

"Oh! had you known her in her softer hour,  
Marked her black eye, that mocks her coat black veil,  
Heard her light lively tones in lady's tower,  
Seen her long locks that fall the painter's power;  
Her fairy form, with more than female grace —"

"By our Lady of the Pillar! I leave not this post  
till we conquer, or I die!"

As these words broke the dread silence of fear, which had nearly paralyzed the defending array of Saragossa, the few remaining soldiers grasped their sabres with renewed fervour, and responded their loud vivas; the wounded raised themselves to look at the speaker, and the fire of hope and courage sparkled once more in the eyes of the dying. And who was it that produced this electric effect on the heart-weary patriots, who were hopelessly struggling for their freedom and their homes? Was it their leader Palafox, inspired with fresh zeal? Was it Cuesta with a band of reinforcements? or was it Julien, the Guerilla chief, who was known to be lurking in some of the neighbouring sierras? No, it was a woman, who with the heart of a Cid, beating beneath her heaving bosom, thus put new life into the discouraged soldiery of Saragossa. A woman, young and beautiful, who, but the day before, would have shunned to look upon the dying, and whose cheek paled at the sight of the flowing blood which, mingling with the waters of the Ebro, had dyed its pure stream with the still purer current of patriotism. She looked the very genius of her country, as, standing upon the cannon, the blazing torch with which she had that moment fired it, held in her right hand, while with eyes uplifted, she made the vow to conquer or die. Once more, loud pealed the battle-cry about her; soldiers, who, wearied and dispirited, had cast away their arms and given up all hope of victory, now seized them again. On they rushed, gathering strength with every step, they poured through the gate of the *Portillo*, cheered by the flash of the cannon, which the heroic girl still fired, and whose death shots, falling thick and fast among the enemy, did fearful execution; their sortie was irresistible; animated by no common impulse, as they bore down upon the flying foe, their victorious shout rose above the din. On they pressed, treading beneath them, hundreds of the light soldiers, who, unprepared for such an attack, were borne down by the resistless onset. They pursued them almost to the verge of their camp, when the French recovering themselves, commenced a destructive fire with howitzers, which drove the Spaniards back within their own defences; but the result of the day was glorious, hundreds of the French troops lay on the field of blood, while comparatively few of the Spaniards

had fallen; and from this moment they considered themselves the conquerors.

That night the name of Agostina rang from one part of the city to the other. The soldiers carried home the tale of her intrepid daring. Mothers and children blessed her. "Viva el Agostina Saragossa!" mingled with the midnight shout of encouragement and defiance, as the freshly inspired patriots repaired again their breaches, and added new defences to their battered walls. But where was she, the heroine of the day—heard she those shouts? Did her heart swell within her, with haughty triumph, as she found herself hailed as the deliverer of her native city? Did this proud-consciousness rejoice in the broken chain, from which the brightest link had that day been wrenched? Ah, no! Any one who had passed through the narrow street where she lived, and paused at the door of her mother's house, might have heard the low wail of a woman's sorrow—the subdued sobs of that bitter anguish, which can never be felt but once in our short lives, for the deep agony of such a trial makes all after ones seem light in the balance. There, when her name was wafted to the skies, in shouts of triumph, knelt Agostina, by the lifeless body of her lover, her hand upon that pulseless heart, whose every beat through life had been for her; but which now, unconscious of her presence, sent back no answering throbs to her fond pressure. What to her blighted hopes were the tones of victory? What cared she for the applause of the nation, when the ear to which it would have been sweetest music was deaf to the sound? For a brief time she felt as if her country's slavery could have been nothing to her, had her lover been spared; and she chid, with bitter lamentations, the gallant leader, for not yielding to the demand of a surrender, which had been made upon him; better to have had a French governor, she thought, and spared the blood of our bravest and best, than thus to gain victory by the desolation of our hearts. But this mood of mind did not continue long; even the dead face upon which she gazed seemed to reprove her for it, and ere the dawn she could look upon the lifeless patriot, and feel it was a glorious fate which had snatched him from her, a martyr to the cause of liberty, who would be canonized in the hearts of his freed countrymen.

For several succeeding days the Spaniards waited not for the attack of the French, but made vigorous sorties upon them, till wearied and exhausted, by continual conflicts, in which they gained not a step, Lefebvre Desnoettes determined to raise the siege, and, accordingly, as a cover to his escape, on the night of the 13th, he kept up a vigorous discharge of cannon and shells