

tines perish from hunger ; the Romans will not come ; they are far away, and occupied with other wars ; in place of sending you legions they send you legates, and thus I, seeing that Alcon hesitated to return, face your indignation to bring you a peace rather necessary than advantageous."

"The conditions ! The conditions !" demanded the multitude, with a formidable howl which shook the Forum.

"Remember," said Alorcus, "that what the conqueror offers you is a gift, for to-day he is master of everything you possess—your lives and your estates."

This terrible truth, falling upon the multitude, produced silence. "Saguntum, which, for the greater part is already in ruins, and whose extremes his troops already occupy, he takes from you as a punishment ; but Hannibal will permit you to build a new city in the place which he will designate. All your riches, those in the public treasury as well as those in your houses, shall be turned over to the conqueror. Hannibal will respect your lives and those of your wives and children, but you must depart from Saguntum to a place which he will indicate, unarmed, and with but two garments each. I understand that these terms are stern, but your misfortune commends them to you, for it is worse to die, and to have your families fall as booty of war into the hands of a triumphant army."

Alorcus ceased speaking, but still the Forum remained in silence, a silence profound, threatening, like the leaden calm which precedes the tempest.

"No, Saguntines ! No !" shouted a woman.

Actæon recognized the voice of Sonnica.