Spain.—“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 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 been 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 Elío'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; and as they have been in a great measure confirmed by respectable testimony, 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 the Fourth, 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,



expedition was totally disconcerted: the mutinous troops could not be trusted, and the regiments by whom they had

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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 recovered 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 enterprise 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 intention, however, was carefully concealed. It having been previously arranged, that the troops should encamp at Port St. Mary's, and the 15th of 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 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



been disarmed had only been bribed to render this piece of service, by the promise of Count Abisbal that they should not be embarked for South America; the conduct of the general himself incurred suspicion, and he was dismissed from his command.

General Elio continued to pursue his measures for the suppression of conspiracy in the kingdom of Valencia, with a keenness which produced not discontent alone among the inhabitants, but resistance on the part of the local magistrates, several of whom were thrown into prison on their refusal to execute the commands of the military governor. The dungeons of the city became so crowded with political delinquents, that it was found necessary to transfer some of the number to Murviedro. Torture is said to have been applied to one of the prisoners, on his refusal to acknowledge the words which he was accused of having uttered by one of the secret agents of the police, who had treacherously drawn him into discourse on public affairs.

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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 were 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 extraordinary 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, was appointed his successor.



The Inquisition, which had lent itself without scruple to the political enterprises of the government, was invested with the superintendence and control of all the other magistrates.

The scourge of pestilence was soon after added to all the other evils of this distracted country. The yellow fever disclosed itself at Cadiz in the month of August, and, spreading to Seville, and other towns in the south, committed horrible ravages. The number of deaths was from thirty to forty daily, out of a population of 70,000 souls.

Ferdinand, who had become a widower at the close of the year 1818, issued, on the 12th of August in this year, the following decree, rendered worthy of preservation by the extraordinary style in which it is expressed: "The supreme tribunals of the capital, the deputies of my kingdom, the different municipalities, several religious communities, and many other corporate bodies, have represented to me how advantageous and necessary it would be to the well-being of the nation in general, and to all Christendom, to preserve, by means of a new nuptial union, the legitimate succession of the throne upon which Divine Providence has placed me. I have listened with favour to the just desires with which all these bodies are animated, and have yielded to their ardent wishes; and, considering the high nobility of the Saxon blood, and of the most serene princes who compose that august family—the alliances, ancient as well as recent, that adorn it—the particular attachment that his majesty King Frederick Augustus has always entertained for the crown of Spain—and, above all, the rare and sublime qualities which heaven has granted to the most serene princess, Maria Josephina Amelia, his niece, daughter of the most high and most puissant prince, Maximilian, and of the most serene princess, Carolina Maria Theresa, of glorious memory—I have chosen Don Ferdinand de Aguilar y Contreras, Marquis of Cerralbo, that he should go and propose to that monarch my hand and my throne for the said princess. Having then imparted to his majesty and her highness my sovereign intentions, they have testified with profound veneration, how agreeable such a union would be to them, as also to all Saxony. I now inform the council thereof,



that it may be apprised of it, and share the satisfaction which this new union creates in me; from which, I trust, will ensue consequences the most favourable to the Catholic religion and to my subjects."

The new queen arrived safely in Spain in the following month. It was hoped, that on this joyful occasion an act of grace would have sanctioned the return of a portion, at least, of the exiled patriots: but conciliation formed no part of the policy of Ferdinand the Seventh; and, in answer to certain solicitations on this subject, a confidential minister of his majesty dryly answered, "This affair must be left to time."

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## CHAPTER VII.

**Change in the Public Mind—Re-assembling of the expeditionary Army—Renewal of patriotic Efforts—Quiroga appointed General-in-chief—Riego undertakes the Liberation of the popular Leaders—He proclaims the Constitution at Las Cabezas—Succeeds in arresting the royal Commander and his Staff at Arcos—Obtains Reinforcements from the Spanish Army—Forms a Junction with Quiroga—Quiroga's Proclamation—Royal Army put in Motion—Success of the Patriots in seizing on the Arsenal—Formation of Riego's flying Column—Its heroic Courage and Sufferings—Inability of Riego to regain the Isle of Leon—San Miguel's Narrative of the flying Column—Quiroga maintains himself in the Isle of Leon—Patriotic Movements in Galicia—at Ferrol—in Navarre—Alarm of the Court—Ineffectual Attempt of Ferdinand at Conciliation—Abisbal declares for the Patriots—Popular Ferment at Madrid—The People demand the Constitution—The King accepts it, and issues a royal Circular to that Effect—Appointment of popular Ministers, and their Measures—Official Narrative of the Massacre at Cadiz—Further Particulars of that Tragedy—Baseness of its Authors.**

WE now approach a period of our history which, above all others, claims the highest interest. The year 1820 is one of the most eventful in the annals of Spain; when the rulers of that devoted country reaped the natural fruits of a system of abuse and tyranny, which had distinguished its administration ever since the restoration of Ferdinand. To the dissolution of the cortes in 1814, and the return



of the king to the maxims of government so long adhered to by his predecessors, but very feeble opposition had been offered: but six years of multiplied oppression and accumulating embarrassments had sufficiently undeceived even the most bigoted on this subject, and the people were at length taught to know, that their only security for the proper administration of government was to be found in their own participation in a portion of its functions.

In the course of November, 1819, the pestilence in the Isle of Leon seemed gradually to abate of its malignity, and before the close of the month it entirely ceased, after having carried off little less than 5000 individuals. On the 2d of December, a *Te Deum* was sung, in acknowledgment of this relief: and the government then renewed its exertions to complete the preparations for the expedition, upon the embarkation of which it appeared to be as earnestly bent as ever. The troops, which had been dispersed in different quarters, were again re-assembled, to the amount of 16,000 or 18,000 men; and the Count de Calderon, commander-in-chief, with the naval minister, Cisneros, employed all their activity in making up for the time which had been so unavoidably lost. But an event was at hand, which decided the fate of the expedition, and probably of the monarchy itself. A body of 6000 troops were about to be immediately embarked for the reinforcement of Morillo in Venezuela: this determined the execution of a plan which had long been in agitation. It has been already observed, that the conspiracy of the preceding July was generally understood not to have been confined to the troops which were disarmed by O'Donnell, and that there was good reason to suspect that that general, as well as the second in command, Sarsfield, had been themselves privy to the designed revolt; a fact respecting which the confessions of O'Donnell, subsequent to the revolution, no longer leave any doubt. A considerable number of officers of different ranks concerted measures for renewing the attempt which had before failed. The general disinclination for the expedition, which was known to prevail among the soldiery, was a sufficient pledge that the great body of the troops would promote the execution of any plan



which promised them an exemption from a service so disagreeable; and they depended upon the universal unpopularity of the government of Ferdinand for the ultimate countenance and support of the people.

Before the removal of Count Abisbal, a general rising had been arranged; and one of the principal objects which occupied the attention of the patriots was, to fix upon a leader whose zeal was unquestionable, and on whose fidelity dependence might be placed. After some deliberation on a point so important, a resolution was unanimously adopted to appoint Antonio Quiroga to the envied post of general-in-chief: his having been distinguished as one of the most zealous members of the secret societies, his character for steadiness, as well as being the senior colonel arrested on the 8th of July, fixed his claims, and abundantly justified the choice. Quiroga, however, was a close prisoner, and a bold and decisive measure was necessary for his rescue, before he could be placed at the head of the patriotic band. The execution of this enterprise of honour was reserved for Rafael de Riego,\* a man who, by his active energies,

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\* Perhaps there is no individual among the Spanish patriots who has rendered more important services to the cause of national freedom than General Riego: he has been enthusiastically honoured among all ranks, as the deliverer of his country, and by none more than by the female sex. When Riego made his triumphant entry into Madrid, the most beautiful women in the kingdom smiled upon him, while the fairest hands threw flowers into the vehicle which bore him through the streets. Just as he alighted from his carriage, a young and elegant female was seen making her way through the crowd which surrounded the patriot chief: on reaching the spot, she took his arm, and would not give it up till he retired from public view. This young lady's heart had been given to a young officer, who was one of the first to raise the cry of Spanish regeneration; and her sufferings had been acute during the three months he was fighting for freedom in the midst of so many perils. Taking this circumstance into calculation, the cause of her attachment to Riego, who had encountered the same dangers as her lover, and the extravagant manner of manifesting it, are less to be wondered at. Count Pecchio, in his 'Anecdotes,' furnishes a lively illustration of the vivacity, as well as patriotism, of this young Spanish heroine, in an extempore sketch drawn by her of the character of the Spanish chief.—“Having had the good fortune to find her at home,” says the author, “I profited by the circumstance, and begged she would describe the hero of Las Cabezas.





*A. Page sc.*

GENERAL RIEGO.

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was well qualified for the post assigned him, and who, besides, was an enthusiastic advocate for the constitutional system. Some few days before the arrests occurred, this officer joined the camp at Palmar; and it is likely he would have shared the same fate as the other patriots, but that a severe illness compelled him to retire to Bornos, where he remained till the 10th of November, and was then summoned to take part in the conferences which related to the

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Without betraying the least hesitation, I immediately received the following answer: 'I have so perfect a recollection, that if I was an adept in portrait painting, I should be able to draw as correct a likeness of Riego from memory, as if he sat to me for his picture; but, to give his physiognomy all its expression, it is necessary to be something more than an artist: he who attempts to paint Riego should feel the same sacred fire of liberty that burns in the soul of his original. Riego is not handsome; but of what consequence is personal beauty? he possesses those of the understanding, which are infinitely more important. I think I now see his dark eyes, full of vivacity and enterprise, his manly complexion, and that mouth which seems to express all the refined delicacy of his sentiments; his hair is also dark; he is of middling stature, and has a very martial air; his gait and general appearance is that of a hero. Riego is incessantly consumed by his love of liberty: and such is the natural intensity of his feelings, that it was easy to perceive him falling away during the five days of agitation occasioned by his visit to this place last year. I should be justified in saying that Riego is diaphanous; for every body can penetrate his thoughts. His countenance is not impregnated with that mysterious melancholy which is so often the characteristic of ambition: the Spanish hero is too ardent and enterprising long to remain wrapped up in his own thoughts. He is a brother to the soldiery: a private and sergeant of the guards dine at his table every day. He was above two years a prisoner in France, during the war of independence; and, while there, employed the time in cultivating his mind and reading the best authors: he speaks French and Italian with fluency. But how am I to express the amiability of his manners to my own sex! I could not possibly leave him, on the day of his entry into Madrid: I knew he was aware of my attachment to an officer of his battalion, who had participated in all his recent perils and fatigues; he spoke frequently of my friend, and seemed to dwell with pleasure on his courage and constancy. It is reported that Riego is about to marry: if so, I shall be truly mortified; for then we can no longer say that he only lives for his country, and is exclusively attached to liberty! No! He ought not to marry; the marriage of such a man seems an act of infidelity to the nation:—is he not *her* lover? And then—other women would no longer enjoy the privilege of admiring him!"





projected rising. At this time, Riego laboured under extreme debility, arising from his severe affliction, but nothing could restrain the ardour inspired by the hopes of rescuing his country from the domination of tyranny; and though he was aware of the dangers and difficulties which surrounded the enterprise, he adopted it without hesitation. Those who were intimately conversant with the history of these transactions affirm, that his exertions were altogether incredible, and such as left him scarcely any time for sleep or refreshment. Firm, ardent, active, and undaunted, he communicated a portion of his unconquerable spirit to others, and was pre-eminently distinguished in securing the success which crowned their subsequent efforts.

The friends of freedom also found in Antonio Alcala Galiano, one of the most eloquent men in Spain, a coadjutor worthy of the cause and its noble supporters. The court had long wished to get rid of this powerful orator and resolute patriot, and had appointed him secretary of legation at the court of Brazil. Arrived at Gibraltar, under pretence of procuring a passage, he obtained a knowledge of the secret preparations which were on foot, and instantly turned all his thoughts to the means of saving his country. Having succeeded in obtaining the confidence of all the exiles who happened to be in that fortress, he prevailed upon them to hold themselves in readiness to take advantage of the first popular movement; while he repaired to Cadiz, and, by the credit he possessed with the principal merchants there, raised considerable sums for the necessary expenses of the intended plan. At the same time, some promising efforts were made to secure the co-operation of the garrison and inhabitants of that city.

An extensive correspondence having been entered into with the provinces, and assurances received of support, the next and most important point to be settled was, to fix the precise period for commencing the work of liberation. It was for want of some such concert, or its being defeated, that every previous attempt had proved abortive. The first day of the new year was agreed upon as the most suitable and appropriate; and that day was finally determined upon, as the second epoch of Spanish regeneration.



In the mean time, Riego and his friends were actively employed in completing the military preparations, and concerting the liberation of Quiroga, Arco Aquero, chief of the staff, and their brave companions, shut up in prison by Abisbal. Every thing being now settled for operations, it was finally decided, that Riego, with the battalion of Asturias stationed at Las Cabezas de San Juan, and the Seville regiment at Villa Martin, should proceed to Arcos, Calderon's head-quarters; while Quiroga should march, at the head of two other regiments, from Alcala, the place of his confinement, to La Isla, moving along the Cortadura, so as to arrive by daybreak at the walls of Cadiz, when the gates were to be thrown open to give him entrance.

The opening of this memorable campaign of liberty presented many and strong circumstances of discouragement. Riego had great bodily weakness; the season was unfavourable, in the midst of a severe winter, when the roads were rendered almost impassable; the patriotic band was surrounded by at least 12,000 of the king's army, to the greatest part of whom it had not been deemed prudent to make known the intention of revolt; and, finally, the uncertainty of those remaining firm to whom the secret was confided. The fair consideration of these perils is necessary, in order to the due appreciation of Riego's undertaking; to which may be added, his conviction, that should the enterprise be defeated, his life, and the lives of his compatriots, must pay the forfeit. It was, however, in the face of these formidable dangers, that the general, at an early hour of the 1st of January 1820, ordered the battalion of Asturias to be drawn out; when, after an animated address from Riego, on the sacred duty they were called upon to perform, he proclaimed the Constitution of 1812, amidst the ardent acclamations of his companions in arms and the inhabitants of Las Cabezas, who were collected around him to testify their approval of the happy event. At this place, and from this day, may be dated the commencement of successful resistance to oppression; though the good cause was destined to sustain many severe trials, and even reverses, before its final triumph.

Immediately after the proclaiming of the constitutional



code, the election of the civil authorities took place; and this procedure necessarily occupied such a time, that it was late in the afternoon before the regiment could leave Las Cabezas. The rain now fell in torrents; it was dark; the line of march lay through cross-roads, which were almost entirely broken up; and it was not before day-break on the morning of the 2d, after a fatiguing march of more than twelve hours, that the regiment arrived within a short distance of Arcos. It was at this point, according to previous arrangement, that Riego was to be joined by the corps from Villa Martin; but he had the mortification of learning that it had, from the ignorance of its guides, taken a wrong direction, and could not be expected to join for some time. What made this misfortune more dangerous was, that the battalion was now exposed to the view of the garrison of Arcos, twice as numerous as itself, strongly posted, and quite fresh; while Riego's men were completely exhausted with their march, having been under arms for nearly twenty-four hours. It is under strong emergencies, that the greatness of men's minds is measured; and it was in the present pressing dilemma, that the general shewed himself fitted for the arduous and hazardous task which the calls of his country had imposed upon him. Advancing to reconnoitre the force at Arcos, while the officers and men were ruminating on the danger which surrounded them, he suddenly returned, ordered the drum to beat to arms, reiterated his instructions to those appointed to arrest Calderon and his staff, and boldly entered the town, the band making the air resound with a popular national air. On a rising ground close to the barrier, he posted a part of the regiment; and, occupying the market-place with a few companies, the arrest of Calderon, and the second in command, Salvador, with the whole staff, was effected in less than an hour, and without serious opposition. Not a moment was lost in proclaiming the political code in this place, and electing local authorities. On this critical occasion, the decision and presence of mind shewn by Riego are above all praise, and prove that he was fully aware of the momentous consequences of a successful execution of the object confided to his courage and conduct. A failure in