

France. On the 8th of August, 1690, King William, with an army of 38,000 effective men and forty pieces of artillery, approached the city from the south or left bank of the Shannon. Limerick then as now, consisted of three distinct divisions. One on the Clare side of the Shannon, on the right bank of the river, one on King's Island, in the middle of the stream, and one on the Limerick side. The part on King's Island was called *Englishtown*, while that on the Limerick side was known as *Irishtown*. A bridge from the Island led to each of the other sections.

The Irish army had been concentrated at Limerick for a month when William appeared before it. Eight thousand infantry manned the works, which had been constantly strengthened since *De Lausan* spoke of them so contemptuously, but they had only nine pieces of Artillery in position. Some regiments of dragoons occupied the island, and the cavalry were stationed above and below the city, on the Clare side of the river to defend the fords, many of which were then passable. When William had disposed of his forces for the investment of the city, he sent a summons for its surrender, but was politely refused. He thereupon made preparations for a regular siege, encircling the city on the south and south-west, and soon opened a terrific cannonade along his entire front. This bombardment continued for two days without intermission; but finding he made little impression on the walls, William directed his fire against the interior of the town, and dispatched messengers to Clonmel to hasten up his battering train and pontoons, which had been conveyed by sea to Waterford, and were now on their way to his camp. The story of how Sarsfield disposed of this expected train forms one of the most dramatic chapters of Irish History. It has already appeared in *THE HARP*. Sarsfield's exploit took place on the 13th of August, and for the two succeeding weeks there was a continued succession of hard combats between the opposing forces. The garrison had made several desperate sallies inflicting considerable loss on the besiegers, while on the other hand the fire from the batteries of the latter had reduced

a considerable portion of the city to ashes, and effected an immense breach in the wall, so that by the 27th, when all was ready for the final assault on William's part, some of the Irish batteries had been silenced, and the wall along its whole front rendered untenable to the musketeers. At this crisis William sent the governor a second summons to surrender. Boisselau consulted the Irish generals, and believing further resistance useless, advised them to accept the terms of capitulation. But officers, soldiers, and citizens were unanimous in their determination to the last; the women declaring they would rather be torn to pieces by the artillery than be subjected to outrages by the foreign soldiery. Boisselau, finding himself opposed on all sides, withdrew from the city and declined all further responsibility. William having received his answer, prepared to storm the city. For this purpose he selected five hundred British grenadiers to lead the assault. These were supported by a force of ten thousand picked men, under leaders of undoubted valor and experience. The artillery was to keep up a tremendous fire along the entire line; when it ceased, the firing of three guns in quick succession was to be the signal for assault. Sarsfield and Berwick had prepared to meet the impending attack.

The greater portion of their infantry were stationed on either side of the breach; their musketeers were posted on every available portion of the wall, and the guns of the Black Battery, which commanded the breach, were loaded with grape to rake the attacking columns as they entered. Other forces were held in reserve in various portions of the city, while the streets were filled with groups of civilians, both men and women, determined to risk their lives in bravely battling for home, honor and fatherland. It was three o'clock in the afternoon when the signal was given for the assault. The British grenadiers, followed by the Dutch guards entered the breach with a rush, and in spite of a terrible shower of grape, which decimated their ranks, they got to the crest of the breach and swept past the first line of guards, but another shower of grape tore through them, and the Irish