

In the midst of it, the citizens blew up a mine which killed five hundred of the Spaniards at once. Among these was a certain captain of engineers named Ortiz. At the moment of the explosion he had just gone down into one of the mines to see how things were there. Instead of being torn limb from limb by the shock, like most of his comrades, he was blown up bodily through the ground into the air. Falling back the next moment into the cavern, his corpse was instantly buried under the immense mass of earth and stones that followed. Forty-five years afterward, people digging in that spot found his skeleton, still encased in armour from head to foot, as if waiting to resume his place in the field, for the same terrible strife was going on still.

Four thousand of Parma's troops fell that day. Among them were nearly seven hundred officers of all grades. From this time he depended more upon the sappers and miners, of whom he had now several thousands, than upon direct assaults. But the Maestricht people were so diligent and skillful with shovels and picks that they often outwitted him. And whenever the Spaniards succeeded in making a breach in the works they found behind it a new rampart of some kind, ready to stop their way.

At the Brussels gate (next that of Tongres, on the west side of the city) they fought for five weeks to capture a ravelin that protected it. At last they carried this important work, only to find that the resolute citizens had built a half-moon inside of it, defended by a ditch forty five feet deep. And by the time Parma had taken this, they had thrown up a third rampart, to which they now retreated. Here they remained night and day, for there were no longer soldiers enough to relieve each other at all.

At length, one night in July, a Spanish soldier on guard was noiselessly pacing his rounds, now and then pausing to listen for some sound from within the walls. Chancing to discover a chink in the ramparts, he crept up to it and peeped through. It was a calm, starry night. He could discern the outlines of objects within, but there seemed to be nobody

astir. With his hands he carefully removed some stones and earth from the battered wall, until the opening was large enough for him to crawl through. It was a bold thing, no doubt, but he ventured to do it. He found that the worn-out soldiers on the ramparts, like every body else, were all fast asleep. Then he crept silently back, roused the Spanish officers, and told them that now was their time. With rapid and noiseless movements the Spaniards scaled the walls, killed the startled watch before they were well awake, and soon carried the town.

An awful massacre followed. The people knew very well that the Spaniards would show them no mercy, and they resolved to fight to the last. From the roofs they threw down heavy stones, boiling water, and red-hot sand upon the heads of their enemies. The Spaniards were greatly exasperated by the obstinacy with which they had maintained the siege so long, and especially by the help the women-soldiers had rendered. So, while they gave no quarter to any body, they hunted and slaughtered the women like ravenous tigers; sometimes hurling them headlong from the roofs, or tying them two or three together and then throwing them into the river. The massacre lasted for two whole days. On the first day the Spaniards themselves say that they killed four thousand persons. Their cries of agony were heard at the distance of three miles. When the slaughter ceased, scarcely any body was left alive.

Such scenes seem too horrible to read about, and yet we ought to know what it cost people to secure civil liberty and freedom of conscience in those days. If they could endure all this, I think the least we can do is not to forget it.

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A LITTLE boy weeping most piteously was interrupted by some unusual occurrence. He hushed his cries for a moment; the thought was broken. "Mamma," said he, resuming his snuffle, "what was I crying about just now?"

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THEY that do good with what they have shall have more to do good with.