

ner of triumph and victory over its broken ramparts, ruined churches, prostrate convents, and the thousands of its slain who filled the breaches; men, women and children, who, falling with arms in their hands, testified to the general feeling which animated them. This siege gave room for the display of many daring and heroic deeds, which the cold historians of the Peninsular war have passed over in silence, or with that slight mention which is even worse than silence. The romance of history, which could illuminate its dark pages, and brighten even the sad details of blood-bought victory, are excluded from the matter-of-fact histories of the officers, who, themselves actors in the great panorama, could only see what was immediately about and around them, and were not always conscious of the hidden springs which put in motion some of the cumbrous machinery of the war. But there is one of these events which not even the silence of historians could consign to oblivion, but to which enduring fame has been given by the pencil of Willie, and the glowing pen of Byron. Who that has ever looked upon the speaking face of the fair "Maid of Saragossa," the Spanish "Joan of Arc," as sketched by that master hand, she stands in the freshness of her youth and peerless beauty, Minerva-like, hurling the thunderbolt of war, and inspiring the drooping soldiery, while with moistened eye she turns a lingering gaze upon her dead lover, without wishing to know more of her eventful history? A leaf or two only has been gathered; but they cannot be gazed at too often, or preserved in too many ways, and we would now endeavour to trace the outline of the gallant deed of this heroic girl, to which Saragossa owed her first deliverance from the invading French.

At the close of the 4th August, 1808, the besieged city of Saragossa was in a most distressed state, completely overlooked by the French, who had gained possession of Monte Torrero, an eminence which commanded the whole city, and from whence they poured a raking and destructive fire, for the defence and support of the troops they had sent to storm a breach in the convent of St. Engracia, through which they hoped to effect an entrance into the city, which had now held them at bay for several weeks. But the Spaniards, fighting for their homes, their lives, their liberty, had met and driven back the assailants with desperate energy; hand to hand they had grappled with the foe, and succeeded in repulsing them, though a few of the most determined of the combatants had obtained and kept possession of the Cosso, the public walk formed on the line of the ancient Moorish rampart, just without the walls of the city. A few-

ful scene had closed the day, and added to the devastating horrors which already surrounded the devoted Spaniards. A discharge of the French howitzers had set fire to a Spanish magazine of powder, which blew up, destroying many houses, and burying under their ruins hundreds of the inhabitants. And, as if this were not enough to complete the terrible picture, which Death, with skilful hand and blood-red palette, was sketching, a more fearful feature was added to the scene, by the firing of the public hospital, from whence the wretched inmates, making their escape, mingled with the combatants, and the ravings of madmen, and the feeble cries of drivelling idiots, swelled the discordant sounds, which ever follow the stern spectre of carnage and war, that was now stalking through the stately streets of Saragossa, and bathing in the rivers of blood which deluged the olive grounds and vineyards of its beautiful country. The day, which had opened with the early attack of the French, seemed interminable; but at last Night drew her friendly curtain over the heated sky; the sounds of the fierce conflict ceased, the lightning flash of the iron-mouthed cannon faded away in the darkness; the French withdrew silently to their camp, many a one bearing a wounded comrade on his breast; the fearful din of strife in the beleaguered city was hushed, and nought but the low groan of the dying, or, at times, the shrill shriek of the roaming maniac, rose on the still air. All who had homes left, sought them, and the women and children were ready to welcome their hardy defenders with all the soothing cares which the weary and heart-sickened soldier requires.

At the door of one of the humblest houses in the city, stood, straining her eager eyes as if watching the approach of some one, a young girl, her mantilla thrown back, her dark hair falling loosely about her pale and anxious face. To a question asked by an individual within the house she replied: "No, mother, he comes not: my heart misgives me, he is among the slain. Would to 'Our Lady of the Pillar,' I knew where he had been stationed—I would seek him there." She pressed her hand heavily upon her heart, as if to still the rising emotion; "Ah! well," she added, "he has fallen in a noble cause. I would he could have been spared a little longer, that he might have seen his country saved, or we might have fallen together in the general ruin." She gave one more piercing look into the thick darkness, which had settled like a brooding cloud over the city, then re-entered the house, and busied herself in aiding her mother, who was binding up the wounds, and attending to the wants of some half-dozen soldiers who lay stretched upon