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A
HISTORY
OF
THE CAMPAIGNS
OF THE
BRITISH FORCES
IN
SPAIN AND PORTUGAL,
Undertaken to relieve those Countries
FROM THE FRENCH USURPATION;
COMPREHENDING
MEMOIRS OF THE OPERATIONS OF THIS INTERESTING
WAR,
CHARACTERISTIC REPORTS
OF THE
SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE TROOPS,
AND
ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTES OF
Distinguished Military Conduct in Individuals,
Whatever their Rank in the Army.

Tros tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur. VIRG.

VOL. III.

THE CAMPAIGN UNDER SIR JOHN MOORE,
HIS RETREAT,
AND RE-EMBARKATION OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. GODDARD,
MILITARY LIBRARY, 1, PALL-MALL.

1812.

**Marchant and Galabin, Printers,
Ingram-Court, London,**

PREFACE

TO THE

THIRD VOLUME.

THIS Third Volume, by a natural order of division, gives to the military public the whole circumstances of a campaign, which, if not very pregnant with utility to the cause on which it took place, is nevertheless one of the most important that is to be found in the annals of the British army.

In truth, the war, of which the operations here to be described form a part, is replete with novel and extraordinary circumstances; and as the last book exhibited the painful picture of the whole fruits of some of the most brilliant efforts of the bravest of armies, resigned to the superior finesse of military diplomacy, yet producing a certain end in the execution of the convention of Cintra; so will the present, besides yielding a powerful lesson from the results of the desultory, vaccillating, and disastrous, operations it describes, record another

effort, without which, (*with its relations*) unhappy as it was, perhaps the cause of political freedom, in the peninsula,—of the independence of empires, must have fallen, never to rise again!

The character of the operations, in course, applies solely to the general; and therefore it may be added, that the present book will answer the further purpose of shewing another instance of the magnanimous character of British troops under the worst circumstances.

Of this great commander, who consecrated the operations he directed by the sacrifice of his life in their execution, according to the generous maxim which prescribes that nothing be said of the dead but what is favourable,* nothing would be added here; but that among the aids which the present work has received in the way of military memoirs, there is one which, with the most respectable of motives, has imperiously demanded that something be said; *truth* must therefore be intermingled with that “favour” which British generosity has so duly shewn, and the integrity of principle, at least of this humble work, be preserved—*de mortuis nil nisi VERUM*.

Several authorities, from those documents which the senate has demanded for its information, to the humblest of private memorials, have contributed to the collective view which is here attempted to be given of the campaign of sir John Moore; but the

* “*De mortuis nil nisi BONUM.*”

most important in every respect is that to which allusion has been made,*

“The public,” says its author, “is here presented with perhaps the most authentic fragment of history on record; for sir John Moore kept a journal of his proceedings; and, with an exactness unusual in a military man, preserved every official paper or letter of importance, which he received, together with copies of those which he wrote.”

“One disagreeable consequence, however,” he adds, “is likely to be produced by so open an explanation, it may irritate those whose conduct cannot bear investigation; and the sufferers from this publication ought to bear in recollection, that the author acts only defensively; and they should point their indignation against the first assailants, who are the original cause of any mortification which they may endure.”

Thus it appears, that this memoir, with the highest claim to authenticity, as far as it regarded personally the general commanding in this campaign, had yet the deterioration, that it is intended by its writer to repel some attack, either real or supposed, which had been made upon that general, his relation.

As an attack upon these real or supposed assailants, it is eminently distinguishable for its eloquence. It is also eminent for a characteristic infinitely more

* Narrative of the Campaign, by James Moore, esq. brother of sir John Moore.

amiable: it is a splendid offering at the shrine of filial piety and fraternal love, imparting to a dear and honoured mother, an account of one, the contemplation of whom was to form her chief consolation, and asserting the fame of an affectionate brother. And who would not envy him—who could with so much excellence execute so delightful a task?

But it is the province of military history to detail to those who shall hereafter form or command armies, the experience which has gone before them, not indeed, with needless austerity, but without that mild and tender regard for the domestic virtues which is so sweetly cultivated in the walks of peace; and, for the blandishments with which affection and friendship will clothe the conduct of the departed object of love and admiration, to substitute the bare view of proved excellence, the tried principles of which even success shall have crowned the justification; to examine the general, not the relation.

On these grounds, many remarks will be found in the ensuing pages, which, without them, would be painful to the writer, and repulsive to the public. The general conduct of sir John Moore, as far as difference of arrangement would permit, is, however, traced agreeably to the Narrative; and if some shall conceive that it is too servilely followed, let it be understood that it was even under all circumstances deemed an important authority;

to those who may conceive that it is not sufficiently regarded, it may be repeated, that the general evidence, in material points, went against it; it may interweave itself in the smooth narrative even of annual journalists, but not in the roughest sketch formed for military men, to whom just censure is of the highest utility.

There was an unsettledness of plan hitherto in the whole of the operations of this war, incapable of that regularity of description which was attempted to be given to it. Sir Arthur Wellesley, was brave,—and sir John Moore, intelligent, in vain for this purpose.

Sir John Moore, too, found every thing in his army disordered; he found also his army insufficient; he found likewise, great inconvenience arising from the command-in-chief not being in single hands. Yet he objected to alterations in the economy of his army, he repulsed the proffered reinforcements of lord Castlereagh, and he refused the command-in-chief of the allied armies; thus disappointing Spain, and aggrandising the enemy; and impressing the ministry falsely at home to the injury of a future campaign.

There is a something, too, very peculiar, as a lesson in the idea of a British general, in opposition to every opinion, whether political or military, determining on an abject retreat; it is only to be accounted for by an unhappy aptitude for a defi-

ciency of success, and a consequent care only to get an army away from the scene of action unimpaired.

That the latter was not to be accomplished by re-embarking, or even keeping on-board ship the flower of the British army, was evident from the expedition to Sweden, whence the troops, with all their native prowess, were unequal to immediate service: and, on the former, the classic general should have recollected the example of Varro, who was thanked, by an act of the senate and people, for not having despaired of the public affairs, who, nevertheless, when offered honours by the people, refused, saying, "The republic is in want of more fortunate magistrates."*

Upon the whole, it was a brilliant modern instance of the fatality attending upon the appointment even of a man of talent, more attentive to the circumstances of military parade, however useful, than the necessary study of war. The prosperous general at home must not seek the imminent trials of active service.

*Duris ingenium, res
Adversæ nudare solent, celare secunda.*

* Fróntinus' *Strategicon*, book I. c. v. § 6.

CONTENTS.

Preface to Vol. III.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

STATE OF SPAIN ON THE APPROACH OF THE BRITISH
ARMY UNDER SIR JOHN MOORE.

- §. 1. *Preparations for an efficient Spanish Government, favorably affected towards the British Army.*
- §. 2. *Political Impediments.*
- §. 3. *First Ministers of the Spanish provisional Government.*
- §. 4. *Good-will of the Spaniards towards the British Forces.*
- §. 5. *Strong Impulse to Exertion in a British General.*

CHAP. II.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE MARCH OF THE BRITISH
ARMY UNDER SIR JOHN MOORE, K. B. INTO SPAIN.

- §. 1. *Instructions of the British Ministry to the General commanding.*
- §. 2. *Difficulties which presented themselves.*
- §. 3. *Examination of those Difficulties.*
- §. 4. *Offer of the Command-in-Chief of the allied Armies to Sir John Moore, and his Refusal.*
- §. 5. *Proclamation of the Supreme Junta to the Spanish Nation.*
- §. 6. *March of the British Army from Lisbon.*

CHAP. III.

ADVANCE OF THE BRITISH ARMY INTO SPAIN.

- §. 1. *Route of Sir John Moore's Army.*

CONTENTS.

- §. 2. *Reception by the Spaniards.*
 §. 3. *Difficulties and their Effects on the British General.*
 §. 4. *Approach of Sir David Baird's Army.*
 §. 5. *Views of the British Commander-in-Chief in respect to the Campaign.*

CHAP. IV.

RETROGRADATION OF THE CAMPAIGN.

- §. 1. *Correspondence of Sir John Moore with Mr. Frere, the new Minister Plenipotentiary of Great Britain in Spain, and others.*
 §. 2. *His disgust at the military and political Arrangements made for the Campaign.*
 §. 3. *Contemplation of Retreat.*

CHAP. V.

STATIONARY POSITION OF SIR JOHN MOORE'S DIVISION AND PARTIAL JUNCTION OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

- §. 1. *Ill-contrived means of Intelligence, and sudden Determination of Sir David Baird to retreat.*
 §. 2. *Arrival of General Hope at Madrid.*
 §. 3. *Vaccillation of the British General.*

CHAP. VI.

CONTINUED OPERATIONS OF THE SPANISH ARMY.

- §. 1. *New military Resources of Spain called forth.*
 §. 2. *Recapitulation.*
 §. 3. *Reverses of the Spanish Army continued.*
 §. 4. *Battle of Tudela.*
 §. 5. *Defeat of San Juan's Corps at the Puerta of the Sierra Morena.*

CHAP. VII.

EFFECTS OF THE SPANISH REVERSES ON THE BRITISH GENERAL.

- §. 1. *Embarrassed Communications with the Generals next in Command.*
 §. 2. *Ill-founded Opinions of the Defence of Portugal.*
 §. 3. *Decision of Sir John Moore in Opposition to the Opinion of his whole Army.*

- §. 4. *Difference of Opinion between Sir John Moore and the Spanish Government, as well as the British Minister there.*
- §. 5. *Disgust of the British General with the Minister and his Emissary.*

CHAP. VIII.

THE BRITISH AND FRENCH ARMIES IN CONTACT.

- §. 1. *First Encounter between the British and French in Spain, the brilliant Affair of General Stewart, with the 18th Dragoons.*
- §. 2. *Intercepted Reports of the French Army.*
- §. 3. *Communications between Sir John Moore and the civil and military Functionaries.*
- §. 4. *Determination to advance.*
- §. 5. *Successful Attack on the French Cavalry of Colonel Otway.*
- §. 6. *Splendid Affair of Lord Paget, with the 10th and 15th Hussars.*
- §. 7. *Hopes inspired by them on the Advance.*
- §. 8. *Halt of the British Army at Sahagun*

CHAP. IX.

CRITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

- §. 1. *Letters; description of the Circumstances of the British and Spanish Armies, from Sir John Moore to Lord Castlereagh, and between the Marquis Romana and Sir John Moore; the Duke of Infantada and Mr. Frere.*
- §. 2. *Determinations of the British and Spanish Generals to attack the Enemy under Soult, Duke of Dalmatia.*
- §. 3. *Accounts and Suppositions of the Advance of the Enemy.*
- §. 4. *Plans of the Enemy, and of the British General.*
- §. 5. *Final Determination of Sir John Moore to retreat.*

CHAP. X.

THE RETREAT OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

- §. 1. *Peculiar Circumstances of this Retreat.*
- §. 2. *Safe Passage of the Eslar.*

- § 3. *Spirited Affairs of the Reserve under Lord Paget, particularly the Tenth and Eighteenth Hussars, with Colonel Leigh, Captain Jones, &c.*
- § 4. *Disorders of the Army; impatient of retiring from the Enemy.*
- § 5. *General Orders for the Retreat.*
- § 6. *Letter of Sir John Moore to the Marquis Romana, communicating his Decision against fighting a Battle.*
- § 7. *Ill-founded Surprise that the other Spanish Armies did not create a Diversion in favour of the the Retreat, by attacking the French.*
- § 8. *Recapitulatory Communication to the British Government.*
- § 9. *Brilliant Affair of the British Reserve under Lord Paget and General Stewart, with the Imperial Guards of Bonaparte, under General Lefebvre, in which their Commander and several Officers were taken.*
- § 10. *Despairing Communication of Sir John Moore to Lord Castlereagh, and unfounded Complaints of Marquis Romana.*
- § 11. *Insubordination of the Army.*
- § 12. *Extraordinary Accumulation of Disasters.*
- § 13. *Remonstrances of British Generals.*
- § 14. *Exertions of the Junta and Mr. Frere.*
- § 15. *Finally despairing Communication of Sir John Moore to the British Government.*
- § 16. *Orders for embarking the British Army.*

CHAP. XI.

BATTLE OF CORUNNA, AND EMBARKATION OF THE
BRITISH TROOPS.

- § 1. *New Character of the Campaign.*
- § 2. *Preparations of the Enemy.*
- § 3. *Dispositions of the conflicting Armies.*
- § 4. *Sir David Baird wounded.*
- § 5. *The Right Flank of the British Army in Action.*
- § 6. *Majors Napier and Stanhope wounded.*
- § 7. *Sir John Moore killed.*
- § 8. *Honourable Death of the British General.*
- § 9. *The British Army withdrawn under General Hope.*
- § 10. *Embarkation of the Troops.*
- § 11. *Conclusion of the Campaign.*

INDEX.

A
HISTORY
OF THE
CAMPAIGNS, &c.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

STATE OF SPAIN ON THE APPROACH OF THE BRITISH
ARMY UNDER SIR JOHN MOORE.

*Preparations for an efficient Spanish Government,
favourably affected towards the British Army.—
Political Impediments.—First Ministers of the
Spanish provisional Government.— Good-will
of the Spaniards towards the British Forces.—
Strong Impulse to Exertion in a British General.*

THE Spanish capital was no sooner evacuated by the French,* than measures were taken for the establishment of a government, which, by concentrating the various local powers that had arisen in the

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.
July 29.
Measures for the
establishment of
a government.

* See Vol. II. ch. ii. p. 100.

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.

July 29.

Measures for the
establishment of
a government.

different provinces on the first burst of indignant patriotism, should enable a more vigorous effort on the part of the country.

To this end, the several ministers, who had been temporarily deputed from Great Britain to the most important of the provinces, constantly urged every argument that could promote its efficiency, though with the utmost delicacy and caution; and most particularly for the assembly of the cortes, that powerful spring, which, by shewing the people, through deputies chosen from among themselves, their interest in the government by which they were to be ruled, promised, more than any other means, to collect the energies of the nation.

The council of Madrid, which had succumbed to the temporary government of the usurper, immediately made a demonstration of its wish to accord with the general spirit of the people. In circular letters to the several provincial juntas of Spain, dated the 4th of August, the president, don Arias Mon, thus expressed himself: "Madrid, which has groaned for upwards of four months under the yoke and irresistible power of the French armies, begins at length to breathe, by the most particular effect of Divine Providence; and the council which naturally shared the greatest part of that terrible oppression, avails itself of the first moments of its liberty to explain its sentiments. These could cer-

Aug. 4.

Address of the
council of Ma-
drid to all the
juntas.

tainly be no other than such as are consistent with its unalterable loyalty, and the indelible love of justice and reason, which always characterized it, and gained it in all times the confidence of the nation." He continues, "The sentiments and desires of the most faithful court of this city are the same; and the council has begun to direct them to the general wish of the nation, by immediately taking such measures as the present critical circumstances will allow. The court will form the plan, and provide such means of defence as are in its power, however weak and insufficient they must prove, without the prompt and efficacious assistance which it expects from your excellency. As to measures of another class, which will undoubtedly be requisite for the grand object of saving the country, and even elevating it to that degree of consideration which it possessed in its happy times, the council can do no more than rouse the authority of the nation, and co-operate with its influence, dignity, and information, to promote the general good of the country. As it is impossible, under circumstances so extraordinary, to adopt immediately the means pointed out by the laws and national customs, the council abstains from laying down the plan which might perhaps be the most proper for adjusting the national representation, and contents itself for the present with observing, that it would feel great sa-

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.

August 4.
Address of the
council of Ma-
drid to all the
juntas.

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.

July 29.

Address of the
council of Ma-
drid to all the
juntas.

tisfaction if your excellency would please to depute as soon as possible, confidential persons, who, in common with those appointed by the juntas established in the other provinces, and with the council, might confer about this most important subject, and settle it unanimously; so that all measures and provisions, issuing from this common centre, might be carried into execution as speedily as they ought."

While the evident utility and propriety of uniting with the members of this council, situate in the very heart of the nation, drew the ready attention of the several bodies to whom the invitation was addressed, many difficulties were naturally to be expected in the way of such an union, and consequently of such political arrangements as were necessary to facilitate the progress of an auxiliary foreign army.

Mr. C. Stuart's
despatch, dated
Aug. 7.

Mr. Charles Stuart, in a despatch of the 7th of August, addressed to secretary Canning, from Corunna, presented the following hopeless picture:—
"The government of every part of Spain," says he, "is at present, without exception, in the hands of the provincial nobility, or, more strictly speaking, the gentry of the country, aided by a few persons, who, having formerly held situations in the ministry at Madrid, had, for various reasons, retired long since to the provinces. No individual distinguished in the capital for rank, power, or riches, has stood forth in the support of the cause of Ferdinand the

Seventh. Some general officers of merit and reputation are indeed employed in the patriotic armies, but we look in vain for the names of those who have hitherto held the highest military commands; they have been happy to remain tranquil, though many have embraced the party of Joseph Buonaparte, and many have fallen victims to the ferocity of the mob. The names of Solano, Helos, Filangieri, are among the latter, while Campo d'Alanze, Negriti, O'Farril, and Massaredo, have joined the French.

“The provincial nobility naturally feel strong local attachments, and are less interested in the general cause than in the welfare of their own particular province: hence difficulties have arisen, impeding the assembly of a general cortes: those who have enjoyed the advantage of supreme authority and the exercise of power, are unwilling to become the mere organ through whom the orders of a superior body shall be executed. The satisfaction of providing for dependants and relations has likewise biassed many very patriotic men, and induces them to find out specious arguments in favour of their own provinces, though prejudicial to the general interests of the state: Every junta desires that the cortes shall be established near their own fire-sides, and many, anxious to retain their consequence, wish to increase the number of deputies from their pro-

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.

Mr. C. Stuart's
despatch, dated
August 7.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

1808.

Mr. C. Stuart's
despatch, dated
August 7.

vinces, sufficiently to depute every member of their own body to that assembly; and thus, by incorporating themselves in the national representation, to retain their power.

“Innumerable jealousies and competitions have arisen from these causes, which are daily increased by demands for military succours on the part of some, and the inability or obstinate refusal of others to send a man to the assistance of their neighbours. The distribution of the money received from England having been confined to particular states or districts, is construed into exclusive support, which is refused to others equally fighting for the common cause. And I understand my presence in Galicia has been commented on in the southern states, which conceive themselves entitled to equal marks of consideration on the part of Great Britain.

“The disputes respecting the precedency, &c. of the provinces have not hitherto left time for any speculation upon the succession to the crown; the future form of their regency is therefore yet a matter of uncertainty. I am sorry to say, that the federal interests of these discordant provinces are not the only causes of division, which retard the progress of affairs. Matters are not quiet in the interior of each district; there certainly exists a degree of ferment here, which places the junta in constant uneasiness for their personal security; their oppo-

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.

August.
Political impe-
diments.

nents threaten to undertake very violent measures, and several individuals here have desired me to assist them in effecting a change, and depriving the present government of authority; a revolution which could not be effected without a tumult, in which many lives would be sacrificed."

Thus, though energetic against the common enemy, it certainly appears, from the best authority, that the country was unhappily divided as to the method of directing its energies against him, and that the constituted authorities which were even most prominent in the patriotic resolution of making a stand against him, unfortunately did not possess by any means the entire confidence of the people.

These circumstances alone could not but present to the view of a general about to lead an auxiliary army into Spain, an infinite variety of difficulties; but it is the business of a soldier to overcome difficulties; where these do not occur, he has no opportunity for the exercise of his profession, as where there is no danger there is no glory; and the importance of the object was too clearly seen by the ministers of Great Britain to be relinquished at the prospect of even greater evils, in the present state of the continent of Europe. Whatever difficulties were to be anticipated in the field, they could bear but little proportion to those of the cabinet, in the

BOOK III.

CAAP. I.

1808.

August.
Political impe-
diments.

conflicts of parliamentary opposition; and the best lesson was therefore afforded to the British general of a steady and noble perseverance.

Fortunately the dejected, though doubtless accurate, despatch of Mr. Stuart, which has just been quoted, was shortly succeeded by a letter from Mr. Patrick, charged with a British mission at Oviedo, announcing a good understanding between the Asturias and Galicia, and this was followed by others of a similar tendency from the other provinces; the result of the whole of which was, the formation of a central junta, in which became vested the executive and sovereign power of Spain. Of the materials and manner of this association of the public functionaries, the best was certainly not to be hoped, still it was at least approaching towards a legitimate form of government, from which the appointment of a regency, and the popular assembly of the cortes might, whatever its progressive difficulties, be ultimately expected.

It falls not within the province of this chapter to trace any farther the political state of Spain at this period, than just to shew the critical circumstances for which it behoved the British general to prepare himself and his army on the advance into that country, not less to prevent inordinate expectation and consequent despondency at every reverse, than to impress abstinence and forbearance, and call

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.
1808.
August.

forth all the hardihood and generous temper with which British troops are at all times to be inspired.

It may be necessary, however, to the explanation of the relations of the British army which will hereafter occur, to describe the persons who were now appointed to fill the various departments of government.

SECTIONS OF THE CENTRAL JUNTA, &c.

State.

His serene highness the president, conde de Florida Blanca.—Murcia.

First ministers of the Spanish provisional government.

His excellency the vice-president, marquis de Astorga.—Madrid.

Don Antonio Valdez.—Leon.

Marquis de Villar.—Murcia.

Marquis de Villél.—Catalonia.

Don Pedro Rivero.—Toledo and Castile.

Conde de Contamino.—Valencia.

Secretary of state for foreign affairs, don Pedro Cevallos.

Grace and Justice.

Secretary of state, his excellency don Hermida.

H. E. don Gaspar Jovellanos.—Asturias.

Archbishop of Laodicea.—Seville.

Patriarch don de Selva.—Madrid.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

1808.

August.

First ministers
of the Spanish
provisionary
government.

Don Rodrigo Riquelme.—Grenada.

Don Juan de Dios Rabi.—Cordova.

Don Franc. Xavier Caro.—Old Castile.

War.

Secretary of state, his excellency don Cornel.

H. E. marquis de Campo Sangrado.—Asturias.

Don Francis Palafox.—Arragon.

Principe Pio.—Valencia.

Conde de Tilly.—Seville.

Don Tomas de Very.—Majorca.

Don M. Garcia de la Torre.—Toledo.

Marine.

Secretary of state, his excellency don Escane.

H. E. baron de Sabazona.—Catalonia.

Don Ayamanos Togores.—Majorca.

Conde de Gimonde.—Galicia.

Marquis de la Puebla.—Cordova.

Don Bonifaz Quintano.—Old Castile.

Don Amatrix.—Navarre.

Finance.

Secretary of state, his excellency don Saavedra.

H. E. don Felez Ovalle.—Estremadura.

Don Lorenzo Cavo.—Arragon.

Don Sebastian Torcano.—Java.

Don Lues Fuenes.—Grenada.

Don Francisco Castanedo.—Jaen.
 Don Maria Ovalle.—Galicia.
 Don Martin Garay.—Estremadura.
 Don Balarza.—Navarre.

BOOK III.
 CHAP. I.
 1808.
 August.

To the administration of these persons were now to be confided the resources and the energies of Spain, and consequently upon their intelligence and vigour, and the spirit diffused by them throughout the subordinate departments, in the provinces through which the British auxiliary army should pass, must depend for its provision and means of transport, with the exception of whatever could be transported with it. That this dependance should be diminished as much as possible, would, under such circumstances, naturally be the first care of the general, and those circumstances themselves the primary objects of his consideration.

Attachment of
 the Spaniards
 towards the Bri-
 tish forces.

The good effects of this establishment, however imperfect, and, in some respects, politically embarrassing to the alliance of Great Britain, was immediately perceptible in the solicitation of the members of the government to be accompanied by British ministers to their place of sitting, and the reception of major-general lord William Bentinck at Aranjuez, whose communication produced results highly important.

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.

August.

Attachment of
the Spaniards
towards the Bri-
tish forces.

In a despatch of Mr. Stuart, dated September 26, he had reason to say, that the approach of a British force to the northern provinces was expected with the utmost confidence after the arrival of lord W. Bentinck; and that, so far from those jealousies which the silence of the Spaniards had hitherto given ground to believe existed on this subject, the persons in power looked forward to their coming as the epoch when the differences among themselves would be finally extinguished.*

The marquis de Villar immediately submitted to the supreme junta the different suggestions which Mr. Stuart had made, and it determined to act upon them without loss of time.

All this was qualified, however, by the effects of that caution which the government evinced in its determinations, naturally arising out of the circumstances of its formation, and producing delay and timidity. "The mischief," says Mr. Stuart, "which is likely to result from the present state of the armies, is by no means the least alarming; the commands are perfectly independent; a reference to Madrid to determine military measures, is absurd; the British army cannot be expected to attend to the admonitions of a civil commissioner. Unless,

* Correspondence relative to the government of Spain, presented to Parliament on the 18th of March, 1810.

therefore, his majesty's commander-in-chief acquires that superiority which shall induce each corps to look up to him for their direction, the disadvantages attendant on a multiplicity of commands remain in their full force. I have submitted these considerations repeatedly to the junta, and they admit their weight and importance. For some time they agreed to nominate a chief, but the intrigues of rival officers, and habitual timidity, overcame their conviction of the evil, and they have adopted a medium, which, while it pleases no one, will, in all probability, *unless prevented by our influence*, create the worst effect.

This influence was certainly obtained and powerfully exerted; notwithstanding the delicacy to be observed with rival commanders, and the British grew daily into higher popularity in the several provinces to which they had access. Besides what we have already seen, it is asserted by major Pasley,* that major-general Leith had so much weight in the province to which he was deputed, that his suggestions were almost equivalent to orders.

The same well-informed officer adds, that major-general Leith, when employed on a mission in the north of Spain, ordered the officers under his com-

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.
Sept.

Attachment of
the Spaniards
towards the British
forces.

* Pasley on the Military Policy and Institutions of Great Britain, p. 277, 281, &c.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

1808.

Sept.

Attachment of
the Spaniards
towards the Bri-
tish forces.

mand to reconnoitre and report upon various parts of that country. "A portion of Asturias," says he, "fell to my share; and nothing, it will be allowed, can be more calculated to give umbrage to the people of a country, than to see foreign officers employed in such a manner. Yet, so far from evincing any tokens of jealousy, or of indignation (as for suspicion that was out of the question, because I always told them who I was, and what I was about) they vied with each other who should give me the best information and shew me the greatest civility; the other officers met with the same favourable reception. Had any jealousy of the English existed at that time, it is impossible that it could have escaped our observation: on the contrary, the people breathed nothing but gratitude to the British government; and, what surprised me, in the wildest places of the mountains they expressed great satisfaction at the prospect of having a free circulation of our manufactures in Spain.

Such was the political state of Spain as regarded the approach of the British auxiliary army. The position of the Spanish troops at the same period, has been detailed as far as possible in the account of the operations of the allies in Spain, previous to the *arrival* of the British troops;* and of their real

* See vol. ii. ch. ii. p. 102.

numerical force, nothing can be added with certainty. By the judgement and zeal of the British admiral (Keats) in the Baltic, an addition was made to it of ten thousand of those Spanish troops which, previous to the revolution, had been allured into the service of France, and, under the marquis de la Romana, were stationed in Funen, Langland, Zealand, and Jutland.

The manner in which this was effected, it would be unpardonable to omit in military history. The generous and loyal character of the marquis de la Romana was sufficiently known to warrant such an enterprise, which, kept in a great degree of ignorance, as he was, concerning the affairs of his country, could not be attempted without considerable difficulty.

Various attempts had been made to communicate with the marquis without success, till a Swedish clergyman, of talents and judgement, undertook it from regard to the cause. He habited himself as a low travelling tradesman, passed through Heligoland to the marquis's head quarters, and after many difficulties was compelled to jostle him in the street, and, to deceive by-standers, offer him coffee for sale. The marquis, conceiving him a smuggler, was offended, and the reverend vendor offered apologies, during which he contrived to let him know he was not a smuggler, but a gentleman who wish-

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.
Sept.

Gen. Romana's
escape.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

1808.

Sept.

Gen. Romana's
escape.

ed to speak to him. The marquis, as a test, addressed him in latin, in which the conversation continued, as if about coffee, till ample communication was made of the brave efforts of Spain, and the generous wishes of England.

The marquis with his whole army, in consequence, endeavoured to escape, but he could only effect it with ten thousand men, which, under the protection of a British fleet, reached Corunna, with their stores, arms, and artillery, on the 30th of September, while the marquis visited London for the purpose of conferring with the British ministry on the campaign which is about to be narrated.

To this valuable augmentation of the Spanish forces was also to be added the Spanish regiments liberated in Portugal by the convention of Cintra.

Of the Spanish army, what may be still deemed the right wing in the east, commanded by don Joseph Palafox, was estimated at 20,000 strong; the left, in the north-west, under Blake, not less than 55,000, and the centre, under Castanos, who had a sort of senior command, 65,000.

The French army continued to regularly oppose it, notwithstanding the weakness which had compelled Joseph Bonaparte to quit his new capital, with its right on the ocean, its left on Arragon, and its front on the Ebro. Reinforcements continued to strengthen it, and Buonaparte ordered a levy of

160,000 conscripts to supply the deficiency at home, while himself prepared to meet, as most worthy, the announced auxiliary army of Great Britain.

Here was a motive of no common impulse to the British general; since, if he failed, he failed only where all Europe had failed before him; and if he attained only the slightest advantage, he had the honour to beat the conqueror, it had almost been said, of every nation but Britain. Towards conquest, there was the promise of a diversion in Germany, which, whatever its termination, would at least give him time in advance to profit if he chose by its temporary advantage.

BOOK III.
CHAP. I.

1808.
Sept,

Strong impulse
to exertion in a
British general.

CHAP. II.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE MARCH OF THE BRITISH
ARMY UNDER SIR JOHN MOORE, K.B. INTO
SPAIN.

Instructions of the British Ministry to the General commanding.—Difficulties which presented themselves.—Examination of those Difficulties.—Offer of the Command in Chief of the allied Armies to Sir John Moore, and his Refusal.—Proclamation of the Supreme Junta to the Spanish Nation.—March of the British Army from Lisbon.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Instructions of
the British mi-
nistry to the
general com-
manding.

THE advance into Spain having been arranged with the British ministry by the intelligent and excellent marquis de la Romana, with the acquiescence of the constituted authorities in that country, on the 6th of October, 1808, sir John Moore received the orders under which he was generally to act, in the following letter from lord Castlereagh.

Downing-Street, Sept. 25, 1808.

Sir,

His majesty having determined to employ a corps of his troops, of not less than 30,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry, in the north of Spain, to co-operate with the Spanish armies in the expulsion of the French from that kingdom, has been graciously pleased to entrust to you the command in chief of this force.

The officer commanding his majesty's forces in Portugal is directed to detach under your orders, a corps of 20,000 infantry, together with the 18th and king's German regiment of light dragoons, now at Lisbon, and a due proportion of artillery; to be joined by a corps of above 10,000 men, which are now assembling at Falmouth, the detail of which you will receive herewith enclosed.

The cavalry will be sent from hence upon the return of the horse-transporters from the Tagus, some time since ordered; and it may be expected to arrive before the rest of the corps can be assembled and equipped to take the field.

It has been determined to assemble this force in the north of Spain, as the quarter where they can be most speedily brought together, and that to which the exertions of the enemy appear at present to be principally directed.

As it will require considerable arrangements he-

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to the
general com-
manding.

Lord Castle-
reagh to sir J.
Moore.

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

1808.

October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to the
general com-
manding.

fore a force of this magnitude can be enabled to take the field, and as it is not deemed advisable that it should be partially committed against the enemy, before the whole can be assembled and rendered completely moveable, it has been thought prudent to send that part of this army which is to proceed from hence to Corunna, rather than to disembark any part of it, in the first instance, at any position more advanced towards the enemy.

It will be for you to consider on what points in Gallicia, or on the borders of Leon, the troops can be most advantageously assembled and equipped for service, from whence they may move forward as early as circumstances shall permit; and it is left to your judgment to decide whether the whole of the infantry and artillery shall be transported from Lisbon by sea to Corunna, or whether a proportion shall be marched through Portugal to that destination.

The cavalry you will of course direct to move by land; and if the horses for the artillery can take the same route, so as to admit of the whole of the horse-transporters being returned to England, it will tend much to accelerate the arrival of the cavalry from hence.

It will be necessary to concert with the commissary-general (Mr. Erskine), who will be attached to the service of your army, the best means of assem-

bling an adequate supply of horses and mules for rendering your army moveable. And that this may be effected with more despatch, it may be advisable to draw your supplies from different parts of Spain, and not altogether to depend upon Gallicia, which has been considerably drained of its resources by the equipment of general Blake's army.

A deputy-commissary (Mr. Assiotti) has been despatched, with colonel Hamilton, of the waggon-train, into the Asturias, to procure such horses and mules as that country can furnish; and he is directed to report the progress of his purchases to you. When you have ascertained the number of draft-cattle of different descriptions that you will require for rendering your army moveable (which you will feel it important to restrict within the narrowest compass, consistent with the efficiency of your corps), you will be enabled to regulate the purchases made by the several agents; and should you deem it necessary to procure the support of his majesty's minister (Mr. Frere), who is now proceeding to the central government, to facilitate these purchases, you will address yourself to him on this subject; or to any of his majesty's civil or military agents now employed in the respective provinces of Spain.

I enclose, for your information, a statement of the various equipments which have proceeded with the respective corps now on service in Portugal, which,

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to the
general com-
manding.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to the
general com-
manding.

subject to the waste that has since taken place, will enable you to judge of the means immediately within your reach, for the equipment of your army.

I also send a similar statement with respect to the corps assembling at Falmouth, under the orders of lieutenant-general sir David Baird; whatever supplies you may wish to receive, not therein included, will be immediately forwarded from hence.

With respect to provisions, the principle upon which I have acted has been to send three months provisions in victuallers with every corps that has moved; exclusive of the provisions in their transports, which may be averaged at about ten weeks additional consumption.

This supply, aided by the cattle to be procured for the troops when on shore, may be deemed as considerably exceeding a supply for six months; and, as provisions for 20,000 men for three months are ordered to be embarked, and constantly kept up as a depôt here, there will be no difficulty in sending you, at the shortest notice, such supplies as you may think may be more conveniently introduced by sea, and for which you may not think it prudent to depend on the resources of the country.—A large proportion of biscuit has been sent in the victuallers, that you may be relieved from the inconvenience of baking when the troops are in motion.

With respect to the plan of operations on which it may be most expedient to employ your troops, when assembled and ready for service, there will be full time before your equipments can be completed for concerting this with the commanders of the Spanish armies.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to the
general com-
manding.

I shall lose no time in forwarding to you from hence such information as I may have been enabled to collect. And I am to recommend that you will take the necessary measures for opening a communication with the Spanish authorities, for the purpose of framing the plan of the campaign, on which it may be advisable that the respective armies should act in concert.

His majesty has been pleased to direct, that the command on which you are employed should be considered as a distinct and separate one from that of Portugal: but you will continue to communicate with the officer in the chief command at Lisbon, and act in concert with him as may be most for the advantage of his majesty's service.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

CASTLEREAGH.

Lieut.-gen. sir John Moore, K. B.

&c. &c. &c.

The minister at the same time addressed the following explanations to lord Wm. Bentinck at the capital.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

September.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

Lord Castle-
reagh to lord W.
Bentinck.

London, 30th Sept. 1808.

My lord,

As the despatches received from sir Hew Dalrymple yesterday leave me no room to doubt, that this letter will find you out at Madrid, I deem it advisable that you should be apprised of the arrangements that are in progress for affording military succours to the Spanish nation.

Mr. Frere, who proceeds as minister to the central government in a few days, will be directed to make a formal communication on this subject; but you will, in the mean time, make such use of the information I send you, as you may think fit, to make the Spaniards feel how eagerly his majesty desires to contribute to their deliverance.

The amount of force which it is proposed to employ in Spain will fall very little short of 40,000 men: it is to consist of 30,000 infantry, rank and file; 5,000 cavalry, and the necessary proportion of foot and horse artillery, waggon train, &c.: the whole to be assembled under the orders of sir John Moore, on the borders of Gallicia and Leon; from whence they may operate in the open country, as soon as the necessary proportion of horses and mules can be procured to render them moveable, leaving it to the Spanish armies, not having a due proportion of cavalry, to act on their flanks in the mountains.

Sir David Baird, with 12,000 men, is ordered to sail for Corunna;—Sir John Moore is to move the remainder of the force required to complete the 30,000 infantry from Portugal, either by land or sea, as he may find most convenient, sending the two regiments of cavalry, under my brother, through the interior; the rest of the cavalry will be sent from hence as speedily as circumstances will permit.

It would have been more satisfactory, had our army been equipped for service, to have disembarked at St. Andero, or some other point nearer the enemy; but, as it is of equal importance to the Spaniards as it is to us, that this army should not be partially committed or brought into contact with the enemy, till the means of moving and following up an advantage are secured; and as the navigation on the coast of Asturias becomes extremely precarious towards the close of the year, it was the decided opinion of all military men, and of none more than the marquis de la Romana, whose sentiments on this subject are stated in the accompanying memorandum, and will be expressed on his arrival in Spain, as fully approving of the decision that has been taken to make Corunna our principal depôt, and to operate from thence. To render the northern provinces the more secure, whilst our army is assembling, and to co-operate with the other Spa-

BOOK III.

CHAP. III.

1808.

September.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

September.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

nish armies in circumscribing the enemy's positions on the Ebro, the marquis has determined to proceed with his own corps, amounting nearly to 10,000 men, to St. Andero; and he proposes, on his arrival there, by the incorporation of the armed peasantry of the Asturias and the Montagna, to augment their numbers to, at least, 20,000 men; which, with the Asturian army and Blake's, will carry the force in that quarter to 60 or 70,000 men, exclusive of the armies operating towards the front or left of the enemy's line. I am not enabled to send you any precise calculation of the number of horses and mules we shall want. The cavalry, artillery, and waggon-train, will be provided from hence; the stores and baggage of the army, the commissariat, &c. must be equipped in Spain. I have sent a commissary into the northern provinces to collect what can be had. Sir David Baird is directed, on his arrival, to equip his corps, if possible, from the resources of Gallicia and the north of Portugal. Sir John Moore, when he has arranged the movement of his army from Portugal, will, probably, superintend in person the equipment on the spot. I have only, in the mean time, to request you will communicate with those in authority, on the best means of rendering this important force serviceable as early as possible; that you will furnish sir John Moore with every infor-

mation and assistance; and that you will cause orders to be sent into the provinces of Gallicia, and to facilitate the equipment of the army, and insure them a good reception.

The marquis of Romana has written to make his government perfectly understand the principles upon which our decision has been taken, and to explain to them why they must not expect the British troops to take the field in detached corps.

I have the honour to be, &c.

CASTLEREAGH.

Major-general

Lord William Bentinck.

Sir John Moore, in his answer to lord Castlereagh, stated, that it was his intention, as it was that of sir Harry Burrard, to move with the troops from Lisbon on Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo; this, he adds, your lordship will observe, by lord William Bentinck's letter of the 2d October, is recommended by the Spanish generals; and I think it preferable, for many reasons, to a movement by sea to Corunna, which at this season would be tedious and uncertain; and where the country, already exhausted by general Blake's army, will perhaps scarcely be able to supply the equipment required, to enable the corps under sir David Baird, when landed, to move forward.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

September.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

September.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

The march from this will be by three routes, Coimbra, Guarda, and Alcantara; one regiment will begin its march the day after to-morrow, in the direction of Coimbra, and all may be forwarded to a short distance, in their different routes, in the course of a week or ten days; but, when they will be able to proceed further, or to pass the frontier of Portugal, it is impossible for me, at this instant, to say; it depends upon a knowledge of country which I am still without, and upon commissariat arrangements yet unmade; but every effort shall be made by me, and those under me, to accomplish so desirable an object before the rains set in. I cannot conclude without mentioning the very great assistance I received from sir Harry Burrard, who acts with a degree of candour, of which few people would be capable under such circumstances. He seems, on this occasion, to put himself aside, and to give every thing to me, and to a service he thinks the most important, with as much liberality as if he himself were personally concerned in the conduct of it.

This testimony, in regard to sir Harry Burrard, is infinitely more agreeable than the reflections in Mr. Moore's narrative on the junior command of his brother.*

* For the elegant narrative of the campaign of the British army in Spain, under this general, Mr. James Moore takes frequent

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

In another letter, dated from Lisbon the 9th of October, 1808, the general adds; I shall avail myself of the permission you are kind enough to give me to correspond with you unofficially, and shall communicate, without reserve, every thing that can give you pleasure, or in any degree contribute to promote the public service. The great object at present is to get the

occasion to express the dissatisfaction of his brother, and sometimes in a manner which excites regret, by the unmilitary freedom with which persons and things, and their arrangements, ordered by the government under which sir John Moore was employed, are treated; and, what is worse, with more zeal than that of the fondest biographer, sir John made paramount to every thing. Nor is it at all consistent to wonder that sir John Moore should have treated his superior, who behaved with amenity towards *him*, with civility, still less to speak of his excellency's Roman spirit inducing him, if ordered, to serve even as ensign, while such an order was impossible. Of the numerous general officers in the British army, it is not in the nature of things but that many can never hope to possess a chief command. The remainder, however, are by no means precluded from distinguishing themselves, opportunities for which never fail to occur to an active and intelligent mind.

Had an inferior in rank and talents, indeed, been suddenly called to overstep him in command, with all the insolence of successful fortunes: had he employed his ignorance in destroying enlightened efforts of his junior officers for the good of the service within his own sphere of action; then, indeed, might sir John Moore have complained of his junior command: but, situated as he was, he was not in a situation in which he would have *suffered* others, his juniors, to complain, and these observations are therefore weak and inexpedient in the extreme.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

troops out of Portugal before the rains set in ; but, at this instant, the army is without equipment of any kind, either for the carriage of the light baggage of regiments, artillery stores, commissariat stores, or other appendages of an army ; and not a magazine is formed in any of the routes by which we are to march. The few days which sir Harry Burrard held the command, only enabled him to ascertain his wants but not to remedy them. I mention this circumstance, in the first place, because it is a truth ; and, in the next, to prevent your lordship from being too sanguine, as to the probable period of my reaching the north of Spain. It is my intention to forward from this to Almeida as much ammunition and artillery stores as I can ; and to form there also a depôt of provisions and other stores. Whatever comes with sir David Baird, and from England, may be landed, or remain on board a ship at Corunna, to be forwarded from thence to such place, in that line, as may hereafter be judged most fit ; but as yet I have no information from Madrid, but what is contained in lord William Bentinck's letter of the 2d of October.

Sir John Moore, notwithstanding the satisfaction which he would appear to have derived from this command, seems even at this early stage to startle at the difficulties which were naturally to be ex-

pected in the equipment of his army, in a manner that certainly did not augur, with his other great acquirements, a mind quite prepared to meet them.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Instructions of
the British
ministry to lord
W. Bentinck.

The following was the effective strength of the troops sent to form the British and auxiliary army of Spain :

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.1808.
October.Force from
Portugal.*Effective soldiers who marched from Portugal
under the command of sir John Moore.*

Description of Troops.	Regiments.	Officers commanding.	Nos. R&F.	Total.
Artillery	Royal Artillery	Colonel Hardinge - -	686	686
Cavalry	18th Lt. dragoons	Lieut.-col. Jones - - -	565	912
	3d do. or King's Germ. legion }	Major Burgwedel - -	347	
Infantry	2d regiments -	Lieut.-col. Ironmonger	616	17,745
	3d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Blunt - - -	815	
	4th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Wynch - -	754	
	5th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Mackenzie	833	
	6th do. - - -	Major Gordon - - - -	783	
	9th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Cameron -	607	
	20th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Ross - - -	499	
	28th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Belson - - -	750	
	32d do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Hynde - -	756	
	36th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Burne - - -	736	
	38th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Greville - -	823	
	42d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Stirling - -	880	
	43d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Hull - - - -	411	
	50th do. - - -	Major Napier - - - -	794	
	52d do. (1st bat.)	Lieut.-col. Barclay - -	828	
	52d do. (2d do.)	Lieut.-col. Ross - - - -	381	
	71st do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Pack - - - -	724	
	79th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Cameron -	838	
	82d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Eyre - - -	812	
	91st do. - - - -	Major Douglas - - - -	698	
	92d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Napier - -	900	
	95th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Beckwith -	467	
	95th do. - - -	Major Travers - - - -	321	
Staff corps - -	Capt. Leicester - - - -	61		
King's Ger. Leg.				
1st light bat. -	Lieut.-col. Leonhart -	803		
2d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Halket - -	855		
				17,745
N.B. The third regiment, except the grenadier-company, being left to keep up the communication with Portugal, should be deducted - - - - -				715
From Portugal				18,628

The numbers of the effective soldiers that marched from Corunna under sir David Baird.

Description of Troops.	Regiments.	Officers commanding.	Nos. R & F	Total.
Artillery	Horse Artillery	Captain Downman - -	177	611
	Royal Artillery	Captain Eveleigh - - -	434	
Cavalry	7th hussars - -	Lieut.-col. Vivian - - -	497	1,538
	10th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Leigh - - -	514	
	15th do. - - -	Lieut.-col. Grant - - -	527	
Infantry	1st ft.gds. (1st bat)	Lieut.-col. Cocks - - -	1300	8,573
	do. (3rd bat.)	Lieut.-col. Wheatley -	1027	
	1st reg. (3rd bat.)	Major Mullers - - - -	597	
	14th do. (2d bat.)	Lieut.-col. Nichols - -	550	
	23d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Wyatt - - -	496	
	26th do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Maxwell - -	745	
	43d do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Gifford - -	817	
	51st do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Darling - -	516	
	59th do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Fane - - - -	557	
	76th do. - - - -	Lieut.-col. Symes - - -	654	
81st do. - - - -	Major Williams - - - -	615	10,722	
95th do. (detach.)	Lieut.-col. Wade - - -	699		

From Corunna - - - - - 10,722

From Portugal - - - - - 18,628

Army 29,350

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Equipment and
preparation for
the march of the
British troops.

In the equipment and preparation for the march, however, it would appear, that difficulty followed difficulty to such a degree, that sir John Moore seems already almost to have given himself up to despair; nor does he fail to confer due censure upon the several departments which he supposed impeded him, nor even the officers who had been usefully employed on missions into the provinces, as will appear from the following letters :

Lisbon, 18th October, 1808.

My Lord,

Since I had the honour to address your lordship, on the 9th instant, I have received your lordship's letter, marked private, of the 30th September, inclosing copies of your instructions to sir David Baird, and of your letter to lord William Bentinck; a statement of transports, and a paper of the marquis of Romana upon the line of march from Corunna into Castile. I immediately wrote to sir David Baird, to inform him of my intention to march the whole of the troops by land, and to prevent his sending round the transports from St. Andero to Corunna; but, had I wished to send any part of the army by sea, I could have done it without the aid of these transports, as there still remains here, after the embarkation of the French, tonnage for 12,000 men. I have received letters within

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

these two days from lord William Bentinck, from Madrid, of the 8th instant, in which he mentioned that the Spanish government had been thrown into a considerable degree of alarm, in consequence of a letter intercepted from the government of Bayonne to marshal Jourdan, informing him, that, between the 16th of October and 16th November, 66,000 infantry, and from 5 to 7,000 cavalry would enter Spain. Lord William seems to consider this alarm, upon the whole, as salutary, although he gives credit to the contents of the letter; as the former supineness of the central council, its confidence and indifference to the existing danger, had been succeeded by a state of great activity. The troops from Madrid had been ordered to advance by double marches. General Castanos was sent to the army; and a determination was come to appoint Mr Morla of Cadiz, minister for the war-department, a man from whose ability and energy of character much benefit was to be expected. A letter was also written to Mr. Stuart, by count Florida Branca, to press the immediate junction of the British force. The letters which I wrote, both to lord William and Mr. Stuart, on the 10th, would inform them of the succours coming from England, and the measures I was taking to accelerate the march of the troops.

It is impossible to be more anxious than I am to get forward; but it is needless to take forward

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

troops without the means to enable them to act ; and however light the equipment I have fixed, yet the difficulty of procuring it is very considerable ; add to this, a commissariat extremely zealous, but quite new and inexperienced in the important duties which it now falls to their lot to execute. I am, however, sufficiently aware of the importance of even the name of a British army in Spain, and I am hurrying as much as possible. The greatest part of the troops are in motion ; in the course of this week all will, I hope, be clear of Lisbon. As soon as they are placed on their different routes, and I shall leave the conduct of the marches to the generals conducting the different columns, and shall proceed myself direct to Almeida, to determine their farther movement.

I have received no report yet of the arrival of sir David Baird. I expect it daily, and have already sent two staff officers to join him.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

The following is still more striking :

Lisbon, 18th October, 1808.

My Lord,

I wish I could announce to your lordship a greater progress, and that this letter had been addressed from any where but from Lisbon.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

All I can assure you of is, that I am labouring in my vocation, and if each day does not produce all the effect I could wish, or which, perhaps, I have a right to expect, yet there is no day which has not produced some, and we are accordingly getting on. In none of the departments is there any want of zeal ; but in some of the important ones there is much want of experience. * * * * * This remark applies particularly to the commissariat, few of whose members have ever seen an army in the field. The short maritime expeditions in which they have been employed, require but middling talents, and give them but little or no experience of the operations they are now called upon to perform. I have no complaint to make. Mr Erskine is a clever man, of strict integrity ; but still his habits have not been such of late, as to prepare him for a situation, to fill which so much ability and energy should be united. Mr. Erskine's character for integrity and honour may be of much use at the head of the department. * * * *

* * * * *

I have only touched upon this subject in my official letter ; but I take the liberty you have given me to address you privately, to impress it seriously upon your lordship's attention, as one of the greatest importance. The department itself must not be looked to ; in it, I am persuaded, proper officers

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

will not be found; but men of business and of resource are to be found in London; and it is such men only who are fit for the higher branches of the commissariat.

I have no hope of getting forward at present with more than the light baggage of the troops, the ammunition immediately necessary for the service of the artillery, and a very scanty supply of medicines. The depôt which I wish to establish at Almeida, I cannot wait for; but I hope the experience which is acquired in setting the troops in motion, will enable the commissariat, when we are gone, to forward what is wanted for Almeida.

The officers proposed to be sent from Madrid and the Spanish army, are not yet arrived; but, upon the information I have, I shall proceed, and am retarded only by my own arrangement. Money and shoes are the two articles we shall be principally in want of; and with respect to shoes, whatever quantities are sent, I should wish they were carefully inspected, as in general they are very bad. Brigadier-gen. Sontag came here some time ago from Oporto. He shewed me your lordship's instructions, to be employed in the south of Spain; but the Spaniards have expressed a dislike to have foreigners sent amongst them, though they are pleased to see any Englishmen. I should therefore, upon this ground, have thought it proper to stop

general Sontag; but it appears to me no longer necessary to employ officers in the distant provinces, since the central government is formed at Madrid; with which I shall be henceforward in direct communication. I have, therefore, also put an end to major Cox's mission at Seville, and have ordered him to return to his regiment at Gibraltar; and I believe it will be equally necessary soon to call in the other officers employed in this manner with the different Spanish armies. I understand that colonel Doyle received at first, from some of the provincial governments, the rank of brigadier-general; and he has now got, from general Blake, that of marshal de Camp, or major-general. It strikes me as an impropriety in British officers to take rank in a foreign service without the king's permission; and dangerous in another view, as the hope of such promotion may tempt them to forget the interest of the service for which they were sent, and their duty as British officers. At any rate, I see no good purpose it can answer: and when the armies join it may be troublesome.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

P. S. I propose to employ brig.-gen. Sontag in taking charge of the sick left at Lisbon, and in forwarding them to the army when recovered; and in assisting in forwarding the different articles for the use of the army, and the depôt at Almeida.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

General orders
of sir John
Moore to the
army.

In the interim, and soon after the general entered upon his command, he published the following orders to the troops:

Lisbon, 9th October, 1808.

“The troops under lieut.-general sir John Moore will hold themselves in readiness to move on the shortest notice.”

“The lieut.-general trusts that the general officers will lose no time in ascertaining that the regiments under their command are in good order, and complete in every equipment to enable them to keep the field.”

“Lieut.-general sir John Moore will take an early opportunity of inspecting the several corps of the army.”

“All the heavy baggage will be left in Lisbon, and directions will be given hereafter respecting it.”

“The general officers will communicate with the commanding officers of corps, upon the situation and fitness of the stores for their heavy baggage, and report thereupon for the information of lieut.-general sir J. Moore.”

“Directions will be given with respect to the sick. The lieut.-general sees with much concern the great number of this description, and that it daily increases. The general assures the troops, that it is owing to their own intemperance, that so

many of them are rendered incapable of marching against the enemy: and having stated this, he feels confident that he need say no more to British soldiers to insure their sobriety."

This order, says Mr. James Moore, was understood to have been relished by the soldiers, and had some effect upon them. Previous to the march, another order was issued to instruct them in their conduct towards the Spaniards.

Head-quarters, Lisbon, 15th October, 1808.

"The commander of the forces trusts, that, on the troops entering Spain, they will feel with him how much it is for their honour and advantage to maintain the high opinion, and cherish the goodwill, which that brave and high-spirited people entertain towards the British nation.

"The troops will generally be received by the inhabitants. The Spaniards are a grave, orderly people, extremely sober; but generous and warm in their temper, and easily offended by any insult or disrespect which is offered them; they are grateful to the English, and will receive the troops with kindness and cordiality.

"This the general hopes will be returned with equal kindness on the part of the soldiers, and that they will endeavour to accommodate themselves to their manners, be orderly in their quarters, and

BOOK III.

CHVF. II.



1808.

October.

General orders
of sir John
Moore to the
army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

General orders
of sir John
Moore to the
army.

not shock by intemperance a people worthy of their attachment, and whose efforts they are come to support in the most glorious of causes, — to free themselves from French bondage, and to establish their national liberty and independence.

“ Upon entering Spain, in compliment to the Spanish nation, the army will wear the red cockade, in addition to their own.”

Account of the
form of march.

Of the form of march, sir John Moore gave the following account to lord Castlereagh :

It should, however, be considered, in opposition to the evils he encountered, according to his biographer and relation, that “ no part of military affairs was unknown to the general ; he was capable of forming, in some degree, what was deficient ; and, though he complains of the inexperience of some of the departments, he writes with approbation of their zeal and exertions. The directions of government were, that the cavalry should be sent by land, as he judged best. Upon an examination of the subject, there was found to be no choice ; for, independently of the uncertainty and danger of a coasting voyage in winter, which, even when prosperous, unhinges the whole machinery of an army, it was ascertained that, at Corunna, there were hardly the means of equipping and forwarding the corps commanded by sir David Baird. — The

Spanish government deputed colonel Lopez, a Spanish officer; who was well acquainted with the roads and resources of the country, to assist the British army on its march, to establish magazines, and to make the necessary arrangements with sir John Moore. He confirmed the former intelligence, and pressed him, in the name of the junta, to march by land; assuring him, that if he went by sea, one half of the army could never leave the coast for want of necessaries.

The next question was, whether they should proceed in a northerly direction, through Portugal to Almeida; or should take the great eastern road to Elvas, and thence march through Estremadura. Necessity decided this question likewise; for it was found that the whole could not be subsisted on the road by Elvas; no magazines having been formed for such a body of troops. When the Spanish commissary-general was consulted on this subject, and when the quantity of meat required by the British army was explained to him, he computed, that, were they to be supplied with the rations specified, in three months all the oxen would be consumed, and very few hogs would be left in the country.

Strict inquiry was then made respecting the roads through the north of Portugal, where there was known to be abundance of food.

He found the Portuguese at Lisbon incredibly

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Account of the
form of march.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Difficulties of
proceeding.

ignorant of the state of the roads of their own country ; but all agreed that cannon could not be transported over the mountains, which form the northern boundary between Spain and Portugal.— Even British officers, who had been sent to examine the roads, confirmed the Portuguese intelligence.

As equipments could not be procured at Corunna, as food could not be supplied on the road by Elvas, and as the artillery could not be drawn over the Portuguese mountains, it became absolutely necessary to divide the army.

This distressing measure was adopted from necessity alone. In an absolute government like France, where the ruler is skilled in military operations, and possesses power to bring forth all the means and resources of the country, such difficulties vanish ; but in Spain and Portugal few obstructions can ever be removed by the government ; they can only be evaded.

It was then determined to send five brigades of artillery to accompany the cavalry through Spain ; and four regiments of infantry were added for their protection.

This important corps of six thousand men was entrusted to lieutenant-general Hope, and directed to march by Elvas, on the Madrid road, to Badajos and Espinar. And two brigades under general Paget moved by Elvas and Alcantara.

The rest of the army moved through Portugal.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

Two brigades, under general Beresford, went by Coimbra and Almeida.

1808.
October.

Three brigades, under general Fraser, by Abrantes and Almeida.

Disposition of
the British
forces.

Sir John Moore thinking it of very great importance that some artillery should accompany these corps, ordered one light brigade of six pounders, under captain Wilmot, to proceed through Portugal, and he trusted to this officer's activity to transport the guns over the mountains by dint of labour.

The different regiments of each division followed each other in succession to facilitate the march; sir John Moore intending that the whole of the troops coming from Portugal should unite at Salamanca; and that sir David Baird and general Hope should either join them there or at Valladolid.

The several divisions having moved off, sir John Moore left Lisbon on the 27th of October, and immediately addressed the following letter to lord Castlereagh.

Lisbon, Oct. 27, 1808.

My lord,

Every thing is now clear of Lisbon, except two regiments which march to-morrow and the day following; and I shall myself leave it in a couple of hours.

Sir J. Moore to
lord Castlereagh

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

I am under the necessity of sending general Hope with the artillery, cavalry, and a corps of infantry, in all about 6,000 men, by the great road leading from Badajoz to Madrid; as every information agreed that no other was fit for the artillery, or could be recommended for the cavalry. This is a great round, and will separate the corps for a time from the rest of the army; but there is no help for it; the road turns to the left a short distance from Madrid, and leads upon Espinar, from whence it can be directed on Valladolid and Burgos, or whatever other place may be judged hereafter best for the assembling of the army.

Sir David Baird arrived at Corunna on the 13th instant; but, as it had not been previously notified to the provincial junta, he was not permitted to land his troops until an answer was returned from Madrid. I have not heard from sir David since that answer was returned; but I conclude that he landed on the 21st. I have written to him to march upon Astorga as soon as his corps is equipped.— With the infantry which marched from this direct upon Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, I shall not advance beyond Salamanca, until the corps under Baird and Hope approach Astorga and Espinar, but shall collect them in Almeida, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Salamanca. This, at least, is my intention at present; and I shall consider myself fortunate if they

reach those places before the first rains, which in general last six or eight days, and fall so heavy that, during their continuance, the troops must halt.

I have directed sir David Baird to form a small depôt of provisions and ammunition at Astorga. I am endeavouring to form one at Almeida; but the difficulty of carriage through Portugal is such, that it is extremely doubtful whether it will be formed in time to be of much use. As we advance, Corunna must be the place from whence our supplies from England are drawn; Lisbon and Portugal become then of no use to us. I have, however, under present circumstances, and until the army is united, thought it right to request sir Charles Cotton not to send home the transports, and to this he has consented, unless he should be otherwise directed from England. Some ordnance and other ships should at any rate be left at Lisbon, for the conveyance of such stores and provisions as may be wanted to Corunna.

Colonel Lopez, the officer sent to me from Madrid, was with me two days; he is now gone to aid general Hope's march. He is very confident we shall not want supplies; and it is upon this general assurance of the Spanish government that I am leading the army into Spain without any established magazines. In this situation nothing is more essentially requisite than money; and, unfortunately

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

BOOK II.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

we have been able to procure here very little. Sir David Baird has come without any, and his troops paid only to the 24th of September, and from this we could only send him £8,000. Mr. Erskine has, I believe, written upon this subject, and I should hope that a supply was now on its passage. It is my intention, as soon as I have made the necessary arrangements for the troops at Almeida and Rodrigo, &c. to go for a few days to Madrid. No commander-in-chief is yet named, and I fear the consequences, should the French, reinforced, be able to act offensively, and the different Spanish armies continue to be directed by a council residing at Madrid.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

With the deference, which is doubly due to sir John Moore, from his high character, and the circumstances of his campaign, it may be inquired whether the difficulties so strongly enumerated and in so querulous a tone, were really so great as they presented themselves to the mind of that accomplished general, or, if so great, whether they were not difficulties ordinarily to be expected on such a service, the remedy of which forms a conspicuous object in the profession of a general officer.

Ignorance of the country, perhaps the greatest

evil a general can encounter, is not obviously to be remedied by complaint, but by endeavours to obtain through others the knowledge of which he is not himself in possession.

The want of provisions, either in sufficient quantity, or of the kind best suited to the habits of an army, is equally clearly to be remedied only by a diminution of its wants, a gentle change in its customary diet, and the exercise of that moral influence which every great commander may always possess, and which never fails in inducing an army with a well-instituted economy to submit to every necessary privation.

The same influence will most frequently prevail in any case of pecuniary deficiency; but there are many resources of which a general may avail himself, of which however the means are only to be obtained by inspiring with confidence, in favour of his army, the country which is the seat of war.—The general who effects this confidence need seldom want the means of paying his troops, or, who preserves that influence, suffer evil if his army be temporarily unpaid.

As auxiliaries to the army of a high-spirited nation, fighting in its own country, nothing certainly could be a greater evil than the want of a commander-in-chief of that nation to whom reference could be had on every necessity of the army, and

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.
1808.
October.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808

October.

whose care and foresight would naturally prevent those necessities from becoming too great, as well as dispose the operations of the allied armies to the best advantage.

It should seem, however, that great as these evils appeared in prospect, they either never existed to their full extent, or not without a proffered remedy.

For however ignorant of the country the officer appointed to the chief command of an army about to advance into it, the British government had, as already been seen, ordered officers the best qualified to be dispersed through the most important of the provinces, for the purpose of procuring the necessary intelligence, in which they were readily aided by the inhabitants, of which intelligence sir John Moore might certainly have availed himself to the full extent. And, moreover, an able officer, well acquainted with the roads and with the resources of the country, colonel Lopez, was commissioned by the Spanish government to visit the army of sir John Moore, and yield every satisfaction on the subject. And it was under the influence of colonel Lopez's intelligence that sir John Moore altered the mode in which the army should advance.

The ministers of the Spanish government also ordered their commissary-general early to attend sir John Moore for the purpose of aiding the provision of his army, but he found the demand for

meat so much beyond his conception, that he deemed it beyond his power to meet it. And it is not surely too much to doubt, whether a contemplation of the new circumstances of the British army, and the superior proportion of animal food ordinarily consumed by British troops, as well as the difficulties of successive provision, the general might not have made his requisition on a larger scale than was absolutely necessary. Colonel Lopez appeared to be perfectly satisfied that the army would experience no want, and though he might calculate upon an excessive estimation, and upon the readiness of the country to yield its supplies, yet there is no reason to believe that he was vaguely incorrect.

With respect to money for the payment of the army, notwithstanding the want of it *anticipated* by sir John Moore, it seems to have been prevented by the watchful care of his government.

As to the acknowledged evil of the want of a head to the Spanish armies, though the difficulties under which the supreme junta first assembled, and the intrigues natural to a new government, as well as the conflicts of different interests, did certainly preclude the appointment of a commander-in-chief, who should locally plan and carry into effect the operations of the allied armies, in perfect concert with the British general, yet, what must at least have equally answered the end of sir John Moore,

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.
1808.
October.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

an end on which he expressed so much anxiety, the Spanish government offered to his excellency himself the chief command of the whole of the allied armies in his own hands, and consequently the whole of the military resources of Spain.

This incident is not mentioned in the Narrative of the Campaign by Mr. James Moore, and indeed controverts some of its observations; but, besides several allusions elsewhere, it is a fact positively known, from the best authority, and is thus stated in a despatch of the 12th of August, 1809, from Mr. secretary Canning to the marquis Wellesley, then proceeding as his Britannic majesty's minister to the Spanish government,—“ THE SPANIARDS OFFERED THE SUPREME COMMAND OF THEIR ARMIES TO SIR JOHN MOORE. MR. STUART* WAS PRESENT WHEN THIS OFFER WAS MADE BY M. CARO TO THE BRITISH GENERAL, *and was declined.*

Mistake in the military conduct of the alliance.

A prominent mistake seems to have already manifested itself in the conduct of the Spanish and British armies. Each conceived itself the chief force, and accordingly attached to itself in the most jealous manner all the importance of that character; while, at the same time, each rested for its support on the other, and conceived itself almost helpless without it.

* The minister of whom mention was formerly made.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.1808.
October.Mistake in the
military conduct
of the alliance.

The Spaniards indeed, with much judgment, desired to incorporate both armies, by intermixing detachments of the veteran British with their whole force! which was, with equal propriety, refused; but it was not with equal judgment that the British force expected to find a powerful army requiring only its aid. Whatever the enthusiasm of Spanish officers in regard to their troops should picture from their numerical strength, a British general might not be so deceived in respect to raw levies; and the disposition of his force, while it could not be extended to the numbers of a very powerful army, would be adapted accordingly.

The British force, joined to a considerable Spanish one, might thus be capable of an important operation, though not of overwhelming the French army, while another part of the Spanish force would be capable of undertaking moderate enterprises as a corps d'élite. Both armies, however, seemed in many respects too proud for explanation, or admission of their own weakness, and consequently it was to be feared, that, when they should co-operate, they would be uncertain of each others powers, without confidence and without strength.

To remedy this evil, the British ministry at home exerted itself in a manner certainly worthy of the object. It was in the very nature of that object to find difficulties on every hand, yet never was more

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

confidence given to an army, never did a government watch an army with more care, or more consideration.

In the mean time, to urge the people to a strenuous exertion in favour of the general cause the Spanish government issued the following proclamation:

The supreme Junta of Spain to the Spanish Nation.

Proclamation
of the supreme
Junta to the
people of Spain.

Spaniards! the supreme junta of government, the depository of the supreme authority, has devoted the first moments which succeeded its formation to the urgent measures which its situation and the circumstances of the time prescribe. But, from the first instant of its installation, it has believed that one of its obligations is to address itself to you with the dignity which becomes a great and generous nation, in order to inform you of your situation, and establish, in a frank and noble manner, those relations of reciprocal confidence, which are the basis of every just and prudent administration.— Without these, neither the government can fulfil the high duty imposed upon it, nor the governed attain the objects desired.

A tyranny of twenty years, exercised by the unfittest hands ever known, had placed our country on the brink of perdition. The oppressor of Europe saw that the time was arrived for carrying into execution the plot he had long been forming, and

adding the richest and most brilliant wreath to his bloody crown. Every thing appeared to flatter his hopes. The nation was alienated from its government by hatred or contempt; the royal family was divided; the beloved heir to the crown accused, calumniated, and, if possible, degraded; the public force dispersed and disorganised; the resources exhausted; the French troops were introduced into the kingdom, and had already seized the strong places of the frontier; finally, 60,000 men were ready to enter the capital, in order from thence to give law to the kingdom.

It was at this critical moment that, suddenly awakening from the slumber in which you lay, you precipitated the favourite from the power he had usurped, and placed on the throne the prince you idolized. An act of fraud, the most abominable which the records of human perversity bear, deprived you of your most innocent king; and the aggression of Buonaparte and tyranny of the French were announced to Spain by the cannonade of the 2d of May on Madrid, and by the blood and slaughter of its innocent and brave inhabitants,—a horrible but fit presage of the fate of Napoleon was preparing for you.

From that memorable day, when the supreme authority was sold to the enemy which our deceived monarch had left at the head of the government,

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain

when the other authorities were oppressed, and the seat of the empire occupied by the foe, the French believed that no further resistance would be made, and spread themselves from east to west to extend their dominion, and enjoy the fruit of their perfidy. Fools, they were not aware that they were insulting and outraging a people most jealous of their honour, and that they rushed on inevitable perdition.

The irritated provinces of Spain rose against the oppressors suddenly, but with solemnity, and swore to perish rather than sustain so ignominious a tyranny. Europe, in astonishment, was informed, at the same instant, of the offence and the chastisement, and a nation which, but a short time before, had scarcely the semblance of power, became at once the object of the interest and admiration of the universe.

Our situation was unexampled in our history, unforeseen by our laws, and, as it were, opposed to our habits. It was necessary to give a direction to the public force corresponding with the will and the sacrifices of the people; and this necessity created the juntas in the provinces, which collected in themselves the whole authority of the nation, in order to expel the public enemy, and maintain the peace of the interior. . . What their energy has been, how they have discharged the trust imposed upon them by the people, and what gratitude the nation

owes them, let the fields declare which have been covered with the bodies of the Frenchmen, the military spoils of the invader, which serve to deck our temples as trophies, the lives and independence of the greater part of the national magistrates which have been preserved, and the applauses of as many thousands of individuals who owe to them their liberty and their vengeance.

But, as soon as the capital was delivered from the enemy, and the communication between the provinces was re-established, it was necessary to unite the public authority into one centre, which had been divided into as many parts as there were provincial juntas, whence the strength and activity of the nation could be called into exercise. This was the decision of the public voice, and this was the measure adopted by the provinces. Their respective juntas nominated deputies, who concurred in forming the centre of authority; and in less time than has been in French Machiavelianism to destroy our antient government, a new and much more formidable administration was seen,—the central junta, which is now addressing you.

The concurrence in the national will which wrought this good, the universal freedom, from selfish motives, which induced the provinces to entrust their authority and power to other hands; this has been, Spaniards, your greatest action, this

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

your best victory. The present age which beholds you, and posterity, to whom you will serve for study and admiration, will find in this act the most convincing proof of your virtue and prudence. The enemies of Spain had already designed the moment of your ruin; they already saw the divisions which would be formed by the convulsions of civil discord.

They already triumphed, believing the provinces would be disunited by ambition, and that some, pretending to superiority over the rest, would apply to them for protection and aid.

But, lo! a central power has been formed before their eyes, and peacefully acknowledged by all; the car of the state runs upon one axle-tree, and vehemently and powerfully forces its way, crushing all the pretensions and all the hopes of their iniquity.

The junta being established, its attention was at once turned to the discharge of its duties. To drive the enemy beyond the Pyrennees, and compel him to deliver up the august person of our august king, and those of his brother and uncle, recognizing at the same time our liberty and independence, were the first duties which the junta conceived the nation had imposed upon it. Much of this is already effected at the period of its establishment; the public enthusiasm was kindled, armies were formed composed almost wholly of fresh troops, important

victories were gained; the enemy was driven to the frontiers; the opinion in favour of his military skill destroyed, and the laurels which adorned those conquerers of Europe transferred to the brows of our warriors.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.



1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

This had already been done, and was what might be expected from the impulse of the first moment; but, having effected all that could be produced by impetuosity and valour, it is necessary to avail ourselves of the means prescribed by prudence and constancy; for, what we have yet to attain, Spaniards, we must repeat it again and again, is an arduous undertaking, and ought to call into exercise all your enthusiasm and all your virtue. You will be convinced of this when you turn your attention to the external situation of public affairs, at the same time when the junta began to exercise its functions.

Our armies full of ardour, and eager to march to victory, but naked and unprovided with every thing: beyond, the remains of the French armies awaiting reinforcements on the banks of the Ebro, ravaging Upper Castile, the Rioja, and the provinces of Biscay; occupying Pampeluna and Barcelona with their fortresses; masters of the castle of St. Ferdinand; ruling over almost the whole of Navaree and Catalonia; the despot of France, restless on his throne, deceiving the slaves who

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

obey him by the grossest impostures, and striving to lull to inactivity all the other states, in order to discharge on us alone the enormous weight of his military force; the powers of the continent, in fine, oppressed or insulted by France, expecting with anxiety the issue of the first struggle, desiring to declare against the common enemy of all, proceeding with the timid circumspection which their past misfortunes council.

It is evident that the sole asylum which remains for the preservation of their independence is a general confederacy:—a confederacy which will assuredly take place at last, for interest persuades and necessity prescribes it. Which is the state that can hold relations of amity with Buonaparte? Who can give credit to his words and promise, or trust to his loyalty and good faith? The fate of Spain will serve as a lesson and a warning; her resolution as an example; her victories as an incentive; and the reprobate who has trampled under foot the principles of equity, and the sanctity of good faith, has placed himself in the hard necessity of having more power than all of them, or of being buried under the mountains raised by his frenzy.

The security and certainty of a league so necessary and just are to be determined by our previous exertions and the prudence of our conduct. When we shall have raised a mass of military as terrible

for its quantity as for its preparation:—When we shall hold in our hands all the means of profiting by success, or remedying a reverse:—When the sound judgment and integrity which distinguish the Spanish people among all others, will manifest themselves in the regulation of all our proceedings and pretensions:—then all Europe, secure of triumphing, will unite itself to us, avenge at once its and injuries and ours. Then Spain will enjoy the glory of having saved the powers of the continent, and reposing in the moderation and rectitude of her desires, and in the strength of her situation; and she will be recognised as the loyal confederate of all, but neither the slave nor the tyrant of any.

Let us, then, now employ all the means we possess, as if we had to sustain alone the whole force of France.

For this purpose, the junta has believed, that it is necessary to maintain under arms 550,000 effective men, the 50,000 to be cavalry; an enormous mass of strength, and disproportionate it may be confessed to our present situation, and our antient situation, and our decent wants, but by no means unsuited to the present occasion. The three armies which are to occupy their operations, and supply their wants, will easily absorb the designated number. And what are they, or the sacrifices which necessity requires, compared with the enter-

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

prise we have proposed to ourselves, and the enthusiasm which animates us? Spaniards, the power of our enemy is colossal, his ambition is still greater than his power, and his existence is incompatible with our liberty. Judge of his exertions by the barbarity of his character, and the extremity of his danger; but these are the exertions of a tyrant, and will be confounded, opposed to the valour of a great and free people, who have resolved upon no other termination to their conflict than to conquer or die.

Considering the magnitude and importance of this first object, the junta turned its attention to the vast means necessary to attain it. The neglect of the last government, if that may be called government which was one continued and monstrous delapidation, had exhausted all the sources of prosperity, had obstructed the canals which brought life and food to all the members of the state, dissipating the treasury, disorganising the public force, and consuming the resources.

The junta has already announced to the public the great savings which result from the suppression of the expenses of the royal household, the enormous sums which have been devoured by the greedy and insatiable avarice of the favourite, the product of his great possessions, and that of the estates of those unworthy Spaniards who fled with

the tyrant. We may add to these, the profit which will accrue to the estate from a free navigation and commerce, and from the communication already opened with America. Principally we rely on a well-arranged administration of the public revenue, and regularly distributed contributions, to the reform and management of which the junta will directly apply its attention. We may add to these means the succours which are now given with so generous a hand, and will hereafter be granted us by the English nation. But it is incumbent on us that these succours which have been so opportunely given, and so gratefully received, and the effects of which have been so beneficial, should be hereafter recognised and recompensed with the reciprocity and decorum which become a great and powerful nation. The Spanish monarchy ought not, in this respect, to be placed in a state of inequality and dependence upon its allies.

The produce of these means will certainly be great, but, at the same time, it will be slow, and for that reason insufficient for the urgent necessities of the state. Are they sufficient to furnish for a time the ordinary supplies, discharge the immense debt which will be incurred, and maintain the formidable army which is to be kept on foot?—But the junta will, in case the manifold events and force of circumstances should exhaust the treasury,

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

have recourse at once to the nation, with the confidence which its ardent patriotism ought to inspire, and the necessity and notoriety of the sacrifice. For evils so extraordinary as the present, remedies as extraordinary must be applied; and as the government judges it to be one of its obligations to give an exact account to the nation of the application of the resources and funds which it is about to administer, it has no fear that its demands will be disregarded through distrust, or be detested as arbitrary.

Thus much with respect to the defence of the kingdom, and the means of effecting it, the most urgent concerns and the first in the order of time which the junta has under its care. But, Spaniards, there are others as necessary and primary as that without attending to which the junta would perform but half its duties, and which is the great reward of your enthusiasm and sacrifices. Political independence is nothing without felicity and internal security. Turn your eyes to the time when oppressed and degraded, ignorant of your own strength, and finding no asylum against your evils, either in the institutions or in the laws; you held foreign dominion less odious than the wasting tyranny which internally consumed you. The dominion of a will always capricious, and for the greater part always unjust, has, for your calamity,

lasted long enough in Spain: your patience, your love of order, and your generous loyalty, have been long enough abused; it is time that the voice of the law only should begin to command, founded on general utility. This was the desire of our good and unfortunate monarch; this was the path he pointed out, even during an unjust captivity, to which a perfidious tyrant reduced him. Country, Spaniards! ought not to be a vague and a vain name to you; it ought to impart to your ears and in your hearts the sanctuary of the laws and customs, the theatre for talents, and the reward of virtue.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

Yes, Spaniards, the great day is drawing near, when, according to the uniform desires of our beloved king, and of his loyal people, the monarchy will be established on durable bases. You will then possess fundamental laws, which will be beneficial, friends of order, restrictive of arbitrary power, and these being re-established, and your genuine rights being assured, you will rejoice to behold a monument worthy of you, and of the monarch who is to watch over the preservation of it; blessing amid so many calamities, the share which the people will have had in its erection. The junta which holds in its hand the supreme direction of the national forces in order, by all means to assure its defence, felicity, and glory.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

The junta, which has already publicly acknowledged, the great influence which a nation ought to have in the government, which alone and without any assistance has done every thing in the name of the king and for his cause ; the junta solemnly promise to you that you shall possess that country which you have invoked with so much enthusiasm, and defended, or rather conquered, with so much valour.

Until the military operations, slow at first, in order to secure a happy result, shall furnish the opportunity and repose necessary for the grand and solemn re-union which it announces to you : the government will take care privately to discuss and to examine the projects of reform, and the institutions which ought to be presented for the national sanction. Without instruction, or knowledge, or date, the majestic work of legislation is the result of a blind and unstable will, and, as such, exposed to error, inconsistency, and contempt. Wise Spaniards ! you who devoted to the investigations of the social principles, unite the love of humanity to the love of country, and instruction of zeal ; this concern is yours ; the happy execution of which is so necessary.

The junta, instead of rejecting your council, desires and seeks it, the knowledge and illustration of our antient constitutional law ; changes which,

in their re-establishment; they ought to undergo from the difference of circumstances, reforms which are to be made in the civil, criminal, and commercial orders, projects to meliorate public education, which among us is so greatly in decline; a system of regulated economy for the better distribution and collection of national revenue: all these claim your attention, and form a vast series of problems and objects of meditation, in which you may manifest your talents and acquirements.

The junta will form from among you different committees, each entrusted with a particular department, to whom are to be freely addressed all writings or matters of government and administration, in which may be discussed the different objects which claim the general attention; so that each contributing, by his exertions, to give a just and enlightened direction to the public opinion, they may enable the nation to establish solidly and tranquilly its internal felicity.

The Spanish revolution will thus be distinguished by characteristic features, altogether the reverse of those which were seen in the French revolution. That began in the wretched internal intrigues of courtiers; ours, in the necessity of repelling an unjust and powerful aggressor; in that there were so many opinions concerning the forms of govern-

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.
October.
Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

ment as they were factions, or rather persons: in ours there is but one opinion, one general desire; an hereditary government, and Ferdinand VII. on the throne. The French shedding torrents of blood, during their anarchy, proclaimed no one principal which they did not afterwards reject; they made no law which they did not violate, and at last they submitted to barbarous despotism. The Spaniards, who, on account of their perfidious invasion of the French, found themselves without a government, and without communication with each other, have not shewn themselves without a government, and without communication with each other, have not shewn themselves terrible or bloody, except towards their enemies, and well know how to meliorate their institutions, and consolidate their liberty, without overthrowing the state.

Oh Spaniards! how beautiful a perspective of glory and felicity we behold before us, if we know how to profit by the singular epoch; if we fulfil the high purposes which Providence points out to us! Instead of being objects of compassion and contempt, as we have hitherto been, we are about to become the envy and admiration of the world. The delicious climate we enjoy, the fertile soil whence we draw subsistence, our geographical position, the riches which nature has lavished upon

us, and the noble and generous character with which she has endowed us, will not be wasted gifts in the hands of a vile and enslaved people.

Already the Spanish name is pronounced with respect in Europe, whose nations, which lie trampled upon by the French, hang all their hopes upon our fortune; even the very slaves of the tyrant, groaning under his intolerable yoke, form vows for us. Let us be constant, and we shall gather the fruit which victory will produce: the laws of religion satisfied; our monarch either restored to the throne or avenged; the fundamental laws of the monarchy restored and consecrated, in a manner solemn and consonant with civil liberty; the fountains of public prosperity pouring benefits spontaneously, and without impediment; our relation with our colonists drawn more closely and become more fraternal, and consequently more useful; in fine, activity, industry, talents, and virtues, stimulated and rewarded; to such a degree of splendour and fortune we shall raise our country, if we ourselves correspond with the magnificent circumstances which surround us.

These are the views, and this is the plan, which the junta proposed to itself from the moment of its installation, in order to fulfil the two primary and essential objects of its institution. Its members charged with an authority so great, and making

BOOK III.

CHAP. II.

1808.

October.

Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

BOOK III.
CHAP. II.

1808.

October.
Proclamation
of the supreme
junta to the
people of Spain.

themselves responsible by entertaining hopes so flattering; do not fail to see the difficulties they have to conquer in order to realize them, the enormity of the weight which hangs over them, nor the dangers to which they are exposed; but they will think the fatigues, and the devotion of their persons to the country well paid, if they succeed in inspiring the Spaniards with that confidence, without which the public good cannot be secured, and which the junta dares to affirm it merits, from the rectitude of its principals, and the purity of its intention.

Aranjuez, Oct. 26, 1808.

CHAP. III.

ADVANCE OF THE BRITISH ARMY INTO SPAIN.

Route of Sir John Moore's Army.—Reception by the Spaniards.—Difficulties and their Effects on the British General.—Approach of Sir David Baird's Army.—Views of the British Commander-in-Chief in respect to the Campaign.

THE Spanish government, it appears,* pointed out, with great propriety of sentiment, the capital of Old Castile as the rendezvous of the British army, for which, as magazines, no less important places were assigned than Madrid and Valladolid. Every hope was entertained that, (exclusive of the Spanish armies in the front and left of the French

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

October.

Route of Sir
John Moore's
army.

* Mr. James Moore's Narrative, p. 17.

BOOK III.

CHAP. III.

1808.

October.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.

under the marquis Castanos,) in the Asturias and Galicia, under Blake and Romana, would be now found in a tolerable state of discipline, near seventy thousand men.

According to the elegant narrative of his brother, from the moment that sir John Moore obtained this command he exerted the utmost activity, and received the most zealous assistance from sir Harry Burrard, to put the army into motion with celerity; and though little preparatory had been done, the greater part was on foot in eight days.

The strength of Spanish enthusiasm at the moment was certainly such as to influence the best informed mind in no ordinary degree; since among the Spaniards nothing less was contemplated than the rapid expulsion of the French, and the invasion of the south of France itself. Yet, if this operated in some degree injuriously, it tended to foster a spirit which might be expected to subside into a rational and vigorous force.

The circumstances of the convention of Cintra did not prevent the British army from being well received on its progress through Portugal, toward the Spanish frontier. Difficulties, however, speedily occurred, and the querulous disposition to which the British general had been induced, soon found means to prolong its existence.

Saltero, a contractor, at Lisbon, says, Mr. Moore

had agreed to supply the divisions with rations on the march through Portugal. But this man failed in his contract, and the divisions of generals Fraser and Beresford were obliged to be halted. There was also a great want of money, from which excessive inconveniences resulted. It had been supposed that government bills would have been accepted, but promissory notes do not obtain credit in Spain and Portugal as in England. At Guarda, the chief magistrate refused to procure provisions without regular payments, and the peasantry had a dread of paper money.

Still, however, it is confessed, these difficulties were surmounted, though not without expense, which, indeed, was hardly to be expected. The commander of the forces was well entertained at the houses of the nobility, and saw little appearance of a French party; yet he thought the Portuguese lukewarm, and a close correspondence with men of discernment on the spot, convinced him of a deficiency of Spanish ardour and enthusiasm: while the weakness and tardiness of the central junta, "by cold languor and foggy dulness, chilled and damped," says he, the spirits of the nation.

Whatever the authority of this correspondence, which is not often communicated in the narrative, it is evident that the best known authorities went greatly

BOOK III.

CHAP. III.



1808.

October.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.

BOOK III.
 CHAP. III.

1808.

October.

Route of sir
 John Moore's
 army.

to the reverse; and, if an influence of this kind did prevail in any degree, the military and diplomatic skill of the general was to be displayed in proportion. And, moreover to this effect did the ministry at home labour with a zeal and discrimination worthy of the salvation of Europe.

Sir John Moore, however, unhappily, seems to have resigned himself at once to an absolute despair of success, which must have rendered his command arduous in the extreme, and one which no ordinary abilities could have encountered. Even the communications on which his excellency relied for his knowledge of Spanish affairs with perfect confidence seems to have been defective, since almost in the same breath the narrative observes, that, "notwithstanding the extensive correspondence which sir John Moore carried on, he could obtain no certain accounts of the numbers or condition of the Spanish forces before the arrival of Buonaparte."

After that time, however, his authorities seem to have estimated the right and centre of the Spanish armies, under Castanos and Palafox, at only forty thousand, while that of general Blake, on the left, though strong, was in imminent danger of the largest force of the French; and this receives confirmation from the subsequent despatch of Castanos to the junta, of Nov. 25, in which he

says, "I leave to your excellency to conceive the critical situation of an army immovable from its few resources, and the greater part of which was composed of new levies badly clothed, and badly provisioned." A council of war, held at Tudela, had already (Nov. 5) pronounced that it could afford no assistance to the army of the left. Captain Whittingham, in a letter addressed to lord William Bentinck, from Castanos' head-quarters at Calahorra, painted it in the most dejected colours; unappointed and unorganized.

Nothing certainly would be more disheartening to the cause; but the Spaniards themselves did not sink under it, they had frequent skirmishes, and if they could not conquer they often harassed the enemy, and then retired to reinforce and inspirit their compatriots against him. The interception of a communication from the governor of Bayonne to marshal Jourdan, the French commander-in-chief, stating, that, between the 16th of October and the 16th of November, sixty-six thousand infantry and from five to seven thousand cavalry, would reinforce the French army, roused the junta to whatever degree of exertion its circumstances permitted.

Sir David Baird with his reinforcement had arrived at Corunna, on the 13th of October, and

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.



1808.
October.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.

General the
marquis Casta-
nos to the junta.

Arrival of sir
David Baird
with reinforce-
ments.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

October.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.

experienced similar embarrassments to those which had so early agitated the commander-in-chief.

It is asserted by Mr. James Moore, but without quoting his authority, that sir David was refused by the junta of Galicia permission even to land, and he is supported by sir John Moore in adding that he was left to provide himself for the subsistence and movement of his troops, to which the writer of the narrative superadds, in censure, "by paying a high price to those whom he came to assist."

That so early as this period some difficulty might occur could not excite great wonder, but, if it did, it is acknowledged to have been done away; and we find, among other correlative circumstances, that "sir David Baird (before the junction) requested the junta of Galicia to send a detachment of troops to occupy Puebla de Sanabria, *which was done accordingly*;"* and the same authority, from personal knowledge of the district, states, that although his excellency might have had the chief command there (as it has indeed been shewn in the preceeding pages he might have had in all Spain,) yet "sir John Moore never to my knowledge expressed any thing in the shape of a wish, suggestion, or advice, to the government or

* Pasley, Mil. Instit. &c. 277.

people of that province in respect to their military affairs."

But to suppose that sir David Baird or sir John Moore, after the clear and accurate instructions of their government, could have stooped to regard the provision of either of their corps, being left to its commander as the proof of injustice, ingratitude, or imposition, on the part of the Spaniards, as appears from the sentence above quoted, would be to suppose them ignorant of the first elements of their profession, and of the policy of the war.* The dismemberment of the French empire is not to be considered as a measure of pure generosity on our part to any foreign prince or nation. It is with us a measure of self-preservation and necessity; and we are principals in every war that tends to that object.

Those difficulties, therefore, which even in an enemy's country ought not to appal, in one which we approach in the guise of friendship from political motives, ought no sooner to arise than to vanish; and to the exercise of the ordinary qualities of a general in such a case should be added in a particular degree those of military diplomacy.

Sir John Moore with his division of the army November 5.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.



1808.

October.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.

* See ante, vol. i. p. 59.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.

reached Atalaia, near forty-four leagues from Lisbon, on the fifth of November, and then first found that, contrary to the information received, the roads, though very bad, were practicable for artillery. It was discovered, according to the narrative, only from stage to stage, by the British officers, which it was certainly to be lamented was not done before, since in that case general Hope's division need not have taken a circuitous route. To remedy the evil, at length, despatches were sent to meet him at Truxillo, desiring him to send forward officers to avoid the necessity of going round by Madrid, which became the more necessary, as lord William Bentinck had now apprised sir John Moore of the French reinforcements having entered Biscay, and the probability of Castanos bringing on an action, with whom it was therefore necessary for the British army to co-operate.

On the 8th, notwithstanding continual rains, the army reached Almeida; where the commander-in-chief ordered a general court-martial on a man who had been detected marauding, which sentenced him to death, and he suffered as an example to the army. Nothing could be better than its general character: the following order was therefore issued on the occasion, on the day on which it entered Spain.

“ November 11th, 1808.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.
November.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.
General orders.

“ Nothing could be more pleasing to the commander of the forces than to show mercy to a soldier of good character under his command, who had been led inadvertently to commit a crime; but he should consider himself neglectful of his duty, if, from ill-judged lenity, he pardoned deliberate villainy.

“ The crime committed by the prisoner now under sentence is of this nature, and there is nothing in his private character or conduct which could give the least hope of his amendment, were he pardoned; he must therefore suffer the awful punishment to which he has been condemned.

“ The commander of the forces trusts that the troops he commands will seldom oblige him to resort to punishments of this kind: and such is his opinion of British soldiers, that he is convinced they will not, if the officers do their duty, and pay them proper attention.

“ He, however, takes this opportunity to declare to the army, that he is determined to shew no mercy to plunderers and marauders, or in other words, to thieves and villains.

“ The army is sent by England to aid and support the Spanish nation, not to plunder and rob its inhabitants. And soldiers who so far forget what is due to their own honour, and the honour of

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Route of sir
John Moore's
army.Entrance into
Spain.

their country, as to commit such acts, shall be delivered over to justice : the military law must take its course, and the punishment it awards shall be inflicted.”

Crossing the rivulet which separates Spain from Portugal, the army marched to Ciudad Rodrigo, and was met two miles off by the governor ; on approaching the town exclamations of *viva los Ingleses* resounded every where. The British headquarters were next day at the curate's of the village of San Martin, a sensible man, who had lodged all the French generals in succession.

On the thirteenth, sir John Moore arrived with the advanced guard at Salamanca, and halted there to assemble the whole of the troops from Portugal ; where he heard of the surprise of the young Spanish count Belvidere, who, with twelve thousand raw recruits, had rashly advanced to Burgos, an open town, in front of the French army, without support, whence he pressed sir John Moore to assist him, who could not arrive in time, and in consequence he was overwhelmed by a superior power.

From Salamanca the general wrote to lord William Bentinck the following letter, which, whether considered merely as a composition, or the production of a general, or a minister, was entirely unworthy of the fine mind of sir John Moore :

Salamanca, Nov. 13, 1808.

My dear lord,

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Wm
Bentinck.

I arrived here early in the afternoon.

I am not only jaded by my journey, but also by the different people I have been obliged to speak to; and only that I am anxious to send a courier to you as soon as possible, I should have delayed writing to you until morning. I received upon the road your two letters of the 8th, and that of the 9th, with the enclosures, some of which shall be returned to you by the next courier.

I am sorry to say, from sir David Baird I hear nothing but complaints of the junta of Corunna, who afford him no assistance. They promise every thing, but give nothing; and, after waiting day after day for carts, which they had promised to procure for the carriage of stores, his commissary was at last obliged to contract for them at an exorbitant price, and then got them. This is really a sort of conduct quite intolerable to troops that the Spanish government have asked for, and for whose advance they are daily pressing.

On my arrival here, and telling colonel O'Lowler that I wished to have supplies immediately provided on the road from Astorga to this place, for the march of the troops from Corunna, he began by telling me that a power which he should have got, and which it was promised should be sent after

BOOK III.

CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Wm
Bentinck.

him from Madrid, had not been sent; that he had thus no authority, and had hitherto been acting upon his own credit. Part of this was a trick—*pour se faire valoir*; it tended only, however, to shew me that he was not the man who should have been selected for us: but, if selected, he should have been furnished with every authority to make him useful. I run over all this to you, though perhaps it should properly be addressed to Mr. Frere, but to you I can state it with more ease, and I shall thank you to speak to Frere upon it; when I hope he will have some serious communication with the Spanish ministers, and plainly tell them, if they expect the advance of the British army, they must pay somewhat more attention to its wants.— Proper officers must be sent to me, vested with full powers to call forth the resources of the country when they are wanted, and without delay; the same as is done, I presume, for the Spanish armies; we shall pay, but they are not to allow us to be imposed upon, but to tell us what is paid by the Spanish government in such cases. We find no difficulty with the people; they receive us every where well. But the authorities are backward, and not like those of a country who wish our assistance.

The officer you mention to have been sent to sir David Baird, travelled by slow journeys, as if in profound peace, and consequently arrived too late,

and when little wanted. The head of Baird's column is this day at Astorga ; but, had they waited for the said officer, it would have been still at Corunna. The Spaniards seem to think that every body should fly but themselves. The troops from Lisbon begin to march in here to-morrow, and will continue to arrive by corps daily until the 23d, when the whole will be assembled. I have directed Baird also to continue the march of his troops on Benavente, as soon as supplies permit it; and, by the time the head reaches Benavente, I shall probably direct it to proceed on to Zamora, and close the whole as near to me at this place as cover will admit; probably by the 23d instant, the rear of Baird's will be about Zamora, but it will depend on the aid and activity of the authorities of the country; if they are slow, it is impossible for me to be quick. All this, however, is upon the supposition that the French do not disturb us; and I suppose you know they are at Burgos. At Ciudad Rodrigo, I received a letter by express from El Conde de Belvedere, from Burgos, dated the 9th, stating that he expected to be attacked by superior numbers, and begging that I would hasten to his assistance. I wrote to him that I had been marching for some time with all the haste I could; but, if he was to be attacked so soon, it was impossible for me to render him any assistance; and he should

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Wm.
Bentinck.

BOOK III.

CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Wm
Bentinck.

report his situation to Madrid. Upon my arrival here, I was informed by the marquis de Cinalbo, that the Spanish troops had been forced to retire from Burgos, and the French were in possession of it. I hope the letter I wrote to general Castanos will draw from him some explanation of his views, by which I may regulate my motions. But his movements, and those of the army under general Blake, require some explanation, in order to be understood; for, though they know that a British force is marching from different parts, in order to unite, they have marched away from the point of assembly, and have left us exposed to be attacked and interrupted before our junction; but, if we were united, he can hardly expect that with my force I should march forward and place myself within reach of attack from such superior numbers, whilst his and Blake's armies are removed at such a distance as to be able to render me no assistance: but all this I expect will be made plain, when I hear from general Castanos. With respect to magazines, it is impossible for me to say where they ought to be made, whilst I am so much in the dark as to the movements which are likely to occur; but, if the country is abundant, as is said, we cannot want. But I must have persons of an authority attached to me, who are acquainted with the resources, and who, knowing the interior government,

customs, and manners, of Spain, can call them forth for me and the British troops in the same manner as they are called forth for those of Spain. This regards not only provisions, but carts, horses, quarters, and, in short, all the wants of troops. With the aid of persons of this description, our own commissaries can do; but without them we can do nothing. The foundation of all this must be an order to the authorities throughout the provinces, to give every aid to the British, as to the Spanish troops. It is a matter of indifference who pays these officers; it would be more consistent with the dignity of Spain that they paid them; though we should reward them according to their deserts.

With respect to the magazines at Madrid, it is very likely to be a proper place for Spain to collect a considerable depôt of various kinds. It is their capital, and they know best; but it does not strike me a place where the British could be called upon to make any collection. We shall establish small magazines for consumption in the neighbourhood where we are acting. These great reserves, which a country makes for general supply, should be made by Spain; when we approach it, we may draw from it, and pay for what we get. But Spain should make it, and be at the expense and trouble of its conservation: as I believe we are giving money to

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Win
Bentinck.

Spain, part of it may be applied by them in this manner; but it is they that should do it—not we.

I have no objection to you, or Mr. Frere, representing the necessity of as many more British troops as you think proper. It is certain that the agents which our government have hitherto employed, have deceived them. For affairs here are by no means in the flourishing state they are represented and believed to be in England; and the sooner the truth is known in England the better. But you must observe, my lord, that whatever is critical must now be decided by the troops which are here; the French, I suspect, are ready, and will not wait. I differ only with you in one point: when you say the chief and great obstacle and resistance to the French will be afforded by the English army. If that be so, Spain is lost. The English army, I hope, will do all which can be expected from their numbers, but the safety of Spain depends upon the union of its inhabitants, their enthusiasm in their cause, and in their firm and devoted determination to die rather than submit to the French; nothing short of this will enable them to resist the formidable attack about to be made upon them. If they will adhere, our aid can be of the greatest use to them, but if not, we shall soon be out-numbered, were our force quadrupled.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
lord Wm Bent-
tick.

I am therefore much more anxious to see exertion and energy in the government, and enthusiasm in their armies, than to have my force augmented.—The moment is a critical one,—my own situation is particularly so,—I have never seen it otherwise; but I have pushed into Spain at all hazards,—this was the order of my government, and it was the will of the people of England. I shall endeavour to do my best, hoping that all the bad that may happen will not happen; but that, with a share of bad, we shall also have a portion of good, fortune.

This is a long letter for one who began by saying that he was jaded; but I have been gradually drawn on by the interest I take in the subject.—You will communicate to Mr. Frere such parts as you think proper, and he will I hope act upon them. Be so good as to excuse me to him, for not particularly addressing himself. Lord Paget was at Corunna the 7th, with two regiments, the 7th and the 10th hussars; the other three were following fast.

I remain, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

There is a kind of unsettled feeling, a sort of levity, in this letter, but little fitting for military history, and tending only to shew the situation of the general's mind, and his views of the campaign, at the period at which it was written.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.
Embarrassments
of sir John
Moore.

On the second night after, general Pignatelli, governor of the province, by express, informed sir John Moore of the occupation of Valladolid by the French, which brought the enemy within twenty leagues distance; while the junction of the various corps of the British army alone could not be effected in less than ten days. Only three brigades of infantry had arrived at Salamanca, an open town, and he was yet without artillery. So far from being able to continue the point of union for the British army at Burgos, that town and also Valladolid were in possession of the enemy; and the misfortunes of the Spanish army had precluded the expectation of any immediate assistance, much less the being covered, as there was originally reason to suppose, by seventy thousand men.

This was a situation of considerable embarrassment, and gave additional cause to lament, that proper officers had not been sent in advance to ascertain the real state of the roads. It is, however, the business of a general to conquer, as well as foresee, difficulties, and the experience of this embarrassment might at least be expected to prevent those of a similar nature in future. Whatever delusion might have occurred in the promised results of that enthusiasm, which naturally fired a brave and honourable people on the spring of their glorious revolution, was now dispelled; and if the British mi-

nistry could possibly have so far misled their general as to lead him to expect a mere parade in the first instance, it was now quite shewn that this expectation was incorrect.

It is, at the same time, much to be regretted that these circumstances were not foreseen; for, if the French advanced in force, the British army had no option but to fall back on Ciudad Rodrigo, where the army could not apparently be long subsisted; and return to Portugal.

It is stated by Mr. Moore that the general *had long* foreseen the possibility of the French advancing to prevent the junction of the British troops, yet this does not appear in his arrangements. It is also stated, that he was at a loss to comprehend the motives for the position of the Spanish armies in Biscay and Arragon. But this unhappily was too easily to be accounted for in their original formation, and the disasters to which they were naturally liable. He also wondered at the tranquillity of the people, while it was known the French were advancing: this was, however, advantageous to his command.

Sir John Moore took the best means he possibly could under the circumstances. His excellency assembled the junta, and, communicating to them the nature of their disasters, explained the reasons for his probable necessity of retiring to Ciudad Rodrigo, and exhorted them to greater exertion. This

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Embarrassments
of sir John
Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Embarrassments
of sir John
Moore.

it is the more agreeable to perceive, since the querulous remark in the letter which has been last given, on the fatigue arising from "the number of people" sir John had "been *obliged to speak to*," would give reason to fear a disinclination from that readiness to communicate where necessary, which is one of the most necessary and important qualities of a general.

But sir John Moore went farther. When he had stated the probable necessity, he told them that, "though the English would be useful auxiliaries, success could be gained only by the union and effort of the Spaniards *themselves*;" and for the purpose of *retreat*, if necessary, he told them he must have the use "of all the carts and mules in the country to transport his magazines," *and that the troops should draw three days' provisions. These were statements surely undervaluing the British auxiliary army, and, at the same time, making for it a demand apparently inordinate.

Not, indeed, that a British general should not under all circumstances command every facility which the country can afford; but there is a manner adapted to circumstances which removes half their evil; and this certainly was not the most conciliatory that could have been devised.

The manner in which it was received was still

* Narrative p. 46.

more extraordinary on the opposite side. All was listened to with (says the Narrative) calm *acquiescence*; and, as if gratified with it, the writer continues, the supineness of the Spaniards in not presenting a more powerful aid, was not owing to disaffection among the people.

Mr. Moore, who must be conceived to speak the sentiments of the British commander, takes occasion, on this subject, to observe, that the apathy of the people proved the inactivity of their rulers; "for, on such an occasion, there should not only have been *numerous armies* on foot, but *every man in Spain should have been armed* and ready to act when required; nor did this appear impracticable."

The view, therefore, which the British general had already taken of the campaign, must have been, in some degree, incorrect; when, so far from its being in the power of the Spaniards to arm their whole population, and their not doing so being a proof of their supineness, they had all along been soliciting, from Great Britain, arms; even before they deemed it expedient to admit troops: and that at the very period the utmost exertions of Great Britain in favour of her allies could not effect it.

In a despatch of the 16th November,* expressly

* Papers relative to Spain, presented to parliament, in May 1810. No. 13.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.



1808.
November.

Embarrassments
of sir John
Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.
November.
Difficulties of
proceeding.

relating to this subject, Mr. Canning states to Mr. Frere, that "As the power of this country to supply its own immensely-augmented consumption of arms is necessarily limited; and instead of being able, as formerly, to supply a great part of our own wants from the continent, the aids which we have been obliged in the course of the last two years to supply to almost all the allies with whom we have been engaged, to Russia, Prussia, Sweden, Sicily, and Portugal, have drained the arsenals of this country; the central government must be made to understand that it really is not within the means of Great Britain to furnish an unlimited supply of arms."

The number of 200,000 muskets were, however, speedily completed, which naturally were soon diminished by the precipitation with which the new levies were thrown into disorder on any reverse.

The same despatch continues more agreeably:—
"With respect to the other articles of arms and military stores, there will be comparatively little difficulty, and every exertion will be made to meet the demands of the central junta, *excepting* only the articles of pistols, which our arsenals have not at present the means of supplying."

After having made the arrangements for his retreat, sir John Moore detached some intelligent officers, with strong patrols, to gain information of

the enemy, when he found that the French infantry had not advanced beyond Burgos, and that a thousand of their cavalry, which had entered Valladolid on the 13th, had retired to Palencia next morning.

This report, so different from that on which he had acted, induced the commander-in-chief to direct generals Baird and Hope to concentrate their divisions, and to advance guardedly, but with all possible speed, to join him at Salamanca.

BOOK III.
CHAP. III.

1808.

November.

Difficulties of
proceeding.

CHAP. IV.

RETROGRADATION OF THE CAMPAIGN.

Correspondence of Sir John Moore with Mr. Frere, the new Minister Plenipotentiary of Great Britain in Spain, and others.—His Disgust at the military and political Arrangements made for the Campaign.—Contemplation of Retreat.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

First ministers
to the Spanish
government.

OF the persons who had been deputed with a diplomatic character from the British government to Spain, as already stated, lord William Bentinck and Mr. Stuart were the principals, with colonel Graham, who remained at the head-quarters of the Spanish army in chief.

The concentration, however, of the Spanish government, and the new modification of the Spanish embassy to London, required a regular appointment on the part of the British cabinet to Spain. Mr.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.1808.
November.

John Hookham Frere, was therefore sent as minister plenipotentiary, a man by genius and education every way qualified for such an appointment. And by disposition and sentiments peculiarly adapted to the present.

This new arrangement, however necessary, did not, it appears, satisfy sir John Moore; with evident marks of dissatisfaction, he therefore addressed to him his first letter from Almeida.

Almeida, 10th Nov. 1808.

“ Sir,

“ As Mr. Stuart mentioned in a late Sir John Moore to Mr. Frere.

letter which I had the honour to receive from him, that he was in hourly expectation of your arrival at Madrid, I conclude that ere this you have reached that capital.

I shall not trouble you with any detail of my movements, as you will obtain every necessary information respecting them from Mr. Stuart and lord William Bentinck, with both of whom I have been in correspondence ever since I was appointed to this command.

The supreme junta have fixed upon general Castanos, as the person with whom I am to correspond, and to combine whatever operations are to be undertaken by the troops under my command. This cannot but be considered as a step

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.
Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

towards appointing him the chief commander of the Spanish army ; and, having gone so far, it is a pity they did not go a little farther, and at once give him the appointment. This decision of the junta was only communicated to me a few days ago, by lord William, in a letter which I received on my road to this place. I have written to general Castanos, to give him every information with respect to the British force, the probable period of its junction ; and I have requested to know, from him, his plans, and his instructions, with respect to the co-operation he expects from us. It is needless to say what different measures I might have pursued, had I been sooner informed of the strength and condition of the different Spanish armies. As it is, the principal part of the infantry from Portugal is now passing the frontier ; and, by the middle of this month, will be collected at Salamanca and Ciudad Rodrigo. General Hope, with the artillery, the cavalry, and 3000 infantry, will be in the neighbourhood of Madrid on the 22d ; and the head of sir David Baird's corps will reach Astorga on the 14th. If nothing adverse happens, we shall be united early in December, more or less advanced, according to the situation and movements of the armies now upon the Ebro. In the mean time I shall wait at Salamanca, with the troops assembling there, until Baird and Hope are

móre forward. Much is still to be done in the article of equipment and of commissariat arrangement. As I see more myself of the resources of the country, I shall be able to decide the mode to be followed for securing to us our supplies : for the present we must depend upon the Spanish government, and their chief director, don Vincenti.

I understand, from sir David Baird, that you were kind enough to spare him £40,000 from the moneys you brought with you from England. I have to thank you for this supply : for, when he applied to me, it was with great difficulty I was able to spare him £3000. We are now in the greatest distress for money ; and, if a quantity does not speedily arrive from England, we must depend upon the generosity of the Spaniards for our supplies. I doubt, at present, if there is wherewithal, after the 24th of this month, to pay the troops their subsistence. I fear that in England, until very lately, they were not aware of the impossibility of procuring money either in Portugal or Spain. I leave this to-morrow, and shall proceed by Ciudad Rodrigo to Salamanca, where I shall hope to have the honour to hear from you.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE."

" I trust you will have the goodness to excuse whatever is informal in this letter ; you may be-

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

BOOK III
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

lieve it proceeds from no disrespect to you, but I have not been informed, and am quite ignorant, of your appointment, whether ambassador, or minister plenipotentiary; and thought it better to give you no titles, rather than the wrong one."

This letter produced the following spirited view of the political state of the capital of Spain and its affairs at the moment.

"Aranjuez, Nov. 13, 1808.

"Sir,

Mr. Frere to
sir John Moore.

I have this evening received the letter which you did me the honour to direct to me from Almeida, and which was delivered to me by lord William Bentinck. His messenger, who sets off with the account, which I received only this morning, of the unlucky affair of the 10th, near Burgos, enables me to thank you for the view which you have given me of your intended movements, and to mitigate the bad news, by the assurance which I think I can venture to give, that it has not created any visible degree of uneasiness or discouragement in the minds of the leading persons here. The people, though much irritated, as it is said, are still farther from being dejected than their leaders. 5000 men marched forward to-day from Madrid, and two regiments from Toledo. The fixed spirit of resistance which, without calculation of danger

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to
sir John Moore.

or of means, seems to have rooted itself in the minds of the people, appears superior to any reverses.

You will have heard of overtures of negotiation: it seems doubtful whether Buonaparte meant to include Spain in the number of our allies with whom he proposes to treat; and still more, whether he would offer terms which it would be possible to accept.

I should incline to think, therefore, that he had no other object than that of cajoling the emperor of Russia, and facilitating the conscription. He will not disunite Spain and England; and I feel confident that he will not succeed in lowering the tone, or relaxing the spirit, of this country.

You, probably, are already acquainted with the appointment of the marquis Romana to the command of Castanos' and Blake's army. His nomination is, I understand, a popular one at Madrid; and his long absence has given him an advantage which is peculiar to him, that of being wholly unmixed in the political intrigues of the day.

I shall be obliged to Mr. Stuart for his assistance in the military as well as other parts of my correspondence; a circumstance which I trust will not be unsatisfactory to you, as it will, I am persuaded, be conducive to the furthering of the public service.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

J. H. FRERE."

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

Nothing could exceed the disgust with which, according to the Narrative, sir John Moore seems to have been inspired at the agreeable view which Mr. Frere had taken of Spanish affairs, and which, for purposes that would have argued almost a treasonable intention, he is plainly stated to have misrepresented. From Mr. Frere, the general's disgust extended itself to all the arrangements of his government in respect to Spain, the most prominent of which he immediately determined to supersede.

In proportion also as Mr. Frere sees occasion to inspirit the British army, its general assumes more and more the hopeless ideas which he had before expressed. Yet he is ready, as appears by the following letter, to censure a Spanish general who too readily gave way to alarm.

The epistle is very extraordinary : there are, in printing it, omissions which were deemed expedient in regard to persons, who are the objects of hasty censure.

Salamanca, Nov. 16, 1808.

“ Sir,

I had last night the honour to receive your letter of the 13th, together with letters of the 14th, from Mr. Stuart and lord William Bentinck.

It does not appear certain whether the French have advanced in any force to Valladolid ; and there

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

is no reason to think, from the information which reached me last night, that they have passed it.

In the course of this day all this will be ascertained, from the reports of the officers and other persons I have sent out.

General Pignatelli's conduct was certainly not such as became a person holding a situation of such trust. He seems to have run off upon the first alarm. It was right for him to retire, and put his person in safety, but no farther; there he should have stopped, and not have left the people without a head. It was his duty, I conceive, to have collected information, in order to communicate it to me, and to those who, like me, were materially interested. I did not know, until I received Mr. Stuart's letter, that the defeat of the Estremadura army had been so complete.

It was however nothing more than was to be expected, when so small a corps was committed so near to the strength of the enemy.

I have been unable hitherto to understand the movements and positions of the Spanish armies; but I have taken it for granted that they were formed from local circumstances, and a knowledge of the country, of which I was ignorant. I should otherwise have said they were upon a scale much too great for the strength of their armies. I begin to fear that this is the case, and that, if their sys-

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

tem be not changed, we shall all of us very soon be beaten in detail. To cover and protect the British army, whilst upon its march from such distant points, in order to unite, never seems to have been in the contemplation of the Spanish generals; and now, from the position the French have taken, the accomplishment of it is become exceedingly precarious. My position here is a bad one, in as much as my movements in it are confined, and leave nothing but a barren country to retire upon. I should undoubtedly be better at Valladolid; but it is impossible for me to go there, whilst the French in force are so near it, and the Spanish armies are at such a distance. Until my force is united, I must be covered and protected. As the corps come to me from such opposite directions, Corunna and Madrid, I cannot move towards one, without increasing my distance and forsaking the other; and, whilst they are each marching towards me, if I am forced to fall back, they will both risk to be destroyed. The difference hitherto between the position of the Spanish and French armies, as they have struck me, is this—the French, in order to concentrate, or to strengthen, either flank, move upon the chord, the Spaniards upon the circumference; the movements of the one are short, and can be easily concealed, those of the other extended, and exposed to be interrupted. I

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

shall write to general Hope, to consider it as his object to join me at this place with all expedition; but to be guided by the information he receives of the movements of the enemy, and to use his discretion. I shall direct general Baird to collect the whole of his corps at and about Astorga, whence his retreat to Corunna is safe; but not to come towards me, until I give him notice; and in this I shall be guided by what I perceive of the enemy on this side of the Ebro, and from the information I expect to receive from the marquis de la Romana, of his designs, and the direction he means to give to the Spanish armies. I know not where to address to the marquis; I have therefore written this military letter to you, and request you will communicate its contents to him.

The contents of the two letters I addressed lately to general Castanos, and which were sent under cover to lord William Bentinck, will of course be given to him;—the tone of conciliation which I have adopted in my letters to general Castanos, and which I shall continue to the marquis Romana, I trust you will approve. I wish to impress upon whoever commands the Spanish armies, that I consider myself as having but one interest with him, and that he will find me as ready as any of his own generals to follow and support his plans. The power and controul over the di-

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

rection of my own army, which, as commanding an auxiliary force, I have, I shall keep out of sight, and hope never to be obliged to exert. You already know how much we are distressed for money. Mr. Stuart and lord William both say that it is to be got by loan, or for bills, at Madrid. This differs from the information given to me by Mr. Kennedy; but I shall be happy to find that they are right, and that Mr. Kennedy has been misinformed. If Mr. Erskine were here, I should send him to Madrid for that purpose; for, if money is to be found, such are our necessities that we must get it upon any terms; but, as Mr. Erskine has not joined me, and as, in his absence, I cannot spare Mr. Kennedy, I shall take it as a very particular favour if you will be kind enough to give me your assistance in this matter:—I have desired Mr. Kennedy to write to you upon it.

With respect to our supplies, I do not apprehend want. If they exist in the country, and we have money, our commissariat will procure them. What we want is, some persons conversant in the mode, and furnished with authority to call forth the aid of the country, and of the magistrates and civil authorities; if don Vincenti be the person entrusted by the Spanish government for the supply of their army, some person from him, to whom he has delegated his information and his correspondence with

his agents in the provinces, is the person whom the Spanish government should appoint to attend the British army, and aid with his knowledge and with his authority our commissariat;—I should rather this person were a man of character, not looking solely to making a property of us, but that could be trusted, and likely to be satisfied with having discharged an important duty, and with such pecuniary reward as would necessarily attend it.

I have but one more subject to touch upon:—were the officers employed with the different armies to correspond, they might have been useful before either you or I were sent to Spain, and when it was necessary for government at home to know what was passing; but I own that I disapprove of any person being authorised to correspond officially with government but you and me.

If I want an English officer at any time to assist my communication with any of the Spanish generals with whom I am acting, I can send one; but, in general, I shall prefer a direct correspondence with the general himself, who will, of course, communicate many particulars to me, which it is unnecessary and highly improper for him to communicate to such officers as are in general sent to them. My wish is, to overset the whole system; to send them with their Spanish rank to England, and to send, as they may occasionally be wanted

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.



1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IV.

1808

November.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

either by yourself or me, officers, or others, who will look to no rank or emolument but from their own country, in whose duty alone they should consider themselves employed, and who, when no longer wanted, return to their former occupations.

I have the honour to remain, &c.

JOHN MOORE."

When the intelligence and constant utility of this service, as well as the personal character of the officers alluded to, are recognized, the preceding paragraph will be deemed not the least singular of the animadversions of sir John Moore.

Notwithstanding the despairing manner in which it is related, it is evident, from the following extract, that the junta was not idle in using its endeavour to remedy the state of things.

Madrid, Nov. 17, 1808.

Mr. Stuart to
sir J. Moore.

The defeat experienced by Blake on the 11th of this month, the occupation of Valladolid by the French, and the distance between the different divisions of your army, give room for the most melancholy reflections. The orders which have been transmitted by the junta, in consequence of this state of things, will, I fear, be very inadequate to meet the evil.

The advance of a few regiments in Andalusia, the concentration of the runaways from Burgos,

&c. at Segovia, and the attempt to render the passes of the Somasiera and the Guardarama defensible, will not save Madrid or Spain. And unless Blake effects his union with you, and Castanos brings together the whole of Arragon, Catalonia, Reding's division, &c. so as to form a force superior to opponents, who are increasing daily, I cannot flatter myself with any serious hope of a good result."

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Mr. Stuart to
sir J. Moore.

Letters were also received by the commander-in-chief from colonel Graham, who was stationed with the central army, and who, it seems, gave a sad detail of cabals and divisions between the generals, with the injudicious interferences of the junta, incidents entirely to be expected from a new government under its awkward circumstances.

But neither reason, nor the experience of all ages, nor their own misfortunes, says the author of the Narrative, gravely, could prevail upon the junta to appoint a commander-in-chief. This is very singular, after the fact which must have been known to him as stated in the preceding pages.*

The correspondence thus continues: and advantageously to the affairs of Spain, notwithstanding the querulous strain of the following letter.

* See page 52, &c.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.*Salamanca, Nov. 19, 1808.*

Sir,

A courier from Madrid brought me, this morning, letters from Mr. Stuart and lord William Bentinck of the 17th: the former inclosed an order from the supreme junta of Ciudad Rodrigo, to place 20,000 dollars at my disposition, to be repaid hereafter. The junta of this town are endeavouring to get money for us. Nothing can exceed the attention of the marquis Cinalbo, the president; the clergy, with Dr. Curtis at their head, exert themselves; and even a convent of nuns have promised five thousand pounds;—all this shews great good will. The funds, however, which it can raise, are small, and very inadequate to our wants. I trust that you will be able to supply us more amply from Madrid, until those from England arrive. A king's messenger brought me, on the night of the 17th, a letter from lord Castlereagh of the 2d, in which he informs me, that two millions of dollars are upon their passage to Corunna: but his lordship adds, that the difficulty of procuring silver is such, in England, that I must not look for a further supply for some months; and he impresses the necessity of taking every means of obtaining money upon the spot. The expected arrival of the above sum from England must not, therefore, lessen your endeavours to get what you can for us at Madrid.

The French, who entered Valladolid upon the afternoon of the 15th, left it the following morning; they were a thousand cavalry and two pieces of cannon; they returned to Placentia, and have not since advanced from it. I have written to sir David Baird to advance a part of his corps to Benavente, and to close up the rest to Astorga; when this is done, he will forward that from Zamora, and follow with the rest; but, as the propriety of these movements depends upon those of the enemy, the execution of them is left entirely to sir David's discretion, who must be guided by the information he receives;—his rear will not reach Astorga before the 4th of December.

I heard of general Blake's defeat and retreat to Reynosa; but I knew no particulars, until I received this morning Mr. Stuart's letter. General Leith, who is employed with that army to correspond, has never written a line to me since I was in command.* I want general officers; I have therefore written to him to leave any of the officers with him, to carry on the correspondence, and to join sir David Baird at Astorga.

The scenes which colonel Graham describes in his letters, as passing at the head quarters of the

* This charge like some others was prematurely made, as will appear from that active and well-informed general officer's despatch, which was delayed on the road.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

central army, are deplorable. The imbecility of the Spanish government exceeds belief. The good-will of the inhabitants, whatever it may be, is of little use whilst there exists no ability to bring it into action.

I am in communication with no one Spanish army; nor am I acquainted with the intentions of the Spanish government, or of any of its generals. Castanos, with whom I was put in correspondence, is deprived of his command at the moment I might have expected to hear from him; and La Romana, with whom I suppose I am now to correspond (for it has not been officially communicated to me) is absent,—God knows where. In the mean time, the French are within four marches of me, whilst my army is only assembling: in what numbers they are, I cannot learn. No channels of intelligence have been opened to me, and I have not been long enough in the country to procure them myself. I state these particulars to you. I wish it were in my power to go myself to Aranjuez or Madrid to represent them; for, really, if things are to continue in this state, the ruin of the Spanish cause and the defeat of their armies is inevitable; and it will become my duty to consider alone the safety of the British army, and to take steps to withdraw it from a situation, where, without the possibility of doing good, it is exposed to certain defeat.

I shall detain the king's messenger until I hear from you, lest you should wish to send by him any despatches to England. I shall beg of lord William Bentinck to join the army, where I think his services will now be most useful.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

The commander-in-chief seems, like Pignatelli whom he censured, to think early of yielding the cause for the insurance of safety.

The despatch of general Leith, alluded to in the preceding letter, runs as follows :

Renedo Valley of Caqueringa, province of Las Montanos de Santander, 15th Nov. 1808.

Sir,

I regret to inform you that the army of general Blake, in which was lately incorporated the infantry of the marquis de la Romana's division, has been defeated in several attacks since the 5th instant, and is entirely dispersed: I have not time to enter into detail of this unfortunate reverse, carrying with it such serious consequences, for fear of delaying the intimation of that which is so essential to make known in general terms to the commander of the British army advancing from Portugal to Galicia. The Estremaduran army has also experienced a reverse at Burgos. In short, the British

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

General Leith
to sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

General Leith
to sir J. Moore.

army has nothing to depend upon in Las Montanos de Santander. In Asturias there are but a few battalions totally undisciplined; and, by the last accounts, the French occupy from Reynosa to Burgos. Except what remains of the Estremaduran army, (of the position of which I am ignorant) and the British army, there is nothing to prevent the enemy from advancing towards Leon and Valladolid that I know of. I very much suspect that he will avail himself of this movement, to attack in detail the army of Palafox and Castanos, united nominally; and all of which are placed under the command of the marquis de la Romana. The army has suffered principally from famine; and I do not think that it is possible to re-unite those who are flying in all directions nearer than Astorga and Oviedo. It does not appear that there has been any want of spirit in the men; and, in many instances, especially of the divisions of the north, distinguished conduct. Some of the new officers have not behaved so well. Captain Pasley,* royal engineers, who was sent to head quarters to obtain information, and to communicate with the British army, I hope may have given early intelligence of the state of things. Captain Lefebren, R.E. is the

* Now major Pasley, author of the admirable *Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire*, which cannot be too often or too extensively read.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

General Leith
to sir J. Moore.

bearer of this letter, and will be able to give such information as may be required. I regret to state that captain Birch, R.E. was wounded, but I hope he is doing well: I caused him to be embarked on board the Cossack frigate, at Santander, from whence I saw seventeen sail of transports, with warlike stores and provisions, when there appeared no chance of this province remaining covered from the enemy, who, no doubt, will occupy a point so useful to the Spaniards, and eventually to the British. Santander was in the power of the enemy, after possessing the roads of Escudo and Reynosa. The accounts of their having entered that town are not yet received however. The different attacks have been at Zorosa (between Durango and Bilbao), Valmaseda, Arantia; and the total deroute, after a defeat at Espinosa de las Montanax. About 7000 re-assembled at Reynosa on the 13th instant, but without any order; from thence they retreated after dark, and have arrived in this valley as a half-starved and straggling mob, without officers, and all mixed in utter confusion. Never has there been so injudicious and ruinous a system begun and persisted in, as that which has led to the serious disasters of the present moment. The marquis de la Romana, who is here, is quite of that opinion; and, if the army on the other side, and near the Ebro, has not or shall not have suffered before he can take

BOOK III.
 CHAP. IV.
 1808.
 November.
 General Leith
 to sir J. Moore.

this direction, I hope affairs may resume a more favourable aspect. I had prepared copies of reports on the different affairs, addressed by different officers to lord Castlereagh: but unfortunately all my papers are on board the Cossack man of war. Mr. Amiotte, the deputy-commissary-general, has been in such bad health since his arrival, that it was difficult enough to get the stores, &c. embarked. I apprehend the convoy, chiefly consisting of warlike stores for the marquis of Romana's division, and arms and provisions, under my orders, for the aid of the armies of Spain, has gone to Corunna, as they could not at this season keep the sea, and there is no good port nearer than the last-mentioned, from whence the roads towards Leon are not so good. I should hope soon to get near the British army. Under the present circumstances, I feel an awkwardness at leaving the marquis de la Romana, with whom I have received particular instructions to communicate on any point still unsettled. I hope, however, he will soon be able to disengage himself from this part of the army (if such it can be called), and he may probably be obliged to go near the British army before he can communicate with the rest of his own troops.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JAMES LEITH,
 Major-general."

I inclose a rough idea of the situation of this valley, relatively to the great route from Reynosa to Santander.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

General Leith
to sir J. Moore.

This true picture of Spanish affairs excites equal regret and admiration; and it is well observed, in the Narrative, that,—“Nothing certainly could be worse judged than the orders sent by the junta to general Blake to fight the French army alone; instead of directing him to fall back, and unite with general Baird at Astorga; for this Spanish army was in no condition to contend with regular troops. There were, it is true, between eight and nine thousand regular soldiers,* who had escaped from Denmark with the marquis of Romana, and who fought well; but they were overpowered by superior numbers. The rest of this army consisted of unfortunate peasants, who had suffered, with constancy, for four months, privations, which would have annihilated a British army.

They had endured excessive fatigue, were without shoes, almost without clothes, exposed to the cold on snowy mountains, obliged frequently to depend for subsistence on such animals as they caught by accident; on meat without salt—a food totally repugnant to the habits of Spaniards. They

* This number is uncer-rated.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

General Leith
to sir J. Moore.

passed many days without bread. Their condition was so wretched, that it is not to be wondered at that they were easily dispersed, and had no inclination to rally.”*

Than this testimony, nothing could be more honourable to the Spaniards, nothing more just: their necessities however, it is evident, would compel them to rally, since separate, at this season and in such a situation, they must perish.

The marquis Romana retired to Leon, to re-assemble as many as he could collect.

The way was now open for the French to the British army, if it should be preferred to that of Castanos, and sir John Moore conceived he could do nothing to hinder it; for, being placed nearly in the centre between two divisions of his army, which were approaching from different points, he felt constrained to wait at Salamanca, in expectation that they should be permitted to join him.

There is in the Narrative a letter from sir John Moore to one of his brothers, which, however valuable as an authentic document, written under circumstances when a man's mind must be most

* The want of information respecting the roads, by which this distance was originally occasioned, becomes now doubly vexatious.

clearly seen, was not very expedient for publication. It however, in consequence, becomes a public document, and therefore liable to proper animadversion.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.
1808.
November.

The principal remark, intended here, relates to the unsettled state of the general's mind, during his command, and those shades of variation in his opinions, and the circumstances on which they were grounded, which become important only in such a cause.

The letter recapitulates what has been already before the public, and then states, in terms of censure, that "Castanos and Palafox have about forty thousand men, mostly undisciplined peasants, upon the Ebro and Alagon. And this is all the Spaniards have to oppose a hundred thousand French troops. The provinces are not armed,* and as to enthusiasm, I have seen no marks of it."

A little farther, the general nevertheless observes *enthusiasm* and that an obstinate determination not to submit to the French yoke may do much: and, the Spaniards have not shewn themselves a wise or a provident people; their wisdom is not a wisdom of action, but still a *fine people*, a character of their own, quite distinct from other nations, and much *might have been* done with them.

* This has been already shewn to be impracticable

BOOK III.
 CHAP. IV.
 1808.
 November.

There is in this *opinion* a degree of refinement not easily to be interpreted, but certainly in favour of the Spanish nation, and its affection to the cause of its allies.

A *fact*, however, is recorded from the journal of sir John Moore in the Narrative, which speaks "more than all the speculative opinions in the world.

Whilst the British head-quarters were at Salamanca, "lord Proby was at Tordesillas, reconnoitering, when a party of French cavalry came into the town. They staid some time. Every man knew that Proby was there, for he had been two days among them; yet not a man betrayed him. And when the cavalry left the place, and his lordship came into the street, they all testified their satisfaction, and declared that, though they had no arms, they would have died rather than have allowed him to be taken."

A similar incident, says major Pasley, quoting it,* happened to me, about the same time, on my way from general Blake's army to Astorga, in which, for a whole day's journey, I generally passed within a few miles of the enemy's posts—an experiment that I should certainly not have hazarded, had I doubted

* Essay, p. 283.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

the good-will of the Spaniards. About dusk, the second evening of my journey, I reached a town in the kingdom of Leon, where I thought myself in security; but, two hours afterwards, it was entered by the French cavalry. A priest, who had been in company with me was taken (as I afterwards learned) by a patrol of the enemy's dragoons, at the door of a house, not more than two minutes after I had quitted it. Nothing could exceed the anxiety which the people of the town showed on my account. It was with great difficulty, that I could prevail upon the guides who attended me that night, to accept of any recompense although they were of the lower class of people. One man, in particular, who had assisted me with great inconvenience to himself, absolutely refused it. Under such circumstances, they seemed to think that serving a British officer was a point of duty and of honour. Such incidents speak for the character of the Spaniards, and prove the affection which at that time they bore to the English."

Major Pasley *also observes*, "When I was sent by the same general (Leith,) from Santander to Reynosa, to join Blake's army, after his defeats in Biscay, the extent of which was at that time not fully known to us, I met a great number of fugitives, all of the new levies, upon the road, ignorant of the situation of the main body of the army, of

BOOK III.

CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

which I informed them ; and endeavoured, but in vain, to persuade the officers to rally their men, and march to Reynosa. They, on their part, advised me to go back, asserting that the communication must be cut off by the French troops, and it was even rumoured by some of them, that the place was actually in possession of the enemy. Proceeding in this state of uncertainty, without giving full credit to these reports, and convinced that, at all events, I should be able to discover the truth, and escape the danger, before it was too late ; I found a detachment of more than twenty men of the veteran troops very much exhausted, at a house upon the road, who offered to put themselves under my command, and make good their way to the army with me wherever it might be, if I would wait till morning. When I declined this proposal, not liking the delay, they determined that I should not go without a guard ; and four of the least fatigued volunteered to accompany me. From what I saw of the spirit of these men, I should have placed the same confidence in them, which they seemed to place in me.

Such anecdotes, trifling in themselves, afford the strongest proofs of the good-will of the Spaniards, at that period, since these are situations in which it may be admitted, that no orders of superiors could

have forced the peasants of the mountains to effect a civility or kindness towards us which they did not feel; and when an army is dispersed, subordination is lost to such a degree, that nothing but a real sentiment of friendship could have caused the Spanish soldiers to follow, or even to respect, British officers in the way that they did, for which I have given the above as an example. Not merely the veteran troops, the stragglers of all kinds, in their greatest distress, even the most undisciplined, respected us as much as, if not more than, their own officers, of the conduct of some of whom they bitterly complained: indeed, I felt so assured that they would obey me, that if a detachment of the French cavalry had presented itself, it was my intention to have ridden back, and put myself at a head of a party of Spaniards of any description; the nature of the country being much in our favour. I was afterwards sorry to see that the stragglers of the British army did not behave with proper respect to the Spanish officers."

It is painful to add the following explanation of the conduct of the Spaniards:

"When sir John Moore's army afterwards advanced, for the purpose of attacking Soult, I was lodged in the same house, where my quarters had formerly been beat up in the manner described, and had the mortification of seeing a British officer, who

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.
November.

did not understand a word of the Spanish language, behave in the most outrageous way to the very man who had been most instrumental in saving me from being taken prisoner.

“When I inquired into the cause of the dispute, I found that this officer had got a notion in his head, that the Spaniards had such a thorough detestation of us, that they concealed the greatest part of their goods, and would not sell any thing to the British army, even for ready money. Under this impression, he had quarrelled with the poor Spaniard, who was a shop-keeper, and seemed disposed to tear the shop in pieces, because the man could not sell him what he had not got. Had this gentleman reflected for a moment, he must have seen the absurdity of supposing, that any tradesman would not grasp at the offer of converting his perishable goods into money, when, his country being the seat of war, he knew that, from day to day, his house, with all that it contained, was liable to be plundered or burnt.

“Upon such grounds as these was the opinion which the soldiers and part of the officers of the British army entertained of the jealous and unfriendly character of the Spaniards formed.”

Had the harsh censure of sir John Moore been applied to such cases as these, the history of his

campaign would have been more glorious and more useful.

One of the qualities with which the general was gifted in a most extraordinary degree (says the Narrative) was prescience. It had better been presence of mind. For though no movement of Buonaparte, however artfully concealed, was unexpected by him, the facts which surrounded him at a close distance were equally important to understand, and more necessary to provide against, than the future operations of the general, whose movements would always be governed by the actual state of things.

Among the most judicious observations of the writer of the Narrative, are the following, on sir David Baird :

“ Sir David Baird, in his march from Corunna, had to struggle with difficulties of a kind totally new to him.

“ This general had distinguished himself in many campaigns in India, where the British army are usually accompanied with so numerous a train of slaves, servants, and sutlers, horses, bullocks, and elephants, that the troops are not only abundantly supplied with necessaries, but even supplied with many luxuries.

But here sir David had to encounter a thousand

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.
November

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.
November.

deficiencies; he met with a variety of obstacles to his progress, and received little aid from the Spaniards to overcome them. In order to procure sufficient supplies for the troops, and to be able to carry forward the baggage, he was obliged to divide his small corps into smaller detachments; each following the other at considerable distances. He arrived at Astorga, November 19, with a part of his infantry; but the following extract of a letter, which he wrote from that place, will explain his situation."

It will also shew, that sir David early felt the despairing influence of sir John Moore.

November 23d.

Sir David Baird
to sir J. Moore.

" My dear sir John,

The more I consider our situation, the more I am convinced of the danger that would attend my making, at the present moment, any movement in advance, or attempt to join you, until my force is more collected. We have no kind of support to expect from the Spaniards, who are completely dispersed and driven from the field. And if I were to move forward the infantry I have at present here, I should necessarily expose myself to be beaten in detail, without a chance of being able to oppose any effectual resistance.

The enemy are certainly at Majorga, and their

parties have pushed forward almost close to Bena-vente. From my present want of cavalry I have not been able to ascertain how forward their infantry may be. But as they have had the army which defeated Blake unoccupied since the 13th, and that which routed the Estremadurans since the 10th, I cannot believe that they are very remote.

On my left, they have pushed forward as far as St. Vincento de la Burena and Colombas, both of which places were attacked on the 19th instant. Of their being carried there, can be little doubt; as there does not appear to be any force in the Asturias sufficient to resist them. And should they have been successful, my communication with my rear may be endangered, by their advance on the road through Monderedo or Lugo.

Under these circumstances, I have felt it my duty to consult with the general officers here, as to the measures it would be proper to adopt; and their sentiments are perfectly in unison with my own; that, unless you should judge it absolutely requisite, it would not be advisable to attempt to advance, without I should be able to assemble my whole force at this place, previous to beginning to move. Should, however, the enemy advance in force before that time, which will not be previous to December 4, from the general tenor of your letters to me, and particularly from the intention

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir David Baird
to sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir David Baird
to Sir J. Moore.

you express in that of the 15th, of falling back on Ciudad Rodrigo, if the enemy approach nearer than Valladolid, I shall instantly commence my retreat, taking care, if possible, to move by the time they are within three days' march of me, to prevent the confusion, and loss, necessarily attendant on a close pursuit.

I had written thus far when I had the satisfaction to receive your two letters, of the 19th instant; and it is particularly gratifying to me, to have your sanction to the measures I proposed to adopt. It is very extraordinary that I have been unable to obtain any sort of information respecting the position of the enemy's infantry, although I have used every endeavour to get intelligence.

I enclose a copy of some intelligence communicated by a person who was sent from Leon, to obtain information respecting the movements of the French, and of a letter written by colonel Graham, from the head-quarters of Castanos' army.

From the latter, it is clearly apparent how very much exaggerated the accounts generally circulated of the strength of the Spanish armies have been. In all probability Castanos and Palafox may by this time have met with the same reverse as Blake; in which case the Spaniards could have no force, deserving the denomination of an army, in the field.

As it could never be intended by the British government, that our army should engage in the defence of this country unaided and unsupported by any Spanish force, I confess, my dear sir John, I begin to be at a loss to discover an object at this moment in Spain: it being very evident that the Spaniards are not at this moment in Spain: it being very evident that the Spaniards are not at this moment in a situation to be capable of assembling a force competent to offer any serious resistance to the progress of the French arms.

It is very remarkable that I have not procured the least intelligence, or received any sort of communication, from any of the official authorities at Madrid, or either of the Spanish generals. Neither Mr. Frere nor lord William Bentinck have written to me for a considerable time.

I remain, my dear sir John, &c.

D. BAIRD."

This excellent letter, says Mr. Moore, shows how very just a notion sir David Baird entertained of the Spanish affairs; and it appears that both himself and the generals in his army saw the prospect of events in even a more desponding light than sir John Moore, who indeed states at this period in his journal—

"I see my situation as clearly as any one, that

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

Sir David Baird
to sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IV.

1808.

November.

nothing can be worse ; for I have no Spanish army to give me the least assistance, only the marquis Romana is endeavouring to assemble the fugitives from Blake's army at Leon.

“ Yet I am determined to form the junction of this army, and to try our fortune. We have no business here as things are ; but, being here, it would never do to abandon the Spaniards without a struggle.”

Remarkable
difference of
opinion between
sir John Moore
and his generals.

Yet, as will afterwards appear, the generals of his army had no conception of the necessity of retreat, whatever the difficulties to be encountered.

Under the despondency created by all these circumstances, sir John Moore began to contemplate not merely a retreat, but the entire abandonment of the Spanish cause ; and, still farther, even an embarkation of the army at Lisbon, ideas which could not fail to have a strong effect on his future operations, whatever the incidents by which they were to be guided ; and yet more upon those of the Spanish nation, most naturally looking up even to a small auxiliary British force, as its exemplar, guide, and stay, upon whose movements, therefore, perhaps it must stand or fall.

CHAP. V.

STATIONARY POSITION OF SIR JOHN MOORE'S DIVISION, AND PARTIAL JUNCTION OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

Ill-conducted means of Intelligence, and sudden Determination of Sir David Baird to retreat.—Arrival of General Hope at Madrid.—Vacillation of the British General.

THE means of intelligence obtained by the British Generals, appear to have been altogether of a very confined and embarrassing nature. Nor, what is more singular, did it improve by the continuance of the armies in the same place. It was thus, that sir David Baird, on the 23d of November, wrote from Leon, that the French had advanced from Sahagun, and were collecting a force at Ampudia, and Rio Seco. And the marquis Romana

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Ill-conducted
intelligence.

BOOK III.

CAAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir David Baird
preparing to re-
treat.

transmitted additional information, which became generally current, that the enemy had, on the 24th, 14,000 infantry at Rio Seco, and 4000 cavalry in the neighbourhood. Sir David, therefore, fearing an attack before his troops were collected, instantly prepared to retreat, and inquired of sir John Moore whether the cavalry should be embarked, or retire through Portugal. This had been produced only by a body of French cavalry, which scoured that country. It nevertheless had the effect of retarding the junction of that general's force with sir John Moore, who ordered him to advance for that purpose.

Lieutenant-general Hope, however, with his usual ability and energy, persevered in his march, provided for the subsistence of his troops, and, arriving near Madrid, had, on the 20th of November, a conference with lord William Bentinck and don Thomas Morla, captain-general of that city, deputed by the supreme junta for the purpose.

Sir John Moore, who had hitherto directed his attention, agreeably to the wish of the Spanish government, northward on the capital, now, for what reason does not appear, is stated, in the Narrative, to have contemplated a movement on the south of Spain.

* The original motives for this direction to the British troops were of course done away by the possession of Portugal.

General Hope, thus describes the result of his conference at Madrid :

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

General Hope
to sir J. Moore.

Madrid, 20th November, 1808.

“ My dear Moore,

In consequence of a pressing letter from lord William Bentinck, I yesterday came to Madrid.

This morning lord William and I have had a long conversation with don T. Morla, authorised by the junta, to converse with us upon the state of affairs.

Much desultory reasoning passed at this conference ; and it is perfectly evident, that they are altogether without a plan, as to their future military operations, either in the case of success or misfortune.

Every branch is effected by the disjointed and inefficient construction of their government.

The only result of this conference, that can be worth communicating to you, is, that it is the decided opinion of Morla, and stated by him as what the government also wish, that, in case of the British force being now prevented from forming a junction, for the purpose of advancing, to undertake active offensive operations, a junction, of whatever part of that force it may be practicable to bring together, should take place in the centre of Spain.”

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.
1808.
November.

The commander-in-chief seems to have conceived that, although, as he admits, neither lord William Bentinck, or Mr. Frere, had any such suspicion, the advice was insidiously given.

Sir John Moore was therefore more displeased when this was succeeded by the following letter from Mr. Frere :

Aranjuez, 25th Nov. 1808.

“Sir,

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

I send inclosed the copy of a note which I addressed to M. Garay, secretary of the junta, and which contains the recapitulation of a conference which I had with him (on the subject of your letters addressed to me, and to lord William Bentinck,) in the presence of Mr. Stuart. I have likewise inclosed his answer, which I have just received. It is difficult to account entirely for the want of information, of which we have to complain. It is owing, certainly in part, to the mistaken notions of secrecy and mystery, which are attached to the concerns of government, which is incidental to people who are unexpectedly called to the management of public affairs. Something, I am afraid, is likewise to be imputed to a jealousy of Great Britain; as if we presumed upon the obligations under which the country is placed.* But, most of

* This, there is reason to fear, was the case, when even the

all, the confusion of their own system of intelligence, or, more properly speaking, the want of system, is the cause of the uncertainty in which we are left upon points of the greatest consequence.

The accounts, however, which have been received to-day, have been personally too alarming for concealment. A courier has arrived, who left the advanced posts of the French, at Medina Celi; and an express has since come in from Torrigo with an account of firing having been heard at Siguença. As the French are superior in cavalry, and there is nothing to stop them between that place and this, the junta are in immediate expectation of their approach, and had determined, this evening, on retiring upon Cordova. I am in hopes that they have been prevailed upon to relinquish this plan, and to content themselves, at present, with retreating to Toledo: The following is the statement of the numbers of their troops in New Castile:

At Buitrago - - 5000

Segovia - - 4700

Somosierra - 6400

Madrid - - 5300

The force of the enemy is reckoned at about

commander-in-chief condescends, in his letters, to reproach them with their obligations. See ante, p. 76, &c.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808

November.

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

eleven thousand men, of which six thousand are cavalry, under general Belliard.

I inclose a report which has just been sent me relative to Blake's army. I find, upon inquiry, that the date of the attack is the 19th at night. Columbres is not above two or three leagues from the first village of Asturias. I learn, at the same time, that one of the Asturian deputies, to whom I had directed my inquiries, has already left the Sitio. The marquis Romana, on the 17th, was attempting to make a stand at Torra de la Vega. General Leith had given orders, which had been properly executed, for evacuating the post of St. Ander. No courier has been received from Castanos; and it is clear, from the situation of the French, that the direct communication is cut off. Great discontent and perplexity are known to be prevalent at head-quarters.

Mr. Stuart will be able to give you better accounts of the military condition of Madrid. There are about 8 or 10,000 muskets, and ammunition has been distributed.

The junta appear at present more anxious for your union with Blake than for covering Madrid. What they most deprecate, and I think with most reason, is a retreat upon Portugal. It would sink the hearts of the whole country, and would give the impression of our having, after an ineffectual

effort, relapsed into the old limited system of protecting Portugal.

I must apologise for the apparent formality of this letter, which does not proceed from any inclination to commence a less confidential mode of communication between us; but is owing to the hurry which the circumstances I have mentioned will account for.

Believe me, &c.

J. H. FRERE."

On this letter, the Narrative contains the following peculiar observations:

There are two singular passages in this letter. The first is, it is stated, that the force of the enemy is about eleven thousand men. Where this force was, is not mentioned; but the junta ought to have known that at this period Buonaparte was advancing rapidly with nearly 80,000; and this information ought to have been communicated to sir John Moore. The second is, that Mr. Frere strongly deprecates a retreat on Portugal. This probably was not an original error of Mr. Frere's, but instilled into his mind by Morla; for, otherwise a person totally ignorant of military affairs would hardly have ventured to express so decidedly his opinion of a military movement to an experienced general.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.
November.

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

BOOK III.

CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Difficulties between the British ministry and general.

Morla was now become the chief ruler of the junta; and was considered a man of the first abilities in Spain. He had been appointed president of the board charged with military affairs, and was with great success effecting the destruction of the Spanish armies. Previous to his interference, the generals Castanos and Blake had most judiciously acted upon the defensive: that system was now reprobated; and the generals were impelled forward, contrary to their judgment. Morla was, however, not content with the destruction of the Spanish armies in succession; but, in order to complete the subjugation of Spain, he got himself appointed by the junta to treat with the English generals; and empowered to proceed to the execution of such measures as were urgent and peremptory.

Being invested with this authority, he did not fail to exert it; and had his advice, or requisitions, been literally obeyed, not a man of the British army could have escaped.

It will only be here remarked, that, whatever the evidence upon which these facts are stated, none are submitted to the reader or the world; and, that if Buonaparte was understood to be advancing with eighty thousand men, a more powerful incentive can scarcely be supposed for either Morla

or Mr. Frere to urge the advance of the British general, previous to the junction of so overpowering a force. And, as to the decided opinion of Mr. Frere, to whomsoever given, it is given with the circumstances on which it was grounded, and with every proper degree of respect to the person to whom it was addressed.

And while Mr. Frere thus urged the British general to coincide with the desire and expectations of the Spanish government, as far as he deemed them just and expedient, he did not fail, with redoubled energy, to urge to that government the complaints of sir John Moore, and to remonstrate with it upon them wherever he saw occasion.

Sir,

I have thought proper to address your excellency, as a member and secretary of the supreme central junta, a representation which appears to me too important not to be communicated to that assembly through a person distinguished by their confidence, and by the important office he holds.

I have received letters from sir John Moore, which render it necessary for me to recapitulate the complaints which he has addressed to me, and which he regrets he is not able to make in person at Aranjuez.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Difficulties between the British ministry and general.

Mr. Frere to Mr. de Garay, dated Aranjuez, Nov. 23, 1808.

BOOK III.

CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to
Mr. de Garay.

He complains, in the first place, of the state of ignorance he is left in, respecting the number and position of the enemy's forces: and even of the plans and operations of the campaign, to such a degree (he writes) that when the very unmilitary evacuation of Valladolid, by general Pignatelli, took place, that officer did not think it his duty to inform him of it.

The particulars of the march, and of the effective strength of the army of Estremadura, were likewise for a long time unknown to him. The retreat of general Blake, and his subsequent retreat to Reynosa, he was also left ignorant of, until he learned these events from Madrid. He continues in these words: "I am in no communication with any of the Spanish armies, nor am I made acquainted with the plans either of the government or of the generals. Castanos, with whom I was put in correspondence, is dismissed from his command at the moment I expected to hear from him; and Romana, with whom I suppose I now ought to correspond, is absent. In the mean time, the French, whose numbers I cannot learn, are only four days march distant from my army, which is only assembling. No channel of information has been opened for me, and I have not been long enough in the country to procure one for myself. I give you this information, and I wish I could go myself to Aran-

juez or Madrid, to make a representation of it; for, in truth, if things remain in this situation, the ruin of the Spanish cause, and the defeat of their armies, are inevitable; and it will become my duty only to consider the safety of the British army, and to take measures to withdraw it from a situation where, without the possibility of being useful, it is exposed to certain defeat."

In answer to those observations respecting general Castanos and the marquis of Romana, your excellency informed me, to my great surprise, that orders had been sent, ten days before, to the marquis of Romana to come and take the command of the army of the centre; and to leave that of the north, and of the Asturias, under the command of general Blake.

It seems to me that a secret known to two-and-thirty persons (the number of the junta) might have been trusted to the minister of his Britannic majesty, without any great additional risk of its being divulged; although there had been no question of a fact so interesting, that the knowledge of it was necessary for a correspondence, upon which might depend the safety of the English army.

It appeared to me that your excellency was not insensible to the justice of this reflection; to which I might have added, that the news of the entry of the French into Valladolid had been concealed from

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to
Mr. de Garay.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to
Mr. de Garay.

me; and, when I inquired if there was any foundation for the rumour which mentioned it, I was answered that no official news had arrived that day, except a report respecting the moving some pieces of artillery, I believe, to Segovia. It was impossible for me to think, after such an answer, that authentic accounts had actually brought certain information of the event respecting which I was demanding an explanation; and that the fact was dissembled by an equivocation founded upon the non-arrival of the official despatches from the commandant.

The news of the defeat of general Blake, a piece of news which might have occasioned the total loss of the two divisions under general Moore and sir David Baird, was undoubtedly communicated to me; but not until the evening of the day which followed the arrival of the courier. I am far from feeling myself in the slightest ill-humour towards persons extremely respectable, and who, both in their answers and in their silence, only follow the system which has been traced out to them; but it is my duty to expostulate strongly against the continuation of a system which, without ensuring secrecy towards the enemy, establishes distrust and mystery, instead of that confidence which should be the foundation of the united plans, on which the fate of the war must depend.

I have learned with much pleasure the news of recalling the disorganizing commission which had been sent to the army of the centre; as well as that of nominating Mr. de Morla, with full powers to confer and conclude with our officers, upon all business respecting an effective system of co-operation; and I hope that these powers will be farther enlarged, both as to execution and deliberation.

The courier which was sent to the marquis of Romana will have undoubtedly carried an order to communicate freely with general sir John Moore.

I cannot finish without thanking your excellency for the attention with which, at a first conference, you listened to the particulars of a representation so disagreeable.

I beg, &c. &c.

J. H. FRERE.

Contrary to the manner in which the British general received the matter submitted to him by the British minister, the following answer was returned from the supreme junta of Spain, exercising sovereign powers.

Most excellent sir,

I have laid before the supreme ruling junta of the kingdom the note your excellency was pleased to address to me yesterday, relative to the

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.
November.
Mr. Frere to
Mr. de Garay.

Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.
Aranjuez, Nov.
24, 1808.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

complaint made to you by sir John Moore, with regard to the state of ignorance in which he was kept with respect to the number and positions of the enemy, and to the events and operations of our armies.

Of the evacuation of Valladolid, which was not a military movement, the supreme junta knows nothing; neither of the particulars of an action in which one of the divisions of the army of Estremadura was concerned. The same is the case with regard to the details of the operations of general Blake; who states that he has had two engagements—the one of which was in favour of our arms, and the other, though of no great advantage to the enemy, obliged him to retreat to Reynosa.

Each of the generals had received positive orders from the junta, which are now reiterated to them by extraordinary couriers, to communicate with the English general, and to act in concert with him.— His majesty would receive the highest satisfaction if sir John Moore could appear personally at Aranjuez or at Madrid, to make such observations, and to adjust those points which he thinks might conduce to the removal of those circumstances which appear contrary to the good understanding, and which might produce all the effect that may be expected from our union with the great power which with such generosity affords us assistance, and which

the junta could not see disappointed or weakened without the greatest regret. This, however, could not happen, if, acting in concert, and with a perfect harmony, we avail ourselves of a speedy union of the forces, to complete the destruction of the enemy, and of his plans; if the English troops forming a junction with the left of our army, we compose a formidable body of 70,000 infantry and 6000 cavalry, a force with which we should be certain of the blow, and which we never could be by any different conduct.

Then the generous efforts of our ally, England, would complete the work; under whose happy and auspicious commencement the eternal friendship and alliance by which the two nations are for ever to be united, began; so that neither interest nor policy will ever be sufficient to break the bonds by which they are united.

When I spoke to your excellency with regard to general Castanos, I had the honour to explain to you the strong and political motives that existed for acting as we had done. Your excellency was convinced; and it was then determined that he should not quit the command until the arrival of the marquis de la Romana. In this there has been no secret; nor should there be any, however important it may be, with regard to the minister of a friendly nation, towards whom the junta feels the

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.
1808.
November.
Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

greatest personal esteem and consideration, independent of his official character.

The junta knew of the enemy's entry into Valladolid, and afterwards, of the evacuation of that city by the French troops, who made but a very short stay there. General Morla is appointed to treat with the English generals, to agree upon the necessary plans and operations, and to give information of them to the supreme junta; proceeding immediately to the execution of those measures which are urgent and peremptory.

I have now only to assure your excellency of the particular satisfaction and pleasure I derived from hearing your remarks on these matters, which led to this our first conference. I shall be ready to repeat it, with pleasure, as often as your excellency may think proper; either at your house, or wherever else you may choose to appoint. In the meantime, I am, &c.

MARTIN DE GARAY.

The effect produced, by these communications on the mind of the British general, seem to be of the most extraordinary kind.

According to the Narrative, disgusted with the minister of his own government, and with that of the allies, without information or means of obtaining it, he refused an invitation of the latter to avail

himself of every means in the capital of Spain, and then applied himself to the former, of whom he had conceived, it would appear, not only the worst, but the most contemptible, opinion! Even the Narrative, ceasing its remarks in this place, has recourse to the most jejeune topics of *biography* to fill up an evident hiatus in its memoirs of this period of the campaign.*

* That these incidents, however placed, are not among the most interesting efforts of biography, it is by no means the intention of the writer to contend, any more than he would against the agreeable and intelligent pages of Boswell. But, in the grave narrative of a campaign, which is *avowedly and imperatively* written to direct future historians, it must evidently require something more than the following reasons for a great general, dissatisfied with the means of intelligence which he possessed, refusing to avail himself of the best when offered to him. Nor is it surely too much to say, of one who certainly judged with sufficient harshness of others, that with the exception of "writing," of which the utility is not made manifest, or, at least, that it might not have been equally performed by the humblest secretary, a diary not inferior might be obtained from the gayest haunts of fashion, or the junior subaltern of the army.

Speaking of the invitation of the Spanish government to go to Aranjuez or Madrid, Mr. James Moore, in his Narrative, thus observes:

"His occupations were too important to admit of such an interruption; and the quantity of business he transacted may be conceived from the manner in which his time was daily employed.

"He always rose between three and four in the morning, lighted his fire and candle by a lamp which was placed in his room, and employed himself in writing till eight o'clock, when the officers of the family were assembled for breakfast.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.
1808.
November.

In this state of mind the general appears to have written the following elegant though incoherent despatches, which are thus given in the most authentic manner.

Salamanca, Nov. 24, 1808.

My lord,

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

I had the honour, upon the 17th instant, to receive your lordship's despatches of the 2d, conveyed to me by a king's messenger.

My letter from Lisbon, of the 27th October, would apprise your lordship that, having concluded every arrangement there, I was about to follow the troops then already upon their march into Spain. As I travelled with my own horses, and was neces-

“ After breakfast he received the general officers and all persons with whom he had business, and the necessary orders were issued. His pen was frequently in his hand in the forenoon also, for he wrote all his letters himself. He always rode before dinner for an hour or two, either to view the troops or to reconnoitre the country.

“ His table was plentiful, and the company varied from fourteen to twenty officers; he was a very plain and moderate eater, and seldom drank more than three or four glasses of wine, conversing with his officers with great frankness and cheerfulness.— His portfolio was usually opened again before he went to bed; but, unless kept up by business, he never sat up later than ten o'clock.

“ By this regularity and assiduity all his affairs were transacted with order, and without procrastination.”

sarily detained by business at different places upon the road, I did not reach Salamanca until the 13th. On the day following the regiments began to arrive, and continued daily to come in by corps in succession. The three divisions of infantry which marched under lieutenant-general Fraser, major-generals Paget and Beresford, are now all here, together with one brigade of artillery, which, with infinite difficulty followed the road by Abrantes and Castle Branco. One brigade of infantry, which left Lisbon last, is still absent. It is employed in the escort of the ordnance, and the other stores which are forwarding for the service of the army.

The troops have performed their march well, in spite of very bad weather, and the worst roads I ever saw. Their appearance now is as good, and their fitness for service much better, than when they left Lisbon. Their conduct upon the march, and since their arrival here, has been *exemplary*. All this does them honour, and *marks strongly* the care and attention of the generals and officers who conducted the marches, and who are in the *immediate* command of the troops.

Lieutenant-general Hope, with the corps which marched from Badajos in the direction of Madrid, will arrive, with the head of that division, at Arevalo on the 25th, where I have ordered it to halt and to close up. The first of the troops under sir

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.

CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

David Baird, from Corunna, reached Astorga on the 13th; and the whole, including the 7th, 10th, and 15th dragoons, will be assembled there about the fifth of December; before which time, general Hope's corps will also be collected at Arevalo.

If we are not interrupted, the junction of the army will be effected early in the next month. But the French, after beating the army of Estremadura, are advanced to Burgos. General Blake's army, in Biscay, has been defeated, dispersed, and its officers and soldiers are flying in every direction; and the armies of Castanos and Palafox, on the Ebro and Alagon, are at too great a distance to render me the smallest assistance. Under such circumstances, the junction of this army becomes exceedingly precarious, and requires to be conducted with much circumspection. Should the French advance upon us before it is effected, sir David Baird must retire upon Corunna, and I shall be forced to fall back upon Portugal, or to join general Hope, and retire upon Madrid.

The information which your lordship must already be in possession of, renders it perhaps less necessary for me to dwell upon the state of affairs in Spain, so different from that which was to be expected from the reports of the officers employed at the head-quarters of the different Spanish armies. They seem all of them to have been most miserably

deceived; for, until lately, and since the arrival of Mr. Stuart and lord William Bentinck, at Madrid, and of colonel Graham, at the central army, no just representation seems ever to have been transmitted. Had the real strength and composition of the Spanish armies been known, the defenceless state of the country, and the character of the central government, I conceive that Cadiz, not Corunna, would have been chosen for the disembarkation of the troops from England; and Seville or Cordova, not Salamanca, would have been selected for the proper place for the assembling of this army.

The Spanish government do not seem ever to have contemplated the possibility of a second attack, and are certainly quite unprepared to meet that which is now made upon them. Their armies are inferior even in number to the French. That which Blake commanded, including Romana's corps, did not exceed 37,000. A great proportion of these were peasantry. The armies of Castanos and Palafox united do not now exceed 40,000, and are not, I suspect, of a better description; and until lately they were much weaker.

In the provinces, no armed force whatever exists, either for immediate protection, or to reinforce the armies. The French cavalry from Burgos, in small detachments, are over-running the province of

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.
1808.
November.
Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh

Leon, raising contributions, to which the inhabitants submit without the least resistance. The enthusiasm, of which we heard so much, no where appears; whatever goodwill there is, (and I believe amongst the lower order there is a great deal) is taken no advantage of.

I am at this moment in no communication with any of the generals commanding the Spanish armies. I am ignorant of their plans, or of those of the government. General Castanos, with whom, after repeated application, I was desired to communicate, for the purpose of combining the operations of the British army, was deprived of his command at the moment I had begun my correspondence with him. The marquis of Romana, who is appointed his successor, is still at Santander. Whatever weight the marquis may have, when he assumes the command, general Castanos had very little, the generals intrigued against him; and civil commissaries sent by the supreme junta, without any plan of their own, served no other purpose but to excite dissension, and to controul his actions. In this state of things, it is difficult for me to form any plan for myself, beyond the assembling of the army. I shall then be in a state to undertake something; and if the Spaniards, roused by their misfortunes, assemble round us, and become once more enthusiastic and determined, there

may still be hopes of repelling the French. It is my wish to lay before your lordship, for the information of government, things exactly as they are; it answers no good purpose to represent them otherwise; for it is thus that we must meet them. I feel no despondency in myself, nor do I wish to excite any in others, but our situation is likely soon to become an arduous one.

Reverses must be expected—and, though I am confident this army will always do its duty, yet ultimate success will depend more upon the Spaniards themselves, and their enthusiastic devotion to their cause, than on the efforts of the British; who, without such aid, are not sufficiently numerous to resist the armies which will be immediately opposed to them.

I have the honour, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, Nov. 24, 1808.

My lord,

I have been so much occupied with the business of the army, that I have trusted to Mr. Frere, Mr. Stuart, and lord William Bentinck, to convey to your lordship a just representation of the state, civil and military, of this country. This army is certainly too much adventured, and risks to be brought into action before it is united, and

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

before its stores, ammunition, &c. are brought forward to enable it to act. I never understood the meaning of the Spanish generals, in separating their armies, beyond communication, on each flank of the French; but I gave them credit that their plans were calculated upon their strength, and framed upon a knowledge of country, and other circumstances of which I was ignorant; and, as they proposed Burgos, I certainly thought I was perfectly safe in assembling the army at Salamanca: but if I had had sooner a conception of the weakness of the Spanish armies, the defenceless state of the country, the apparent apathy of the people, and the selfish imbecility of the government, I should certainly have been in no haste to enter Spain, or to have approached the scene of action, until the army was united, and every preparatory arrangement made for its advance. After I was here, and the troops were landed at Corunna, it was too late to retire; though I fear it may prove the wisest thing I could have done; for I see nothing that has a chance of resisting the force that is now brought against this country. There seems neither to be an army, generals, nor a government. I cannot calculate the power of a whole people determined and enthusiastic, if persons are brought forward with ability to direct it; but, at present, nothing of this kind appears, and yet I see no

other chance Spain has of resistance. We are here by ourselves, left to manage the best way we can, without communication with any other army; no knowledge of the strength or position of the enemy, but what we can pick up in a country where we are strangers, and in complete ignorance of the plans or wishes of the Spanish government. Indeed, as far as I can learn, the junta, alarmed at their situation, which they might have foreseen and obviated, are incapable of forming any plan, or of coming to any fixed determination. I have of course communicated my sentiments to Mr. Frere, and in a late letter have plainly told him, that the ruin of the Spanish cause seemed to me so inevitable, that it would very soon become my duty to consider alone the safety of the British army, and withdraw it from the contest which risked its destruction, without the prospect of doing the least good. In the mean time, I am in constant communication with sir David Baird and general Hope. Every thing is forwarding from Corunna and Lisbon, that we can want, as fast as the natural difficulties of the countries through which they pass, and the scanty means of conveyance they afford, will allow. Every effort shall be exerted on my part, and that of the officers with me, to unite the army. But your lordship must be prepared to hear that we have failed; for, situated as we are,

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

success cannot be commanded by any efforts we can make, if the enemy are prepared to oppose us. I am without a shilling of money to pay the army their subsistence, and I am in daily apprehension that, from the want of it, our supplies will be stopped. The 500,000 dollars your lordship mentions, sir David Baird considered as sent to him; he detained them, and has nearly expended them. The money which it is possible to procure at Madrid, and in other towns of Spain, is quite trifling, and it is impossible to describe the embarrassment we are thrown into from the want of this essential article; nothing but abundance of money, and prompt payments, will compensate, when we begin to move, for the want of experience and ability of our commissariat. Mr. Erskine is still at Lisbon, confined to his bed with the gout. There must be a change in the head of this department: your lordship seems to have misunderstood me; assistants can easily be procured every where, but it is a man of ability to direct, that is wanted. And, believe me, my lord, that it is essentially necessary to find one if this army is kept together, even if, to do it, you deviate from the common line, and place a man as the head, who has never before been in the department; but I beg to be understood, that, unless the change is essentially for the better, it will do more harm than good. The changes

which have already taken place have only tended to puzzle us the more, for Mr. Kennedy is a very respectable man, and is at least as good as any of his colleagues in the department. I have transmitted to Mr. Erskine copies of Mr. Harrison's and Mr. Burgman's letters, which accompany your despatches; but I doubt if money to any considerable amount can be procured in any part of Spain; and your lordship must be prepared to supply it from England. Provisions can be of no use to us, unless we were acting upon the coast; it would be impossible, when at a distance, to have them conveyed to us, or to find the means of their accompanying the movement of the troops. It is my intention to make the troops find their own meat, and to call upon the commissary for bread, wine, and forage only. This would be attended with many good effects, besides easing the commissariat. The troops would be satisfied with less meat, and would gradually learn to live upon what the country produced in greatest abundance; but, to adopt this plan, I must be certain of money to pay them, which at present I am not.

With respect to the officers employed with the armies, I cannot help thinking, though probably not intentionally, that they have done harm, as the intelligence they have conveyed has tended to deceive: for nothing can differ more from the real

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

state of Spain, the strength, condition, and composition of its armies, than all the representations I have ever read, which they had sent.

Major-general Leith is an old acquaintance of mine, and he perfectly deserves the character you give of him; although from letters I have seen from him, I think he has in some instances mistaken the purposes of his mission. At present he can be of little use with a dispersed army; and as, from the general-officers who left us, we are in want of officers to command the brigades, I trust you will approve of my having ordered him to join sir David Baird; he will leave one of the officers attached to him to carry on the correspondence.

(This passage contains observations on the abilities of several individuals, Spanish and British, very important for ministers, but not proper for the public eye.)


The British officers employed with the Spanish armies should confine themselves to their duty, to transmit faithful statements of all that passes, but should keep aloof from all cabals or intrigues. I have no uneasiness about the relative rank I should hold when serving with the Spanish generals, though perhaps it will be right for the British

government to stipulate something upon this head. My situation at the head of so large a British force will always give me sufficient influence. The tone of my letter to general Castanos was conciliatory, and tending to convey that I considered him as chief of the Spanish army, the person whose wishes I desired to follow, and begged him to communicate them to me. I shall adopt the same style in my correspondence with the marquis of Romana. I perfectly feel the power I have, as commanding an auxiliary force, to depart from any plan I disapprove; but this need not be produced unless required: it is natural that the commander of the Spanish army should be considered as the commander of the whole. What I have stated in my official despatch of the conduct of the troops, is not more than they deserve: nothing can exceed their behaviour: it is the surprise and admiration of the Spaniards. (At Almeida was the only exception.)

One of the soldiers who was sentenced to be hanged by a court-martial, I ordered to be executed; and I spoke my mind pretty freely to both the officers and soldiers as I passed Almeida. I hope this will have a good effect; and that when they join the army, they will behave better. Brigadier-general Charles Stuart is with general Hope.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.
November.
Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.
November.

I forwarded his letter to him; and I hear good accounts both of him and of the cavalry.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, 25th Nov. 1808.

My lord,

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

In answer to your lordship's letter, inclosing the copy of a warrant for the assembling a court of inquiry to investigate the circumstances under which the late convention in Portugal was concluded, I have only to say, that I hope, in the middle of such operations as I am at present engaged in, I shall not be desired to send home the adjutant and quarter-master-generals of the army; the two officers upon whom hinges the whole business of the army. It is hardly necessary for me to dwell upon such a subject; the members themselves must be sufficiently acquainted with the inconvenience which must attend such a measure to me, and the injury which it will occasion to the service. I trust that the court and parties will either dispense with the evidence of these officers, or that they will send out the questions which they wish to be answered; when they can be taken upon oath here, before the deputy judge-advocate of the army.

Indeed, from the nature of the evidence which

brigadier-general Clinton and colonel Murray can give, I should think this method might be adopted with equal advantage to all the parties : but, at any rate, if this cannot be, I hope the inquiry will be put off until quieter times.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, 25th Nov. 1808.

My lord,

I had the honour to receive your lordship's letter, mentioning, that it had been determined to send sir John Craddock to command in Portugal, in consequence of sir Harry Burrard's recall ; but that his superior rank was not to interfere with my command of the army in the field, in the event of the British army falling back on Portugal. Sir Harry Burrard sent an order to major general Mackenzie, now with sir David Baird, but who belongs to the staff of Portugal, to go to Lisbon to take the command upon his departure ; but, as the commotions which your lordship mentions are long since quelled, and as Portugal is perfectly tranquil, I have taken upon me to detain major-general Mackenzie with sir David Baird, who is much in want of general officers, until the arrival of general Leith, for whom I have sent to St. Andero.

I am not prepared at this moment to answer mi-

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

nately your lordship's question respecting the defence of Portugal; but I can say generally, that the frontier of Portugal is not defensible against a superior force. It is an open frontier, all equally rugged, but all equally to be penetrated. If the French succeed in Spain, it will be vain to attempt to resist them in Portugal. The Portuguese are without a military force; and, from the experience of their conduct under sir Arthur Wellesley, no dependence is to be placed on any aid they can give. The British must in that event, I conceive, immediately take steps to evacuate the country. Lisbon is the only port, and therefore the only place from whence the army, with its stores, can embark. Elvas and Almeida are the only fortresses on the frontier. The first is, I am told, a respectable work. Almeida is defective; and could not hold out beyond ten days against a regular attack. I have ordered a depôt of provisions, for a short consumption, to be formed there, in case this army should be obliged to fall back. Perhaps the same should be done at Elvas. In this case we might check the progress of the enemy, whilst the stores were embarking, and arrangements were made for taking off the army. Beyond this, the defence of Lisbon, or of Portugal, should not be thought of.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

*Salamanca, 26th Nov. 1808.*BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

My lord,

It was my intention to have detained the messenger until I should have received from Madrid, Mr. Frere's despatches; but I have received no answer from him to the letters I wrote to him on the 19th, two days after the arrival of this messenger from England. I am averse to detain him longer, thinking the matter contained in my letters of the 24th, sufficiently important not to be longer detained. I was the more surprised at not receiving any from Mr. Frere, as he should be able to judge, from the state of the junta, and of the public mind there, what efforts are likely to be made to oppose the French; and this is material to determine me whether to fall back on Portugal, or Madrid, in case such measures are necessary. If I am obliged to fall back before my junction with sir David Baird, it will, I think, be on Portugal. After the junction I am inclined to prefer Madrid; unless I plainly see that the game is up, and resistance on the part of Spain vain. If we remain in Spain, too many cavalry cannot be sent, as the French cavalry are numerous, and the Spaniards have few or none. Yesterday I received a letter from general Leith, from Leon; where he had arrived with the marquis of Romana.

I am in hopes of seeing the marquis of Romana

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

as he passes to Madrid; and think it most important that I should. General Blake is at no great distance from Leon; but I believe alone, without any part of his force, which is completely dispersed.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, Nov. 29th, 1808.

My lord,

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

I received yesterday evening a letter from Mr. Stuart, inclosing one from lieutenant-colonel Doyle, from Aranjuez, announcing the total defeat of the army of Castanos and Palafox. My junction with sir David Baird, which was always extremely doubtful, although I was determined to try it, is become, I conceive, quite impracticable; but if this army could be united, after the specimens we have had of the very little resistance offered by the Spaniards, what chance has this army alone of resisting the formidable numbers which will be immediately brought against it? I conceive the British troops were sent in aid of the Spanish armies; but not singly to resist France, if the Spaniards made no efforts. By persevering longer, I should certainly sacrifice the army, without benefiting Spain. I have, therefore, determined to retire. I have ordered sir David Baird to fall back on Corunna,

and general Hope to endeavour, by forced marches, to join me at this place. I have already given your lordship my opinion, that Portugal cannot be defended against a superior enemy; but the Spaniards may still give the French some occupation; and the difficulties of the country, the swelling of the rivers, &c. may prevent the French from pushing us much, and enable me to stand for a time. This time can only be well employed in withdrawing the army, which can do no good here; but which, if the Spaniards rouse, and get an able man at their head, are able to collect, and to make battle from the south. If landed at Cadiz, we may still be useful. I have desired sir David, therefore, to repair, when embarked, to the Tagus; and I should hope that your lordship will immediately order a sufficient number of transports from England to receive the army. When I left Lisbon there was tonnage there for 12,000 men. It is by landing in the south of Spain, that now we can be of any use. The Spaniards have failed not so much from any fault of weakness in the people, as from the want of energy and ability in the government. If this be overset, and men of great talent get to the head, there may still be a chance; and, by throwing in arms and ammunition, and finally with this army, their affairs may be retrieved. It is, however, im-

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.
Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

possible, after what we have seen, to be very sanguine on this subject.

I shall probably have an opportunity of writing to you again very soon; but I was anxious not to detain Mr. Vaughan, who carries this, and who brought me Mr. Stuart's letter from Madrid. I shall anxiously wait for your lordship's answer, and hope to find that the decision I have made meets the approbation of his majesty's government.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

P. S. I shall write to the general commanding in Portugal, to embark immediately the stores of the army; and to send provisions to Abrantes and Oporto for this army. He will provision Elvas, and make dispositions to aid us in covering Lisbon.

In the same spirit, precisely, sir John Moore addressed the British ministers* in Spain:

Salamanca, 27th Nov. 1808.

Sir,

I had the honour to receive, last night, a letter from Mr. Stuart, of the 25th instant, in

* Mr. Stuart still remained in an official capacity.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

answer to that which I addressed to you on the 19th.

The conversation which Mr. Stuart states you to have had with the secretary of the supreme junta, and the remonstrances with which you have followed it are, perhaps, as much as can be done by you in your situation. The effect produced upon the secretary, and the measures he said were determined, are very good, if we were looking to events six months hence; but the situation in which we are, calls for something more efficient and energetic.

Madrid is threatened — the French have destroyed one army, have passed the Ebro, and are advancing in superior numbers against another: which, from its composition and strength, promises no resistance, but must either retire, or be overwhelmed. No other armed force exists in this country. I perceive no enthusiasm, or any determined spirit amongst the people.

The French cavalry, even in parties so weak as eleven or twelve men, enter the villages in Leon and the neighbouring provinces, and raise contributions without opposition.

This is a state of things quite different from that conceived by the British government, when they determined to send troops to the assistance of Spain. It was not expected that these were to cope alone

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

with the whole force of France ; but as auxiliaries, to aid a people who were believed to be enthusiastic, determined, and prepared for resistance.

It becomes, therefore, a question, whether the British army should remain to be attacked in its return, or retire from a country where the contest, from whatever circumstances, has become unequal.

I wish to throw no responsibility off myself, which properly belongs to me.

The question is not purely a military one. It belongs at least as much to you as to me to decide upon it. Your communications with the Spanish government, and the opportunities you have had of judging of the general state of the country, enable you to form as just an estimate of the resistance that is likely to be offered.

You are, perhaps, better acquainted with the views of the British cabinet ; and the question is, What would that cabinet direct, were they upon the spot to determine ? It is of much importance that this should be thoroughly considered ; it is comparatively of very little, on whom shall rest the greatest share of responsibility. I am willing to take the whole, or a part ; but I am very anxious to know your opinion.

The movements of the French give us little time for discussion. As soon as the British army has formed a junction, I must, upon the supposition

that Castanos is either beaten or retreated, march upon Madrid, and throw myself into the heart of Spain, and thus run all risks, and share the fortunes of the Spanish nation; or I must fall back upon Portugal.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.
November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

In the latter case, I fall back upon my resources, upon Lisbon; cover a country where there is a British interest; act as a diversion in favour of Spain, if the French detach a force against me; and am ready to return to the assistance of the Spaniards, should circumstances again render it eligible.

By marching into Spain, I detach myself from my resources, and should, probably, be able to take with me but a small portion of the military stores I have brought forward. In which case I should not be able, for a time, for much contest. But every thing could be sent from Lisbon to Cadiz, and thence join me.

The movement into Spain is one of greater hazard, as my retreat to Cadiz or Gibraltar must be very uncertain. I shall be entirely in the power of the Spaniards; but perhaps this is worthy of risk, if the government and people of Spain are thought to have still sufficient energy and the means to recover from their defeats; and, by collecting in the south, be able, with the aid of the British

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

army, to resist, and finally repel, the formidable attack which is prepared against them.

It is impossible not to wish, and then it is more difficult not to hope, that the Spaniards may be at last successful in a struggle which does them so much honour. They are a fine people; and, had they fallen into more able hands, would have proved themselves fully equal to the contest. But I much fear the opportunity is now past; and that no efforts they are likely to make will be sufficient, or in time, to stand the armies they must engage. Upon this subject, however, I cannot be very decided, and shall be most happy to find myself mistaken.

I am, &c. &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, Nov. 27, 1808.

My dear sir,

I thank you for your letter. You will see what I have written to Mr. Frere, and will, I hope, think with me on the necessity of deciding a question, which, surely, alone, he being in the country, I could not with propriety decide for myself. Whatever be the decision, I shall be guided by events in the execution of it.

I have every inclination to think well of the Spanish cause: that I wish it well is most certain; and that I shall be most proud to give it every aid

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

in my power. But really, so little ability has been displayed by the government, or by those employed to direct their armies; there appears so much apathy in the people, and so little means prepared for resistance, that I do not see how they can stand against the enemy. The French will have troublesome subjects; but, in the first instance, they will have little more than a march to subdue the country.

I have not a shilling. The Spaniards, I find, promise much more than they perform; and here we have not been able to get five thousand pounds. The house you mention in a former letter, have money, but will not give it.

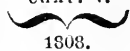
Sir David Baird, *upon some false intelligence* that the French had collected a large force at Rio Seco and Ampudia, has *taken measures to retreat*, but I shall be able to stop him; and I hope by the 7th or 8th of December, we shall be able to make our junction.

I hope to meet Romana on his passage to the army. The intelligence was sent to Baird by general Blake. The French have many friends in this country; it is from them that a thousand reports are daily spread to the disadvantage of the *good cause*.

I remain, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.



1803.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.
Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

P. S. There was a colonel Charmilly here from England. He is gone on to Madrid, to offer to raise a regiment of cavalry. He is married in England ; but I cannot help always having some dislike to people of this description.

Sir J. Moore's
dislike to col.
Charmilly and
his propitious
design.

The singular disgust, which is so striking a feature in the present correspondence, receives a new demonstration in the postscript to the last letter ; where the general's only causes of dislike specified, are, an offer to raise a regiment for the Spanish service, and being married in England !

But what is worse than these personal feelings, his excellency, under the impressions which have been shewn seems to have vacillated to a degree that must have almost unnerved his efforts, and weakened the best judgement that ever was employed ;—not to say wasted moments, when a vigorous operation might have appalled the enemy, and intimidated him from his immediate approach to the capital.

These circumstances, altogether, occasioned the continuance of the British head-quarters at Salamanca, till the hopelessness which had pervaded the spirit of sir John Moore, received some sanction in the Spanish reverses—reverses, which it will be the painful duty of the next chapter

to describe; the more painful, from the difficulty of proving, that those reverses might not, at least in some degree, have been mitigated by a more active conduct of the British army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

November.

CHAP. VI.

CONTINUED OPERATIONS OF THE SPANISH ARMY.

*New military Resources of Spain called forth.—
Recapitulation.—Reverses of the Spanish Army
continued.—Battle of Tudela.—Defeat of San
Juan's Corps at the Puerta of the Sierra Morena.*

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI.

1808.

November.

Spanish opera-
tions.

IT really affords some relief, though unhappily a painful one, to turn for a moment from the inactive scene presented by the British auxiliaries, to the second course of operations attempted by the Spanish armies.

It may be proper just to recapitulate the circumstances which preceded the unfortunate affair that chiefly affected the plans of sir John Moore, as to the cotemporary campaign of the British army.

The supreme central junta, among its first acts, as has already been seen, appointed a new council

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI.

1808.

November.

Spanish opera-
tions.

of war. The result of its judgement was to put in motion the forces of Andalusia, Grenada, and Estremadura, to raise new levies; to send home the vanquished army of Dupont, according to the embarrassed treaty which had been made; to provide for the British auxiliary army. In consequence, the whole of this force, including that of Romana, formed their grand army, of which the eastern or right wing was commanded by general Joseph Palafox, the north-western, or left, by general Joseph Blake, and the centre by general Castanos, who was, without having the rank imparted to him, under the temporary circumstances, made the medium of the command in chief: the small armies of Estremadura and Catalonia, formed the out-posts or reserve of this irregular line. The French army nearly in front, its right towards the ocean, its left on Arragon, its front on the Ebro, where it received its reinforcements from France. Vain was the hope, alas! that the Spanish army should turn the wings of the French; Castanos, however, was reasonably hoped to be able to make some impression upon the centre; and a body of upwards of 150,000 men, armed and enthusiastic, at least forbad despair.

But Bonaparte having levied 160,000 conscripts, that powerful lever against the most preponderating weight of his enemies, rushed into Spain, while he permitted his cabinet to make overtures of nego-

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI.

1808

November.

Spanish opera-
tions.

tiation with Britain. On Oct. 30, he quitted Ram-
bouillet, was at Bayonne on the 3d of November,
and, with 12,000 men, joined his brother Joseph at
Vittoria two days after! The topographical know-
ledge of the French army was, as usual, such, that
the commencement of operations did not wait for
the *soi-disant* imperial presence.

Castanos was suffered to advance with impunity.
The veteran army commanded by the ablest gene-
rals of the French, strangers to defeat, hastily re-
tired across the Ebro, before the enthusiastic levies
of Castanos, leaving their posts, Leria, Viana, Cap-
peroso, &c. in possession of his detachments, making
only a feeble demonstration of resistance. Moncey
(marshal, and duke of Corneigliano) advancing with
the left wing of the French along the banks of the
Alagar and the Ebro, led Castanos across the river,
when Ney (marshal, and duke of Elchingen) passed
his division along the line of the Ebro, and threw
columns upon every Spanish post, particularly Lo-
grono, and Calahora, and cut off the left wing of
the Spanish army, if so it could be called, com-
pletely. The effect on the country, as might be
supposed, was terror and desolation.

The army of general Blake, thus separated, (if it
could be considered as ever joined to the main army,)
was harassed and rapidly pursued through its posts

from Durango to Guenas, thence to Velmaseda, and lastly to Espinosa.

A stand was made here, for it was necessary to prevent an abandonment of what would have deprived it of the name of an army, its magazines and artillery. The troops of course made a brave but not steady resistance for two days, and then dispersed with their arms.

Against Reynosa, where the Gallicians had been taught so much as to inspire the enemy with terror, a powerful detachment was sent, which suddenly attacked them on the 11th, by break of day, at all points. Here every thing was lost.—Blake, with his remains, took refuge in Asturias; Romana, after trying St. Andero, did the same. Sout (marshal, and duke of Dalmatia) entered St. Andero with his van on the 10th, when the bishop retired to an English ship of war.

The count de Belvidere, the fate of whose army of Estremadura has already been mentioned, after a resistance full of bravery for twelve hours, tried Lerena, and then fled to Aranda.

The worst yet remains to be considered. Thus encouraged, the enemy did not fail to follow up his successes by attacking the central or main army, under Castanos.

The French arrived, on the 22d of November, at Calahora, as soon as the Spaniards had evacuated

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI.

1808.
November.
Spanish operations.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI.

1808.

November.
Spanish opera-
tions.

it, and followed to Alfaro. At break of day on the 23d, the French general Lefebvre, with the cavalry and Morlat's division, forming the advanced guard, came up with the Spaniards, and reported to the general duke of Montebello.

The Spanish army under Castanos, according to the best account, that of the enemy, now consisted but of 45,000 men; these, however, they found under arms, and ready to receive them.

The Spanish general, Castanos, saw the advanced guard of the French from his head-quarters at Cintruenigo on the 21st, and also their advance by Soria and Lerena.

One of the first misfortunes of the retension of military power in the field by the supreme junta was here apparent. Its representative, as well as the captain-general of Arragon, selected a small ridge of hills behind Tudela as a good position, and though the general, Castanos, disapproved of it, and wished to retire, it was retained. It was considered by the enemy also as "a disposition altogether faulty."*

Castanos, nevertheless, did his best: he drew up his main body near the centre of the ridge, concealed it from the enemy, and advanced his two flanks on the small hills near Tudela. The Arragonese were

* Eleventh Bulletin of the grand French army, journals of December, 1808.

on the right, the troops of Valencia and New Castile in the centre, and the three divisions of Andalusia, under the particular command of Castanos, on the left. His line was covered by forty pieces of cannon.

The French attacked at all points, and Castanos bravely repulsed their main body from his centre; they were also forced back on the left.

The French general, Maurice Matheas, however, penetrated the Spanish centre, and the cavalry powerfully extended the consequences.

But the most important and interesting moment was when half the Spanish line being turned and defeated, the French general, La Grange, attacked the village of Cascante, where, under Castanos, the excellent general La Pena was placed, and whence, when compelled, he retired in good order.

The Spaniards were followed up to Maller and Saragossa, to Catalayud and Tarragona, a large sacrifice of every kind was sustained, and that of troops of the line in considerable numbers was particularly to be regretted; as also, that to the peasantry under arms no quarter was given.

This reverse opened the way once more for the French army to Madrid. For the accomplishment of so desirable an object, the Spanish army of reserve, to the number of 13,000, under San Juan, was attacked at the Puerto of the Sierra Morena,

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI.

1808.

November.

Spanish operations.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI.

1808.

November.

Spanish operations.

on the 29th, by a division under the French general Victor, duke of Belluno.

The pass was intersected by a trench, fortified with sixteen pieces of cannon, while a body of French troops advanced by the road with six guns, other columns gained the heights on the left. A brisk discharge of cannon and musketry ensued on both sides, but the Polish light-horse, under the French general Montbrun, suddenly charging with impetuosity, seems to have driven the Spaniards back with the loss of some standards and their artillery, though by no means to have placed them *hors de combat*, as will appear from some subsequent circumstances.

Thus was almost every effort of the Spanish army unsuccessful. It seems to want, in every instance, a *point d'appui*; it required an active body of sufficient weight to rest its operation upon, and on which might be formed a basis for the exercise of whatever degree of energy and prowess was attributable to them. With such a support, from the persevering character of the Spaniards, every thing was to be expected; without it, it seems to have been by this time completely proved, nothing.

CHAP. VII.

EFFECTS OF THE SPANISH REVERSES ON THE BRITISH
GENERAL.

Embarrassed Communications with the Generals next in Command.—Ill-founded Opinions of the Defence of Portugal.—Decision of Sir John Moore in Opposition to the Opinion of his whole Army.—Difference of Opinion between Sir John Moore and the Spanish Government, as well as the British Minister there.—Disgust of the British General with the Minister and his Emissary.

UPON the mind of sir John Moore, vacillating as it had been, the information of the reverse of Castanos was sufficient to produce the darkest eclipse. He received it at Salamanca, (where he still remained in hesitation) on the 28th of November,

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.



1808.

November.

Embarrassed communications with the generals next in command.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.
Embarrassed
communications
with the gene-
rals next in com-
mand.

through the medium of Mr. Stuart, who, the day before, became informed of it at Madrid.

The following are the reasonings, which, according to the Narrative of Mr. James Moore, took place in his excellency's mind on the subject.*

While Castanos's army remained, there appeared to sir John Moore a hope of resisting in the north of Spain; but now he thought there was none. It was also evident, that if Buonaparte chose, as might be expected, to push forward his advanced corps upon him, his junction with general Hope would be very doubtful, and that with sir David Baird impossible.

For these reasons, he at once took the resolution of withdrawing the army from Galicia and Leon, and assembling it upon the banks of the Tagus.

The advantages of this measure were, that the whole British force would be collected and united with upwards of 10,000 men more, who were left in Portugal.

In the mean time, all the scattered corps of the Spanish army might fall back, to join such new levies as were raised in the southern provinces; which, when assembled, might still form an army capable of making a stand: and the British could

* Narrative of the Campaign, &c. 110.

then move to their aid in a formidable body. It appears, from the previous correspondence, that it had always been the favourite plan of sir John Moore, to carry on the military operations from the south; and now that the three Spanish armies were beaten, the reasons for adopting it had acquired great additional weight.

If the Spaniards had constancy to hold out, and fortitude to continue the contest, an opportunity would still be afforded them. In the south, all their energies might be put forth, and effectual assistance would be given them by the British army. And should they also be repelled in this effort, Cadiz and Gibraltar afforded them secure retreats.

* From these fortresses, the war might be renewed, if circumstances should favour it; or if the contest should be given up, the armies would still be in safety.

The result of these reasonings, were the following letters to sir David Baird and general Hope, on the same evening.

Salamanca, 28th Nov. 1808.

My dear sir David,

I have received, this evening, despatches from Mr. Stuart, at Madrid, announcing the defeat and dispersion of Castanos's army. The French in

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
November.

Sir J. Moore to
sir David Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
sir David Baird.

Spain are estimated at 80,000 men, and 30,000 are expected in the course of a week. It certainly was much my wish to have run great risks in aid of the people of Spain; but, after this second proof of how little they are able to do for themselves, the only two armies they had, having made so little stand, I see no right to expect from them much greater exertions; at any rate, we should be overwhelmed before they could be prepared. I see no chance of our being able to form a junction, as certainly, at Burgos, the French have a corps, which will now move forward.

I have, therefore, determined to retreat upon Portugal with the corps I have here; and, if possible, with Hope's corps, if by forced marches he can join me. I wish you to fall back on Corunna; send back immediately your stores, under such part of your force as you judge proper. You may then stay with the rest a little longer, if you can depend upon knowing the movements of the enemy. I propose this, as, were you at once to retire, it would encourage the enemy to push at once on Hope and me, and prevent our junction, which is the more necessary, as I must stop upon the frontier of Portugal, and cover Lisbon as long as possible. On your arrival at Corunna, you will of course embark, and sail for the Tagus, where orders shall be waiting for you. Write immediately to England,

and give notice of what we are doing; and beg that transports may be sent to Lisbon: they will be wanted; for, when the French have Spain, Portugal cannot be defended.

I remain sincerely, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
sir David Baird.

This letter, though of the same date, is written on the evening of the day on which I wrote by baron Tuyle.

You will use your discretion as to sending the cavalry by sea, or through Portugal. I shall not want them here, if I can get the two regiments with Hope.

J. M.

You will go to Lisbon with the whole of your force; the two regiments of cavalry included, not yet disembarked; unless you should receive orders from England to the contrary.

J. M.

One cannot help remarking in this letter, first, that the entire regard of sir John Moore, is *exclusively* expressed towards his own army, without any consideration for the effects of a retreat upon that of Spain; and also, that, uninformed as sir John confesses himself to be, he still, with the utmost promptitude, determines, in opposition to every other decision on the subject, of the best and

Sir J. Moore's
perverseness in
opposition to ju-
dicious measures
&c.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

most experienced judges, that when the French have Spain, Portugal cannot be defended!

The reverse of this position has been constantly asserted by every military man who has treated of the subject.

Salamanca, November 28th, 1808.

My dear Hope,

I have received, by Mr. Vaughan, the letters from Madrid, which you had very properly opened.

After due consideration, I have determined to give the thing up, and to retire. It was my wish to have run great risks, to fulfil what I conceive to be the wishes of the people of England, and to give every aid to the Spanish cause; but they have shown themselves equal to do so little for themselves—their two principal armies having allowed themselves to be thus beaten and dispersed, without almost an effort—it would only be sacrificing the army, without doing any good to Spain, to oppose it to such numbers as must now be brought against us: besides, I take for granted, a junction with Baird is out of the question; and, perhaps, with you, problematical; as there must be troops at Burgos, which must now push on to intercept us. I shall write this night to Baird, to fall back on Corunna. I wish you, if possible, by forced marches, and in larger bodies, to push by Penaranda,

Sir J. Moore to
general Hope.

or Alba de Tormes; whence, according to circumstances, you may join me here, or march at once on Ciudad Rodrigo. Should you, however, from any thing which comes to your own knowledge, deem it unsafe to push on to me, you are at liberty to use your discretion, and fall back on Guardarama and Madrid. It must, however, be my wish, that, if possible, you should join me; for, as I must stop on the frontier of Portugal, I shall be in much want of your aid, and that of your corps; but I leave you a discretion that you may use, should you see, which I do not at present see, a great probability of your being intercepted. This is a cruel determination for me to make—I mean, to retreat; but I hope you will think the circumstances such as demand it. I shall take measures for falling back; but I shall stay at this place as long as I can. Provisions we shall want in Portugal; and if you could get carts, and send the provisions collected at Penaranda to Ciudad Rodrigo, it would be an object. It is unnecessary that it should be known, the determination we are come to; other reasons may be given for your changing your march.

Sincerely, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

P. S. Napier arrived as I had finished my letter

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
general Hope.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
November.

to you, which is inclosed. You seem to have foreseen my wishes, I have therefore nothing to add at present. I shall write to you by Napier in the morning; and shall think of a movement towards you, should it appear necessary. The French have only a corps of cavalry at Valladolid.

It thus appears (observes the Narrative) that sir John Moore took the resolution of retreating, without waiting for Mr. Frere's answer to his letter of the 27th. The defeat of Castanos had totally altered the question; and the situation of the army admitted of no delay; for, if Buonaparte should detach his most advanced corps against the British, general Hope might possibly be intercepted, and sir David Baird might be hotly pursued, and suffer loss in the embarkation.

He then assembled the general officers, and shewed them the intelligence he had received, and the plan he had adopted. He told the generals that—"he had not called them together to request their counsel, or to induce them to commit themselves by giving any opinion upon the subject; he took the responsibility entirely upon himself, and he only required that they would immediately prepare for carrying it into effect."

It ought to be mentioned, (says Mr. Moore,) that the idea of *retreating* was very generally dis-

approved of, at Salamanca, by the army. The murmurs against it from officers of rank were heard in every quarter. Even the staff-officers of sir John Moore's family lamented it, and for the first time doubted the wisdom of his decision.

The generosity with which his excellency here disclaims the implication of his staff, and the generals serving under him, in his decision, but little compensates for deciding so positively in opposition to the opinions of all around him, both military and civil.

To the latter, Mr. Frere and Mr. Stuart, he thus announced his intentions.

Salamanca, Nov. 29, 1808.

My dear sir,

I had determined to unite this army, if possible, and to try what could be done for the Spaniards, though I own I saw but little chance of being able to do much good. I had ordered Baird, though all his corps could not be at Astorga until the 4th, to march with such part as already are there to Benavente, on the 1st of December; and on that day I was to march myself with a corps from this to Toro, and to send others to Zamora. Hope was to have marched to Tordesillas, and we should have taken up a line upon the Duoro, to cover the arrival of our stores, and then to have

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Acknowledgement of sir John Moore's decision in opposition to every other opinion.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

acted according to circumstances; but the destruction of Castanos's army, announced by your letter, which Mr. Vaughan brought to me yesterday afternoon, changes the case. My junction with Baird is no longer practicable; but, if it was, the little resistance made by the Spanish armies gives no hope of our doing any good. We should now have the greatest force of the enemy to encounter single-handed, and this we are not equal to; I have therefore come to the determination to retire. I have ordered Baird to fall back upon Corunna; I shall endeavour to unite with Hope, and retire upon the frontier of Portugal; I shall be at hand to return if affairs take a more favourable turn; or the army may be transported by me to some other point, where they may still be useful, if this government be overset, and another rises up, directed by men of more ability.

Mr. Vaughan sets off to-day for Corunna.

If you can possibly send me any money, to Almeida, do it.

I send this by colonel Lopez, who as yet knows not the misfortune which has befallen Castanos, nor of my resolution.

Believe me always, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

I address this to you; you will of course make a communication to Mr. Frere.

*Salamanca, Dec. 1, 1808.*BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.1808.
November
Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

My dear sir,

General Hope forwarded to me your letter of the 29th, and I received it last night.

My letter to you of the 29th, after I had seen Mr. Vaughan, would inform you of the resolution I had come to. It was with reluctance you may believe that I formed such a determination, but I had no alternative; and reflection since has confirmed me in the opinion, that I have done right. There is nothing so easy as for the junta with their pens to form armies; and they have I see in this manner collected one of eighty thousand men in Leon: but Romana, whom they have put down at twenty thousand, has only five thousand fugitives from Blake, without arms, clothing, stores, or ammunition; without organization, or officers to make any; the soldiers neither disciplined nor (Romana complains) susceptible of taking any; when checked they go off. The junta neglected the opportunity to form armies and to prepare the provinces before the arrival of the French reinforcements; it is now too late under the beards of a victorious enemy; and Spain has no chance now but from a force, if collected in the south, and at a distance. I consider this letter, and that which I wrote to you on the 29th, as if written to Mr. Frere, and as such I beg you will have the goodness to communicate

BOOK III
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

them to him. I continue in the same determination I was in then, with respect to my own movement, which will take place the moment that general Hope is out of danger; but he has found it necessary to go round by Avilla, whence I hope he will be able to join me. I have not heard from sir David Baird since my letter to him by Mr. Vaughan; but, as he was prepared, I take for granted he has commenced his movements on Corunna. The communication with Madrid is become less secure from the incursions of the enemy's cavalry; I cannot therefore enter into more particulars, but if the Spaniards make head, I conceive the British force can still, in one way or another, be taken to their assistance. I am sorry when Hope sent Mr. Smith to Madrid, that he did not give him special instructions: Mr. Kennedy writes to him by this opportunity. But such is our want of money, that if it can be got at a hundred per cent. we must have it; do, therefore, if possible, send me some at any rate; but it must make a circuit by Avilla at least; and if Smith is still at Madrid, I wish you would tell him from me, that he cannot render such service as by bringing money at any discount.

The enemy do not, at present, seem to have any thing but cavalry on this side of Vallañolid, they certainly have a division at Burgos, and the thirty thousand from France will be there shortly; and

they will detach from the army which has defeated Castanos, and may have done so already, unless they first choose to enter Madrid. It is from the centre and south that an effort should be looked for; in this quarter the business is up, and the people, without enthusiasm, think they have nothing left for it but to submit.

The armies, you see, are also without enthusiasm or even common obstinacy,—they do not stand,—and the individuals we see passing as fugitives are not ashamed, nor are they thought ill of by the people, nor is indignation excited. In this province, and it is probably the same in others, there is no head to direct,—the captain-general, Pignatelli, is a weak old man. A man of a firm and active mind could, by taking the means which exist, have done much. At Zamora, there are three or four thousand stand of arms, in other places there may be more. If they remain collected in towns, they will be taken by the enemy, for the towns will make no defence, but if put into the hands of the peasants, with ammunition, they would protect their property, kill small parties and stragglers, and harass the enemy; and, when assembled at any time in bodies, they would form the best materials for an army.

This and a thousand measures could be adopted if the junta had selected men to employ; but they

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Stuart.

have acted with all the *imbecility of an old-established weak government of the old regime*. Lord William is this moment arrived, having narrowly escaped being taken at Arevalo.

I shall be glad to hear from you and Mr. Frere, but your messenger must be cautious, and advance on information of the enemy.

I have the honour, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

On the 2d of December sir John Moore received ample despatches, all softening the losses of the Spaniards, and giving more favourable accounts of their remaining resources. Mr. Stuart was in regular communication with Morla, as is mentioned formerly, and the following was the result :

Madrid, Nov. 30, 1808.

My dear general,

I have this moment received your's, dated the 29th, announcing a determination to retire on the frontier of Portugal, in consequence of the intelligence conveyed, through Mr. Vaughan, respecting the army of Castanos. I have to inform you that two other officers have arrived from Arragon, by whom the government have received accounts somewhat more favourable. Having however received nothing from Graham, Whittingham,

Mr. Stuart to
sir J. Moore.

and Doyle, and being equally deprived of letters from the Sitio since they came, I cannot say to what extent matters are retrieved. I know, however, that the enemy have made three attacks on San Juan, near Sepulveda, and have been as often repulsed. And from the large force, particularly of cavalry, which were engaged in the late affair at Borja and Tudela, it is impossible they can have any thing so considerable as general Hope represents in the neighbourhood of Valladolid and Olmedo. They have 10,000 cavalry in Spain, 1500 are at Sepulveda. If therefore 4500 were in Valladolid, there would remain but few on the other points they have so lately attacked. Every report brought in here states that several small parties are scattered in Castile, for the purpose of obtaining provisions, gaining intelligence, and inspiring terror throughout the province. And this accords so well with all the positive intelligence which has reached us, that I really believe it to be true.

You must, however, certainly know best the chances of effecting a junction between your different divisions; and it does not become me to hazard an opinion on the subject. With respect, however, to the consequences of their distinct retrograde movements, I can tell you that they are very likely to produce an effect here, not less serious than the most decisive victory on the part of the enemy;

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.
1808.
November.
Mr. Stuart to
sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Mr. Stuart to
sir J. Moore.

and I shall, I own, be surprised if a change of government is not the immediate consequence, when the reasons for your retreat are known.

A part is here omitted, which chiefly consists of observations on the paymaster's department. He then goes on—

I had written thus far when I saw Morla, who informs me that Castanos is bringing the greater part of his force, though he did not say what,* from Calatayud to Siguenza, for the purpose of effecting a junction with San Juan. Reports from the latter add, that the French have reinforced their corps at Sepulveda, and that he expected to be attacked yesterday or to-day.

He has received an addition of four new regiments, and on the result of the affair about to take place, it is thought his union with Castanos will depend. He likewise tells me again that he believes the enemy have merely small parties throughout Castile, not sufficient to impede the union of your divisions. He declares that his report from Olmedo merely mentioned the arrival of thirty dragoons in that village, which were detached from Valladolid, where he insists that their present force is not sufficiently considerable to impede your movements. He added that, according to the declarations of prisoners, Buonaparte is at Burgos.

* The ascertainment of this fact was peculiarly important.

You will take all this as it is given. He declares he speaks on official reports, and your own accounts will enable you to ascertain how far it is worthy of credit. *This much is certain*, that the accounts of the enemy are magnified, both by their own details and by the fear inspired in the country. If it be true that Buonaparte is at Burgos, it certainly looks like a great effort either on the side of Somosierra or Valladolid, though Segovia would appear to be his object, if his cavalry are pushed beyond the latter town.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.
1808.
November.

Truly yours,

CHARLES STUART.

This was accompanied by the following:

Aranjuez, Nov. 30, 1808.

Sir,

I had just written my other letter of this date, when I received a messenger from Mr. Stuart with the communication of a note addressed to him, but intended equally for myself. I do not know that I can in any way express with less offence the entire difference of our opinions on the subject of it, than by forwarding what I had already written in the ignorance of the determination which you had already taken.

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

I have the honour, &c.

J. H. FRERE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
November.
Mr. Frere to sir
F. Moore.

Aranjuez, Nov. 30, 1808.

Sir,

You will find inclosed a letter, of which I think it right to say, that if there appears any thing in the form or mode of transmitting it which may appear deficient in respect, it is, I am persuaded, wholly unintentional;* and, trusting to your candour for seeing it in that light, I have not thought it worth while to make any remark to Mr. Garay on the apparent dryness of his communication.

Respecting Mr. Escalante, it may be proper that you should know that he is understood to have behaved very unfairly towards general Castanos. I mention this only as it may lead you to admit his opinion on subjects connected with that general's conduct with some degree of caution.

In what I said respecting a retreat upon Portugal, I wished to confine myself to a simple political opinion, which, supposing other considerations not to be decidedly adverse, might, I thought, deter-

* To this letter, in the Narrative, there is the following note: "This apology is curious, and shews that Mr. Frere thought the most delicate expressions ought alone to be employed to the commander of the forces;" which is exceedingly remarkable when compared with the text immediately preceding, in which are these observations: "Mr. Frere appears not to be at all aware of how much importance it is for a minister to restrain the ebullitions of temper!"—*Narrative*, 129.

mine for a retreat upon Galicia, or the strong country about Astorga, in preference to Portugal, supposing of course a retreat to have been determined upon as absolutely necessary.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808

November.

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

If, however, you do me the honour to consult me respecting the general state of the country, and the means of resistance to be expected from it, I should say that the provinces which you have hitherto seen are, of all Spain, the least distinguished for a military, patriotic, or provincial, spirit. No man ever calls himself a Leonese. The junta of that province (at the time when Galicia and Asturia were sending deputies, and seemed to be almost putting themselves on the footing of independent states) quietly gave their full powers to the Asturians, and acquiesced in what they determined and obtained for them. With the exception of La Mancha and the city of Madrid, the same description will apply to nearly the whole of Old and New Castile.

In the course of the late events they have been wholly passive, and have seen their country successively occupied by the stronger party. And, indeed, it is difficult to blame them, living in open villages, in vast plains, without arms, and without horses, they have neither the means of defence or escape.

Yet even here we have seen that the towns are

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
November.
Frere to sir
Moore.

abandoned at the approach of the French, that no magistrate has been brought over to take an oath of allegiance to the pretender, nor have the French been able to enlist a single soldier.

The whole of this country has in all times belonged to the party which was superior in cavalry, while, in the extremities of the kingdom powers, in every respect inferior, have been able to protract their independence for ages.

From every thing that I can learn of the disposition of the other provinces, they seem to be possessed by the most ardent and determined spirit, which, even in the event of the defeat of the levies which they are raising for the general defence of the kingdom, would lead them individually to continue a desperate resistance, under the direction of their separate juntas, with such assistance as England could afford them by flotillas, disembarkations, &c. But it must, I apprehend, be the wish of government, on every account, to prevent things from being brought to this extremity. There seem to be two modes of acting with this view, one which you justly state to be of greater hazard, inasmuch as we effectively place ourselves in the power of the Spaniards; but, as you observe at the same time with great truth, this may be worthy of risk, if the people of Spain and their government have sufficient energy to recover from their late defeats. Of the

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

people I have no doubt; the government are new, and have been hitherto too numerous to be very active, but I trust that this inconvenience will soon be remedied. They are resolute, and, I believe, every man of them determined to perish with the country: they will not at least set the example (which the ruling powers and higher orders of other countries have exhibited) of weakness and timidity.

The military system is certainly defective in its two main points, reward and punishment; but the circumstances of the times must prove the necessity of varying from the old system in this respect; and I am persuaded, that your representation on this, as on all other points, would be listened to with the greatest deference.

If you should determine upon marching into Spain, exclusive of the importance of covering the capital, there are, I think, great advantages which would result from hastening the measure. We have now in New Castile, an army of 20,000 men, upon which Castanos (as you will see) is falling back. Reinforcements are passing through here every day from the provinces; and the addition of the British would give a force very much, I should apprehend, superior to any thing which the French would be able to assemble *by that time*; especially

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to sir
J. Moore.

having a strong country in arms against them to their left the whole way from the Pyrennees.

There is, besides, at present, a great delay in the arrival of the reinforcements which were promised them; and which, if they had been sent, would by this time have composed an enormous force.

There are reports that the resistance to the conscription has been much more obstinate than usual; and the pastoral letter of the bishop of Carcassone, seems to imply that such reports cannot be wholly groundless.

Every great effort on the part of France has been preceded by a similar interval of weakness and internal disturbance; an advantage, therefore, which should be obtained at the present moment would be doubly valuable, inasmuch as it would render a conscription for a third attempt infinitely difficult, if not impracticable. But if, on the other hand, the French are allowed with their present forces to retain their present advantages, and to wait the completion of their conscription, they would pour into Spain with a number of troops, which would give them immediate possession of the capital and the central provinces.

The war would then be reduced to an absolute competition between the two countries which would stand out longest against the waste of population, enormous as it must be on both sides.

I cannot but think, therefore, that *considerations both of policy and generosity call upon us for an immediate effort.*

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to
sir J. Moore.

If, however, this view of the subject should not appear to you sufficiently clear or conclusive to induce you to take a step, which would, I am well convinced (since you do me the honour to refer to me on that subject) meet with the approbation of his majesty's government; I would venture to recommend retaining the position of Astorga. A retreat from that place to Corunna, would (as far as an unmilitary man may be allowed to judge of a country which he has travelled over) be less difficult than through Portugal to Lisbon; and we ought in that position to wait for the reinforcements of cavalry from England, which would enable the army to act in the flat country, which opens immediately from that point and extends through the whole of Leon and Old Castile. My political reasons on this head I have already troubled you with.

I mention this, however, merely as, in my humble opinion, the least objectionable of the two modes of retreat. Our first object, as it appears to me, ought to be, TO COLLECT A FORCE CAPABLE OF REPULSING THE FRENCH BEFORE THEY RECEIVE THEIR REINFORCEMENTS.*

* Is it possible that this could be doubted?

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Mr. Frere to
sir J. Moore.

The covering and protecting Madrid is surely a point of great moment for effect in Spain, and still more in France, and in the west of Europe. It would be a point of the utmost importance for Buonaparte to be able to publish a decree, or to date a letter, from Madrid. The people of the town are full of resolution, and determined to defend it, in spite of its situation, which is judged to be an unfavourable one. This determination ought surely to be encouraged by some show of support. The siege of Madrid by a pretender to the throne would be a circumstance decisive against the claim, even if in other respects it were a legitimate one.

I inclose a copy of two official reports from Castanos.

Believe me, &c.

J. H. FRERE.

Nothing more luminous, whether considered in a military or political view, has ever appeared on the subject than this letter of Mr. Frere; nothing more appropriate in every respect. The enemy was about to form a junction: the capital was the stake: the Spanish force required a basis, a *point d'appui*, a direction to its impetus, and this was to be found alone in the British auxiliary army; which, on the other hand, had no other purpose, no other object, and though certainly lastly, yet not least to be con-

sidered, in the case of abandonment of the object, no means of protection even in retreat! Than this letter, nothing more admirable has ever appeared; it exhibits the qualities of a minister under such circumstances in a very eminent point of view.

The following is the letter of M. Garay alluded to:

*To the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of his
Britannic Majesty in Spain.*

Most excellent sir,

The supreme junta, wishing at once to determine on the future operations of the English auxiliary force, and in order that the plans decided on may be for the greatest advantage of the allied army, has selected persons whose character, *knowledge*, and *military experience*, are united with *other qualities* necessary for those who are to undertake so important a charge.

On this account don Bentua Escalante, captain-general of the armies of Granada, and brigadier don Agustin Bueno, have been considered the most fit; and they will immediately set off for Salamanca, to consult with the English generals, and to agree with them on the plans that may be thought most seasonable, and will decide on the operations and other points that may occur; so that the troops of his Britannic Majesty may act in concert with ours, and in accelerating their combined movements, may

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Mr. de Garay
to sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

M. de Garay to
sir John Moore.

avoid all delays, so contrary to the noble and important cause of the two nations, whose ties of friendship and alliance become more close as their danger becomes greater and more common; and in participating the glory, the greatest part will be due to her generous ally.

A copy of this has been sent for the guidance of generals Escalante and Bueno.

MARTIN DE GARAY.

At Aranjuez, Nov. 28.

Sir J. Moore's
harsh authority,
and indifference
to the mission of
Spanish gene-
rals.

To this step is attributed, by the Narrative, with its ordinary facility, high treason: it says—"The mission of these Spanish generals was unquestionably a measure of don Morla's, to endeavour to prevent the retreat of the British to the south."

That they spoke enthusiastically there is no doubt;—they corroborated the statement made by Mr. Frere, of the strength of the Spanish armies, asserted that they were undismayed and augmenting every hour; and that general San Juan, with 20,000 brave Spaniards, was in possession of the pass of Somosierra, which he had fortified so strongly as to render the approach to Madrid impracticable.

After listening to this flattering statement, it is vauntingly stated in his own memoir, that sir John Moore exceedingly surprised these Spanish generals

by introducing to them colonel Graham, who had just brought certain accounts that San Juan's corps had been charged by a body of French cavalry, and were completely routed; and that there was no doubt that the French army was in full march for Madrid.

As colonel Graham had supped the night before with San Juan, in his way from Madrid, his intelligence could not be questioned.

Sir John by his interrogations seems to have completely sounded the depth of these generals' capacities; and finding them very ignorant of facts, was little effected by their requisition to move to Madrid.

Considering these generals as the military representatives of the supreme junta, it is to be lamented, that, even if just, sir John Moore should have found it necessary to regard their talents, and even mission, with so much contempt.—It was, perhaps, still more to be regretted, that not without a satisfactory tendency toward the allies, that his communication with the British minister experienced no better fate. For the Narrative continues:—Nor was he altered by Mr. Frere's letters; one of which was written previous to his knowledge of Castanos's defeat; and the short one, which was written after that event, contained no fresh information. He was not even shaken by Mr. Stuart's

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
December.

Sir J. Moore's harsh authority, and indifference to the mission of Spanish generals.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

intelligence; but persisted in his resolution to retire, and waited only for the arrival of general Hope.

The capital of Spain had, however, another chance. The raw Spanish armies, though they could not maintain the shock of the best troops of France, could re-assemble with facility, and were properly re-forming upon Madrid. Thither, therefore, with every well-founded hope, was the attention of the British general endeavoured to be drawn.

Most excellent sir,

T. Morla to
sir John Moore.

The junta, military and civil, formed of all the united authorities of the kingdom, established in the king's name for the defence of the country, are threatened by the enemy; and have the honour to lay before your excellency a true and just representation of affairs at this moment.

The army which general Castanos commanded, and which amounts to about 25,000 men, is falling back on Madrid in the greatest haste, to unite with its garrison; and the force which was at Somosierra of 10,000 men, also is coming for the same purpose to this city, where nearly 40,000 men will join with them. With this number of troops, the enemy's army which has presented itself, is not to be feared.

But the junta, still apprehending an increase of the enemy's force to unite with that at hand, hope that your excellency, if no force is immediately opposed to you, will be able to fall back to unite with our army, or take the direction to fall on the rear of the enemy. And the junta cannot doubt, that the rapidity of your excellency's movements will be such as the interests of both countries require.

With great consideration,

THE PRINCE OF CASTELFRANCO,
THOMAS MORLA.

Madrid, 2d December, 1808.

P. S. The junta is persuaded, that your excellency will have united with the army that general Blake commanded.

This endeavour was, however, in vain, as was the following :

This letter was brought to Salamanca, by a messenger of the junta, December 5, 1808, says the Narrative. The prince of Castelfranco, and don Thomas Morla, were deputies of the supreme junta, entrusted with the government of Madrid; and the latter was the person appointed to concert all military movements with the English general, as has been mentioned. While sir John was taking this paper into consideration, colonel Charmilly

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December,

T. Morla to
sir John Moore.

BOOK III.
 CHAP. VII.
 1808.
 December.

arrived with the following despatches from Mr. Frere.

December 3, Talavera.

“ Sir,

Mr. Frere to sir
 John Moore.

Though I have little to add of the general's representation respecting the means of resistance at present existing in Spain, which I had the honour of stating in my letter of the 30th of last month; yet the report which is just brought me by colonel Charmilly, of the state in which he left Madrid, is so strong a confirmation, or, more properly speaking, so much exceeds every thing which I had ventured to say of the spirit and resolution of the people, that I cannot forbear representing to you in the strongest manner, the propriety, not to say the necessity, of supporting the determination of the Spanish people, by all the means which have been entrusted to you for that purpose.

I have no hesitation in taking upon myself any degree of responsibility, which may attach itself to this advice; as I consider the fate of Spain as depending absolutely, for the present, upon the decision which you may adopt. I say, *for the present*; for, such is the spirit and character of the country, that, even if abandoned by the British, I

should by no means despair of their ultimate success.

You will see, by the date of this, that the junta are removed from a situation in which they were exposed to be made prisoners. They have determined to retire to Badajos; where I shall hope to be honoured by your answer.

I have, &c. &c.

J. H. FRERE.

This letter, the Narrative continues, was sent in to the general, and colonel Charmilly, the bearer, pressed vehemently to see him; asserting that he had important communications to make. Sir John at length came out from an inner apartment,* and questioned him upon the intelligence he brought. The colonel described, in lofty terms, the patriotic zeal with which all ranks of persons at Madrid were animated. The whole inhabitants of the city, he said, were in arms, and had united with the troops. The streets were barricaded; batteries were erecting all round; the peasants were flocking to the capital; and, in fine, the enthusiasm was unexampled.

He added, that there were most favourable accounts of the rising ardour of the south of Spain.

* There is something exceedingly affected in this style of description of a military transaction.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
roused to a sense
of duty in aid of
the Spanish
cause.

Sir John Moore listened to all this without uttering a word which could indicate his thoughts. But, when alone, he reflected seriously upon the extraordinary demands which were transmitted to him, not only by the Spanish government, but also by the British minister: and he called to mind, that he had been commanded to receive the requisitions and representations of both with the utmost deference and attention.

But, independent of these positive requisitions, the intelligence brought was of the most favourable kind, and from so authentic a source, that it could not be doubted. The letters were official, and from the highest authorities: and Mr. Charmilly, who was deputed by the British minister, had been an eye-witness of the effervescence of Madrid.

The general was thus persuaded that a great and unexpected improvement in the public affairs had taken place; and he judged, that he ought not to pursue the plan which he had devised previous to these events. Was it becoming him to fly when the common enemy was threatening the ruin of Madrid, and when the inhabitants of that city had bravely determined to perish, rather than yield? This was impossible; and, having the strongest reasons to believe that the causes for retreating had altered, he abandoned his intention, and resolved to support the capital to the utmost

of his power. In short, he embraced upon this, as upon all occasions, the determination which he thought would be most useful to his country, and which was most congenial to a noble mind.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.
1808.
December.

To stop sir David Baird as soon as possible, he wrote to him that night, as follows :

Salamanca, 5th December, 1808.

My dear sir David,

The city of Madrid have taken up arms, have refused to capitulate to the French, are barricading their streets, and say they are determined to suffer every thing rather than submit. This arrests the French ; and people who are sanguine entertain great hopes from it.—I own, myself, I fear this spirit has arisen too late ; and the French are now too strong to be resisted in this manner. There is, however, no saying ; and I feel myself the more obliged to give it a trial, as Mr. Frere has made a formal representation, which I received this evening. I must beg, therefore, you will suspend your march until you hear from me again, and make arrangements for your return to Astorga, should it be necessary.—All this appears very strange and unsteady ; but, if the spirit of enthusiasm does arise in Spain, and the people will be martyrs, there is no saying, in that case, what our

Sir John Moore
to sir David
Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to sir David
Baird.

force may do. I hope, in the mean time, the regiment of cavalry is coming to me, which I asked you for.

Believe me, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

After more full deliberation, says Mr. Moore, he wrote again next morning :

Salamanca, Dec. 6, 1808.

My dear sir David,

I wrote to you last night, to suspend your retrograde movements. I now write to you, to beg that you will put to the right-about, and return bag and baggage to Astorga.

The people of Madrid, it is said, are enthusiastic and desperate; and certainly at this moment do resist the French—the good which may result from this, it is impossible to say; I can neither trust to it, nor can I altogether despise it. If the flame catches elsewhere, and becomes at all general, the best results may be expected; if confined to Madrid, that town will be sacrificed, and all will be as bad, or worse than ever. In short, what is passing at Madrid may be decisive of the fate of Spain; and we must be at hand, to aid and to take advantage of whatever happens. The wishes of our country, and our duty, demand this of us,

with whatever risk it may be attended. I mean to proceed bridle in hand ; for, if the bubble bursts, and Madrid falls, we shall have a run for it. Let all your preparations, as far as provisions, &c. go, continue to be made for a retreat, in case that should again become necessary. Establish one magazine at Villa Franca, and one or two further back ; to which let salt meat, biscuit, rum or wines, forage, &c. be brought up from Corunna. Send to me to Zamora, two regiments of cavalry, and one brigade of horse artillery ; keeping one regiment of cavalry and one brigade of horse artillery with yourself ; and send on your troops by brigades to Benavente. The enemy have nothing at present in that direction ; we must take advantage of it, and by working double tides make up for lost time. By means of the cavalry patrols, you will discover any movements immediately near you ; and I take for granted, you have got other channels of information ; and both you and me, although we may look big, and determine to get every thing forward, yet we must never lose sight of this, that at any moment affairs may take that turn, that will render it necessary to retreat.

I shall write by this opportunity to the marquis of Romana ; and it would be satisfactory if you

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to sir David
Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to sir David
Baird.

kept an officer constantly, or sent one occasionally to him, to judge his force, and its state of preparation for service, to let us know how far we can depend upon its action. I wish you would forward the money to me.

I remain, my dear sir David, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Sir David Baird had proceeded no farther than Villa Franca, and general Hope, with his division, was close to Salamanca. The British army, in sir John's own opinion, had, therefore, become more secure. He had both cavalry and artillery; and, by a movement to the left, his junction with sir David Baird was certain. To strengthen himself farther, he wrote immediately to the marquis of Romana, who was at Leon.

Salamanca, 6th December, 1808.

Sir,

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
de la Romana.

I had the honour to receive your excellency's letter of the 30th November. I shall in general write to you in French, as you desire it; but I hope you will excuse me, if I address this to you in English, as I am at this moment a good deal hurried.

Since my arrival in Spain, I have been put in

no communication with any of the Spanish armies, and have been kept perfectly in the dark with respect to their movements, the plans of their generals, or their government;—and during the time my army was on its march to assemble and unite itself, I have been left exposed without the least support.

My wish has always been to co-operate with the Spanish armies, for the good of the common cause : but, at last, finding that I was left to myself, it became necessary for me to think of myself alone ; and to consider, after the two armies of generals Blake and Castanos were beaten, what steps I could take for the British army, which was then collecting at Astorga and this place ; thus, the more helpless from its separation ; but, even if united, not sufficiently strong to encounter the whole force of the enemy, which I saw would immediately be turned against us. I therefore felt myself obliged, however reluctantly, to order the corps at Astorga, to fall back on Corunna, and I meant myself, with the corps I had here, to retire upon Portugal, from whence I should be ready to return to the assistance of Spain, whenever their affairs were better managed, and an opportunity offered of doing them any good. Perhaps this opportunity has already occurred. The French have turned a great part of their force against Madrid. The

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
de la Romana.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
de la Romana.

people there have armed themselves, and say they are determined to resist. If this enthusiasm which actuates the people of Madrid last, and they continue resolute, and, above all, if the example of the capital is followed, and the enthusiasm becomes at all general throughout Spain, and induces large armies to come forward to the assistance of Madrid,—Spain may still hope to recover from her misfortunes, repel the French, and re-establish her independence. As my retreat was forced, and made with reluctance, so it is stopped the moment I see a chance of acting for the advantage of this country.* I have ordered sir David Baird to return with his corps to Astorga, and from thence to Benavente. My wish is to unite with you; and to undertake with you such operations as we may judge best for the support of Madrid, and the defeat of the enemy. The French have driven general St. Juan from the Somosierra; and are in possession of that and the pass of the Guardarama.

General Castanos is said to be at Siguenza. The supreme junta have retired to Badajos. The duke of Castlefranco, and Mr. Morla, are at the head of the junta, civil and military, at Madrid.

I have written to you with that frankness which

* The time lost in this vacillation, however, was entirely disastrous.

become a military man; I shall act with you in the same manner. I have the greatest respect for your character; and you will find me always ready to undertake whatever is practicable for the advantage of the Spanish nation.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1806

December.

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
de la Romana.

How agreeably different is this letter from the complaining part of sir John Moore's despatches. One cannot but exclaim—*si sic omnia*.

Still, however, without any cynical asperity, it must be observed, that there is a great deal of unnecessary verbiage in it. If, for instance, sir John Moore had not time to write in French, (though it is hard to conceive any greater difficulty to that accomplished general in writing French than English,) it is to be lamented that a secretary or one of his staff should not have been permitted to assist him; for there is nothing whatever superior in his letters, to those of other generals who make no boast of the happy talent of letter-writing; in fact, the correspondence of sir John Hope, and sir David Baird, is by no means inferior; on the contrary, that of the former is replete with eloquence.

In the morning of December 6, adds the Narrative, colonel Charmilly again appeared at headquarters, and presented the following letter, which

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
December.

he had been desired not to deliver unless it was necessary.

December 3d, 1808.

Sir,

Mr. Frere to
Sir John Moore.

In the event, which I did not wish to pre-suppose, of your continuing the determination already announced to me of retiring with the army under your command, I have to request that colonel Charmilly, who is the bearer of this, and whose intelligence has been already referred to, may be previously examined before a council of war.

I have, &c.

J. H. FRERE.

The circumstances and conduct of this campaign, are so peculiar, that, however extra-military, it becomes necessary to quote the opinion of sir John Moore in this letter :

Mr. Frere's mind, says the Narrative,* must have been strongly wrought upon to view the retreat of the British army to the Tagus, as so injurious a measure. For, not content with sending intelligence of the brilliant state of Spanish affairs, and employing arguments, requisitions, and deputations,

* Of Mr. James Moore, p. 154.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.
1808.
December.

he here attempts to controul the commander of the forces; and seems to have expected to compel him by a council of war to obey, even against his will.

It may easily be conceived, (it continues,) that a high-spirited officer could not read such a proposition without expressing great indignation at the writer. And he was astonished to find, that Mr. Frere had had the imprudence to entrust colonel Charmilly with the secrets contained in the important despatches he brought.

The general, however, not choosing to repose any confidence in this Frenchman, did not utter a syllable which could give him the slightest indication of his plan; and, not even approving of his presence with the army, directed the adjutant-general to write an order for him to retire.

The colonel was thus dismissed, with the conviction that sir John Moore was still determined to retreat; and he returned to Mr. Frere, to communicate the bad success of his mission.

But, notwithstanding this conduct of Mr. Frere, sir John wrote to him an answer so calm and dignified as to form a striking contrast with the style of the other. For, as Mr. Frere was the king's minister, he was desirous, if possible, of preserving a correspondence which was necessary for the public service.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Surely, these opinions and this conduct, are very incompatible with the relation established by the British government between its general and minister; and it cannot but strike one forcibly; that, if Mr. Charmilly excited suspicions, he ought not to have been set at large.

His excellency very early thus addressed himself to the British minister.

Salamanca, Dec. 6, 1808.

Sir,

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

I had the honour to receive, on the 2d instant, your letter of the 30th, in answer to that which I addressed to you on the 27th November. Had this army been united and ready to act at the time of general Castanos' defeat, much as I think it would have been risking it, yet it was my intention to have marched on Madrid, and to have shared the fortunes of the Spanish nation. If I could not have sustained myself there, I thought, by placing myself behind the Tagus, I might give the broken armies, and the people of Spain, if they had patriotism left, an opportunity to assemble round me, and to march to the relief of the capital. That this was my intention, is known to the officers with me, who are in my confidence; it is known also to lord Castlereagh, to whom I had

imparted it in one of my late letters. I wished to have my opinion confirmed by yours; which was the reason of my addressing you on the 27th. Had you seen the affairs of Spain in a different light, and had you been adverse to the army being committed in the heart of Spain, your opinion upon such a subject, would, I may say, certainly have decided me to have altered my intention.

With respect to the determination I made on the evening of the 28th, upon receiving from Mr. Stuart the account of Castanos' defeat, I should, had you been with me, have communicated it to you; but should never have thought of asking your advice or opinion,* as that determination was founded on circumstances with which you could not be acquainted, and was, besides, a question merely military, of which I thought myself the best judge. At that time the army was divided into three different corps, and could not possibly be united before the 13th or 14th of this month; before which period there was every reason to believe that it would be attacked by all the force of the enemy: as, after general Castanos' defeat, I know of no Spanish army from which it could receive the smallest assistance. The army I commanded was weak from

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.
Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

* Yet this would not have overstepped the boundaries of his excellency's orders.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

separation; and, when united, amounts to only 26,000 men, fit for duty. I had been left without any communication with any of the Spanish armies; I expected no assistance from any, and it behoved me to consider the safety of the British troops. I therefore directed sir David Baird, whose corps would not have been collected at Astorga until the 4th of this month, to fall back on Corunna. I directed general Hope, by forced marches, to join me here, where I intended, if I was permitted, to wait his arrival; and I took measures for retiring, with him, into Portugal, with a view either to defend that frontier, and, ultimately, to return to Lisbon, or to return to Spain should any change of affairs there render it eligible.

The resistance made by the people of Madrid has occupied the French, and has prevented any corps from being detached against me. This example of enthusiastic patriotism in the capital, if it holds,* may be followed by the most happy effects, if the flame communicates, and the example is followed by the provinces. There has

* Here is at once an acknowledgement of Mr. Frere's judgement, in urging an advance on the capital; and while it did hold, much was naturally to be expected from the British army. It was the general's business to preserve and extend this enthusiasm. What would not an audacious attack have effected in lieu of this marching and counter-marching, ordering, and counter-ordering, forming only what may be termed the *vaccillations* of Salamanca.

been no example of any such resistance in any other part of Spain; and, though I hope this will produce it, I have neither seen nor heard of much enthusiasm elsewhere. Their armies are devoid of both; and, though I trust it will prove otherwise, I cannot but consider it as doubtful, whether the people of Madrid will continue firm when they come to be pressed. If they yield, the whole is gone. I received yesterday a letter from the junta of Madrid. I have ordered sir David Baird to march back to Astorga; and have stopped my preparations for a retreat on Portugal. I have put myself in communication with the marquis Romana, at Leon; and, without being able exactly to say in what manner, every thing shall be done for the assistance of Madrid, and the Spanish cause, that can be expected from an army such as I command. I cannot make a direct movement on Madrid, because the passage of the Guardarama and Somasierra are in the hands of the French. Besides, until joined by sir David Baird, I am much too weak. I have thought it my duty thus calmly to explain to you the reasons which have and do actuate my conduct; and I wish anxiously, as the king's minister, to continue upon the most confidential footing with you: and I hope, as we have but one interest, the public welfare, though we may occasionally see it in different aspects, that

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

this will not disturb the harmony that should subsist between us.

Fully impressed as I am with these sentiments, I shall abstain from any remark upon the two letters from you, delivered to me last night and this morning by colonel Charmilly, or on the message which accompanied them. I certainly at first did feel, and expressed much indignation at a person like him, being made the channel of a communication of that sort from you to me. Those feelings are at an end; and I dare say they never will be excited towards you again.

If Mr. Charmilly is your friend, it was, perhaps, natural for you to employ him; but I have prejudices against all that class; and it is impossible for me to put any trust in him. I shall, therefore, thank you not to employ him any more in any communication with me. It is impossible not to remark, that whatever enthusiasm exists in the country, a small portion of it belongs to the Junta; who would otherwise, I think, have found some place more central, and less remote, than Badajoz for their residence.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

This letter is certainly a most extraordinary communication. The manner, however, in which

the person deputed by the British minister to his excellency, is treated in it, is, in the highest degree, abrupt and improper, and equally without any grounds being advanced for such treatment.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Observations
on the letters of
sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

To refuse to examine any person sent to him by the British minister for that purpose, was surely an act of austerity highly unbecoming; but when recognising that person as the "*Friend*" of the British minister, it was ungracious in the extreme.

The general declared, however, his dislike of such people, but, as usual, without accounting for such dislike, by any thing in the shape of a motive or reason.

It may, perhaps, be observed, that few generals pass through the operations of a campaign without employing and conversing with many for whom they may not have a direct liking, with emissaries even for whose services, however useful, they may feel disgust; yet, even this does not induce the general to forego the advantages to be derived from these necessary appendages to an army.

But in the present instance it is due to the character of the British government, of its minister, and of the individual himself, to inquire what could be the cause of sir John Moore's dislike to M. Charmilly in his public character?

It has already, indeed, appeared as if he considered the whole of the British officers sent to

BOOK III.
CHAP. V.

1808.

December.

Observations
on the letters of
sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

Spain, for the purpose of intelligence, of assisting in the formation of the Spanish and Portuguese armies, and facilitating the operations of the whole as well as our own, as little better than a set of intriguers, acquiring a factitious rank from services at least irregular, and at best of little value; and all this in direct opposition to the facts so honourable to them, which every where stared him in the face.

But still the character of M. de Charmilly was of a peculiar kind, and should not surely have been treated by the general as that of a suspected traitor.

Possessing an ample property in his own country, in one of those revolutions, which have stained the history of the present age, he adopted England, and proved himself faithful to her interests. For them he had bled by the side of one of the generals, (sir B. Spencer,) who was prominent in the war of the peninsula. He had resided in the British capital, in a manner to become sufficiently known, and had so pledged himself and his circumstances as to have become naturalised. This war, so congenial to that in which he had acted conspicuously, attracted him, and he was induced to commit himself again to fortune, by raising a native regiment. His activity, judgment, and facility, rendered him importantly useful to the British

minister and the Spanish cause, and, therefore, it were to have been supposed, to the British general. However this was, nothing could be more singular than the dislike expressed by sir John Moore to such a character, except his refusing to avail himself, in any way, of his intelligence, or to secure its veracity by a council of war!* And this

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Observations
on the letters of
sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

* The use made of this incident, afterwards in parliament, and in some of the newspapers, was of the most extraordinary kind. It produced, however, in a journal of the day, the following additional account of M. de Charmilly, which may be acceptable here :

“ There is a wonderful mystery created in the luckless messenger, the most mysterious that ever was contrived. If lord Grey was not ashamed to gather London dirt around him, which we would not repeat, why was lord Liverpool (who *may* know how excellence often emerges from obscurity) ashamed to defend the man employed by his colleagues, whose whole story would have reflected credit on any defenders. If neither know “ this man,” nor their scrutinising journals cannot discover him, *we can*, and without being able to assume to ourselves any great superiority of intelligence. He is, then, the count de Charmilly, one of the most opulent and intelligent colonists of St. Domingo, the garden of the antilles, a *man* who, had he been less attached to the old regimen of France, would have proved himself of similar materials to the princes, marshals, and generals of his, of whom earl Grey, with truth, pronounced the eulogy. Disdaining a compromise of his principle, for the safety of his property, he preferred placing himself at the head of those, who invited England to the acquisition of his country. That the enterprise failed, will not be imputed to him, where a *Whitelocke* had the command! There are, however, generals enough to tell, that those parts of it which did succeed, were chiefly planned by him, and that he joined, and bled, in their execution; and the

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Observations
on the letters of
sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

the more particularly, when a dearth of intelligence is one of the most prominent complaints of the British general in every relation, and at every opportunity; and whatever was to be derived from this person, came authenticated by all the authority of office, either with respect to Britain or Spain.

Of a similar character is the following letter, in regard to the Spanish generals, who had been deputed to him, with the whole confidence of their government; but that it goes beyond it, and assumes a contumacy of the most dangerous kind.

Salamanca, 6th Dec. 1808.

Sir,

I neglected to mention to you in my letter of this date, that the general officers, Escalante and Bueno, had been with me, who are mentioned

British public know, or may know, him, in the quarto volume which forms the history of his country, and himself; and the eulogy of those very blacks, with whom we have now a settled intercourse. In London "this man" was not among the contrarevolutionists, who took the first opportunity of succumbing to Buonaparte. *He* preferred to remain faithful to the sovereign he had adopted. Is it then to be wondered that in such a career, in which he had been so experienced, brave, intelligent, and faithful, he should be so employed: Our space, rather than our will, refuses us, for the *present*, to say more of the *mysterious messenger* though WELL-KNOWN M. de Charmilly."—*Speculator*, April, 1809.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

in that extraordinary paper which you sent me with your letters of the 30th of Nov. signed by Martin de Garary, secretary of the junta. The two generals seemed to me to be *two weak old men, or rather women*,* with whom it was impossible for me to concert any military operations, had I been so inclined.

The persons with whom such operations can be concerted at present are the generals, who command the armies, not men like these two, who have no information upon which such plans can be formed, except the official papers, always incorrect, which have been given to them from public offices. Their conference with me consisted in questions, and in assertions, with respect to the strength of different Spanish corps, all of which I knew to be erroneous; and they neither knew that Segovia nor Somosierra were in possession of the enemy. I shall be obliged to you to save me from such visits, which are very painful.

I mentioned to you in my letter of this day, that I had a letter from the junta at Madrid. My instructions direct me, that all my communications with the Spanish government should go through you; and I should be very happy, on every ac-

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

* This does not seem to have been thought so at the time.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1803

December.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

count, to comply with them; but I do not see how this can be, if you continue at Badajoz. I shall, however, send you copies of them, if you wish it.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

The following romantic picture is given in the general's journal, of ideas at this time revolving in his mind, while waiting for the junction of sir David Baird.

After Castanos' defeat, the French marched to Madrid. The inhabitants flew to arms, barricaded their streets, and swore to die rather than submit.

This has arrested the progress of the French, and Madrid still holds out. This is the first instance of enthusiasm shown. There is a chance that the example may be followed, and the people be saved. I have stopped Baird's retreat, and am taking measures to form our junction, whilst the French are wholly occupied with Madrid.

We are bound not to abandon the cause as long as there is hope. But the courage of the populace of Madrid may fail; or, at any rate, they may not be able to resist. In short, in a moment, things may be as bad as ever, unless the whole

country is animated, and flocks to the aid of the capital.

In this part the people are passive. I have sent colonel Graham to Madrid, to let me know exactly what is passing; for we find the greatest difficulty to get people to bring us information.

Colonel Graham, on his mission to Madrid, bore the following letter :

Salamanca, 6th Dec. 1808.

I had the honour to receive, last night, a letter, signed by the duke of Castelfranco and M. de Morla, in the name of the junta, military and civil, established at Madrid. Hitherto I have been left without communication or support from any of the Spanish armies; and, as the army I command was separated at Astorga and Salamanca, at which place it had been ordered to collect, at the time when the army, under general Castanos, was defeated, it became necessary for me to consider what steps were necessary for the security of the British army, which was helpless from its separation, and, when united, not sufficiently strong to encounter the whole French force, which was about to be turned against it. I had, therefore, ordered the corps at Astorga to fall back on Corunna, and was about to retire with the corps from this to some place of greater secu-

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

Sir J. Moore to
the duke of Cas-
telfranco and M.
de Morla.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
the duke of Cas-
tellfranco and M.
de Moria.

rity, from whence I might return to the assistance of Spain, when a more favourable opportunity offered. Those measures I have now stopped. The corps, under sir David Baird, shall return to Astorga. I have put myself in communication with the marquis de la Romana, at Leon; and I shall, in concert with him, undertake such operations as are deemed best for the interests of Spain, and for the relief and assistance of Madrid. I should hope that the example of patriotism given by the capital will be followed by the provinces, and that the people will flock up to its assistance; when, headed by the armies, the best results may be expected. The junta may rest assured, that every thing shall be done by me that can be expected by such a corps as I command. This will be delivered by colonel Graham, whom I send to the junta, that he may explain the particulars of my situation, and communicate to me the wishes of the junta, and the relative positions and strength of the people of Madrid, and the French opposed to them.

I have the honour to be,

Your excellency's, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

It is useless to enter into the ideas, which have been rendered tolerably current by the eloquent

“Narrative” of the brother of general sir John Moore, on the subject of this letter, or of the circumstances of the surrender of Madrid; yet the following statements are too striking and too devoid of *proof* to be omitted even in a general notice.

“The two high-born Spanish chiefs sheathed their swords at the sight of the enemy of their country, and *by his order employed their perfidious pens to betray the British army!* In the letter to sir John Moore, the signature, *Il Principe de Castelfranco,* is written with a steady hand, but *Thomas Morla's appears to have trembled in signing his infamy!*

Buonaparte, with affected grandeur, pretended to extend his clemency to these degraded Spaniards. To conceal their concert with him, and to gratify his spleen, he cunningly taunted Morla for his former perfidy in breaking the capitulation with Dupont; but so shallow a device is easily comprehended!

Morla made good terms for himself and his base associates. His fortune and military rank were preserved to him, and he stoops to exist under the protection of the usurper of his country.

Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem
Inposuit, fixit leges pretio atque refixit!

But these dismal truths were all unknown to sir John Moore: he never saw the men, and had no

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.
Spanish operations.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

means of judging of the sincerity of their professions. He perceived very clearly the folly which predominated in the Spanish councils, but conjectured nothing worse."

Here is assertion of the most flagrant kind, without the smallest testimony, and complaint not merely without foundation, but recurring upon the general himself, as where he complains of not knowing the men whom he had been *invited* to know; and professes favourable ignorance of the character of the Spanish nation which he had set down as the worst.

It was fortunate for his spirit, that, on the 7th of December, he had the pleasure of receiving the following patriotic address from the city of Toledo, which, as has been described, was animated.

Toledo, December 5, 1808.

Excellent sir,

The junta of
Toledo to
sir J. Moore.

The junta of Toledo, most anxiously wishing to save their country, have signified to general Eredia, the commandant of this capital, that it is their intention to reunite here the dispersed armies, and to take the proper measures to enable him to defend this city to the last extremity.

The junta is besides in communication with Aranjuez, and other points of union, and have the satisfaction to assure your excellency that they are resolved to die in defence of their country. They

transmit this information for the guidance of your excellency, wishing you many years.

(Signed) The MEMBERS of the JUNTA.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
the junta of
Toledo.

To this the following agreeable answer was returned.

Salamanca, Dec. 7, 1808.

Gentlemen,

I have received this morning the letter which you have done me the honour to address to me.

The sentiments it contains, and the determination you express to die for your country, do you and the city of Toledo the greatest honour. If similar sentiments animate the rest of Spain, and the Spaniards will adhere faithfully to each other, there can be no doubt of your ultimate success, whatever temporary advantages the French may perhaps gain. The example given by Madrid is worthy of a great nation; it will, I hope, excite the enthusiasm of all good Spaniards; make them collect, and march to the assistance of a town which ought not to be sacrificed.

The British army; like the British nation, is desirous of rendering every assistance to the Spanish cause, and you may depend upon its best exertions. I am uniting the different corps of the army, and preparing to act.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
the junta of
Toledo.

The marquis of Romana is at Leon, collecting the army that was with general Blake in Biscay; and, in concert with him, whatever is possible on this side shall be done.

I shall hope to continue in correspondence with you, and that you will inform me with the progress you make, and with whatever movements are made either by the enemy or by the armed force assembling at Toledo. You shall be equally informed by me of every thing on this side. In order to facilitate this correspondence, I shall send a British officer to reside at Toledo, which I trust will meet your approbation.

I have the honour, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Something was surely now to be expected from the anxious vigilance of sir John Moore; but rapidity of motion was not the forte of this army, and instead of a detachment to *act*, an *officer* was accordingly sent “to concert measures for the defence of Toledo;” the junta, therefore, at the approach of a French corps, suddenly changed their resolution, and, as described with sufficient humour by Mr. Moore, instead of dying, or even fighting, for their country, very prudently retired, while the duke of Belluno took possession of their peaceful city.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Remarks on the
Narrative of Mr.
James Moore.

Indeed, says Mr. Moore afterwards with ordinary confidence, few generals have been entangled with so many embarrassments as sir John Moore, who not only had to contend with the distrust of the Spanish government, always exaggerating their resources, and concealing or glossing over their disasters, but also to guard against the secret plots of unsuspected traitors, hid in the bosom of the junta, while the British minister, instead of assisting him with correct information, *perplexed him with false intelligence, harassed him with vexatious missions, and thwarted him with pertinacious requisitions!*

This is the grand climax of the assertions of an authority which must be conceived that of the British general, and by which the long train of despairings and embarrassments, and yaccillations, are endeavoured to be accounted for and defended; and, as if most fitly to complete it, the Narrative, with wonder, concludes, while nothing had been done to prevent it,—and, lastly, he had to encounter the power and genius of Buonaparte.

It is too truly added—Madrid had now fallen, and the indefatigable emperor was resolved to give the discomfited Spaniards no time to rally, but to disperse their dissipated troops, and penetrate with celerity to the south.

Marshal Bessieres was chasing the central army on the road to Valencia, the duke of Belluno had

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Remarks on the
Narrative of Mr.
James Moore.

entered Toledo, and the duke of Dantzic, with a strong division, was marching to Badajos, with the design of either seizing upon Lisbon or Cadiz; the duke of Treviso was proceeding against Saragossa, the duke of Dalmatia was preparing to enter Leon, and Buonaparte, from Madrid, was ready to support all these movements, and complete the subjugation of Spain.

How much then, although the latter position is not quite correct, is it to be lamented that the vacillations of the British general at Salamanca should have prevented any anticipation of these accumulated terrors which were obviously to be foreseen towards the patriotic cause of Spain. Yet even these terrors were liable to the exaggeration which seems to have pervaded this unfortunate campaign, since it is declared by the writer of the Narrative himself:—

There are no certain documents to ascertain what were the actual numbers of the French army who invaded Spain.

Buonaparte, as already appears, announced that his intention was to carry there 200,000 men, and the French officers who were taken affected a lief that their army consisted of fully that number.

The following statement is given on the part of the general, but with an authority which has been

considered not merely vague, but highly injurious on the part of the Spaniards :

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.



1808.
December.

Calculation of
the French
force in Spain.

Various accounts agree in calculating the French force in Spain, in autumn 1808, which was stationed behind the Ebro, at 45,000

There were at the same time, in the town of Barcelona, and in the province of Catalonia 15,000

According to the intercepted letter from the governor of Bayonne, to marshal Jourdan, there would enter Spain by Bayonne, between 16th October and 16th November 72,000

An army, chiefly from Italy, entered Catalonia about the same period . . . 15,000

Junot's division entered, in the beginning of December 30,000

177,000

For the returns, or even operations, of this force, we look in vain to any other source than the Narrative, yet to it is added the following :

From reports, there is reason to believe that there were other French corps besides the above, which entered Spain at various periods. And this

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Amount of the
British force
that entered
Spain.

appears to have been substantiated by intelligence received after the campaign was over; for the secretaries of state declared, in both houses of parliament, that the French force in Spain amounted to 200,000 men, which accords with Buonaparte's original declaration.

It is not, however, says the authority, with proper qualifications, to be imagined, that there ever was, at one period, so great an effective French force as the above; for, with great truth it is added, deaths and casualties always occasion a great reduction of the numbers of an army.

Considerable pains have been taken, it appears by the Narrative, to ascertain what was the real British force which entered Spain; for, as very properly observed, a very false estimate may be made, by examining only the *total* numbers of official reports. After an accurate examination, it is, however, found, that the whole effective force of the corps which march from Corunna under sir David Baird consisted of 9550 men; and of those which proceeded from Portugal was 18,416; making, altogether, an army of 25,631 infantry, and 2450 cavalry. The artillery was numerous, but of too small a calibre; including a brigade of useless three-pounders, it amounted to fifty guns.

It is painfully satisfactory to find that the British force was thus early inferior.

Sir John Moore was now however joined by general Hope's division, and was desirous of uniting himself with sir David Baird's; having resolved to prosecute the war in the north of Spain. But with all due exaltation, exclaims Mr. Moore, neither the arts of Morla, the news of Charmilly, nor the arguments and requisitions of the junta and Mr. Frere, could induce the general to advance to Madrid. So much the worse.—He knew that the passes of Somosierra and Guardarama were possessed by the French, and that an attempt to force them would be destructive; *yet, if he continued where he was, or only guarded the frontiers of Galicia, every thing valuable in Spain would be quickly subdued!* The first of these plans was rejected as rash, and the others as futile.

But he formed and executed, says the Narrative, a plan for stopping the progress of the French, and relieving Spain, which has been highly admired by masters in the art of war. This, adds Mr. Moore, will be *gradually developed*.

But, as he found that the Spanish generals, who had been deputed to him, were quite incapable of discussing a plan, or giving him any advice, he thought it would be imprudent to confide his intentions to them. He considered it most advisable and proper to trust no one with his designs, ex-

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore's
obstinacy to the
requisitions of
the junta, &c.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

cept the government, and the generals commanding armies who were to co-operate with him.

That this new interference however did not arise entirely from quiescent incapacity of giving advice, so much as difference of opinion, is evident from the following document which may be given by the way :

La Calzada de Banos, Dec. 7, 1808.

Most excellent sir,

Don Ventura
Escalante to sir
J. Moore.

I in vain exhausted every means, military as well as political, to induce your excellency to give up the project of retiring with your troops to Ciudad Rodrigo and Portugal, and of withdrawing that part of the British army which is at Astorga to Galicia. And your excellency having observed, that the marquis of Romana was only able to collect five thousand men, I left Salamanca yesterday morning to meet the supreme junta, considering my mission at an end. But to-day I have received a courier with a letter from the marquis of Romana ; of which I transmit a copy to your excellency, in hopes that it will have more influence than my observations, and induce you to change your plan. For, if, instead of uniting the two divisions of your army with the army of the marquis of Romana, at Zamora, or some other point that may impose upon

the enemy, you persist in putting your design in execution, you will immediately occasion the destruction of Spain, and perhaps your excellency will be *under the necessity of embarking for England*.* But, if your excellency will accede to the said junction, it is *very probable that the enemy will abandon his intention* of attacking Madrid, and will retire. This would give time to the army of the centre to concentrate, and take other positions.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Don Ventura Escalante to sir J. Moore.

I request your excellency to give an answer to the bearer, that he may send it to me. And it would be important if your excellency would be so good as to write to the marquis of Romana your final determination.

VENTURA ESCALANTE.

The answer that was sent to this letter, it appears, was one of mere civility.

The campaign of sir John Moore now assumes a degree of interest, perhaps superior to any military event that has occurred for ages.

How the plan alluded to here could have been formed, under the existing circumstances, it is not merely difficult to conceive, but the subsequent events would seem to have rendered it impossible ;

* This "old woman," according to sir J. Moore's nomenclature, seems to have possessed as much prescience as a young officer.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.
1808.
December.

since, whether arising, as sometimes asserted, from the total want of information, the incorrectness of what he had, or any other cause, during the long period of vacillation at Salamanca, sir John Moore does not appear to have any steady view of his own situation correlative with that of the French army, nor any fixed determination as to the various operations which succeeded each other, in his contemplation. And, moreover, the orders which his excellency gave, were of such a conflicting, not to say confused, nature, as almost to preclude any harmony of co-operation in the divisions of his army, while his opinions expressed to the government at home, and the British minister in Spain, were at variance with them, and with each other.

Nor, whatever the circumstances of the formation of this plan, does it appear that any great degree of excellence is to be justly attributed to it. The end of well-ordered retreat is safety. Disorder marked the progress of the present; and, instead of retaining its power, destruction threatened its end. The diversion, if diversion it could be called, created by it in favour of the Spanish arms, was one of horror and despair.

The manner in which the plan of operations described to have been formed by sir John Moore, begins to develop itself, is to be found in the following instruction to sir David Baird, a document,

which it is difficult to reconcile with the established character of his excellency as a scholar and a gentleman, still less as a general commanding in chief, addressing himself on public concerns, in his most important functions.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
December

Such were the instructions despatched to sir David Baird :

Madrid, says he, still holds out, and I have some reason to believe that some efforts are making, to collect a force at Toledo, and a still larger one on the other side of the Sierra Morena. As long as there is a chance, we must not abandon this country. The conduct of Madrid has given us a little time, and we must endeavour to profit by it. My first object must be to unite with you, and thus connect myself with the marquis Romana. I shall move a corps from this, on the 10th, to Zamora and Toro. To which last place I shall move head-quarters.

Sir J. Moore to
sir David Baird.

Is it possible sir John Moore should not have perceived that in the *sedentary* occupations of Salamanca, and the vacillation that marks every succeeding *intention* of his excellency, he had already exhibited the most complete abandonment of the Spanish arms?

Remarks on sir
John's letter.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
sir David Baird.

In a most remarkable cant of office, sir John continues:—"I should wish you to push on your people, by brigades, to Benavente. I have desired general Clinton to send you, for your *private* information, the manner I propose dividing the army. I think you will prefer commanding a division, to being second in command without any. I send you this, *private*, that you may consider it, and let me know if you would wish it altered in any particular. But I should not wish it to be *shown to any* of the generals, which might draw upon me applications which I could not grant. You will have the goodness to point out to me any alterations, respecting the corps with you, which might improve the arrangement."

And again he takes occasion to censure the active and intelligent general Leith, for not having done that which he had so sufficiently done;* and again, to censure with a pomposity calculated for meaner minds, the well-informed officers employed under him in the manner most useful to armies.

Unjust reproach
of sir John on
gen. Leith.

"You never noticed the letter I enclosed to you, long since, for general Leith, ordering him to join you. I am, therefore, ignorant whether he is with

* See Ante, p. 111

you. He is placed, like all the corresponding officers under my command, but he has *never written me a line*. I shall thank you to *tell me where he is*, as also the officers, who were employed in the mission under him."

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.
December.

Sir J. Moore to
sir David Baird.

But the following paragraph is the most extraordinary in its principle, and in its terms; in its charge of fraud on the Spanish nation, and its expression of the influence supposed to have been exerted upon other officers

"In the mean time I am anxious to know the real strength and condition of the troops Romana and Blake are assembling; and I shall thank you to send an intelligent officer to Leon to see them, and who *is capable* of judging, without allowing himself to be *humbugged*. You will of course order whatever troops arrive at Corunna to be immediately landed and moved forward.

Sir John's illiberal distrust, and stigma on the Spanish generals.

I have sent colonel Graham (90 regiment) to Madrid, and expect to hear from him this evening.

I remain, &c.

JOHN MOORE."

How, with common regard for his subject, the affectionate narrator of his brother's labours could have introduced this document it is hard to conceive; yet it is among those which he attributes to

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.
1808.
December.

the *judgment* of sir John Moore,* and forms a conspicuous object in “ a plan of operations, approved by masters in the science of war !”

Colonel Graham, with the answer to the prince of Castelfranco, and general Morla, proceeded only to Talavera, where he arrived late at night on the 7th of December, and, with indefatigable activity, he returned to Salamanca on the 9th, before the letter with which he had charged a Spanish messenger arrived.

Talaveira de la Reina,
Wednesday Night late, 7-8 Dec. 1808.

My dear general,

Col. Graham to
sir J. Moore.

Owing to the extreme difficulty in getting horses, I did not get here till past eleven to-night : and hearing there was a part of the junta-central still in this place, I immediately waited on them to obtain information : the amount of which I send by an extraordinary courier, as the most likely means of its reaching you soon ; as he will get on much faster than I could, requiring fewer horses.

It seems on the 3d, † Castelfranco and Morla

* Narrative, p. 179.

† Let it be recollected that it was on the 2d that these persons urgently addressed sir John Moore for assistance ; and with the view expressed by the Spanish general, Escalante, of compelling the French to retire, while the Spanish armies should concentrate, and the people of Madrid have full scope for their acknowledged patriotism.

made some sort of agreement with the French, who on the day before got possession of the Retiro and Prado of Madrid. They are suspected of treason in this proceeding; having refused to admit the troops under St. Juan and Hereida, who were at the gates on this side; and whose presence, it is asserted, would have enabled the citizens to have defended the town. Castellar, the captain-general, and all the military officers of rank, refused to ratify the agreement, left the town, and brought away sixteen guns; and the inhabitants refuse to deliver up their arms. In this state of things, the enemy remain in the Retiro, without having taken possession of the different posts within: and they (the two deputies here) do not think there is any chance of any part of the French force (between 20 and 30,000 men) being detached from Madrid.

Castanos' army, meanwhile, commanded by general la Pena, second in command, is at Guadaxara; and, they say, amounts to about 30,000 men. There are about 12,000 of the remains of St. Juan and Hereida's army here, going to occupy the bridge of Almaraz; where great exertions are making by the junta, to assemble a large force. Meanwhile St. Juan has been sacrificed to the popular fury for retreating from Madrid; and was this morning murdered here. One of the members now here is to proceed immediately to Leon,

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.



1808.

December.

Col. Graham to
sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Col. Graham to
sir J. Moore.

to concert measures with the M. de la Romana; whose force they state, by the accounts received this day, to exceed 30,000 men; and every where, where the country is not occupied by the enemy, they say the most active measures are taking to increase the military force of the country. They state the whole of the French force in Spain not to exceed from 70 to 80,000 men; a part of which is before Saragossa. They deny any reinforcements more being on their way to join the enemy. They are most anxious that you should join Romana. I shortly explained to them, the divided state of your army, and the necessity you were under to begin a retreat, instead of completing the junction, on hearing of Castanos' defeat. I assured them, that, whatever might be your determination from circumstances, you have nothing more at heart than to serve effectually the cause of Spain; but that the British auxiliary army could do little in that by itself, and that every thing depended on their being able to bring forward a powerful Spanish army, that could unite with it. I mean to return by the Placentia road. I am afraid I shall not be able to get the courier to send this till to-morrow morning.

I remain, ever most truly yours,

THOMAS GRAHAM.

P. S. I think they mean that La Péna should retire on Andalusia: though they do not seem to have

quite given up hopes of the people of Madrid resisting, should they be able to introduce a few thousand men. The junta is at Truxillo. You see that *all I can do is to repeat what I have heard*; for I have no means at this moment for judging for myself.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.
1808.
December.

(Paper enclosed.)

In the Morning of the 8th.

I have just heard, from good authority, that the enemy have gone towards Saragossa, with a large force; and that that and Madrid are their objects.

P. S. Official accounts are just come, that they attacked Saragossa on the first, and were repulsed with great loss.

Who does not feel what sacrifices might have been prevented by a previous march of the British army on Madrid?—Who does not lament the unsettled feeling of the British general here?—Who, but must severely lament it?

Notwithstanding his doubts, says the Narrative, now, he considered himself compelled, to make every effort in his power, for the relief of the capital, and accordingly advanced (alas! by how much too late) from Salamanca, by a movement

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

The British
armies pushing
forward to unite.

made from the left flank; in brigades, towards the Duero.

The reserve, and general Beresford's brigade, proceeded to Toro; there to unite with the cavalry under lord Paget, who had arrived there from Astorga. He moved with the remaining divisions towards Alaejos and Tordesillas. At this last place, says the Narrative, the whole were intended to unite, whence he proposed to proceed to Valladolid. Sir David Baird's corps were not yet all collected; but he was directed to push on his brigades to Benavente, to support or join him. The intention of this movement was, to threaten the communication between Madrid and France, as expressed in the following letters to the British minister, and the general second in command of the British forces.*

* The following letter, though of trifling import, is added here as exhibiting further the spirit of sir John Moore in these communications:

Salamanca, 8th December, 1808.

My lord marquis,

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
de la Romana.

I take the opportunity of writing to you through the means of an officer, whom I am going despatch to sir David Baird. I have not yet received any certain information respecting Madrid; but I have reason to believe the people still hold out. A letter from the junta of Toledo informs me, that it is their intention to assemble there a body of troops; and that the people are determined to die sword in hand.

*Salamanca, Dec. 10, 1808.*BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore
to Mr. Frere

Sir,

Colonel Graham, whom I had requested to go to Madrid, returned last night. He got no farther than Talaveira, where he met two members of the supreme junta, from whom he learned the capitulation of Madrid, with the circumstances relating to it. I own, I cannot conceive how the duke of Castelfranco and Mr. de Morla could have given up the town, if the inhabitants had been very resolute in their determination to defend it. It is, I suspect, like the cry of the armies, who, to cover

General Castanos has received orders to retire upon Carolina, on the other side of the Sierra Morena.

The people in this part of Spain are too lethargic; they say they have no arms; they stand in need of a head, to excite them, to unite them, and to command them. I propose, on the 10th inst. to make a movement upon Zamora and Toro, that I may be nearer general Baird and you. When I am informed what progress you have made in the organization of your army, we shall be able to concert measures together, and I shall anxiously wait the reply to the letter which I had the honour to address to you on the 6th.

Two general officers were here a few days ago, sent by the supreme junta. They did not appear to me to have either the *authorities* or the *information necessary* for concerting any operation. I thought I could explain myself more satisfactorily to your general and I *refused* to enter upon *any discussion* with them. They were the generals Escalante and brigadier-general Bueno.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore
to Mr. Frere.

their misconduct, accuse their chiefs of treachery, and in the instance of St. Juan, put them to death. Although I have little hope of the success of the Spanish cause, (for I see no marks any where of enthusiasm, or of a determined spirit, either amongst the people, or the government;) yet, as it is possible that it may be roused, and as it is said, that forces are assembling in the south, I shall unite the British army; and, in consort with the marquis of la Romana, undertake such operations as appear to us best. I have not yet received an answer from the marquis to my late letters; but I expect to receive one hourly. I do not know the number of people he has collected; but they are not of a description from whom much can be expected.

I have now with me general Hope's division, the artillery, and the whole cavalry, which, however, as yet only amounts to 2,300. Madrid, in the state it is, must occupy a considerable portion of the enemy's force. Saragossa still holds out; and the levies in the south will attract his attention. The whole cannot be turned against us; and, in a very few days, I hope to have the army in readiness to act. I shall begin to-morrow to put part of it in motion; and my wish is to unite it at Valladolid. In the present doubtful state of things, it strikes me that it would be an advantage to get Cadiz into our possession; and, perhaps,

if it were pointed out to the junta as a place of safety for them to retreat to, they would agree to our placing a garrison in it: in which case there are two strong regiments coming from Gibraltar to join this army; and, upon signifying it to sir John Craddock at Lisbon, they could be thrown into Cadiz for the moment, until some arrangement could be made. This province, like others, has received orders to arm; but, unless the junta place in the provinces persons of character and ability to carry their orders into execution, they will be of little avail. Pignatelli, the captain-general, has retired even from Avila. By the bye, that town furnished 25,000 rations to the French the other day, upon a simple order being sent to them from the Escorial.

If at this moment this town, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Zamora, were armed, and would defend themselves, it would be of considerable service; as, otherwise, when I go towards Valladolid, my communication with Almeida and Portugal, from whence I draw my resources in ammunition, &c. &c. may be intercepted. A man of energy, as captain-general of this province, residing under the protection of this army, and explaining in proclamations, or otherwise, to the people the services expected from them, and which they might perform, would be of infinite use. The people are

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore
to Mr. Freere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

November.

Sir J. Moore
to Mr. Frere.

left too much without direction; and we cannot get, even for money, common intelligence. It is only by colonel Graham, last night, I knew the capitulation of Madrid, which happened the 3d. I take the liberty to state these particulars to you, as, perhaps, by means of the junta, remedies might be applied. I shall thank you not to mention any direction in which I mean to move; but to say, in general, that the British army will act in conjunction with the army of La Romana.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, December 12th, 1808.

My dear sir David,

I have received both your letters of the 8th, in answer to mine of the 5th and 6th.

Lord Paget is at Toro, to which place I have sent the reserve, and general Beresford's brigade; the rest of the troops from this are moving to the Duero. My quarters to-morrow will be at Alaejos; Hope's at Tordesillas; Fraser will be with me with his division on the 14th; on which day lord Paget, with the cavalry and infantry from Toro, will move along to Duero, towards us, so as to enable the whole to reach Tordesillas and its neighbourhood the 15th, and Valladolid on the 16th. I have no answer from the marquis de la Romana,

to whom I wrote upon the 6th, and with whom it is my wish to form a junction, and to co-operate. But, although I am disappointed in not hearing from him, and must forego any assistance from him; and although your corps will not be up in time, yet I think it an object with the troops I have to march to Valladolid; from whence, according to the information I receive, I may move on to Palencia and Buigos; and thus threaten the enemy's communications, and cause a diversion in favour of Madrid or Saragossa, or any movement which may be in contemplation from the south of the Tagus. I shall, at all events, cover you whilst assembling at Astorga and Benavente, and may bring you on to me, or fall back upon you, as occasion requires; and, in the mean time, I shall be just as safe as at Salamanca or Zamora. I think I shall call on to me colonel Crawford, with his corps, either by Toro or Medina de Rio Seco, of which I shall give you notice from Alaejos. I have attached one brigade of artillery to each division of the army; whatever is over, is considered as reserve. To each division, also, there is attached ten rounds of musket cartridges *per* man, carried in carts, and four mules with pack-saddles, for the purpose of bringing the cartridges, when wanted, from the carts to the troops; besides which, I am forwarding musket-ammunition, and ammunition

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
sir D. Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to sir D. Baird.

for guns, to Zamora. I think if you bring on with the troops two brigades of artillery, besides the two of horse-artillery, one of which is with lord Paget, this will suffice; leave the other two at Astorga, ready to come forward when called for. I wish you would make the same arrangement for carrying with your brigades, or divisions, ten rounds a man, besides the sixty in pouches. I shall enclose a letter from colonel Harding, commanding the artillery, explanatory of every thing else. I consider Benavente as a place to have certain stores advanced to; the rest you should divide between Astorga and Villafranca.

All the money at Corunna should be brought up to Villafranca; we shall want it. I am much obliged to you for your opinion upon the Galicias and Vigo; and it is that which now, probably, I shall follow, should such a measure become necessary. I am, therefore, most anxious that magazines should be formed on that communication. I have written home, to direct that all transports, &c. should call at Corunna, and Vigo, unless otherwise directed. Corunna must be the place for all supplies from England;—the communication through Portugal is difficult and tardy.

Forward the enclosed to the marquis de la Romana,* as soon as possible; and send me any

* See the correspondence at the close of the present chapter.

letters which may come from him without delay. An officer will remain at Salamanca to forward letters to me. Should you not prefer the direct road by Toro to Tordesillas, or Valladolid, you will not think it necessary to have more cavalry with you whilst I am in your front. I shall enclose a letter for lord Castlereagh, which I shall thank you to forward to Corunna.

Believe me sincerely, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, Dec. 12, 1808.

Sir,

I leave this to-morrow, and I expect to be in Valladolid on the 16th, with that part of the army which came from Portugal, joined by 1500 cavalry, which came with sir David Baird; the rest of sir David's corps he is assembling at Astorga and Benavente; but I have thought it advisable to make this movement without him, rather than wait longer. He will be in my rear, and can join me when he is ready. I have heard nothing from the marquis de la Romana, in answer to the letters I wrote to him on the 6th and 8th instant. I am thus disappointed of his co-operation, or of knowing what plans he proposes.

I am in ignorance of the state of Madrid. It was attacked the 2d, and capitulated the 3d.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
sir D. Baird.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere

The French then had the Retiro, and the people kept their arms. Whether this continues their relative situation, I cannot learn. The difficulty of obtaining information surpasses what I ever met with.

The object of my movement is to threaten the French communications, and attract their attention from Madrid and Saragossa, and favour any movement which may be projected by the armies forming to the south of the Tagus.

If no advantage is taken of it, if no efforts are made, and if every one continues quiet, as they did when Madrid was attacked, the French will have their option to turn against me what portion of their force they please; it will, of course, not be one inferior in number, and I need not state to you what is likely to be the consequence.

The French in the north of Spain have from 80 to 90,000 men:—it is said that more are advancing, and I believe it; as many of the letters, found in the intercepted mail, mention a seventh and eighth division, preparing to enter Spain. I have seen nothing in the conduct of the Spaniards that gives me the least hope that they will resist such formidable numbers. They have shown nothing like resolution hitherto. Madrid, after so much boasting, held out but one day. This army is now in motion, and I shall make with it what

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

diversion I can, to favour any resistance, or any attacks made elsewhere. If the forces collected to the southward of the Tagus will move forwards in great numbers, and, like men determined to rescue their country, Madrid may still be saved; if the inhabitants keep their arms, and if the French, notwithstanding the capitulation have not dared to enter the city; but nothing short of some very decided measure will save either Madrid or Spain at this moment. I shall continue to keep you informed of my movements, and our courier, coming by Ciudad Rodrigo, will be informed where to find me.

The doubts of the British general, indeed, seem to be such, that it is almost impossible he should have advanced with any legitimate view of assisting the Spanish arms; and this will more completely appear from comparison of the preceding documents, with the following despatches of the same period, addressed by his excellency to the secretary of state, for the ministers of government at home.

And, whatever censure it may be the imperative duty of any thing in the form of history, to employ on the listless commencement of this singular campaign, whatever the painful feelings which arise from the communication of such letters as have already been the subject of animadversion in

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Mr. Frere.

the preceding pages: yet the advantages to historical truth, which are to be derived from the authentic memoirs afforded in the series of correspondence thus given to the public, cannot be too much approved and admired.

If some have escaped, which private affection might be expected to conceal, yet the public cause is eminently benefited by them; and it is the most glorious tribute, paid to truth and justice and to society, that whatever the address of the general, the politician, or even the philosopher, in life, these authentic documents generally, at some time or other, disclose the real shape and complexion of the transactions which they concern.*

Salamanca, Dec. 5, 1808.

My lord,

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

I had the honour to address your lordship on the 29th of November, and to inform you with the determination I had come to, in consequence of the defeat of the army of general Castanos; and general Hope, with the division he commands, marched to Avila to avoid the superior cavalry of the enemy in the plain, and reached Alba de Tormes, four leagues from this, yesterday;

* A memorable instance of this is afforded in the several publications of the letters of the celebrated Wilkes.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J Moore to
lord Castle-
reagh.

his junction is thus secured, and I am now preparing to fall back on Ciudad Rodrigo. The enemy has directed his whole force towards Madrid, which will probably give me time to reach Portugal unmolested. Buonaparte is at Aranda de Duero; reinforcements join him daily. The French attacked and carried the pass of Somma Sierra on the 27th, which opens to them that of the Guadarama; and they are in possession of Segovia. The few Spanish corps opposed to them are composed of fugitives collected from the beaten armies, and they offer no resistance. I have had no communication with Madrid since the 30th of November; the inhabitants had taken up arms, were barricading the streets, and expressed a determination to die rather than submit; no such spirit has yet been manifested by any other force in Spain. How long the populace of a large town are likely to persevere in such a resolution, or how long they will be able to withstand the formidable attack made against them, I cannot say. Your lordship may believe that it was not without much reflection and extreme reluctance that I determined to withdraw the army from Spain, and to abandon the cause, for the success of which the government are so much interested, and the public mind so highly exalted. My letters to your lordship, of the 25th and 26th November, containing a just re-

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castlereagh.

presentation of the state of affairs in this country, would tend to shew how much the government and the people of England had been deceived, and would prepare your lordship for the reverses which have since taken place. As long as there remained an army, and any hope of resistance on the part of the Spaniards, I was determined to persevere, at all risks, in the junction of the army, and then if general Castanos had received a check, or been forced to retreat, it was my intention, if nothing better offered, to march upon Madrid, from whence, getting behind the Tagus, we should have given the Spaniards an opportunity of rallying around us, and have shared their fortunes. This intention I mentioned to your lordship in my letter of the 26th, and I imparted it as a question to Mr. Frere for his opinion.* But the sudden defeat of general Castanos' army, so complete, and yet accomplished after so little resistance, shewed with what little ardour the Spaniards are inspired in their country's cause—it left nothing either to aid me, or to prevent the farther progress of the enemy. The British army was at that moment on its march to collect at this place and Astorga. General Hope, with the head of his division, was at

* There is something very strange in the manner in which sir John Moore alternately considers Mr. Frere, at one time soliciting his opinion, at another condemning him for giving it.

Villa Castin ; and, from the collected manner in which it was necessary to march, he could not have joined me sooner than he has done ; sir David Baird's corps could not be collected at Astorga before the 4th of this month : it was thus impossible for this army to have been united before the 14th, or the 13th ; and still later before it could be ready to undertake an offensive movement. This time was more than sufficient to enable the enemy to finish the destruction of what little Spanish force remained, and to turn the greatest part of his army against the British, which, when united, does not exceed 26,000 men, but which probably he would be able to attack whilst detached and separated. I had the most perfect conviction, from experience, of the want of energy and ability in the Spanish government, and of the apathy of the people, and of the unprepared state of the country, and that, upon the defeat of the armies, no aid was to be expected from any other quarter. I considered the British army as standing alone, that its union could not be attempted without great hazard, and, if effected, that it could not withstand the great force that would be brought against it. It was vain, I thought, that, under such circumstances, it could retrieve the Spanish cause ; and, though I knew the army would cheerfully attempt whatever I ordered, I thought my

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1806.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

duty called upon me not to expose it to a contest in which its best efforts could not promise to be successful. It may fairly be said that the British army never reached Spain: it cannot in the true sense be called an army until it is united and prepared to act; the Spanish forces were defeated, and their cause lost, before the British so constituted could come to their assistance. I feel the weight of the responsibility fallen to me; I had nothing but difficulties to chuse; whether I have chosen the least, and that which will be the least disapproved by his majesty and my country, I cannot determine: my wish has been to decide right. I reflected well upon the different duties I had to discharge, and if I have decided wrong, it can only be because I am not gifted with that judgment which was imputed to me when I was entrusted with this important command.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, Dec. 8, 1808.

My lord,

In a short letter which accompanied my despatch of the 5th instant, I mentioned that the resistance offered by the people of Madrid had arrested the operations of the French, and gave a hope that the affairs of this country might still be

recovered, desperate as they are; yet, if the example of the capital is followed, and enthusiasm becomes general, France will be forced to divide her armies, and will be no longer so formidable. The difficulty of obtaining information is very great, I have none certain with respect to Madrid, only I believe it still holds out. I have ordered sir David Baird, who was retreating, to march back. I shall continue the arrangements I have ordered in Portugal, in case I should be obliged to fall back, but I am preparing to march to Zamora and Toro, to join Baird, whom I have ordered to advance to Benavente; when we are joined, and if the marquis de la Romana, with the troops he is collecting at Leon, are ready, I shall move towards Burgos, and the communications of the French. Your lordship may depend upon it, that I never shall abandon the cause as long as it holds out a chance of succeeding; but you must be sensible that the ground may be in an instant cut from under me: Madrid may fall, and I be left to contend with very superior numbers indeed. I hope a better spirit exists in the southern provinces; here no one stirs, and yet they are well inclined. An expression in a letter, intercepted from a French officer commanding at Vittoria, to the chief of the staff with the army, paints the people in this part exactly:

The disposition of the public mind is always bad;

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

our successes are never believed, but the country remains completely tranquil.*

I have made no remark on the subject of your lordship's despatch of the 25th November, respecting my rank with the Spanish generals; the government has not as yet named any one to the chief command of their armies; every thing on that head is as loose as ever. You perceive by the manner I have already expressed myself in former letters, that I have no wish to be tenacious on this subject; but I confess I have heard of none of their generals yet, under whom it would be safe to place the command of the British troops. I shall certainly always be inclined to pay great deference to the wishes of whatever general commands any Spanish army with which I am acting, yet, until some one appears very different from any we have heard of hitherto, it cannot be desirable that he should know he had a right to command me, and I cannot help beseeching you to consider this subject once more before you finally fix it.

As I am sending a courier to sir David Baird, I have written this on the chance of an opportunity offering to forward it; and in this manner I shall endeavour to keep you in the current of affairs here.

* L'esprit public est toujours mauvais, toujours de l'incrédulité sur nos avantages, quant à la tranquillité du pays, elle est parfaite.

I have sent colonel Graham to Madrid, to send me information of what is passing there. Lord Paget with the cavalry arrives at Zamora to-morrow, and next day I propose moving a corps with myself to Toro.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VI.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

I know not if your lordship has heard lately from general Charles Stuart; he is in our front, and very well.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

P.S. The junta are gone to Badajos; not a very good example for the people.

Salamanca, Dec. 10, 1808.

My lord,

Colonel Graham, whom I had sent to Madrid, returned to me last night. He could only get as far as Talavera de la Reina, where he found two members of the supreme junta, who informed him that Madrid had capitulated on the 3d. The duke of Castelfranco and Mr. Morla, who were at the head of the junta established at Madrid, are accused by the people of betraying them. Castellar, the captain-general, and all the military officers of rank, refused to ratify the treaty, and left the town with sixteen pieces of cannon. The people refuse to give up their arms, but the French have the gates, the Retiro, and Prado. Saragossa still

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

holds out, and it is said that, on the 1st, they repulsed the French, who had made a general attack. It is said that attempts are making to assemble a great force in the south; I dare say the force will be assembled, but the efforts it will make when assembled I must think are very doubtful. I cannot believe that real enthusiasm is spread over any considerable portion of Spain. Had the people of Madrid been really determined, I do not see how Mr. de Morla and the duke of Castelfranco could have given up the town. They accuse their leaders to cover their own want of spirit: this was the case with general St. Juan, who commanded when the pass of Soma Sierra was forced. It is thought his troops misbehaved; they have since accused him of treachery, and have murdered him. I certainly think the cause desperate, because I see no determined spirit any where, unless it be at Saragossa. There is however a chance, and whilst there is that, I think myself bound to run all risks to support it. I am now differently situated from what I was when Castanos was defeated; I have been joined by general Hope, the artillery, and all the cavalry (lord Paget with three regiments is at Toro), and my junction with sir David Baird is secure, though I have not heard from him since I ordered him to return to Astorga. Madrid, though it has capitulated, must still engage a considerable part of the

enemy's force. Saragossa is also a considerable diversion; and the collections forming in the south cannot be neglected; all his force cannot thus be directed against me. The corps collecting under the marquis of Romana, at Leon, is, I am told by sir David Baird, very bad. I shall, however, connect myself with it, and I mean to move to Valladolid, where I shall order Baird to join me, and to which neighbourhood I hope also that La Romana will advance.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808. -
December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

This movement I shall begin to-morrow, by sending two corps to join lord Paget at Toro; generals Hope and Fraser, from Alva de Tormes and this place, shall move on Tordesillas. I hope on the 14th to be at Valladolid. My communication when there, will become uncertain with Almeida and Portugal, from whence all my stores are not yet forwarded, but I must take my chance: I shall be in fortune's way, if she smiles, we may do some good, if not, we shall still, I hope, have the merit of having done all we could. The army for its number is excellent, and is, I am confident, quite determined to do its duty. I have had a letter from sir John Craddock from Corunna, he was proceeding to Lisbon; he has landed part of the money from the Lavinia there, and will land the rest at Oporto or Lisbon. I have begged of him to bring the two regiments from Gibraltar to the Tagus.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

I understand that Mr. Murray is intended to relieve Mr. Erskine and to supersede Mr. Kennedy. The latter has acted as chief commissary with this army since it reached Spain (Mr. Erskine is still at Lisbon), and has certainly acquired a degree of experience which is extremely useful; it is quite cruel for him to be thus superseded by an officer not previously of higher rank than himself, and who probably has much less experience, and not more ability: at any rate, a new man at the head of the department would be very prejudicial at this moment; Kennedy could not be expected to act under him. I have therefore begged sir John Craddock to keep Mr. Murray at Lisbon; and I hope, unless Mr. Murray's talents are known to be very superior, that he may not be permitted to supersede Mr. Kennedy with this army, who, without money and under many disadvantages, has hitherto supplied us well. I should hope that the rest of the cavalry your lordship has mentioned will be sent without delay.

The horses and harness of the waggon-train will be useful, but their waggons are heavy and bad; those we get in the country are more convenient, I should therefore propose to leave the waggons at home, and send the rest of that establishment only.

Until affairs in Spain bear a more promising as-

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

pect, I should think your lordship will approve of keeping at Corunna and Lisbon a sufficient quantity of transports for the re-embarkation of the army ; and I think many reasons unite to make it desirable for us to be in possession of Cadiz. I mean to mention this to Mr. Frere. When it is agreed to, the two regiments from Gibraltar, as the most ready, could take possession and garrison it.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Salamanca, Dec. 12, 1808.

My lord,

I leave this place to-morrow, and I shall be at Valladolid on the 16th, with the troops I brought with me from Lisbon, with the addition of three regiments of cavalry from England, amounting to 1500. I have not heard from the marquis of Romana, and must give up the co-operation of his corps for the present. Sir David Baird's will not be at Astorga for some days, but he will advance to Benavente when ready ; and, as he will be in my rear, he can move up, or I can fall back upon him ; but I do not think it advisable longer to delay moving forward. I shall threaten the French communications, and create a diversion, if the Spaniards can avail themselves of it ; but the French have in the north of Spain from 80 to 90,000 men, and

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
agh.

more are expected. Your lordship may, therefore, judge what will be our situation if the Spaniards do not display a determination very different from any they have shown hitherto. I have written to sir John Craddock to keep whatever transports are not required for the embarkation of the troops in Portugal, ready to send to Vigo, if required. If I am forced to retreat, it will probably be on the Galicias. The road is good, and the country capable of being defended. In this case we shall want flour, as the country produces only cattle in any abundance.—Whatever ships are sent from England, for the purpose of withdrawing the army, should call at Corunna for orders, and then rendezvous at Vigo. It is to Corunna also that money and every supply should be forwarded. The communication from Lisbon and Oporto, through Portugal, is so very bad, that nothing can be forwarded in time; and, as I consider myself now united with Baird's corps, I shall certainly of the two, whether for retreat or communication, prefer Galicia to Portugal.

I fear that Mr. Frere is infinitely more sanguine upon the subject of Spain than I am. This is to be regretted, as it renders it more embarrassing for you to come to a decision upon the measure to be pursued. I have seen no ability with the Spanish government, but much the reverse; none has been displayed by their officers in the command of the

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

armies; no one officer has yet a chief direction of the military branch; the armies have shewn no resolution, the people no enthusiasm, nor no daring spirit; and that which has not been shewn hitherto, I know not why it should be expected to be displayed hereafter. I feel as if the British was the only efficient force in Spain. Your lordship will consider with what view it was originally sent, whether in aid of an enthusiastic brave people. capable of fighting their own battles, or to contend alone with France, and retrieve the affairs of a beaten disorganized nation. We have had now some proof of the efforts of which Spain is capable; and we can judge by the resistance they have made, whether they have fought with that spirit and obstinacy of a people ardent for the independence of their country. It is certainly right for your lordship to consider well these matters, that you may be able to estimate justly the aid which is to be expected in this struggle from the Spanish nation, and decide to what amount the British army should be reinforced, or, if not reinforced, what measures it should follow. The French force in Spain may fairly be set down at 80,000 men, besides what is in Catalonia; the British at 27 or 28,000, including the regiments coming from Portugal. The French expect considerable reinforcements. The armies which the Spaniards had formed have been beaten and

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

dispersed, and are again collecting. This, my lord, is, I believe, the true statement; and I leave your lordship to throw into the scale what portion of enthusiasm, resolution, and ability, you think we have a right to expect from the specimen already given.

As this letter is private, I have written it with a freedom which otherwise I should not have used. It is my wish to give you every material upon which to found a just opinion, for certainly the situation of this army is too critical to be long neglected; and unless a spirit is displayed by the Spaniards, of which we see no indication, it is impossible but they must be subdued.

I have the honour, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Such, in the most plain and unequivocal terms, are the continued fluctuating views and sentiments of sir John Moore in regard to his own army and its economy, to those of Spain with which he stood in any relation, and those of the enemy opposed to him; and certainly nothing more hopeless, nothing more indeterminate, than these letters express, can be conceived.

Unlike those glorious examples both of antient and modern times, where a general has deprived himself of the power of contemplating escape by

the destruction of his fleet the moment he stepped on the shores of an enemy; and has directed his despairing soldiers to the chief posts of an enemy to obtain by their own daring the relief of which they stood in need; the mind of the British general in the heart of Spain still lingers on the shores of the peninsula, from which, whatever advantageous prospects, or hopes, or doubts, arise to compel him to advance, he seems but to drag a lengthening chain.

Thus checked at every step, and impeded by every obstacle, however slight, much promise could not be entertained from the progress of the British army, though it did not long remain without some demonstrations of its ordinary spirit, that spirit which, when properly fostered and directed, never fails to elicit glory.

The surrender of Madrid, of which but imperfect particulars had yet reached the allies, soon became fully detailed in the bulletins of the French army, through the public channels of information.*

The circumstances are not more remarkable than the style in which they are described: both amply shew the importance properly attributed by Buonaparte to the possession of the capital, and the rapid

* The *Moniteur* French journal, Dec. 14, &c. and that of London, *The Times*, Dec. 19, 1808.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

manner in which that possession was obtained, while the Spanish character is in no way whatever implicated, forms but too powerful a contrast to the stay of the British general at Salamanca.

Thirteenth bulletin of the French army in Spain; dated Saint Martin, near Madrid, Dec. 2.

On the 29th (of November, ult. says the bulletin) the head-quarters of the emperor were removed to the village of Bonquillas. On the 30th, at break of day, the duke of Belluno presented himself at the foot of the Soma Sierra. A division of 13,000 men of the Spanish army of reserve defended the passage of the mountains. The enemy thought themselves unattackable in that position. They were entrenched in the narrow passage called Puerto, with 16 pieces of cannon. The 9th light infantry, marched upon the right, the 96th upon the causeway, and the 24th followed by the side of the heights on the left. General Senarmont, with six pieces of artillery, advanced by the causeway; the action commenced by the firing of musketry and cannon. A charge made by general Montbrun, at the head of the Polish light-horse, decided the affair; it was a most brilliant one, and this regiment covered itself with glory, and proved it was worthy to form a part of the imperial guard. Cannons, flags, muskets, soldiers, all were taken, or cut to pieces. Eight Polish light-horse were killed upon this

BOOK III.
 CHAP. VII.
 1808.
 December.
 Thirteenth
 French bulletin.

causeway, and 16 have been wounded ; among the latter, is captain Dzievanoski, who was dangerously wounded, and is almost without hopes of recovery. Major Segur, marshal of the emperor's household, charged among the Polish troops, and received many wounds, one of which is very severe. Sixteen pieces of cannon, ten flags, thirty covered chests, 200 waggons, laden with all kinds of baggage, and the military chests of the regiments, are fruits of this brilliant affair. Among the prisoners, who are numerous, are all the colonels, or lieutenant-colonels, of the corps of the Spanish divisions. All the soldiers would have been taken, if they had not thrown away their arms and dispersed in the mountains. On the 1st of December, the headquarters of the emperor were at St. Augustin, and on the 2d, the duke of Istria, with cavalry, commanded the heights of Madrid. The infantry would not arrive before the 3d. The intelligence which we hitherto received, led us to think that this town is suffering under all kinds of disorders, and that the doors are barricaded. The weather is very fine.

Camp at Madrid, Dec. 4.

The town of Madrid has capitulated ; our troops entered it to-day at noon.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteen bulletin of the French army in Spain; dated Madrid, 5th December.

The 2d, at noon, his majesty arrived in person, on the heights which impend over Madrid; on which were already placed the divisions of dragoons of generals la Tour, Maubourg, and la Houssaye, and the imperial horse-guards. The anniversary of the coronation, that epoch which has signalised so many days for ever fortunate for France, awakened in all hearts the most agreeable recollections, and inspired all the troops with an enthusiasm, which manifested itself in a thousand exclamations. The weather was beautiful, and like that enjoyed in France in the finest days in the month of May. The marshal duke of Istria, sent to summon the town, where a military junta was formed, under the presidency of the marquis Castelar; who had, under his orders, general Mörta, captain-general of Andelusia, and inspector-general of artillery. The town contained a number of armed peasants, assembled from all quarters, 6000 troops of the line, and 100 pieces of cannon. Sixty thousand men were in arms; their cries were heard on every side; the bells of 200 churches rang altogether; and every thing presented the appearance of disorder and madness. The general of the troops of the line appeared at the advanced posts, to answer the summons of the duke of Istria. He was accompanied by thirty men of the people, whose dress, looks, and ferocious language, recalled

the recollection of the assassins of September. When the Spanish general was asked whether he meant to expose women, children, and old men, to the horrors of an assault, he manifested secretly the grief with which he was penetrated; he made known, by signs, that he, as well as all the honest men of Madrid, groaned under oppression; and, when he raised his voice, his words were dictated by the wretches who watched over him. No doubt could be entertained of the excess to which the tyranny of the multitude was carried, when they saw him minute down all his words, and cause the record to be verified by the assassins who surrounded him. The aid-de-camp of the duke of Istria, who had been sent into the town, was seized by men of the lowest class of the people, and was about to be massacred, when the troops of the line, indignant at the outrage, took him under their protection, and caused him to be restored to his general. A butcher's boy from Estremadura, who commanded one of the gates, had the audacity to require that the duke of Istria should go himself into the town with his eyes blindfolded. General Montbrun rejected this presumptuous demand with indignation. He was immediately surrounded, and effected his escape only by drawing his sword. He narrowly escaped falling a victim to the imprudence of having forgot

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1806.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

that he had not to make war with civilized enemies. A little time after, some deserters, from the Walloon guards, came to the camp. Their depositions convinced us, that the people of property, and honest men, were without influence; and it was to be concluded, that conciliation was altogether impossible.

The marquis of Perales, a respectable man, who had hitherto appeared to enjoy the confidence of the people, had been on the day before this accused of putting sand in the cartridges. He was immediately strangled. It was determined that all the cartridges should be re-made. Three or 4000 monks were employed upon this work at the Retiro. All the palaces and houses were ordered to be open, to furnish provisions at discretion. The French infantry was still three leagues from Madrid. The emperor employed the evening in reconnoitring the town, and deciding a plan of attack, consistent with the consideration due to the great number of honest people always to be found in a great capital.

To take Madrid by assault, might be a military operation of little difficulty; but to engage that great city to surrender, by employing alternately force and persuasion, and by rescuing the people of property, and real good men, from the oppression under which they groaned—this was what was

really difficult. All the exertions of the emperor, during these two days, had no other end. They have been crowned with the greatest success.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

At seven o'clock, the division lassisse of the corps of the duke of Belluno arrived. The moon shone with a brightness that seemed to prolong the day. The emperor ordered the general of brigade, Maison, to take possession of the suburbs; and charged the general of brigade, Lauriston, to support him in the enterprise with four pieces of artillery belonging to the guards.

The sharp-shooters of the 16th regiment took possession of some buildings, and in particular of the grand cemetery. At the first fire, the enemy shewed as much cowardice, as he did of arrogance all the day. The duke of Belluno employed all the night in placing his artillery in posts marked out for the attack. At midnight, the prince of Neufchatel sent to Madrid a Spanish lieutenant-colonel of artillery, who had been taken at Somo Sierra, and who saw with affright the obstinacy of his fellow-citizens. He took charge of the annexed letter, No. 1.* On the third, at nine in the morning, the same flag of truce returned to the headquarters, with the letter No. 2. But the general of brigade, Senarmont, an officer of great merit,

* These are not given.

BOOK I.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

had already placed 30 pieces of artillery, and had commenced a very smart fire; which made a breach in the walls of the Retiro. The sharp-shooters of the division of Villatte having passed the breach, their battalion followed them; and in less than a quarter of an hour, 1000 men who defended the Retiro, were knocked on the head. The palace of the Retiro, the important posts of the observatory, of the porcelain-manufactory, of the grand barrack, the hotel of the Medina Celi, and all the outlets which had been fortified, were taken by our troops. On another side, 20 pieces of cannon of the guards, accompanied by light troops, threw shells, and attracted the attention of the enemy by a false attack.

It would have been a difficulty to form a conception of the disorder that reigned in Madrid, if a greater number of prisoners arriving in succession, had not given an account of the frightful scenes, of every description, of which that capital presented the spectacle. They have intersected the streets, erected parapets on the houses; barricades of bales of wool, and of cotton, had been formed; and the windows had been stopped with mattresses. Those of the inhabitants who despaired of a successful resistance, were flying into the fields: others, who had preserved some share of reason, and who preferred appearing in the midst of their property

before a generous enemy, to abandoning it to the pillage of their fellow-citizens, demanded that they should not expose themselves to an assault. Those who were strangers to the town, or who had nothing to lose, were for a defence to the last extremity, accused the troops of the line of treason, and obliged them to continue their fire.

The enemy had more than 100 pieces of cannon pointed; a more considerable number of two and three pounders, had been dug up, taken out of cellars, and tied upon carts, a grotesque train, and sufficient in itself to prove the madness of a people abandoned to itself. But all means of defence were become useless: the possessors of Retiro are always masters of Madrid. The emperor took all possible care to prevent the troops going from house to house. The city was ruined if many troops had been employed. Only some companies of sharpshooters advanced, and the emperor constantly refused to send any to sustain them. At eleven o'clock, the prince of Neufchatel wrote the annexed letter, (No. 3.) His majesty, at the same time, ordered the fire to cease on all points.

At five o'clock, general Morla, one of the members of the military junta, and don Bernardo Yriarte, sent from the town, repaired to the tent of his serene highness the major-general. They informed him, that the most intelligent persons were of

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

opinion, that the town was destitute of resources, and that the continuation of the defence would be the height of madness; but that the lowest classes of the people, and the crowd of *mea*, *strangers to Madrid*, wished to defend themselves, and thought they could do it with effect. They required the day of the 4th, to make the people listen to reason. The prince major-general, presented them to his majesty the emperor and king, who addressed them thus :

“ You make use of the name of the people to no purpose; if you cannot restore tranquillity, and appease their minds, it is because you have yourselves excited them—you have led them astray by propagating falsehoods. Assemble the clergy, the heads of convents, the alcades, the men of property and influence, and let the town capitulate, by six o'clock in the morning, or it *shall cease to exist*. I will not, nor ought I to withdraw my troops. You have massacred the unfortunate French prisoners who had fallen into your hands. Only a few days ago, you suffered two persons, in the suite of the Russian ambassador, to be dragged along and murdered in the public streets, because they were Frenchmen born. The incapacity and cowardice of a general, had put into your power troops, who capitulated on the field of battle; and the capitulation has been violated. You, Mr.

Morla, what sort of a letter did you write to that general? It well became you, sir, to talk of pillage; you, who, on entering Roussillon, carried off all the women, and distributed them as booty among your soldiers! Besides, what right had you to hold such language? the capitulation precluded you from it. See what has been the conduct of the English, who are far from piquing themselves on being rigid observers of the law of nations. They have complained of the convention of Portugal; but they have carried it into effect. To violate military treaties is to renounce all civilization; it is placing generals on a footing with the *Beduins* of the desert. How dare you then presume to solicit a capitulation, you, who violated that of Baylen? See how injustice and bad faith always recoil upon the guilty, and operate to their prejudice. I had a fleet at Cadiz: it was in alliance with Spain; yet you directed against it the mortars of the town, where you commanded. I had a Spanish army in my ranks: I would have preferred seeing it embark on board the English ships, and being obliged to precipitate it from the rocks of Espinosa, than to disarm it; I preferred having 7000 more enemies to fight, rather than to be deficient in honour and good faith. Return to Madrid; I give you till six o'clock to-morrow morning. Return at that hour,

BOOK III.

CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Fourteenth
French bulletin.

if you have to inform me only that they have surrendered; if not, you, and your troops, shall be all put to the sword."

On the 4th, at six in the morning, general Morla and general don Fernando de Vera, governor of the town, presented themselves at the tent of the prince major-general. The discourses of the emperor, repeated in the midst of the persons of distinction, the certainty that he commanded in person, the losses sustained during the foregoing day, had carried terror and repentance into all minds. During the night, the most mutinous withdrew themselves from the danger by flight, and a part of the troops was disbanded. At ten o'clock, general Belliard took the command of Madrid; all the posts were put into the hands of the French, and a general pardon was proclaimed, &c.

These particulars, it is to be recollected, had not yet reached the British general but in a very imperfect manner.

Salamanca, 5th December, 1808.

My lord,

Since I had the honour to address my despatch to you this morning, I find considerable hopes are entertained from the enthusiastic manner in which the people of Madrid resist the French. I own I cannot derive much hope from the resist-

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castlereagh.

ance of one town against forces so formidable, unless the spark catches, and the flame becomes pretty general; and here the people remain as tranquil as if they were in profound peace.

I have, however, in consequence of the general opinion, which is also Mr. Frere's, ordered sir David Baird to suspend his march, and shall continue at this place until I see farther, and shall be guided by circumstances. Unless the spirit becomes general, Madrid must soon fall. At all events, if I marched into Portugal, it would be with a view to return the moment a favourable opportunity offered. But I shall not go towards Madrid, until I know with more certainty the force of the enemy, and see something to convince me that more confidence can be placed in the steadiness of the Spaniards.

I had the honour to receive yesterday your lordship's despatches of the 15th of November, by Mr. Windham, 1st guards.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VII.

1808.

December.

Sir J Moore to
lord Castlereagh.

CHAP. VIII.

THE BRITISH AND FRENCH ARMIES IN CONTACT.

First Encounter between the British and French in Spain, the brilliant Affair of General Stewart, with the 18th Dragoons.—Intercepted Reports of the French Army.—Communications between Sir John Moore and the civil and military Functionaries.—Determination to advance.—Successful Attack on the French Cavalry of Colonel Otway.—Splendid Affair of Lord Paget, with the 10th and 15th Hussars.—Hopes inspired by them on the Advance.—Halt of the British Army at Sahagun.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

First encounter
of the British
and French.

IN pursuance of the plan, whatever it might be, which is attributed to sir John Moore, on the 12th of December, lord Paget, with the greater part of the cavalry, marched from Toro to Tordesillas.—

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.
First encounter
of the British
and French.

Brigadier-general Stewart, with the 18th and king's German dragoons, moving from Arevalo, obtained information of a party of the enemy, comprising cavalry and infantry, at the village of Rueda, which he ordered captain Dashwood to reconnoitre at night, and ascertain the position of the guards.

To brigadier-general Stewart was thus given the honour of the first encounter with the French in Spain. With a party of his own regiment, the 18th, he suddenly dashed into the village, and killed or took prisoners nearly the whole party, to the complete astonishment of the enemy, who had no suspicion of British troops being in the neighbourhood, and was entirely taken by surprise.

Nothing could be more propitious than this little affair to the onset of the British army, after the stationary character of the campaign. It had a powerful effect on the troops, particularly the cavalry, and every one looked on it as the most favourable omen of future advantages.

On the 14th of December, the head-quarters of sir John Moore were at Alaejos, where he immediately recommenced his correspondence with the various relations of his army; communicated with the marquis Romana, and received amongst a packet of letters from the head-quarters of the enemy (the officer who bore them having been killed by the

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.
1808.
December.

Spanish peasantry) the following letter of the French major-general Berthier, prince of Neufchatel :

To the Marshal Duke of Dalmatia, commanding the 2d Corps of the Army at Saldana. The Vice-Constable Major-General.

Chamartin, Dec. 10, 1808.

Intercepted despatch of the enemy.

Marshal duke of Dalmatia,

I read to the emperor your letter of the 4th of December, which was brought by one of your officers. His majesty approves of all you have done. The 8th regiment of dragoons, the 22d of chasseurs, the regiment of colonel Tascher, and the Hanoverian regiment, make four regiments, forming two brigades, commanded by the generals Belle and Franceschi. These two brigades are under your orders, and you can manœuvre them as you think proper. The emperor is of opinion that, with the division Merle, and the division Mouton, together with the four regiments of cavalry, nothing can resist you.

What have you to do?—Render yourself master of Leon, drive back the enemy into Galicia, make yourself master of Benavente and Zamora. You can have no English in your front, for some of their regiments came to the Escorial and Salamanca, and every thing evinces that they are in full retreat.—

Our advanced guard is this day at Talavera de la Reyna, upon the road to Badajos, which it will reach soon. You clearly perceive that this movement must compel the English to hasten immediately to Lisbon, if they are not gone there already. The moment, marshal, you are sure that the English have retreated, of which there is every presumption, move forward with rapidity. There are no Spaniards who can resist your two divisions.— Order shoes and great-coats to be made at Leon, St. Andero, and Palencia. His majesty approves every demand for bettering your equipment. You may also require mules for your artillery, and horses to remount your cavalry; but let it all be done according to the regular forms of administration. It is possible that, as soon as the dragoons of general Millar shall arrive in Spain, the emperor will send them to you, but this cannot happen these fifteen days. At the distance you are, marshal duke, you must direct yourself, and look upon all I write as only general instructions.

His majesty imagines that you will take every measure to reduce the country between the Duero, Galicia, and the Asturias, always preserving most attentively St. Andero. The 5th corps, commanded by the marshal duke of Treviso, has received an order to direct its march to Saragossa. The 8th

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Intercepted despatch of the enemy.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Intercepted des-
patch of the
enemy.

corps, under the duke of Abrantes, whose 1st division arrived at Vittoria on the 12th, will probably receive orders to unite at Burgos. Gun-boats and armed vessels of every kind have orders to sail to St. Andero. Load them with confiscated English merchandise, cotton, wool, artillery, and send all to France. In short, hold Valladolid and Zamora in subjection. Valladolid is a good town, which has behaved well. It is thought to be very important to occupy Zamora. To conclude, the emperor thinks that you can do what you please, as soon as the English retire to Lisbon.

Five divisions of Castanos, composed of the best troops, have been routed, with even less difficulty than you found in beating the Andalusian* army at Burgos. The wreck of Castanos's army is pursued by marshal Bessieres, who has cut them off from the road to Estremadura, and is pursuing them towards Valencia, several marches beyond the Tagus. The emperor's head-quarters are at Chamartin, a little country seat, a league and a half from Madrid. His majesty enjoys an excellent state of health.

The city of Madrid is quite tranquil; the shops are all open, the public amusements are resumed,

* The Estremaduran army is meant.

and there is not the least appearance of the first proposal, having been strengthened by 4000 cannon balls.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.
1808.
December.

THE PRINCE OF NEUFCHATEL,
Major-general.

I will send you to-morrow a proclamation and some decrees of the emperor, in which you will there recognise the style of him who was born to command every where.

From these orders and details, thus fortunately obtained by a vigilant exertion of the Spaniards, which it were to have been wished had been often repeated, the British general was put in complete possession of the French plan of operations, the results of those of the Spaniards, and the state of the capital. He also found, what was still more important, that in consequence of the hesitation which had produced no movement on Madrid, Buonaparte had naturally conceived that he was already in retreat,—that indeed no British force of any magnitude had approached it.

Intimidated by Soult's strength, sir John Moore changed his determination of marching on Valladolid to that of Toro, to prevent any impediment to his junction with sir David Baird, and thus communicated with that officer, and also with the British minister on his motives.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to sir D. Baird.

Head-Quarters, Alaejos, Dec. 14, 1808.

My dear sir,

I received last night your letters of the 10th and 11th inst. It was my intention to have moved to-morrow on Valladolid, but by a letter from Buonaparte to marshal Soult at Saldana, which we have intercepted, the officer who carried it having been murdered by the peasantry, I am induced to change my direction, and shall be to-morrow, with all the troops I have, at Toro and its immediate neighbourhood. It appears that marshal Soult, duc de Dalmatia, has with him two divisions at Saldana, besides one under the duc d'Abrantes, which is collecting at Burgos, and another under the duc de Treviso, which has received orders to march on Saragossa, but which of course may be recalled. Madrid has submitted, and is quiet; and the French from thence are marching upon Badajos. Their advanced guard was at Talaveira la Reina on the 10th instant. My object is now to unite the army as soon possible; you at Benavente, and I at Toro; from whence, either by a forward or flank movement, the two corps can be joined, I shall direct all my stores from Zamora to be forwarded to Benavente. The arrangement with respect to yours, which I communicated to you in my letter of the 12th inst. may go on; by which we shall have a certain portion at Benavente, and

the rest at Astorga and the rear. It appears from the intercepted letters, from deserters, and from prisoners we have taken, that the French are in complete ignorance of the present movements, and think we have retreated. As they will now know the truth, what change this may make in their march to Badajoz I know not; but marshal Soult will certainly be checked in his intended operations, which were projected upon the supposition that he had nothing but Spaniards to oppose him. Every arrangement which I before directed, with a view to enable us to live in the Galicias, should be strictly attended to; for, though in the first instances we may not have opposed to us more than we can face, it will be in the power of the enemy to increase their force far beyond our strength. I have received a letter from the marquis of la Romana, and I expect an officer from him every hour. Whatever I determine with him shall be communicated to you; in the mean time I shall thank you to let him know that I have changed my intention of going to Valladolid in consequence of information, and that I am collecting the army at Toro and Benavente.

Believe me, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VIII.



1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
sir D. Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.*Toro, Dec. 15, 1808.*

Sir,

Marshal Soult, duke of Dalmatia, is with a corps at Saldana; Junot, duke of Abrantes, is marching with another by Vittoria on Burgos; and there is a corps under another marshal, duke of Treviso, destined for Saragossa. Madrid is quiet; and the army, or rather a portion of it, is on its march to Badajos; the advanced guard was at Talavera de la Reina on the 10th. Buonaparte is at Chamarin, in the belief that the British have retired into Portugal. Marshal Bessieres is in pursuit of the army of Castanos, has intercepted its march to Estremadura, and is following it to Valencia. This information, which I received yesterday, has determined me to unite the army with all possible speed, and instead of proceeding to Valladolid, I have marched to this place, in order to make my junction with sir David Baird, who is assembling his corps at Benavente. I met a king's messenger on my coming to this town, who was in search of you; I have directed him to go to Ciudad Rodrigo, where, according to the information he receives, he will proceed straight to Badajos, or enter Portugal.

I have the honour, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

This letter, though it does not communicate any intended operation, is terse with marks of better spirits, as is also the determination described in the narrative.

The British commander was now very desirous that the duke of Dalmatia should move forward, and meet him half way; though he could hardly flatter himself with this expectation. He resolved, therefore, to march towards him, from his junction with sir David Baird on the road, and, if possible, encounter marshal Soult before he was reinforced, and before any French corps should be pushed forward on his right flank to endanger his retreat.

With this design he had marched to Toro, which he reached on the 16th. But as if some fatality was constantly to arrest his excellency's best intentions, he now received the following intelligent, but inappropriate, letter from lieutenant-colonel Symes, who had been deputed, by sir David Baird, to ascertain the strength and condition of the marquis of Romana's troops.

Leon, 14th Dec. 1808.

Sir,

I have the honour to acquaint you, that I arrived at Leon yesterday evening; the difficulty of procuring post-horses greatly retarded my journey. Between Membibre and Manzanal, I met a

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.
December.

Observations
on the letters of
sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.

Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

BOOK III.

CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

brigade of Spanish artillery, viz. two howitzers, and six field-pieces: they were proceeding to Ponteferada, for what precise object I could not learn;—possibly to defend the passes of the mountains.

At a league, north of Astorga, I came on another brigade of Spanish guns, drawn up on a rising ground. These guns had only three or four men to guard them, and no regular sentinals. I was told that the gunners and cattle were in the neighbouring village. I examined the state of the guns and the ammunition, as closely as I could without giving offence. They appeared very defective; the men said they came from Leon fifteen days ago, and knew not whither or when they were to proceed. At Orbigo, four leagues from Leon, I found the place occupied by a numerous body of troops: I was told 4,000, under major-general don Jenars Trigader. There were five regiments; three of the line—El Rey, Majorca, and Hibernia; and two of militia—the Maldonada and another. The equipment and appearance of these troops were miserable. I had an opportunity of inspecting the arms of the general's guard, which were extremely imperfect; the springs and locks do not often correspond; either the main spring was too weak for the feather-spring, or the feather-spring too weak to produce certain fire from the hammer. I tried sixteen; of this number only six

had bayonets, and these were short and bad. The ammunition-pouches were not proof against rain: the clothing of the soldiers was motley, and some were half naked. They were in general stout young men, without order or discipline, but not at all turbulent or ferocious; and nothing of intoxication was observable. Soon after I left Orbigo, I met the regiment of Vittoria, on its march from Leon, destined, I was told, for Ponteferrada; the men were wretchedly clad and armed.

I got to Leon early in the evening, and waited on the marquis de la Romana; he had not heard of the capitulation of Madrid; expressed himself vaguely on the subject of moving; stated his force at 22,000 infantry and 300 cavalry; complained much of the want of officers; had intended to form his army into five divisions, but could not for want of officers to put at their head: he, therefore, meant to divide his army into wings, one under general Blake, the other under himself; that his force was daily increasing by the return of fugitives. He expressed hopes, that we had light troops to oppose those of the French, who were very expert; and added, that he was training 6,000 of his men to that species of warfare. There was to be a general review the next day, at which I expressed a desire of the honour of attending his excellency. In the morning I waited on the

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.
December.

Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

marquis, and pressed him, as far as I could with propriety, on the subject of joining sir John Moore; to which he evaded giving any more than general assurances. He does not think that the force of the enemy in the north exceeds 10,000 men in all; and that there is no danger of their penetrating into Asturias. He recommends to sir John Moore to break down all the bridges between Toro and Aranda—five in number; that Zamora be fortified and made a depôt; and that magazines be formed at Astorga and Villafranca; regretted his want of cavalry; expressed a wish to procure 2,000 English muskets, and shoes for his army. When I asked him for 100 draft mules for general Baird's army, he replied, it was impossible; he had not one to spare. Whilst we were talking, a courier brought intelligence of the repulse of the French at Madrid. It may be true, but seems at present to stand in need of confirmation.

I attended the review. The troops were drawn up in three columns; each might, perhaps, consist of 2,500 men. The marquis, on horseback, addressed each column separately; when that was over, the troops formed into lines; the right wing was badly armed, and worse clothed; the left was better, being chiefly provided with English firelocks; and a corps of 1,000 men in uniform, who, I was informed, were light troops, might be called

respectable. Their movements, from column into line, were very confusedly performed, and the officers were comparatively inferior to the men; there was only one brigade of artillery in the field; and I doubt whether there is any more in Leon. The guns were drawn by mules. No ammunition-waggons were brought into the field for inspection. On the whole, from what I have been able to observe, since I came here, and from the tenor of my conversations with the marquis, I am disposed to doubt his inclination of moving in a forward direction to join sir John Moore. I suspect he rather looks to secure his retreat into Galicia, unless the aspect of affairs materially alters for the better; and if he were to join sir John, I doubt whether his aid would be found essentially useful. My reasons for these conclusions are as follows:— If the marquis meant to advance, why send his artillery and troops into the rear? and why, as he is assured of the time when sir John Moore intends to be at Benavente, decline to fix any precise day to make a movement? I do not know what communication he may have made to you through captain Doyle, or by letter to sir John Moore, to whom he says he has written fully; but to me he has certainly given no cause whatever to suppose that he will move in concert with your army, or

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

that of sir John Moore: I hope I may be mistaken.

My motive for doubting, whether the aid which he might bring would be of any importance, arises from a sense of the inefficient state of his army, and the want of discipline in the men. It is morally impossible that they can stand before a line of French infantry. A portion of, at least one third of, the Spanish muskets will not explode; and a French soldier will load and fire his piece, with precision, three times before a Spaniard can fire his twice. Men, however brave, cannot stand against such odds; as to charging with the bayonet, if their arms were fit for the purpose, the men, though individually as gallant as possible, have no collective confidence to carry them on, nor officers to lead them; they will, therefore, disperse, probably on the first fire, and can never be rallied, until they voluntarily return to their general's standard; as in the case of the marquis de la Romana's present army, almost wholly composed of fugitives from the battles of the north. A striking instance of this is given by the marquis himself, who assured me that the Spaniards did not lose above 1000 men in their late actions with the French; a proof not of the weakness of the

French, but of the incapacity of the Spaniards to resist them. In fact, the French light troops decided the contest;—the Spaniards flew before a desultory fire;—they saved themselves, and now claim merit for having escaped.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.
1808.
December
Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

By a repetition of such flights and re-assembling, the Spaniards may, in the end, become soldiers, and greatly harass the enemy; but, as we cannot pursue that mode of warfare, our allies are not much calculated to be of use to us on the day of battle, when we must either conquer or be destroyed.

I do not mean to undervalue the spirit or patriotism of the Spaniards, which I highly respect, and which, in the end, may effect their deliverance; but they are not now, nor can they for a long time be, sufficiently improved in the art of war, to be coadjutors with us in a general action: we must, therefore, *stand or fall through our own means*; for, if we place any reliance on Spanish aid for success in the field, we shall, I fear, find ourselves egregiously deceived.

I think the marquis de la Romana should immediately be called upon, to say upon what day he will march, and on what day and at what place he will join sir John Moore.

I have thought it my duty, sir, thus to enter at length into the subject, with a view to prevent

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Lieut.-colonel
Symes to sir
David Baird.

hereafter any disappointment on a matter of such high importance.

I have the honour to be, &c.

MICHAEL SYMES,

Lieut.-colonel.

Here was, in many respects, a faithful and able, though not a very new, picture. As was easily to be conceived, this letter entirely depressed the rising spirit of the British general, and dashed the small hope which had just beamed upon him, as it had often before beamed in vain.

As if some astonishingly-new discovery had been made, instead of what every military reader will have long since anticipated, the narrative of sir John Moore's operations, or rather inoperations, thus exclaims:—

Alas! it was to remedy these exaggerations and misconceptions of their force—it was to give to this and every other description of the Spanish force consistency; it was to furnish to their body a vivifying spirit, that was the chief business of the British general at this moment, and an admirable exercise of all those superior qualities of a general, which are only to be elicited by such embarrassments, in which peculiar excellence was to be expected from the judgment naturally to be attributed to sir John Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.
1808.
December.

This account of the marquis of Romana's troops was most discouraging. It was evident that little reliance could be put on a force so imperfectly organized: and then adds, that the following letter from the marquis, though it gives no very flattering description of his army, was, in many points, an exaggeration.

At the same time, in what the exaggeration consists is difficult to be conceived by an ordinary reader.

Leon, December 14th, 1808.

Sir,

From the forward movements which the army under your excellency's command is making, I am induced to despatch my aide-de-camp, Mr. O'Niell, with this letter, which will inform you of the destination of my army, and my designs. I have now twenty thousand men present under arms, whom I have begun to clothe and to organise; but much is still wanting to complete the work, and there are still at least two-thirds who are in want of clothing from head to foot.

The marquis of
Romana to sir
John Moore.

Almost the whole army are without havresacks, cartouche-boxes, and shoes; and, notwithstanding all the exertions I have made to that effect, I have not been able to succeed, the country offering so few resources. I expect all these articles from day

Distressed state
of Romana's
army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

The marquis of
Romana to sir
John Moore.

to day, but the distance which they are from this, retards the execution of my orders. If the provinces were a little more zealous, I doubt not but the army would by this time be fit to act in concert with that of your excellency. So much for the situation of my troops : I will now communicate to your excellency my plans. If the enemy were not in front of me, I should not a moment doubt the possibility of uniting my forces with your excellency's, and of concerting a decisive attack upon the troops who now surround Madrid ; but, according to the best information, there is a division, from about eight to ten thousand men, which extends from Sahagun to Almanza ; and whose object, as far as I can judge, is to check my army, and to keep open the communication with the mountains of Santander. Its position is along the little river of Cea, and it occupies the villages of Sahagun, which strengthen its left ; its principal corps is at Saldana, and its advanced posts at Cea and Almanza. From this last place they push their reconnoitring parties as far as Pedrosa, at the entrance of Valdeburon ; and they expect to harass my left. As long as this corps remains in this position, I cannot abandon mine ; both because I cannot expose nor abandon this country, from whence I draw large supplies of provisions ; nor can I leave the enemy a free passage to the Asturias,

who would instantly take possession of this country, and threaten the passage into Galicia. As soon as I am able to manœuvre, I intend to push forward the corps which is in my front; and, at the same time, sir David Baird can shew the heads of columns in advancing from Benavente upon the road to Palencia. This combined movement will oblige this division of the enemy to fall back upon Reynosa, or even upon Burgos. If we were once clear of this party, I do not think it would be difficult for your excellency to join us, as well as sir David Baird. I should very much wish to have an interview with your excellency; we might then smooth many difficulties. If I can effect it without committing any error here, I shall repair as soon as possible to Tordesillas, and I shall not fail to give you timely notice of it.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

THE MARQUIS OF ROMANA.

This is evidently the communication of an accomplished general; instead of exaggeration, he states that two-thirds of his army were naked, and therefore in course *at the moment* inefficient; the whole in a state that required peculiar spirit to act; the exertions of the provinces paralyzed—for the provinces were as little to be expected to be in a state to provide for armies, as armies to act—the whole

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

The marquis of Romana to sir John Moore.

Romana ardently solicits the British army to join him.

Remarks on the candid communication of the state of things from the marquis of Romana:

BOOK III.

CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

country was paralysed. But he shews what is to be done, and in a proper spirit, under all circumstances, specifically declares what himself will do.*

To balance the one and support the other, from an entirely separate quarter, and with every support that authority could give or responsibility could require; and while (as stated by his brother,) sir John Moore's whole attention was engrossed with the attack on the French army, which he *was meditating*, a member of the supreme junta, accompanied by Mr. Stuart, in his diplomatic capacity, and with the acquiescence of Mr. Frere, presented the following despatch, as it had been in some form presented to him.

Sir,

Mr. de Garay to
Mr. Frere.

In this letter, Mr. de Garay expresses the consternation of the Spaniards, and their perilous situation if deserted by the British armies, and points out the advantages that would yet arise from an union of their forces.

The marquis de la Romana has informed the supreme junta, from his head-quarters in Leon, under date the 2d instant, that eight days ago he was treating with the English general, sir David Baird, who commands the troops of his nation, at Astorga, to proceed with them, and twelve or fourteen thousand picked men of the army under his

* And when the army of the marquis Romana did act, instead of exaggeration, a greater proportion turned out efficient, while the remainder sustained, with fidelity, deprivations, from which human nature shrinks.

command, to Zamora, to unite with the general sir John Moore, by the road he had pointed out; in order to make a movement against the enemy, towards the point that might be thought most convenient. But, when he flattered himself that general Baird would agree thereto, he replied, that he had positive orders to go by land or sea, to unite with sir John Moore in Portugal. That he had repeated his request to both generals; and that, on the preceding day, general Baird had definitively answered him, that he was withdrawing his artillery, to embark it at Corunna, and that he intended to go with his troops to Portugal, along the coast of Galicia, or by the province of Tras los Montes, upon Almeida. That he wrote to him, in conjunction with general Belande, (who had arrived that night at Leon,) acquainting him with the consternation into which he would throw the country by his retreat; the impossibility of the marquis's marching alone, without any cavalry, towards Zamora; the evils to which that province remained exposed, and the risk with which it threatened the kingdom of Galicia.*

The supreme junta has learnt with the greatest surprise and pain, this resolution of the English

* The Narrative has interrupted this communication, by a note charging the marquis of Romana with inconsistency, which on the slightest comparison, will be found, not to apply at all.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.
1808.
December.
Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

general; which, if put in execution, would afford great advantages to the French arms, and would bring on the most terrible consequences upon the Spanish arms. The generous and ready succours that England afforded us, and the troops with which she assisted us, increased the enthusiasm of the whole country, and strengthened the just hopes that this union would secure the happiest results to the enterprise. For the same reason, the dismay and consternation that will now arise from seeing the British army retreat without acting or uniting, will excite feelings contrary to the good cause; will weaken the enthusiasm and ardour which, hitherto, confidence in the uniformity of ideas, and in the operations of the British army, united with our troops, has sustained.

Besides, the irreparable injury that we should feel, Portugal would remain exposed to see herself for the second time subjected to the French; who would then disconcert, most completely, all the plans and measures that would alone save these two kingdoms, allies of England, who, by the ultimate result, would only have afforded us succours and troops to make us rely on their effective assistance, and withdraw them in the most critical and interesting moment. In reality, the enemy has never been nearer his utter ruin (if the English and Spanish armies act with judgment and energy) than

in the moment when, weakened by what his late efforts have cost him, we might profit of the advantage of seeing his army divided in covering such an extended line.

All these considerations, and the melancholy consequences the retreat of the British troops would produce, cannot be hidden from your excellency's penetration, and that of his Britannic majesty's generals; but, if the British army were united to ours, it would contribute to give liberty to Spain and Portugal; finish the generous work for which the friend of Spain destined them; immortalise their name, and render service to all the continent.

Although our troops have experienced reverses, there are no grounds for dismay. The state of things rather promises that, by the number of English and Spanish troops, and by the enthusiasm and confidence their union will produce, advantages will occur which must secure us victory.

The marquis de la Romana will see sir John Moore, and join him with fourteen thousand chosen men from his army; and with the active and energetic measures which the supreme junta has directed, in a month it will augment its numbers with thirty thousands conscripts from the kingdoms of Leon, Galicia, and Asturias. His majesty, as your excellency knows, has resolved, that one of its members shall go and confer with sir

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Mr. de Garay
to Mr. Frere.

John Moore. He is ready to depart, and will be accompanied, as your excellency has promised, by Mr. Stuart, who will do every thing in his power to contribute to the object. He also hopes that your excellency, impressed with these weighty considerations, will endeavour to persuade the general-in-chief of the English troops, that the enthusiasm of the people, their consolation, the liberty of the nation, the security of Portugal, the interests of England, and those of all Europe, depend on the immediate union; and, when the plans are concerted, to act in the most convenient manner: for, otherwise, neither the object of their coming will be attained, nor any advantage will have resulted, than that of losing the best opportunity of destroying the eternal enemy of the repose of the continent, abandoning Spain and Portugal to their fate, in the precise moment in which they stood most in need of the assistance of their ally.

The supreme junta, relies on the attachment your excellency has shewn them, and on the lively interest you take in our cause; and that you will contribute with all your influence and representation, that the great enterprise may not fail. All which I submit to your excellency's consideration, by command of his majesty.

(Signed) MARTIN DE GARAY.

Truxillo, December 8th, 1808.

With this document, against which even the Narrative does not except, Mr. Stuart bore the following from Mr. Frere :

BOOK III.
CHAP. VI. C.

1808.
December.

Truxillo, Dec. 8, 1808.

Sir,

After the representations which have been made to you from other quarters, I can hardly hope that a farther remonstrance on my part can produce any effect: when high military rank and authority, and the influence of persons whom I am told you honour with your private esteem, have been found unavailing. The advantages which Mr. Stuart possess in this respect will, I hope, enable him to urge you with the warmth of regard, what I may be allowed to state with impartiality and candour, towards a person with whom I am no otherways acquainted than by the honour which he has done me by his correspondence: I mean the immense responsibility with which you charge yourself by adopting, upon a supposed military necessity, a measure which must be followed by immediate if not final ruin to our ally, and by indelible disgrace to the country with whose resources you are entrusted.

I am unwilling to enlarge upon a subject in which my feelings must be stifled, or expressed at the risk of offence; which with such an interest at stake, I should feel unwilling to excite. But this

Mr. Frere
to sir J. Moore.

The minister,
after repeated
expostulations,
despairs of ever
rousing sir John
to exertion.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Mr. Frere to sir
John Moore.

much I must say, that *if the British army had been sent abroad for the express purpose of doing the utmost possible mischief to the Spanish cause, with the single exception of not firing a shot against their troops, they would, according to the measures now announced as about to be pursued, have completely fulfilled their purpose.*

That the defence of Galicia should be abandoned must appear incredible.

I inclose a note which I have just received from Mr. Garay, secretary to the junta, and remain, with great truth and regard,

Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

J. H. FRÈRE.

To these documents, no other answer is attempted than remarks so jejeune, and grounds of action so surprising, that they need only be added without comment

This letter and this second mission (says his excellency's memoir) shew the continued interference of Mr. Frere in the military operations; and they prove how determined he was that sir John Moore should be *governed by him!*

It must (strangely continues the Narrative) be very superfluous to add a word in justification of sir John Moore's original plan, *since it appears, by Ber-*

thier's letter, that Buonaparte presumed that his movement would of course induce the English to retire on Lisbon. We do not, however, suspect that Mr. Frere thinks himself a superior general to Buonaparte, we only perceive that his understanding was completely warped by traitors! The style of the letters, however, do not admit of the same apology; and the whole transaction displays an extraordinary specimen of diplomatic authority. Had it not been recorded, no one could have suspected how commanders of armies might be treated by British plenipotentiaries!!*

The *forbearance* of sir John Moore on receiving these letters is very remarkable: he *sent no answer till the 23d,*† which will appear in its place. In his journal there is the following passage.

I halted at Toro on the 16th, when Mr. Stuart came to me from Mr. Frere, accompanied by a member of the junta, to request I would connect myself with the marquis of Romana. This I told

* And could that reasoner be a friend of sir John Moore, or of his memory, who would suppose that the British general contented himself with acting agreeably to the opinion of the enemy, and that an opinion too which might at any time, according to the first principles of strategy, be thrown in his way to mislead him. These are common ideas, not *ex post facto* reasoning.

† It might be very *remarkable*, but not very polite, nor very expedient. The public is, however, assisted from the journals.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Another traitor
discovered,

BOOK III.
 CHAP. VIII.
 1808.
 December.

them I was about to do, and that I had written to the marquis from Salamanca.

I explained to Mr. Stuart Mr. Frere's extraordinary conduct to me, and I shewed him his letters, which surprised him. He was not much pleased at having been sent upon a mission with only a half confidence.*

“It is mortifying to observe,” continues the Narrative (with permission of the patient reader, for it is very intrusive) “with how much more propriety and judgment the political details are managed by the French, even when conducting an atrocious usurpation, than by the English when engaged in the justest cause.

Let marshal Berthier's letter be compared with Mr. Frere's. The instructions contained in the former are perspicuous, and the language is concise and polite. And though marshal Soult only commanded a detached corps, he is left with ample discretionary powers, and free from the fetters of diplomatic men.”—Because, let it be answered, each general possessed a diplomatic character. The remainder should be withheld from regard for any distinguished character.

The following deduction is, however, too impor-

* This passage exhibits not merely a complete ignorance of diplomacy, but also of a want of feeling for the delicacy of Mr. Stuart's situation.

tant to be omitted, and is at once useful and agreeable.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.
December.

It thence appears that the correspondence between public officers in France is of a nature opposite to the pompous bulletins. The latter are intended to deceive the vulgar, the former to instruct their officers. And the French are too wise politicians to suppose that successful measures can be founded on false information.

Still more the following:—

Sir John Moore had now resolved to threaten the communications between France and Madrid; and, if a favourable opportunity offered, to attack the duke of Dalmatia's corps, or any of the covering divisions that should present themselves. He foresaw that this would necessarily draw upon him a large French force, and of course would prove an important diversion in favour of the Spaniards, who would, by this means, have the opportunity of collecting in the south, and restoring their affairs.—The army was now near the French position. The cavalry, under *lord Paget*, were pushed so forward that their patrols reached as far as Valladolid, and *had frequent successful skirmishes* with the enemy. *Colonel Otway* met a detachment of French cavalry, charged them, and made *the whole prisoners*.

Colonel Otway's
affair with the
French cavalry.

On the 18th of December sir John Moore's headquarters were yet only at Castro Nuevo, sir David

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Baird's only at Benavente, on the road to join him.

Sir John, it is added, was very desirous of obtaining the co-operation of the marquis of Romana, who unluckily was beginning to retire on Galicia. *This proceeded from the Spanish and English commanders being independent, instead of the one being subordinate to the other.*

This assertion, without attempt at proof, is certainly astonishing; and as to the command-in-chief it was *refused* by sir John Moore.

Castro Nuevo, Dec. 18, 1808.

Sir,

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
of Romana.

I had the honour to receive, at Toro, on the 16th inst. your excellency's letter of the 14th, delivered to me by your aid-de-camp, Mr. O'Niell. I have deferred to answer it until I approached nearer to you, and until I knew what measures you might propose to pursue, in consequence of the information I had directed sir David Baird to communicate to you. Upon a knowledge that marshal Soult had a corps so near as Saldana and Sahagun, which would soon be joined by another coming from France, under general Junot, I judged it expedient to make my junction with sir David Baird in this neighbourhood, as speediest done, rather than at Valladolid, I therefore marched from Alae-

jos, on Toro, and yesterday came here; where I occupy rather an extended cantonment. My intention was to march towards Saldana and Sahagun, as soon as sir David Baird's corps was come forward, which I thought would either lead to an action with the corps under marshal Soult, or induce him to retire: in either case I expected to disembarass you from a troublesome neighbour. In this operation I of course expected the co-operation of such part of your corps, if not the whole, as was fit to move.

I received, upon my arrival here yesterday afternoon, a letter from sir David Baird, inclosing one which he had just received from you, dated the 16th, in which you mention your intention immediately to retreat, by Astorga and Villafranca, into the Galicias. I beg to know whether this be still your excellency's determination, as it is one which must materially affect my movements. I own that I expected that your excellency would have left the road through the Galicias to Corunna open for the British army, as it is that by which we must receive our supplies, and by which, if obliged, we can alone retreat. I expected that your excellency, with the Spanish troops, would have entered the Asturias, and have thus protected the left flank of the communication on Corunna. I was the more induced

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
Romana.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1809.

December.

Sir John Moore
to the Marquis
Romana.

to think that this would have been your mode of acting, as it is stated in a paper given, I believe, by your excellency to the British government; and by which they were induced to prefer the disembarkation of their troops at Corunna, and the assembly of the British army in Leon.

As it was my wish, on coming here, to combine my movements with those of the Spanish army under your command, I hope you will have the goodness to communicate to me your intentions. You know the successes the French have met with, you know the forces they have in Spain, and you should be able to judge better than I can, what chance there is, after the recent defeats, of an army being assembled in the south of Spain able to resist or occupy the attention of the French, sufficiently to oblige them to withhold any considerable portion of their army from being sent against us. I have no accounts from Saragossa; but it is reasonable to suppose that it cannot hold out long against a regular attack.

I had forgot to mention to you, that a member of the supreme junta waited upon me at Toro, to request, in the name of the junta, that I should act in concert with your army. The junta were at Truxillo; but have retired to St. Mary's, near to Cadiz.

I shall wait anxiously for your excellency's answer, and have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

For the present no better details can possibly be obtained than the following.

The general continued his march on Villapando and Valdros. On the 20th December he reached Majorca; and here he was joined by sir David Baird, with the guards and general Manningham's brigade.

The British army were now united; and, independent of some small detachments left to keep up the communications, it amounted to 23,000 infantry, and 2000 two or three hundred cavalry. The head-quarters were at Majorca, but the cavalry and horse-artillery were advanced to Monastero Melgar Abaxo, within three leagues of Sahagun, where it was understood that near 700 of the enemy's cavalry were posted.

The weather was extremely cold, and the ground covered with deep snow; yet lord Paget endeavoured to cut off this detachment. His lordship marched at two o'clock in the morning, and sent general Slade, with the 10th hussars, along the Cea, to enter the town, while he proceeded towards it

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.
December.

Lord Paget's
attack on the
enemy.

BOOK III.
CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

in another direction, with the 15th dragoons and horse-artillery.

His lordship approached the town at dawn, and surprised a piquet; but two or three men escaped, and gave the alarm. He pushed forward, and discovered the enemy formed up, not far from the town. The two corps manœuvred for some time, each endeavouring to gain the flank of its opponent. At first, the ground was unfavourable to lord Paget, whose party was in a hollow. But, by superior skill, his lordship surmounted this difficulty; passed the hollow, completely out-manœuvred the enemy, and charged them rapidly and successfully; for, the French having wheeled into line, halted to receive the shock, to which they were unequal; and were thus broken and routed in a moment, and dispersed in every direction. Many of the French were killed: and the prisoners amounted to 157, including two lieutenant-colonels. The loss of the British was trifling. The 15th regiment of hussars, about 400 strong, encountered, in this action, near 700 French, and surpassed them both in skill and intrepidity.

These little affairs were sufficient to have inspired the highest hopes in the British general and his army, and, on the contrary, to damp those of the enemy, in a manner, the most favourable to the

BOOK III.

CHAP. VIII.

1808.

December.

cause of Spain. The troops who could thus in slight skirmishes in the first moment of being opposed to him evince so decided a superiority, when regularly brought into action, would necessarily promise the most certain victory, over an enemy of any ordinary equality of numbers. Buonaparte would soon discover the changed character of his combatants; and nothing but a want of energy in the general in following up these little spirited affairs, and thus rousing the embers of patriotic courage in the Spanish people, could give him any hopes of successfully prosecuting the war.

On the 21st of December, sir John Moore had his head-quarters at Sahagun, and halted there a day to refresh the troops, who had suffered from forced marches in bad weather, and the badness of roads, borne, however, pretty generally with an alacrity, that promised the most agreeable and important results.

CHAP. IX.

CRITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

Letters descriptive of the Circumstances of the British and Spanish Armies, from Sir John Moore to Lord Castlereagh, and between the Marquis Romana and Sir John Moore; the Duke of Infantada and Mr. Frere.—Determinations of the British and Spanish Generals to Attack the Enemy under Soult, Duke of Dalmatia.—Accounts and Suppositions of the Advance of the Enemy.—Plans of the Enemy, and of the British General.—Final Determination of Sir John Moore to retreat.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.
December.
Observations.

THE circumstances, detailed in the preceding chapter, will already have shewn that the situation of the British army, and its general, was becoming hourly more embarrassing, and rapidly approaching, towards a state of the most critical nature.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.1808.
December.

Observations.

The indecisive deliberations, which had taken place at Salamanca, appear to have been inspirited by the communications which had increased with the marquis Romana; and the hopeless spirit of sir John Moore, to have been spurred into somewhat better views. Still, however, he turns into the old strain, and looks at the irregular force of the allies as a point upon which every object is to depend, instead of proceeding to inspirit that force, and to elicit the spirit of the people by a decisive movement in their favour.

The first of these observations, is evident in the communication to the British ministry at this time; the latter, in one of the marquis Romana, who, notwithstanding the wretched state of his army, could not contemplate retreat, and forcibly desired to do something.

Sir John thus gives a retrospective view of the movements immediately preceeding, and in his usual colloquial manner;—probably adopted by way of giving apparent ease to his communications, but certainly not successful in regard to elegance.

Toro, Dec. 16, 1808.

My lord,

I had the honour to receive your lordship's letter of the 3d Dec. with enclosures, forwarded to me by a king's messenger, who reached

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castlereagh.

me on the night of the 13th, at Alaejos, the head quarters of the army, after its first march from Salamanca. I was to have proceeded on the 15th to Valladolid, which place I should have reached the next day, when I received the letter of which I send your lordship a copy. It is from Berthier, prince of Neufchatel, to marshal Soult, duke of Dalmatia. The officer who was charged with it was murdered by some peasants, near Valdestillos, between Segovia and Valladolid, who brought the letter to our advanced posts, to brigadier-general Stewart. I was determined by the information it contained to prefer the speedy union of the army to every other object, and therefore, instead of Valladolid, I marched to this place. I had already directed sir David Baird to push on his corps by brigades to Benavente. The first arrived there yesterday, and the brigade of guards will reach it this day. I shall march from this to-morrow to some villages within two or three leagues of Benavente. I shall there be so close as to be able to protect sir David's junction, and make it perfectly secure. It will be the 20th before all his corps are up. If then marshal Soult is so good as to approach us, we shall be much obliged to him; but if not, we shall march towards him. It will be very agreeable to give a wipé to such a corps; although, with respect to the cause generally, it will probably have no

effect, Spain being in the state described in Berthier's letter. She has made no efforts for herself; our's come too late, and cannot at any rate be sufficient. The French seem to have been ill informed of our movements; they are, however, soon acquainted with them, as our advanced posts have met; and general Charles Stuart, with a detachment of the 18th dragoons, on the night of the 12th, surprised a detachment of their cavalry and infantry in the village of Rueda, killed and took prisoners the greatest part of them. The affair was trifling, but was managed by the brigadier-general with much address, and was executed with spirit by the officers and men. It was a detachment from Valladolid, where general Franceschi commanded, with three or four hundred cavalry. He had no knowledge of our being so near, and would not believe one of the men, who escaped from the village in the dark, and carried to him the report of the surprise and defeat of the detachment. Whether, when Buonaparte hears that we have not retired to Lisbon, he will give to the corps on their march to Badajoz a different direction, I cannot say; but, whilst I march towards Sault, I must take care not too much to uncover Astorga, and the passes into Galicia; from whence in future I must draw all my stores, and through which ultimately, if pressed, I alone can retreat. Should, therefore, on my ap-

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castlereagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

proach, Soult retire towards Burgos to join Junot, who is on his march to that place with the 8th corps, I shall of course be forced to desist, and to return to this neighbourhood. In short, unless some great efforts, of which there is now but little probability, are made by the Spaniards, it is evident how the business must terminate. For, even if I beat Soult, unless the victory has the effect to rouse the Spaniards and to give their leaders ability, it will be attended with no other advantage than the character it will attach to the British arms. I have apprised sir John Craddock of Buonaparte's march to Badajos; which has since been confirmed to me by a man who left Talavera after his advanced guard had entered it. I have told him that, in case of retreat, mine will be through Galicia; and I have begged him, after selecting the quantity of tonnage necessary for the embarkation of the troops in Portugal, to send the rest to Vigo to wait my orders. The lieutenant-general will communicate to your lordship the quantity of tonnage he sends to Vigo, when you will be able to judge the quantity necessary to be sent there from England, should the re-embarkation of this army become necessary. Your lordship must see the probability of such an event; and will, I fancy, think it right to have the means upon the spot. Should this army retire into Galicia, and remain in it any time, I understand, from

sir David Baird, that we shall want flour, which I should hope you will send from England. With respect to the propriety of sending reinforcements, I must leave your lordship to determine. If, at this moment, I had seven or eight thousand cavalry, I should certainly do much. If we retire into the Galicias, they would be an incumbrance. And to enable us to keep our ground in Spain, the reinforcements of both cavalry, infantry, and artillery, must be considerable indeed. I shall endeavour to give your lordship from time to time every information, and must then leave you to form your determination. It is a subject upon which you can form as good a judgment as the best military man. I shall ever be of opinion that, unless Spain herself makes greater efforts, and displays more ardour and energy in her own cause, the efforts of England can be of no avail.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

P.S. I received a letter on the 13th from the marquis of Romana, in which he says he will send an officer to me, as he does not choose to trust to paper, by a messenger, the subject he has to communicate: this officer has not yet come. The marquis is still at Leon, he says, with 20,000 men, 3000 of whom have no arms; but, from sir David Baird's account, they are in no state to be much depended

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

upon ; and he seems also to doubt their number.—

The fugitives from that and other armies are spread over the whole country. They have in general their arms, and will be troublesome subjects to the French ; and we may expect to hear of continual insurrections in different parts of Spain, of massacres, &c. But there must be a great change in the conduct and character of this country before the people are brought to assemble in armies, and to act upon system.

J. M.

The letter of the marquis Romana is an answer to one already given.

Leon, December 19, 1808.

Sir,

The marquis
of Romana to
sir John Moore.

I hasten to reply to your excellency's letter of yesterday, dated from Castronuero, to explain to you, that, although I thought of making a retreat, it was only in consequence of the information which I received from sir David Baird ; and that *otherwise it was far from my intention*. I have placed my advanced posts so as to be able to retreat in good order ; and if marshal Soult's corps should not receive more considerable reinforcements, I have nothing to fear from my position, which is but temporary, and solely to re-organise the army. I

should wish to co-operate with your excellency in the movement you are about to make upon Sahagun; and I shall only wait to learn when your excellency proposes putting it into execution, to begin my march. I shall order a body of light troops to go round by the mountains of Leon to Guardo, whilst the principal part of my troops will march upon Almanza, and from thence, coasting the river Cea, I shall move upon Saldana, where marshal Soult's corps is expected to be, unless, as is reported, he should have changed his position within these two days. The accounts say, that he left only 1500 men at Saldana, and that he has filed off the rest towards Guardo, drawing nearer to the mountains of Santander, which border upon Leon and the Asturias. After all, there is no great reliance to be placed upon the reports of the peasants, who are not very accurate in their observations, and are, besides, confounded by the continual marches and countermarches of the enemy.

I have the honour to acquaint your excellency that the bridge and entrance of Sahagun are barricaded with carts.

If your excellency has formed any other plans, I hope I shall be made acquainted with them, in the persuasion that I have no other wish than to act in concert with your excellency in every thing, and to aid you, to my utmost, in all your operations.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

The marquis of
Romana to
sir John Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

The marquis of
Romana to
sir John Moore.

I think that, for the present, there should be *no thoughts of a retreat*; but that we should feel the pulse of the enemy, and oblige them to retire from the capital. If your excellency thinks it advisable, we might have an interview at Benavente; and it would, perhaps, be easier then to concert a plan of operations.

I have this evening received letters from the junta, dated from Merida, in Estremadura, on the 13th; in which they announce to me that the people at Madrid still hold out, that the French have been repulsed and beaten on their way to Saragossa, and that affairs are going on well in Catalonia.

I beg your excellency to receive the homage,
&c. &c. &c.

MARQUIS OF ROMANA.

The information of the junta, mentioned in this letter, is certainly most unaccountable in any other way than that, at the distance to which its members had been driven, correct intelligence was difficult to be obtained from the capital, and they were desirous to think the best.

Nor is it indeed impossible that if they heard of the capture of Madrid, accompanied by all the circumstances, they might (with whatever judgment) be loath to dispirit their armies, or deter

the British general, by its communication, from an advance which might yet arrest the progress of the French, or occupy them by some forward movement.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.
1808.
December.

It is quite possible that the junta did not know the fact here so erroneously stated, or knowing wish to communicate it; if the latter, it was but another instance of the secret policy for which it had been censured by Mr. Frere before; yet it is more probable that the junta did not know it, from the want of information in Mr. Frere, whose vigilance was now particularly excited; and whom it is certainly not so easy to charge with treason to the cause of the allies, as it was in effect done by the British general.

Mr. Moore, in the Narrative of his brother's campaign, has given, among the many useful documents thus furnished, a letter of the duke del Infantado, which, from the circumstance of its having, with one of Mr. Frere's accompanying it, miscarried, and passed to England, he involves in considerable mystery, and opposes, with high hopes, to every other communication.

“Had sir John Moore (says he, exultingly) been so fortunate as to find so candid a correspondent as the duke of Infantado, a person who would describe things as they were, there is no

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

The duke del
Infantada to sir
John Moore.

doubt that the events and conclusion of the campaign would have been very different."

But on a simple inspection of the letter of that highly-respectable, as well as exalted, character, it will be found, that instead of a detection of folly, deceit, &c. so far from contrasting facts in any view in a more explicit manner, or contradicting other testimonies, it tells no more than has been told before, and *confirms* every matter to which it relates, respecting which other communications have been given! It describes the miserable state of the Spanish army, urges the *especial* necessity of acting in concert with the English; and, what is more important, as a proof that the junta could not maintain the communication necessary to obtain correct intelligence of the French and the capital, states his own total ignorance of the place where the junta has established itself.

To this letter that of Mr. Frere certainly should have been added, its want, however, is not now to be supplied.

Cuenca, Dec. 13th, 1808.

Sir,

I think it my duty to announce to you, as our very good and faithful ally, that, having been sent to this army of the centre, to endeavour to hasten its arrival to the capital, in order, if pos-

The duke del
Infantada to sir
John Moore.

sible, to save it; but not having been able to succeed in my design, and preparing in consequence to join the supreme junta, I have found myself obliged by the generals, and forced by circumstances, to take the command of the army, till I receive the decision of the junta. It was unfortunately the spirit of insurrection and discontent among the soldiery which placed me at the post I now occupy; and it is certainly a very disagreeable situation, to have to correct inveterate evils, and to set out with the measures necessary to re-establish that order and discipline which have been totally neglected.

I cannot describe to you the state in which I found this body of famished troops,—*without shoes*, most of them without uniforms, *wanting ammunition*, having lost the greatest part of their baggage, reduced to about nine thousand infantry and two of cavalry, and, to crown all, having totally lost all confidence in their commanders. From these circumstances I thought it right to follow the plan adopted by my predecessor, of coming to this mountainous country for a few days, in order to re-organise a little the troops; to give an opportunity to some stragglers and recruits to join me, to give shoes and repose to the men and horses, and then to set forward upon some new operations. But *it is very important for their suc-*

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

Decemb e

From the duke
del Infantado
to Mr. Frere.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

From the duke
del Infantado
to his excellency
Mr. Frere.

cess, that these should be in concert with those of the other armies, especially of the English; and it would be, consequently, indispensably necessary, that we should be made acquainted with each other's plans. Colonel Whittingham is ill at this moment; I therefore wish that his excellency General Moore, the commander-in-chief, would send me an experienced and confidential officer, who can give me an account of the plan adopted by the general for this campaign, and inform him of what we shall have agreed upon together, relative to the part which this division of the army can take in its execution. I shall be delighted if the choice should fall upon colonel Graham, whom I had the honour of knowing at Mr. Stuart's.

I know not, sir, when this letter will reach you, for I am still ignorant where the junta has stopped, or established itself; and I believe that you are with it. My letter will not be less the testimony of my sincerest affection than of the high consideration with which I have the honour to be, &c.

The Duke del INFANTADO.

During the halt at Sahagun, the following communication arrived from the British minister, who seemed to hail a new course in their present operations, alas! of too short duration.

Merida, Dec. 14, 1808.[*Received Dec. 22, 1808.*]

BOOK III.

CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Mr. Frere to Sir
John Moore.

Sir,

I was last night honoured by your letter of the 10th, and was sincerely gratified at learning that, with hopes infinitely less sanguine than I confess myself to entertain of the final success of the Spanish cause, you had determined to make an effort in its favour. A resolution taken with such views must have been, in a great measure, founded upon feelings similar to those which you will have seen very strongly expressed in a letter, of which Mr. Stuart was the bearer; and of which I wish to say nothing more, than that I feel highly gratified in the idea of your having partaken them with me; and that, without communication between us, the same sentiments which at that very moment were influencing your conduct were guiding my pen.

Your letter happened to be delivered to me while I was with the junta; and, after communicating such parts of its contents as were most important and gratifying to them, with the reserve which you pointed out, I mentioned Mr. Pignatelli's conduct, and was told that it had been already determined to remove him from his command, and that he should be sent before a court-martial for his conduct at Valladolid; that the

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Mr. Frere to Sir
John Moore.

same resolution had been taken with respect to an engineer officer, of high rank, whom his brother officers had denounced to the marquis of Romana, for not having appeared in the moment of action. That, with respect to Avila, the authorities of that town should be displaced, and general Romana directed to treat them in the manner which their conduct has deserved. You know, I presume, that he is invested with the authority of captain-general of Leon and Old Castile, Galicia, and Asturias; and I can congratulate you on having to do with a man whom, upon all subjects of this sort, you will find of a perfectly right mind, and determined to keep every man to the performance of his duty.*

The placing the towns which you mention in a state of defence, suitable to the means of attack which the enemy might at present be able to direct against them, would, I imagine, fall within the limits of his authority; but I shall state the subject to the junta, and *I have no doubt of their approbation of any measure which you suggest.* The one of giving a temporary species of defence to the open towns has, I think, great advantages in a country like this, which is not over-run with luxury and timidity, and where a kind of provin-

* This account of marquis Romana, every way confirmed as it has been, should have induced some respect towards him.

cial pride exists, not only in every province, but almost in every town. The people would be amused and animated not only against the enemy, but in rivalry with each other; the enemy would be obliged to overcome, at the price of his blood, obstacles which had been opposed to him by mere labour; and a thousand barriers would be interposed against that deluge of panic which sometimes overwhelms a whole nation, and of which, at one time, I was afraid I saw the beginning in this country.

With respect to what you mention of directing the public mind by proclamations, and other means of popular impression, marquis Romana is, with very few exceptions indeed, the man whom I have seen most capable of judging rightly. I send inclosed an ordonnance which has been published in Aragon, and which has not yet appeared in the papers. I will thank you to forward it to marquis Romana, if it is not printed. In the mean while, you will be glad to hear that it is much approved of by the junta; and that they are well persuaded that it is only in this way that things can be done. They are almost all of them men of mild tempers and good humour, such as it is natural to expect in men who have been the object of a popular choice; and it will cost them some struggle to get the better of their natural

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Mr. Frere to sir
John Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.
December.

Mr. Frere to
sir John Moore.

dispositions, unless (which I think most likely) they put the thing out of their own hands, by erecting a special tribunal for military offences.

The extinction of the popular enthusiasm in this country, and the means which exist for reviving it, would lead to a very long discussion. I would only say, that, if I am at all right in my judgment of the cause of the evil, it is already removed by the act of the junta; and I trust that its effect will not long survive.

I have been persuaded to write to the commander-in-chief in Portugal, to reinforce the army under your command, with all the troops he can spare; and have already transmitted home a representation to that effect. The Portuguese, who have been offered by the regency, I apprehend, you would hardly wish for; I have therefore suggested their being sent to Badajos or Alcantara.

No official report has yet been received of the capitulation of Madrid, nor is it by any means certain, that any formal stipulation existed. Nothing has been heard from Morla, Castellar, and Castelfranco; nor is it known where they are. An order has been drawn up, and is to be published, prohibiting all persons concerned in the capitulation, or holding any command in the town at that time, from approaching the residence of the junta.

The army of Aragon had repulsed an attack on the 2d. Palafox's official report of the unfortunate action of Tudela, represents it as an exceedingly bloody one; and that the French confess to a loss of 4000 men. All the reports from Madrid represent the force of the French as much reduced. I have heard no estimate above 26,000 men. All these estimates are vague; but officers who were witnesses to the attack, are confirmed in the opinion of the weakness of the enemy, by what they observed of his appearance and mode of approach. The Catalans appear to be entirely at their ease, following up the blockade of Barcelona. Whenever it falls, it will set loose a considerable reinforcement; Mr. Jovellanos made out to me a regular detail of 25,000, besides peasantry and irregulars, who are employed there.

The junta are on their way to Seville, a situation on many accounts preferable, in my opinion, to any other they could have chosen; unless circumstances could have allowed them to have stopt at Toledo. I shall follow them from hence to-morrow.

This province is raising horses and men with great zeal, and sending them forward to defend the passes of the Tagus; particularly to Almanza. The junta have been received with general respect

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1803

December.

Mr. Frere to
sir John Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.
1808.
December.

by the people, and with great deference by the inferior juntas.

I have the honour to be, &c.

J. H. FRERE.

Since the threadbare topics of the various censures on Mr. Frere, would no longer apply to this letter, which, as usual, contains an intelligent picture of existing circumstances; the warm terms in which his ready approbation of, and attention to any proposition of the British general tending to, inspire and support the cause in which they were both engaged, were expressed, are now made the subject of literary criticism in all the pomp of petty review.—The stern dignity of political and military history, descends to ridicule, the *style* of Frere, in a beautiful strain of irony, by Mr. Moore!

One remark of the Narrative, as occurs in several other instances, is contradictory to the other. He complains that the exertions for defence, of the supreme junta, are too late to be effective; but forgets, when he argues the effect that ought to be produced by the advance of the British army, that it was not only too late, and evanescent: but, while censuring the unnecessary arguments of Mr. Frere, he labours to prove the fallacy of statements, which the minister, while he gave them, described as vague!

In the same spirit, but with accumulated mystery, is regarded the following letter in continuation, in which it is difficult to perceive any thing but an anxious desire to communicate every way usefully with the British general.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Las Santos, Dec. 16, 1808.

Sir,

There was a part of the letter with which you honoured me on the 10th, to which I hope I shall now be able to send a satisfactory answer. The subject of the ships in Cadiz had not escaped me; but I thought it so very dangerous to suggest to the junta any idea except that of living and dying on Spanish ground, that I avoided the mention of any subject that could seem to imply that I entertain any other prospects. The measure of confining the French prisoners on board of them, seems to offer an opportunity for making arrangements, which, without damping the spirits of the country, may provide a resource in case of the worst. This measure has been taken by the junta of Seville, whose energy was so conspicuous in the course of the last summer. They have, as I judge from their proclamation, determined to assert themselves very vigorously; for they have re-assumed their old title, and directed the commander of Cadiz to correspond with them directly, as they do not know what is

Mr. Frere
to sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Mr. Frere

to sir J. Moore.

become of the central junta. I hope I shall succeed in keeping the peace between them.

I have the honour to be, &c.

J. H. FRERE.

This letter, says the Narrative, should be read with particular attention, as the hints it contains are very extraordinary.

One turns with pleasure from these subjects to the following letter :

Sahagun, Dec. 22, 1808.

Sir,

Sir J. Moore to
the marquis de
la Romana.

I had the honour to receive your excellency's letter of the 19th, yesterday morning early, as I was getting upon my horse to march with the troops to this place, where I arrived in the forenoon. Six or seven hundred French cavalry were stationed at this place; a part of my cavalry marched the preceding night, attacked and defeated them at day-light yesterday morning, killed a good many, and took two lieutenant-colonels, eleven officers, and 144 men, prisoners.

The body of the French under marshal Soult, is still at Saldana. I shall march in that direction tomorrow, and shall attack them the moment I can. If your excellency can make any movement in favour of this attack, or take advantage of any

success I may meet with, I take for granted you will do it. But time *to me* is the most precious of all things: and I *cannot delay* my movement. (*Si sic omnia.*)

With respect to the information sent to you by the junta, you may depend upon it, it is erroneus. Madrid is quiet; Buonaparte's proclamations are dated from it; and nothing but the greatest exertion on the part of Spain, and all good Spaniards, will preserve them from conquest.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

Sir John Moore here appears in the character in which his best friends and strongest advocates must most delight to view him: and painful as were the vaccillations of the past, the severest censor is warmed with hope.

Of a similar complection is the following, at the same time received:

Leon, Dec, 21, 1808.

Sir,

I had the honour to write to you on the 19th, in reply to the letter which your excellency remitted to me through my aid-de-camp, Mr. O'Niell; and, not having had any accounts since, I think it right to state, that I am desirous to co-

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.
Sir J. Moore to
the marquis de
la Romana.

The marquis de
la Romana, to
sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

The marquis de
la Romana to
sir John Moore.

operate in the attack, which, it seems, is your excellency's intention to make upon Saldana, that the success may be complete. The enemy, when they shall have assembled all the forces which they have scattered about at all points in the surrounding parts, will have, at the utmost, according to the best accounts I can obtain, from about eight to nine thousand infantry, and a thousand cavalry, with from eight to ten pieces of artillery. It would be of great importance to surround this corps, and to destroy it, before its junction with any other which Napoleon might send to reinforce it. If your excellency determine upon this enterprise, I will make a movement with from nine to ten thousand men, of those which are best clothed and armed, all the rest being nearly naked, and very ill equipped.

If your excellency gives me a speedy reply, I will set out to-morrow; but I have the honour to observe to you, that, as soon as the blow shall have been struck, I must return to my winter-quarters, for want of clothing and equipments for my troops. However, it will be time enough to talk of this at our interview, as well as to concert the plan of operations which we are to follow.

I am persuaded that the enemy is not strong, and that all the disasters we have witnessed are owing to the want of union in the operations of

our armies. I have been informed by an officer of engineers, whom the junta of Zamora have sent back to me from having some slight suspicions of his conduct, that the army of Palafox has received no check, as the enemy give out; but that he has been obliged to fall back upon Saragossa, on account of Castanos's army having quitted Logrono, which he should not have abandoned. He gives very circumstantial details of the French army at Madrid, of the emperor, of Junot's division, and, in short, of particulars which I think it very necessary to acquaint your excellency with, and from which it appears to me that we must indispensably have an interview.

I have the honour to renew to your excellency, the homage of my sincere and respectful attachment,

THE MARQUIS DE LA ROMANA.

The Narrator himself is here animated by the same feelings for a moment.

Complete concert, he allows, was thus established between the British and one Spanish army. The number of the Spaniards which could be brought forward, was less than the half of what had been originally stated; and the assistance that could be expected from these troops may be judged of from the report of colonel Symes, who continued with

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

The marquis de
la Romana to
sir John Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

the marquis. In a letter from him, dated Leon, December 22d, he says, 'The troops here, although they cannot be relied on to influence materially the result of a general action, yet may be brought into use *as auxiliaries*, to engage the attention of a part of the enemy's force; and, in the event of the enemy being broken, may prove an active instrument to complete his destruction. When I say this much, I say all that can possibly be expected from them, under the present appearance.

The animation continues in the following orders;

Sahagun, Dec. 23, 1808.

Sir,

I had the honour to write to you yesterday; and this morning I received your excellency's letter of the 21st. I shall march this night to Carrion, where, I have reason to believe, some of the enemy are collected. To-morrow I shall march on Saldana. If your excellency would march from Mansilla, either direct on Saldana, or pass the river a little above it, whilst I march on from Carrion, I think it would distract the attention of the enemy, and considerably aid my attack. My march from Carrion will probably be in the night. Any information of your movement, I shall thank you to address to me at Carrion, where I shall be

Sir J. Moore to
the marquis de
la Romana.

at day-light to-morrow. I enclose a letter, and a printed paper, sent to me by Mr. Frere, and which I received yesterday.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
de la Romana.

Prepared for the attack, were collected between Sahagun, Grahal, and Villada, a British army of twenty-five thousand four hundred men.

Before this period, it is stated in the Narrative, Sir John Moore had been able to establish many *excellent* channels of intelligence, upon which he could, in *some* measure, depend. Expresses were continually arriving with reports of every important circumstance.

By these means, information was obtained, that the French general Soult, after the defeat of his cavalry at Sahagun, had withdrawn a detachment from Guardo, and concentrated his troops to the amount of eighteen thousand, behind the river Carrion. Seven thousand were posted at Saldana, and five thousand at the town of Carrion; and detachments were placed to guard the fords and bridges; and that the head columns of Junot's corps (the 8th) were between Vittoria and Burgos.

Sir John Moore, apparently with undiminished spirit, thus communicated his views to the minister.

BOOK III.

CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
Mr. Frere.*Salagun, 23d December, 1808.*

Sir,

I had the honour to receive yesterday, your letters of the 14th and 16th, with inclosures, which shall be forwarded by the first opportunity.

As you acknowledge only the receipt of my letter to you of the 10th instant, I send you a duplicate of two letters which I addressed to you on the 6th, and which I sent by a messenger who, perhaps, was intercepted.

With respect to your letter, delivered to me at Toro, by Mr. Stuart, I shall not remark upon it. It is in the style of the two which were brought to me by colonel Charmilly, and, consequently, was answered by my letters of the 6th, of which I send you a duplicate: that subject is, I hope, at rest.

I am in communication with the marquis de la Romana. I march this night to Carrion, and the next day to Saldana, to attack the corps under marshal Soult.*

Buonaparte is dating his proclamations from Madrid; and as to the British army, if it were in a neutral, or enemy's country, it could not be more completely left to itself. If the Spaniards are enthusiasts, or much interested in this cause, their conduct is the most extraordinary that ever was exhibited.

* His views of Spanish co-operation, are very properly omitted.

The movement I am making is of the most dangerous kind. I not only risk to be surrounded every moment by superior forces, but to have my communication intercepted with the Galicias. I wish it to be apparent to the whole world, as it is to every individual of the army, that we have done every thing in our power in support of the Spanish cause; and that we do not abandon it, until long after the Spaniards had abandoned us.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

All was now ready; the disposition for attack made: the generals had received their instructions; and all was vivid expectation. Alas! alas! this was not to be.—In the course of this day, messenger after messenger, it seems, brought unpleasant reports, and the commander delayed his operations to receive them!

A strong reinforcement, it appeared, had arrived at Carrion from Palencia, and a large quantity of provisions and forage were preparing in the villages in front of that town.

But information was received from Los Santos, that the French corps, which was marching to the south, had been halted at Talavera, and that the enemy were also advancing from Madrid.

Of the latter incident the marquis Romana did

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

not fail to give due intimation. He, at the same time, however, urged for orders.

Leon, Dec. 22, 1808.

Sir,

The Marquis of
Romana to
sir J. Moore.

A confidential person, whom I had placed on the river Duero, has written to me, on the 18th instant, that he is assured that the enemy's troops posted at the Escorial are moving in this direction.

He adds, that if the person who gave him this intelligence should not arrive the same day, he would go himself to Villacastin, twelve leagues from Madrid, to watch the two roads; the one of which leads to Zamora, and the other to Segovia.

I hasten to give this information to your excellency, that you may judge what measures are requisite to be taken.

I have the honour, &c.

THE MARQUIS OF ROMANA.

*Mansilla, Dec. 23,
three o'clock in the evening.*

Sir,

The marquis of
Romana to
sir J. Moore.

I have the honour to inform you of my arrival here with the troops which I intend to employ as auxiliaries to your movement.

I have only been able to lead out 7000 infantry, 120 cavalry, and eight pieces of artillery. The

troops are cantoned in the space of a league and a quarter round this town. The advanced posts are towards Saldana, except one corps, which I have sent to Villarmimio, three leagues distance from Cea.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.
1808.
December.
The marquis of
Romana to
sir J. Moore.

I shall wait for your answer, and shall not begin to march until your excellency shall have communicated to me your plan and intentions.

I request a positive answer, to enable me to send orders at an early hour to the troops.

I have the honour, &c.

THE MARQUIS DE LA ROMANA.

Alas! the complexion of affairs were in a few short hours entirely changed!

No longer were the spirited contemplations of danger, of darting on the enemy, and at every risk destroying him, expressed. Here were no rapid orders for immediate operations that should take him in detail, and if he threatened to become ultimately too powerful, weaken his force before it should be concentrated.

All the animating hopes and sanguine expectations that had been formed were at once dispelled; the bright rays that had begun to light up the horizon, were at once obscured into a glimmering twilight more dreadful than night itself.

The renewed and final determination of the Bri-

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

tish chief was announced to the Spanish general in his embarrassed answer.

In vain on this point is the Narrative (so fertile in other respects) consulted for explanation. This extraordinary reverse it announces only by saying "an answer was instantly sent back;" and having described that answer, turns instantly into what was the supposed plan of Buonaparte, a plan of which, with the highest respect for the officer* who is appealed to for its confirmation, it is conceived he would not himself consider as confirmed by any dinner-conversation of the wary generals of that experienced commander.

As to the expressions supposed to be those of Buonaparte, "Moore is the only general fit to contend with me," they might well be used after the Spanish generals had been so unfortunate, and his determination to pursue him in person was quite natural from national motives at *that* time. Would to heaven that Moore had not been equally unfortunate,—that the following letters had never been written!

* Major Napier, 50th regiment, who was severely wounded, (stabbed with a bayonet, and wounded in the head by a sword,) and taken prisoner at the battle of Corunna. His character and manners obtained, from the principal French generals, the kindest attention.

*Sahagun, Dec. 23, 1808.*BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.1808.
December.Sir J. Moore to
the marquis of
Romana.

Sir,

I had the honour to receive your excellency's letter of the 22d this afternoon, and have to thank you for the information which it contains; the probability of its truth is confirmed to me by information which reached me this morning, that a considerable quantity of provisions and forage had been ordered to be prepared in the villages on this side of Palencia. I also know that the intended march of a corps of the French to Badajos, has been stopped, when its advanced guard had reached Talavera de la Reina.

Your excellency knows my object in marching in this direction was to endeavour to free you from a troublesome neighbour, and to strike a blow at a corps of the enemy, whilst it was still imagined that the British troops had retreated into Portugal. I was aware of the risk I ran, if I should be discovered, and the enemy push on a corps between me and my communication.

My movement has in some degree answered its object, as it has drawn the enemy from other projects, and will give the south more time to prepare. With such a force as mine, I can pretend to do no more. It would only be losing this army to Spain and to England, to persevere in my march on Soult, who, if posted strongly, might wait; or, if not,

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
the marquis of
Romana.

would retire and draw me on until the corps from Madrid got behind me : in short, single-handed, I cannot presume to contend with the superior numbers the French can bring against me.

I received your excellency's letter at six, and the troops were to have marched from this to Carrion at eight this evening. I countermanded them, and shall take immediate measures for retiring on Astorga. There I shall stand ; as my retreat thence, if necessary, will be secure. I shall be in the way to receive the supplies and the reinforcements which I expect from England. At the worst, I can maintain myself, and, with your excellency's aid, defend the Galicias, and give time for the formation of the armies of the south, and that which you command to be prepared, when a joint effort may be made, which can alone be efficacious. It is playing the enemy's game to draw him to attack our armies in rotation.

I hope this plan will meet your approbation ; you may rest assured that I shall not retreat a foot beyond what is necessary to secure my supplies from being intercepted ; and that I desire nothing more than to meet the enemy upon any thing like equal terms.

I have the honour, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
the marquis of
Romana.

P.S. I had finished my letter, and was writing one to colonel Symes, both of which I meant to despatch to your excellency in the morning, when I received your letter from Mansilla of this date.

Your excellency will see that in consequence of the information contained in your letter of yesterday, I have countermanded my march to Carrion. I am sensible of the zeal and activity your excellency has displayed, in thus hastening to co-operate with me, but for the reasons contained in the former part of this letter, I believe the attempt no longer advisable. It will, however, be of use, and will blind the enemy, should you continue with your corps a few days at Mansilla.

You will of course not mention my intentions of falling back. If I am followed, I shall stop and offer battle; and though you should be at a distance, yet the knowledge that you are within reach will distract his attention, and act as a diversion.

I shall be happy to hear again from you what are your intentions. I shall, I think, fall back on Benavente.

I have the honour, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

From the Narrative, indeed, is to be learned that, by the trifling operations which so suddenly appeared to arrest his progress, he was apprised that,

BOOK III

CHAP. IX

1808

December.

agreeably to his *long expectation*, his designs (so difficult alas! to be conceived by his army) were discovered by Buonaparte, for which discovery he was at the same time *entirely prepared*.

And the Narrative also deems it necessary to point out the plan of Buonaparte, which seemed to be as follows:

The British army, by a feigned retreat of Soult, was to be led on to Burgos, or as far eastward as possible, while another corps, taking the course of Leon, should turn its left flank, and prevent its retreat. The corps marching on Badajos was countermanded on Salamanca, while Buonaparte, with all the disposable force at Madrid and the Escorial, moved directly (it need not be added rapidly) to Benavente.

The British army was, it seems, to be surrounded before its arrival in Galicia. Sir John Moore saw (says the Narrative) the whole plan, had "*calculated the time*," and was prepared for the danger!

Sir John Moore immediately prepared for retreat.

Soult was strongly reinforced between Carrion and Saldana, behind the river. Junot, advancing from Burgos to Palencia, threatened the British right flank. The advanced guard of the cavalry attached to Buonaparte, passed through Tordesillas on the 24th, while the British left Sahagun, and both advanced towards Benavente. A corps under

the duke of Dantzic was countermanded from Talavera towards Salamanca. The duke of Treviso was even halted, according to the Narrative, on his march against Sarragosa.

Of the three routes across the river Esslar, that by Mansilla, where there is a good bridge, was in possession of the marquis Romana's troops, who had also necessarily exhausted the country. The whole army would be endangered by the swell of the river at the ferry at Valencia; nor could an adequate supply of food and covering be obtained in that neighbourhood. Sir David Baird, therefore, marched by that route; the remainder by Castro Gonsalo, where was also a bridge, and which led to Benavente, where, and at Zamora, were the stores and magazines.

The marquis Romana left three thousand men and four pieces of cannon, at the request of sir John Moore, to defend the passage of the river, and then retired to Leon.

The Narrative contains many deductions not altogether obvious, and entirely unnecessary to the explanation of the French plan of operations described, which certainly seems to have been to surround from all points the British army.

Sir John Moore thus communicates his plan :

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
the marquis of
Romana.

Sahagun, Dec. 24, 1808.

Sir,

My information this morning states, that the French have received reinforcements. I shall begin my retreat to-morrow morning with a part of the infantry, the rest will follow with the cavalry the day after. It is of great importance to me that you should keep a strong corps at Mansilla, to defend the bridge there, whilst I march in two divisions on Valencia and Benavente. The corps which passes at Valencia will remain on the opposite side to guard the ferry, until the corps which marches on Benavente has passed the bridge at that place. Sir David Baird commands the division which goes to Valencia; I shall march with the other to Benavente. My hopes are to cross the river Esslar before I am interrupted; when once across, my communications with the Galicias will be secure; and, if pressed then, I shall have no objection to try an action.

I have thought it right to make this communication to your excellency. You will, I suppose, think it right, when I am passed, to order the boats upon the river to be destroyed. *I have only to repeat my request, that Astorga and its neighbourhood may be left for the British troops, together with the passage into the Galicias, and not occupied by those under your excellency's command.* You

will find no inclination in me to abandon the Spanish cause, but, on the contrary, every desire to co-operate with you for the general good.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.
1808.
December.

The request which closes this letter is one of a most extraordinary kind. Sir John Moore must at least have known the state of the Spanish army; and ought to have known whether any other route was left open to it. But this will be seen hereafter.

Whether in advance or retreat, sir John Moore's sedentary system seemed constantly to prevail, and Sahagun to replace Salamanca, as appears from the following answer to a request of interview from the marquis Romana.

Sahagun, Dec. 24, 1808.

Sir,

I had the honour to receive your excellency's letter of this date. There is nothing I wish so much as to have a personal interview with you; but, in the present situation of this army, it is impossible for me to leave it for a moment. Once across the Esslar, and I will ride any distance to have the honour of meeting you. I shall remain here with the cavalry until the afternoon to-morrow, and shall leave them to join the division of the infantry in the evening, which will be at Majorga.

Sir J. Moore to
the marquis of
Romana.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Sir J. Moore to
the marquis of
Romana.

If your excellency can make it convenient to come there, you will make me very happy; but if this be inconvenient, I shall go to you when I reach Benavente. The French continue to receive reinforcements. A considerable number arrived at Palencia this morning.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

The marquis de Romana seems now to have resigned his correspondence with sir John Moore.

Mansilla, Dec. 25, 1808, one o'clock.

Sir,

Colonel Symes
to sir J. Moore.

I had the honour of your note early this morning, and am fully aware of the necessity which prevents a meeting between your excellency and the marquis at present. The marquis, for reasons of the same nature, cannot leave his troops; indeed, his presence is indispensably requisite, for he has no second to whom he can confide his charge. General Blake is at Leon. The marquis says, that wherever else he may go, it is *impossible for him to send any part of his troops into the Asturias, as the roads are now impassable; the snow has fallen in unusual quantity.* The marquis's idea seems to be that of retiring on Astorga, but not precipitately; to put Leon in the best possible state of defence,

and to leave there 2,000 men and some guns.— These troops, when added to the armed inhabitants and the volunteers who are armed and under a sort of training, may impede the progress of an enemy, give him much trouble, and afford protection to your left flank. The volunteers of Leon, including the students, are estimated at from 12 to 1500 men; the rabble are numerous.

The city of Leon is very extensive, it is surrounded by a high wall, in some places ruinous. There are old Moorish towers at irregular distances, several gateways without gates, but a little trouble may repair the chasms and blockade the gateways. The suburbs embrace the wall, which in some parts forms a back for long rows of mean houses. The city is not commanded; there is some rising ground about a mile and a half distant to the east and north, excepting this, the country seems to be an uninterrupted plain for many miles. Between Leon and Astorga it is a continued flat, without inclosure or obstacle to oppose the advance of troops from any direction. Leon, if disputed vigorously, may prove very embarrassing to the enemy, and it is a kind of warfare for which the Spaniards seem adapted.— The marquis appears rather disposed to risk a general action; but he says, what is too true, that his army, in effect, is no army. He thinks that his artillery will be well served,—it may be so, but I

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.
December.
Colonel Symes
to sir J. Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.

December.

Colonel Symes
to sir J. Moore.

doubt it. Two howitzers and eighteen field-pieces compose the number of guns with us. We move to Leon to-day. The marquis communicates to your excellency the intelligence he has received.—Mansilla is not capable of defence; and breaking the bridge, the marquis thinks, *will not be any material obstacle to the enemy*. In the present state of the weather I think it would impede his progress.

I am, sir, with great respect,

Your faithful humble servant,

M. SYMES.

Agreeably to the arrangement of sir John Moore the division of general Fraser, followed by that of general Hope, marched on the 24th of December to Valderos and Majorga, and sir David Baird's proceeded to Valencia, where lord Paget was ordered to push strong patrols of cavalry close to the advanced posts of the enemy, for their concealment.

The reserve, with two light corps, retired from Sahagun on the morning of the 25th, by the route of general Hope; lord Paget remained with the cavalry till evening: sir John Moore accompanied the last corps.

Thus commenced an operation certainly the most unblest that was ever recorded in military

history, either antient or modern; whatever the various merits or demerits ascribed to it by the numerous advocates on either side who took a share in the discussion to which it gave rise, — a discussion almost unprecedented even in an age remarkable for military deliberations.

BOOK III.
CHAP. IX.

1808.
December.

CHAP. X.

THE RETREAT OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

Peculiar Circumstances of this Retreat.—Safe Passage of the Eslar.—Spirited Affairs of the Reserve under Lord Paget, particularly the Tenth and Eighteenth Hussars, with Colonel Leigh, Captain Jones, &c.—Disorders of the Army impatient of retiring from the Enemy.—General Orders for the Retreat.—Letter of Sir John Moore to the Marquis Romana, communicating his Decision against fighting a Battle.—Ill-founded Surprise that the other Spanish Armies did not create a Diversion in favour of the Retreat, by attacking the French.—Recapitulatory Communication to the British Government.—Brilliant Affair of the British Reserve under Lord Paget and General Stewart, with the imperial Guards of Buonaparte, under General Lefebvre, in which their Com-

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.
December.

mander and several Officers were taken.—Despairing Communication of Sir John Moore to Lord Castlereagh, and unfounded Complaints of Marquis Romana.—Insubordination of the Army.—Extraordinary Accumulation of Disasters.—Remonstrances of British Generals.—Exertions of the Junta and Mr. Frere.—Finally despairing Communication of Sir John Moore to the British Government.—Orders for embarking the British Army.

THE military reader, in contemplating the retreat which is the melancholy subject of the present chapter, must dismiss from his mind the remembrance of those splendid acts of ancient and modern history which formed the studies of his youth, and the exemplars of his martial career.

He must prepare himself for a new subject of military experience, which, though less useful and singularly unhappy, is yet not without advantages in which, though neither the vigour and ready acumen of Xenophon, nor the steady march of Moreau, is apparent, the direful effects of a total want of energy, of a vacillating spirit, of a desponding habit, will be seen, both as relates to the troops and the service.

Hesitating and doubtful, after a long and important period lost in vain suggestions and weak sur

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December 26.
The retreat
commenced.

mises, in indecisive arrangements and conflicting views, at the head of a powerful, well-appointed, and, upon the whole, not ill-provisioned army, commanded (under him) by several of the best generals in the world, at the moment when both commanders and soldiery had been led to expect the consummation of their hopes; notwithstanding the gloomy prospect of evils which had accumulated alone by delay, sir John Moore determined upon retreat.

Deliberately, indeed, (as it is called in the Narrative, which must be accepted as the memoir of the general,) was this retrograde expedition commenced, like the advance of which it formed the conclusion. On the 26th December, sir David Baird passed the ferry of the Esslar, with less difficulty than was expected; took post at Valencia; and wrote to the marquis Romana to blow up the bridge of Mansilla.

The other divisions passed equally unmolested to Castro Gonsalo, where lord Paget fell in with one of the detachments of the enemy.

Colonel Leigh, by direction of his lordship, charged this detachment in a masterly manner, with two squadrons of the 10th hussars, on the very summit of a steep hill, where it had halted: keeping one squadron in reserve, he led the other, under a severe fire of the enemy, briskly up the hill; as

he approached the rugged summit, he reined in for a moment, and then dashing in upon the enemy, broke and destroyed them, leaving many killed and taking upwards of a hundred prisoners.

This audacity was equalled by that of the 18th dragoons, in six charges: with thirty captain Jones beat off a hundred French dragoons at Palencia, killed fourteen, and took six prisoners.

Generals Hope and Frazer marched their divisions to Benavente, the cavalry, horse-artillery, and a light corps, staying for the night at Castro Gonzalo.*

It only remained for the rear guard to cross the Esslar, in which it equally succeeded with the other divisions of the army; it is stated by Mr. James Moore's Narrative, "after completely blowing up the bridge."

But here commenced those circumstances of the retreat, which, as they related to the energies of the brave and powerful body of men which formed this army, as to the success of its operations, are equally important. Without entering into the causes or effects at the moment, the following relation of the

* On the 24th, it seems, Buonaparte marched from Tordesillas, 120 miles from Madrid and 50 from Benavente; strong cavalry detachments pushed to Villalpanda and Maiorga.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Colonel Leigh
and capt. Jones's
affairs with the
French cavalry.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1803.

December.

Behaviour of
the troops on
the retreat.

Narrative, as explanatory of the ideas of the British general on the subject, is added :

It now becomes requisite, says the narrator, to make a very painful confession. The army which, during the advance, had been distinguished for regularity and good conduct, began to display, on the retreat, a very opposite behaviour. This may in part be imputed to inattention in the Spanish magistrates, who, instead of exerting themselves to procure lodgings and necessaries for the troops, sometimes fled or hid themselves. But another cause of these disorders was, undoubtedly, the independent character of Britons, who always submit to military discipline with great reluctance. They were indignant at the little assistance afforded them by the Spaniards, and took the opportunity which the retreat afforded them, of throwing off restraint, of displaying their native humours, and of acting too much as they pleased.

But, whatever was the cause, the general was most desirous to stop this misconduct, both from humanity to the Spaniards, and for the safety of his own army. He therefore issued out the following orders :—

GENERAL ORDERS.

Head-Quarters, Benavente, Dec. 27, 1803.

The commander of the forces has observed with concern the extreme bad conduct of the troops

at a moment when they are about to come into contact with the enemy, and when the greatest regularity and the best conduct are the most requisite. He is the more concerned at this, as, until lately, the behaviour of that part of the army, at least, which was under his own immediate command, was exemplary, and did them much honour.

The misbehaviour of the troops in the column which marched by Valderas to this place, exceeds what he could have believed of British soldiers.— It is disgraceful to the officers, as it strongly marks their negligence and inattention.

The commander of the forces refers to the general orders of the 15th of October, and of the 11th of November. He desires that they may be again read at the head of every company of the army: he can add nothing but his determination to execute them to the fullest extent. He can feel no mercy towards officers who neglect, in times like these, essential duties; or towards soldiers who injure the country they are sent to protect. The Spanish forces have been overpowered; and until such time as they are re-assembled, and ready again to come forward, the situation of the army must be arduous, and such as to call for the exertion of qualities the most rare and valuable in a military body. These are not bravery alone, but patience and constancy under fatigue and hardship, obedi-

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

General orders.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.
December.
General orders.

ence to command, sobriety, firmness, and resolution, in every different situation in which they may be placed. It is by the display of such qualities alone that the army can expect to deserve the name of soldiers; that they can be able to withstand the forces opposed to them; or to fulfil the expectations of their country.

It is impossible for the general to explain to his army the motive for the movement he directs. The commander of the forces can however assure the army, that he has made none since he left Salamanca which he did not foresee, and was not prepared for; and, as far as he is a judge, they have answered the purposes for which they were intended.

When it is proper to fight a battle, he will do it; and he will choose the time and place he thinks most fit: in the mean time he begs the officers and soldiers of the army to attend diligently to discharge their parts, and to leave to him, and to the general officers, the decision of measures which belong to them alone.

The army may rest assured, that there is nothing he has more at heart than their honour, and that of their country.

The latter part of the above order, (adds the Narrative) alluded to a number of officers having been

indiscreetly free in their criticisms of the military operations. This licence is characteristic of Englishmen: but, in the present situation of the army, it had a most mischievous tendency. Besides, as sir John Moore kept all his intelligence extremely secret, it was impossible for the officers to judge of the propriety of the movements.

Sir John Moore endeavoured to remove one of the causes of the irregular conduct by this letter to the marquis:—

Benavente, Dec. 27, 1808.

Sir,

I had the honour to receive yesterday, on my arrival here, your excellency's letter from Mansilla, of the 25th. The enemy are advancing; but I believe their main body only reached Valladolid yesterday. The movement I made to Sahagun has answered every purpose I had a right to expect.— A little more good fortune would have enabled me to cut up Soult's corps; but the attention of the enemy has at last been attracted from other objects. His march on Badajos has been stopped, and the forces in the south will have time to be formed, and to come forward. I shall continue my movement on Astorga. It is there, or behind it, we should fight a battle, if at all. If the enemy follows so far, he will leave himself the more open to the efforts

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.
1808.
December.

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
Romana.

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to the marquis
Romana.

of the south. My opinion is, that a battle is the game of Buonaparte, not ours. We should, if followed, take defensive positions in the mountains, where his cavalry can be of no use to him; and there either engage him in an unequal contest with us, oblige him to employ a considerable corps to watch us, or to retire upon Madrid: in which last case we should again come forth into the plain. In this manner we give time for the arrival of reinforcements from England, your army to be formed and equipped, and that of the south to come forth. In short, the game of Spain and of England, which must always be the same, is to procrastinate and to gain time; and not, if it can be helped, to place the whole stake upon the hazard of a battle.

The people of this part of Spain seem to be less well-disposed than those I have hitherto met with. They perhaps think that we mean to abandon them. It would have a good effect if you explained to them, in a proclamation, that this was by no means either your intention or that of the British army; and call upon the alcaldes and corregidores to remain at their posts, and to be of all the use in their power to the different armies both Spanish and British. Some of them of late have run away from the towns, which has been the unavoidable cause of irregularities having been committed by the troops; for, when the magistrates are not present

to give regularly, the soldier must take, and this produces a mischievous habit.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.
1808.
December.

During the march to Benavente, it seems, a confidential person, whose intelligence had always been correct, came up with the general at Fuentes. He had passed Buonaparte and his army, who were naturally enough making forced marches to overtake the British.

And (adds the Narrative) it appeared from several accounts, that in contradiction to the declarations and information so repeatedly transmitted from the central junta and Mr. Frere, not the slightest movement was made by the Spanish armies; who permitted the various divisions of the enemy's army to traverse Spain in every direction, with as much tranquillity as France; with this essential difference, that the Spaniards furnished them with every supply for nothing, whereas in France they must have paid for what they wanted.—Whence these accounts were derived does not however appear.

Notwithstanding this unfavourable intelligence, says the Narrative, sir John Moore had still some expectations of being able to maintain a footing in Spain. He hoped that the Spaniards, after all their

BOOK III.
 CHAP. X.
 1808.
 December.

declarations and promises, would rouse themselves to make some effort; and perhaps want of provisions for so large an army might stop the advance of the French. It was his earnest wish to maintain himself in the mountains of Galicia; and to retire to the coast, unless compelled by great superiority of numbers.

Of these hopes and views, a sufficient picture is afforded in the following recapitulatory communication:—

Benavente, 28th Dec. 1808.

My lord,

Sir John Moore
 to lord Castle-
 reagh.

Since I had the honour to address you upon the 16th, from Toro, the army has been almost constantly marching through snow, and with cold that has been very intense. The weather within these few days has turned to rain, which is much more uncomfortable than the cold, and has rendered the roads almost impassable. On the 21st the army reached Sahagun; it was necessary to halt there, in order to refresh the men, and on account of provisions. The information I received was, that marshal Soult was at Saldana with about 16,000 men, with posts along the river from Guarda to Carrion.

The army was ordered to march in two columns

at eight o'clock on the night of the 23d, to force the bridge at Carrion, and from thence proceed to Saldana. At six o'clock that evening I received information that considerable reinforcements had arrived at Carrion from Palencia; and a letter from the marquis de la Romana informed me, that the French were advancing from Madrid, either to Valladolid or Salamanca. It was evident that it was too late to prosecute the attempt upon Soult; that I must be satisfied with the diversion I had occasioned, and that I had no time to lose to secure my retreat. The next morning general Hope, with his own division and that of lieutenant-general Fraser, marched to Mayorga. I sent sir David Baird with his division to pass the river at Valencia; and I followed general Hope on the 25th with the reserve, and the light brigades, by Mayorga, Valderos, to Benavente; the cavalry under lord Paget followed the reserve on the 26th; both the latter corps entered this place yesterday. We continue our march on Astorga: generals Hope and Fraser are already gone on. Sir David Baird proceeds tomorrow from Valencia; and I shall leave this with the reserve at the same time. Lord Paget will remain with the cavalry, to give us notice of the approach of the enemy. Hitherto their infantry have not come up, but they are near, and the cavalry is round us in great numbers; they are

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

checked by our cavalry, which have obtained by their spirit and enterprise an ascendancy over that of the French which nothing but great superiority of numbers on their part will get the better of.

The diversion made by our march on Sabagun, though at a great risk to ourselves, has been complete; it remains to be seen what advantage the Spaniards in the south will be able to take of it. But the march of the French on Badajos was stopped when its advanced guard had reached Talavera de la Reina; and every thing disposable is now turned in this direction. The stores I have collected are moving back to Astorga, and those at Astorga to Villafranca. The roads are very bad, and the means of carriage scanty. If I am pressed I must lose some of them; and I may be forced to fight a battle. This, however, I shall endeavour to avoid; for, certainly, in the present state of things, it is more Buonaparte's game than mine. It is said that he comes himself with 10,000 of his guards. The force moving against us cannot be less than 50,000 men: we shall, when at Astorga, be about 27,000. The marquis la Romana came forward to Mansilla with 6,000, to co-operate with me in the attack on Soult: I therefore conclude that he cannot have above 8,000 fit for action. The country about Astorga offers no advantage to an inferior army; I shall, therefore, not stop there

longer than to secure the stores, and shall retreat to Villafranca, where, I understand, there is a position. But, if the French pursue, I must hasten to the coast; for there is a road to Orense which leads more direct to Vigo, and which, of course, renders the position at Villafranca of no avail. Some time ago the marquis la Romana intimated his intention of retiring into the Galicias by Astorga and Villafranca. I endeavoured to dissuade him from it; pointing out to him that it was the only communication we had for our retreat or supplies, and begged that it might be left open to us. He stopped his retreat for the moment, but I much fear he will now prosecute it; in which case I know not how it will be possible for us to pass.

I had the honour to receive your lordship's despatches of the 10th by captain Hardinge, yesterday morning. I shall be guided by circumstances; and shall not, you may rest assured, retreat an inch beyond what I am compelled to do. But I fear, if once I am forced into the mountains, that the want of the means of subsistence will make it necessary to proceed down to the coast, to be provisioned from the ships. I need hardly add, the necessity of sending immediately the means of transport to re-embark the army, at Vigo or Corunna.

The only part of the army which has hitherto

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castlereagh.

been engaged with the enemy has been the cavalry; and it is impossible for me to say too much in their praise. I mentioned to your lordship, in my letter of the 16th, the success brigadier-general Stuart had met with, in defeating a detachment of cavalry at Rueda; since that, few days have passed without his taking or killing different parties of the French, generally superior in force to those which attacked them. On the march to Sahagun, lord Paget had information of six or seven hundred cavalry being in that town. He marched on the night of the 20th from some villages where he was posted in front of the army at Mayorga, with the 10th and 15th Hussars. The 10th marched straight to the town, whilst lord Paget with the 15th endeavoured to turn it. Unfortunately, he fell in with a patrol, one of whom escaped and gave the alarm; by this means the French had time to form on the outside of the town, before lord Paget got round. He immediately charged them, beat them, and took from 140 to 150 prisoners, amongst whom were two lieutenant-colonels and eleven officers; with the loss on our part of six or eight men, and, perhaps, twenty wounded. There have been taken by the cavalry from 400 to 500 French, besides a considerable number killed; this, since we began our march from Salamanca. On his march from Sahagun on the 26th lord Paget with

two squadrons of the 10th attacked a detachment of cavalry at Mayorga, killed twenty, and took above one hundred prisoners. Our cavalry is very superior in quality to any the French have; and the right spirit has been infused into them by the example and instruction of their two leaders, lord Paget and brigadier-general Stuart.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

There are, he adds, two roads to Vigo; but that by Orense, though the shortest, is neither practicable for artillery, nor for any species of waggon; consequently, the British army took the road by Astorga; and orders were now sent to sir David Baird, who was still at Valencia, to march to that point; while, on the 28th of December, generals Hope and Fraser proceeded with their divisions to La Banessa.

Next morning, at day-break, after nearly two days rest, sir John Moore followed with the reserve; and lord Paget, as before, was ordered to bring up the rear with the cavalry.

But at nine o'clock in the morning, before his lordship had moved, some of the enemy's cavalry were observed trying a ford near the bridge which had been blown up; and presently between five

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.
1808.
December.

and six hundred of the imperial guards of Buona-
parte plunged into the river, and crossed over.

They were immediately opposed by the British piquets, who had been much divided to watch the different fords; but were quickly assembled by colonel Otway. When united they amounted only to two hundred and twenty men. They retired slowly before such superiour numbers, bravely disputing every inch of ground with the enemy. The front squadrons repeatedly charged each other; and upon the piquets being reinforced by a small party of the 3d dragoons, they charged with so much fury that the front squadron broke through, and was for a short time surrounded, by the enemy's rear squadron wheeling up. But they extricated themselves, by charging back again through the enemy. They then quickly rallied, and formed with the rest of the piquets.


Lord Paget soon reached the field: and brigadier-general Stuart, at the head of the piquets, was sharply engaged, the squadrons on both sides sometimes intermixing. His lordship was desirous of drawing on the enemy farther from the ford, till the 10th hussars, who were forming at some distance, were ready. This regiment soon arrived, and lord Paget immediately wheeled it into line, in the rear of the piquets. The latter then charged

the enemy, supported by the 10th hussars. But before they could close, the French wheeled round, fled to the ford, and plunged into the river. They were closely pursued, and left on the field fifty-five killed and wounded and seventy prisoners; among whom was general Le Febvre, the commander of the imperial guard.

As soon as the enemy reached the opposite side of the river, they formed on the bank; but a few rounds from the horse-artillery, who arrived at that moment, quickly drove the French up the hill in the greatest disorder.

The imperial guards showed themselves much superior to any cavalry which the British had before engaged. They fought very gallantly, and killed and wounded near fifty of our dragoons. Major Bagwell, who commanded some of the piquets, was wounded.

It was learnt from the prisoners that Buonaparte slept the night before (on the 28th) at Villalpando, which is four leagues from Benavente. He had commanded general Lefebvre to pass the Esslar if possible, but not to commit himself; and it was expected that he would have been joined on the march by a Polish regiment: which, however, did not come up in time. Lefebvre owned to sir John Moore, that when he saw nothing but the cavalry piquets, he concluded that all the rest of

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.
December.
Retreat of the
British army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Retreat of the
British army.

the army had left Benavente. This induced him to cross the river; and when once over, he could not, he said, without fighting, retreat with such a corps as he commanded, with men who had put to flight thirty thousand Russians at Austerlitz.

As the soldier to whom he had surrendered had taken from him his sword, the general presented him with a fine East-Indian sabre.

Towards the evening the enemy brought up some field-pieces, and cannonaded the piquets from the heights on the opposite side of the river; but without the least effect.

Lord Paget drew off the cavalry at night, and followed the reserve to La Banessa.

This account is taken entirely from the Narrative, because, with the exception of the close description of sir John Moore's present to the French general, it is a very spirited account of a spirited affair, rendered peculiarly important by the troops engaged on the part of the enemy.

Notwithstanding the plan, however, which sir John Moore was supposed to have formed and digested for his retreat, the length of time which had been afforded to digest that plan, and the deliberation and decision with which the retreat commenced, notwithstanding the various regular and correct intelligence which he is described to have

received, he now found that it was impossible for him, for want of more decisive intelligence, to ascertain whether Vigo or Corunna should be the scene of embarkation; for, upon this operation towards which his views had ever continued to lean, he seemed at last to have determined.

To keep both routes open, therefore, he detached a light corps of three thousand men, under general Crawford, to Orense, on the road to Vigo, whence, if pursued, he could take up a strong position behind the Minho; while the rest of the army proceeded to Astorga, where, according to sir John's narrator, he "was extremely disconcerted to find that the town was pre-occupied, *and FILLED* with the troops of the marquis Romana."*

Without the intelligence, to the want of which is attributed these movements, however, sir John is stated to have foreseen that the enemy might have seized the road by one of their light detachments, precede the columns of the British by forced marches, and deprive them of Vigo, or retard and embarrass the retreat from some of the passes in front. To no other person was this prediction obvious; but, on the contrary, from the best accounts of his army this power was not in existence, as supposed by sir John Moore, from his total ignorance of the roads.

* Narrative of Mr. James Moore, 297.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.
1808.
December.
Retreat of the
British army.

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Retreat of the
British army.

The marquis Romana's march through Astorga was matter of deep reprehension and regret on the part of the British general. "Thus was he," querulously exclaims the Narrator, "perpetually disappointed in every assistance that he expected from the Spaniards! He had repeatedly requested the marquis Romana to leave the roads to Galicia clear for the British, and wished the marquis to *fall back on the Asturias*; because, when the enemy proceeded towards Galicia, this Spanish army might have interrupted the French convoys, or compelled them to employ large detachments for their protection."—"In the Asturias," it is added, "they might be *eminently useful and quite safe*. But all remonstrances were in vain; and the Spanish army, instead of being of the slightest use to the English, were a most serious impediment."

This is not merely one of the numerous instances in which sir John Moore shewed a preference for the entire accommodation of his own plans to (it had almost been said) the safety of the ally; but it is also, unhappily, not the only instance of entire and most extraordinary misrepresentation defensive of itself. That the Asturias was not *safe*, nor even *practicable*, is evident from the communication of colonel Symes,* already given, and which was

* See ante, p. 304.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Retreat of the
British army.

also given in the same volume in which the assertion is made, the *roads being impassable*, from the *snow having fallen in unusual quantities*. The marquis Romana had, therefore, in fact *no other alternative* between crossing the British line of march at Astorga, which was equally inconvenient to himself, or *being cut to pieces* with his whole army. And major Pasely,* who was on the spot, an authority at least of equal weight in every respect, clearly states, that the Spanish army crossed the British *only at one point*, Astorga: and, adds that respectable writer, “he (the marquis Romana) *left us half the city to ourselves*. *Nothing could be fairer*.” And as to the indelicate statement of the total inutility of the Spanish force, when sir John Moore gave up the attack upon Soult’s army, in which, as has been just seen, marquis Romana readily prepared to join him, he requested him to protect the circuitous retreat of the British army by way of Benevente, and he did so. And it was only owing to separation by the enemy, and the sudden rapidity of sir John Moore’s retreat, that interrupted his communication with the British general. His army was also always nearest to the enemy. And all this too when the vacillations of the British general passed under his eye, and he saw

* Essay 203, note.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Retreat of the
British army.

himself liable at every moment to be left to his fate, and to the ruthless vengeance of an enemy inspired by so many peculiar motives against himself and army.

The marquis did not see any useful purpose in destroying the bridge at Mansilla, but left a guard there which disputed its passage with Sout, till overpowered; after which, as was to be expected, the French general advanced and obtained quiet possession of the city of Leon.

At Astorga, where a British depot had been formed for warlike stores, the Spanish army was supplied with the arms and ammunition which they had wanted so long, and which it was to be lamented was so long wanted:—the remainder was now destroyed!

By a strange reasoning, the Spanish troops, which were expected to have thrown themselves amidst the deepening snows of Asturias, and waved every degree of comfort that that of the British should not be impaired—rather than to equip whom the stores of Astorga were to have been condemned to destruction; appeared, according to the description of sir John Moore, in an “extremely melancholy state, *wretchedly clothed* and *sickly*, yet with *undoubted* COURAGE; and enduring the *most cruel privation* with the utmost PATIENCE; almost FAMISHED!—a condition that *would have dis-*

heartened the bravest people!" One is tempted to ask how the British general could have desired to avoid men of whom he pronounces so proud an eulogy.

BOOK III
CHAP. X.
1808.
Decemocr.
Retreat of the
British army.

Here was camp-equipage and baggage, by which the horses and mules would have been detained. The commander-in-chief ordered whatever was not immediately necessary to be destroyed. What was worse, the sick were compelled to be left behind.

From this place the commander-in-chief addressed his government in a communication not remarkably different from his others, in which he details the movements.

Astorga, Dec. 31st, 1808.

My lord,

I arrived here yesterday; where, contrary to his promise, and to my expectation, I found the marquis Romana, with a great part of his troops, Nobody can describe his troops to be worse than he does; and he complains as much as we do of the indifference of the inhabitants, and of his disappointment at their want of enthusiasm. He said to me, in direct terms, that, had he known how things were, he neither would have accepted the command, *nor have returned to Spain.** With all this, however, he talks of attacks and movements

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

* Let this be compared with every document that relates to the character and conduct of marquis Romana. Even the enlightened Romana would thus seem not to have escaped sir John Moore's ready imputation of traitorous feelings!

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

which are quite absurd, and then returns to the helpless state of his army and of the country.

He could not be persuaded to destroy the bridge at Mansilla. He posted some troops at it, who were forced and taken prisoners by the French, on their march from Mayorga. With respect to me, my lord, and the British troops, it has come to that point which I have long foreseen. Abandoned from the beginning by every thing Spanish, we were equal to nothing but ourselves. From a desire to do what I could, I made the movement against Soult. As a diversion it has answered completely; but, as there is nothing to take advantage of it, I have risked the loss of the army for no purpose. I have no option now but to fall down to the coast as fast as I am able. I found no provision here; the little which had been collected has been consumed by sir David's corps in their passage; and there is not two days' bread to carry the army to Villafranca. I have been forced to push on the troops by divisions, without stopping. General Fraser, with his division, will be at Villafranca this day, and will proceed on to Lugo. General Hope, with his division, stopped yesterday two leagues from this, and proceeds this morning, followed by sir David Baird. The two flank brigades go by the road to Ponferada, I shall follow, with the reserve and cavalry, to Villafranca, either

this night or to-morrow morning, according as I hear of the approach of the French. There are no means of carriage: the people run away, the villages are deserted; and I have been obliged to destroy great part of the ammunition and military stores. For the same reason I am obliged to leave the sick. In short, my sole object is to save the army. We must all make forced marches to the coast, from the scarcity of provisions, and to be before the enemy: who, *by roads upon our flanks*,* may otherwise intercept us; but, after a time, the same difficulty which affects us must affect him; therefore, the rear, once passed Villafranca, I do not expect to be molested.

I hope to find on the coast transports for the embarkation of the troops. If not, I hope to be able to take up some position, which I can maintain until they arrive.

It is not probable that we can be followed by the numbers which are now marching against us. And, once collected upon the coast, we shall certainly not allow ourselves to be molested by any thing like equal numbers. It is only whilst retreating that we are vulnerable. I have heard of some despatches from your lordship to me, entrusted to lieutenant-colonel Chabot; but he has

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

* It was for general Moore to have known that no such roads existed, which was the case.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

been sent into Portugal, and I have not received them.

The morning I marched from Benavente, some squadrons of Buonaparte's guards passed the river at a ford above the bridge. They were attacked by brigadier-general Stewart, at the head of the piquets of the 18th, and 3d German light dragoons, and driven across the ford. Their colonel, a general of division, Lefebvre, was taken, together with about 70 officers and men. The affair was well contested. The numbers with which general Stewart attacked were inferior to the French. It is the corps of the greatest character in their army; but the superiority of the British was, I am told, very conspicuous. I enclose, for your lordship's satisfaction, lord Paget's report of it. This army, there cannot be a doubt, would have distinguished itself, had the Spaniards been able to offer any resistance; but, from the beginning, it was placed in situations in which, without the possibility of doing any good, it was itself constantly risked—and now it is good fortune alone that can save it. It is impossible to deny that its discipline has been affected by the late movements. The shoes and necessaries are destroyed; and, for some time after it reaches the coast, the men will be in the worst state.

I send the French general Lefebvre to Corunna, to be forwarded to England. He is a young man;

and I should suppose, from the station he held, a personal favourite of Buonaparte.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.
December.

From Astorga also were issued the following

GENERAL ORDERS.

Head-quarters, Astorga, Dec. 30, 1808.

The present is a moment when the army is necessarily called upon to make great efforts, and to submit to privations, the bearing cheerfully with which is a quality not less estimable than valour.

The good-will of the inhabitants will be particularly useful to the army, and can only be obtained by good conduct on the part of the troops.

The commander of the forces cannot impress too strongly on the whole army the necessity of this; and he trusts that the generals and the commanding-officers will adopt such measures, both on the march and in the cantonments, as will ensure it.

It is very probable that the army will shortly have to meet the enemy; and the commander of the forces has no doubt that they will eagerly imitate the worthy example which has been set them by the cavalry, on several recent occasions, and particularly in the affair of yesterday, in which brigadier-general Stuart, with an inferior force, charged

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

General orders

and overthrew one of the best corps of cavalry in the French army.

The generals will immediately inspect the baggage of the brigades and divisions. They are held responsible that it does not exceed the proportion fixed by the general orders.

The army marched to Camberos on the evening of the 30th of December, and the cavalry followed at night. The pipuets were posted on the road from La Beneza to watch Buonaparte's cavalry, and at the bridge at Orbigo to observe that of Soult, which soon retired as the enemy advanced. The whole arrived on the 1st of January at Bemibre, the cavalry, precisely as the preceding divisions, were marching off to Villafranca.

This would seem to mark sufficient order in the general outline, but unhappily the detail shewed otherwise. To use the terms of the Narrative, the scene of drunkenness that presented itself here was disgusting. The stragglers from the preceding divisions so crowded the houses, that there was hardly accommodation for the reserve: while groupes of the half-naked and unfortunate peasants, belonging to the marquis of Romana, completed the confusion. The marquis was moving towards Orense. The French patroles, during the night, fell in with the cavalry piquets.

At Astorga Buonaparte was joined by Soult, with whom he had probably expected to inclose the British army; and assembled there, it is believed, near 70,000 men, when he halted to watch the event; sending three divisions to follow the British closely, and to destroy them, either before or during their embarkation, with other corps to support them.

A multitude of severe distresses were now accumulating upon the British army which their leader could not avert. According to his own account, deluges of cold rain fell, chilling and drenching the soldiers, who were wading in bad roads deep with mud. It was often difficult to procure shelter when they halted, or fuel to dry their clothes, or to dress their food. The provisions were often scanty, and irregularly procured; for the baggage, magazines, and stores, were transported on carts, drawn chiefly by Spanish mules and bullocks; but the drivers, terrified by the approach and attacks of the French cavalry, often ran away in the night-time, leaving their waggons, persuaded that if they fell into the hands of the French, they should be massacred.—The bullocks and mules, unfortunately, could not be made to move, except by the native drivers.—Thus provisions and stores were frequently obliged to be destroyed, to prevent their falling into the possession of the enemy; and the weak, the sick, and the wounded, were necessarily left behind.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.



1808.

December.

Junction of
Buonaparte and
Soult.

Difficulties on
the retreat from
bad weather, &c.

BOOK III.
 CHAP. X.
 1808.
 December

This is a picture unhappy indeed, but no less true.—Sir John Moore, however, and after him the author of the Narrative founded on his documents, recurs to the old cause of every evil, notwithstanding the share which the *elements* had in the present disastrous state of the army, naturally arising from the delay of active operations, till the season when their malign influence was to be expected; a circumstance on which, at least with as much truth as some others, the opinion of *the enemy* in its favour might be quoted!

Yet, after all that has been written and said on the subject, the recurrence to these old topics is made with a degree of diffidence hardly to be conceived in the present instance.

Truth (and of course *truth alone*) *makes it necessary* to mention, (says the Narrator,) that the inhabitants of Spain gave little aid to their persevering allies, who were *encountering every evil for them*, and made no attempt to annoy or to retard the enemy. Had the armed Spaniards harassed the flanks and rear of the French army, they might, with little danger to themselves, have retarded their advance, and diminished their numbers; instead of which, they never fired a musket at a Frenchman, and often fled from their houses at the approach of the English; barring their doors and carrying off mules, carts, oxen, forage, and provisions; in short,

Whatever could lessen the distresses, or contribute to the comfort of their friends was neglected. This conduct on the part of the Spaniards excited much animosity in the breasts of the English, and was the cause of many disorders. But I have no doubt that the passive conduct of the peasantry was owing to their rulers never organising them, nor leading them forward. Sir John Moore always entertained this opinion. In his journal and letters he praises the people, and deprecates the apathy and weakness of their chiefs; for he was not aware that there were traitors among them who paralysed the nation.

It has been mentioned that, on the 1st of January, the general found the little town of Bemibre filled with stragglers of the preceding divisions.— And when he marched with the reserve and the cavalry to Villafranca, on the morning of the 2d, he left colouel Ross with the 20th regiment, and a small detachment of cavalry to cover the town, while parties were sent to warn the stragglers, amounting to near a thousand men, of their danger, and to drive them, if possible, out of the houses.— Some few were prevailed upon to move on; but neither threats, nor the approach of the enemy, could induce the greater number to quit the houses. At length the rear-guard was compelled to march and leave these senseless people to their fate: yet a small detachment of cavalry covered the whole,

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Disorders on
the retreat.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1808.

December.

Disorders on
the retreat.

and only quitted the town on the approach of the enemy : then, from the immediate danger, the road was filled with Spanish and British stragglers (armed and unarmed), mules, carts, women and children, all mingled in strange confusion.

Four or five squadrons of French cavalry were seen moving from Bemibre, their advanced guard firing at a patrol of the 15th hussars. On their approach, the detachment in the rear was compelled to retire, and was closely pursued for several miles.

Of these stragglers, however, painful as is the consideration, it ought to have been known to the Narrator, if not to sir John Moore, that a number, by no means inconsiderable, of whose motives it is not here presumed to judge, did, *avowedly* under the influence of honourable feelings, make the best of their way to join the native legion, then training in Portugal, and sir John Cradock's army, in Lisbon and its vicinity, rather than succumb to the enemy, or yield to the disastrous complexion of affairs in which the British army was leaving Spain.

Of the unhappy men, who, from intoxication, were left behind, as it is stated, (with horror be it remembered,) the French dragoons were obliged to cut through them on every hand, in pursuit of the British rear, which also they continued, till severely checked by the reserve, under lord Paget.

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Irregularities on
the retreat.

The whole army in fact already exhibited symptoms of insubordination that threatened to disorganise it. When the cavalry reached Villafranca, while the reserve halted at Cacabelos, it was reproached with the irregularities of the divisions which preceded it. Even the commissaries had to complain of plundered magazines, and of the destruction which arose from the despoliation of the stores of provisions.

An example was immediately made, in the execution of a man who was detected in this fact; and another, who had suffered from the enemy's cavalry by his irregularities, was exhibited through the ranks. It had been well if these were all.

The enemy did not fail to take advantage of these circumstances. A considerable body of cavalry approached Cacabelos on the 3d of January, upon which a detachment of British cavalry and the 95th regiment advanced to a hill at a mile and half distance, in front of the town, through which ran a shallow river, and on its opposite bank was posted the reserve. To it sir John Moore ordered the 95th to retire; but before they reached it, their cavalry piquet was driven through them, and a few men of the rear companies made prisoners; the enemy, joined by their dismounted chasseurs, immediately crossed the river and attacked the 95th. This corps, however, made a successful and orderly

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

The 95th rifle
corps success-
fully engaged.

retreat up some hills, among vineyards, and annoyed the enemy exceedingly during their progress.— It also drove back the cavalry, charging up the road, under general Colbert, who commanded the French advance-guard, and was killed. A column, immediately descending towards the opposite bank of the river, was checked by a severe fire from the British artillery of the reserve, which was afterwards withdrawn to Villafranca.

The cavalry was then sent forward through the inclosed and mountainous country to Lugo, and sir John proceeded with the army, by a night-march, to Herrerias, alarmed by the proximity of the enemy, and contemplating the necessity, from the harassing nature of the attacks, for a general battle.

It was only here that sir John Moore obtained the information which determined him to a preference of Corunna to Vigo for his point of retreat and embarkation. An amount of information so small as to excite wonder how he could have remained so long in ignorance of it. The ground in front of Lugo was described, it seems, as favourable to action.

The commander-in-chief now despatched captain Napier, his aid-de-camp, to halt sir David Baird, who was advanced to Nogales; the orderly dragoon, who was despatched by sir David to his junior officers, got drunk and lost the despatches; so

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Disastrous cir-
cumstances of
the retreat.Misfortunes of
delay.

that general Fraser's division had to retrace a day's march in the most dreadful weather, from the road to Vigo, and lost many men from the consequent fatigue! Engineers, (whose information was certainly acceptable before) now also reported favourably of the peninsula of Betanzos, which increased the predeliction of sir John Moore towards Corunna. On the 4th, therefore, he thought of sending off to the admiral commanding off Vigo (sir Samuel Hood), to request the transports might be sent thence to Corunna, with provisions to receive the troops. This he necessarily did, at so late a period, by expresses, through two different routes.

Near Nogales, the army were met by thirty wag-gons, laden with stores, arms, and ammunition, for the marquis of Romana's army, which were, alas! now too late, and were therefore chiefly destroyed. This was attributed by sir John Moore (on what grounds are not perceptible) to treason in the Spanish councils! On a hill, above the place, lay two drunken soldiers, and a woman dead in the snow.

Sir John Moore, who had so particularly censured the marquis Romana for not destroying the bridge at Mansilla, did not himself destroy that of Nogales, over which the enemy followed close at his heels. Stores of every kind were hourly destroyed, from the disorder of the retreat.

Carts, drawn by bullocks, under the charge of

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.
Disorders of the
army.

Mr. Courtney, of the pay-master-general's department, laden with casks of dollars, brought from Corunna with sir David Baird, of which so severe a want had been before experienced, and of which the amount is admitted in the Narrative to be *twenty-five thousand pounds*, were now obliged to resign their burthen into a precipice, unless what was momentarily caught by the soldiery on the spot.* One cannot but marvel how this sum was not before appropriated to the payment of the army, which would have made its burthen imperceptible.

The murmurs of the subordinate ranks, and, indeed, general discontent of the officers which had long been very openly expressed, could now hold out no longer; they evinced themselves in clamour and in fierce remonstrance; even general Paget argued the necessity of paying more attention to impeding the pursuit of the enemy, by the destruction of bridges, but in vain. Sir John pointed to the fords near some, argued the difficulty of destroying others, but above all, forsooth with due awe, argued the ease with which they could be repaired by—*an army constituted like the French!*†

* Several knapsacks pretty fully laden reached London, as is well known to many officers of sir John Moore's army, notwithstanding the order.

† Whatever may be thought of those who have been constantly

The manner in which sir John Moore argued this matter with lord Paget is so perfectly in contrast

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.
January.

holding up to the public the superiour constitution of the French armies, or whatever many military judges may be constrained to admit of the inferiority of that of the British military force, there is no reasoning of sir John Moore on any part of his conduct of this campaign more ill-founded than this deference to "an army constituted like the French." It has been sufficiently shewn, in a former book, that any army with *proper conduct* may be equally constituted to the French; and in many glorious occasions that, whatever may be the constitution of the British armies, they have beaten the French in every quarter of the globe, however brave and well-conducted. But if (and it is not intended to insist on the contrary) the constitution of the French army was found so superiour to that of Britain by sir John Moore, it is reasonable to ask, how, with all the judgment and experience of that distinguished general, and all the influence he possessed in the royal ear, (for, says his brother elsewhere, "Moore was an officer whom his majesty noticed early, and cherished constantly; and when he was assailed by powerful undermining intrigues, ever afforded him his royal protection,") it is just to ask, how, with these ample advantages employed in the service so long, he left it so deficient. The commander-in-chief of all his majesty's forces (also eminently his friend) cannot be supposed, with every qualification requisite to his high office, to possess ubiquity or universality of knowledge; and if general-officers with all these advantages do not assist his royal highness, all ready and accessible as he is, with the best arrangements for the constitution of armies, but on the contrary perhaps represent to him either in words or practice, a *step*, a *gun-lock*, or some complex movement like *wheeling a close column*, as paramount to them all; how can armies be well-constituted for the field? Had sir John Moore while at home, instead of the *meanest elements of drill*, that eternal and vitiating torment of the practised soldier, directed his mind to *moral influence and*

Disorders of the
army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Disorders of the
army.

to his frequent complaints against marquis Romana, and at the same time so explains the motives of the British general, that it should be added, though rather too verbose.

When pressed to destroy the bridges, says the Narrative of Mr. James Moore, sir John, in answer, requested him to look around and examine with him more particularly the nature of the rivers over which these bridges were thrown. He pointed out to him, that both infantry and cavalry could usually pass a little above or below the bridge; and that the obstruction to artillery would be quickly repaired by an army constituted like the French. That it must likewise be recollected, that the destruction of these strong bridges could not be soon effected; and that the troops must halt during that time. So that when this loss was deducted, it would be found that the advantage was much less considerable than was imagined. Whenever any important advantage could arise from blowing up a bridge, he thought it certainly should be done:

agency, and all the numerous and *important powers* necessary to the constitution of armies, he would never have argued that British troops could not *destroy* a bridge in as little time as a French vanguard would *restore* it; nor have had occasion to resort to the censures of marquis Romana, on the opposite side. It is not for the *powerless* inferiour grades of armies, whatever their capacity and experience, to effect these things.—Let their superiours, therefore, “be wise by others’ harm, and we shall yet do well.”

but he was persuaded that general Paget would agree with him, that when the advantage was less, it was a cruel measure to do such lasting mischief to those allies we came to benefit, as to ruin, for a length of time, the communications of their country.

This was the defence that sir John Moore made, for what some have thought a neglect; but which increased general Paget's esteem for his friend and commander.

The rifle-corps was desultorily engaged during the whole of the 5th, with the enemy's advances upon the rear. It was halted with the horse-artillery on the top of a hill above Constantino, to which the road winding around it was every way exposed, for the purpose of covering the reserve, in which they were entirely successful, retiring themselves also without loss, after performing that duty.

The enemy, however, having refreshed in the plain in rear of another hill, no sooner saw the passage clear, than he rushed along it with new vigour.

To meet this new contingency, sir John Moore ordered lord Paget to defend the bridge and the banks of the river with the 28th and 95th regiments, while himself took a strong position on a neighbouring hill, with the 52d, 20th, and 91st

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Disorders of the
army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.
January.

regiments. The artillery was dispersed with equal care for general purposes.

The bridge was attempted several times by the enemy's cavalry, and dismounted chasseurs, but were repulsed: at night, lord Paget retired to Lugo, followed by the reserve.

Such was the character and conduct of both officers and men when engaged with the enemy;—unanimously brave, able, and steady. That something, however, affected their minds and hearts with respect to the manner of conducting the cause in which they were engaged, will, it is to be hoped, appear from the following document:—

GENERAL ORDERS.

Head-quarters, Lugo, 6th January, 1809.

Generals and commanding-officers of corps, must be as sensible as the commander of the forces, of the complete disorganization of the army.

The advanced-guard of the French is already close to us, and it is to be presumed that the main body is not far distant; an action may, therefore, be hourly expected. If the generals and commanding-officers of regiments (feeling for the honour of their country and of the British arms) wish to give the army a fair chance of success, they will

exert themselves to restore order and discipline in the regiments, brigades, and divisions, which they command.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

General orders.

The commander of the forces is tired of giving orders, which are never attended to: he therefore appeals to the honour and feelings of the army he commands; and if those are not sufficient to induce them to do their duty, he must despair of succeeding by any other means. He was forced to order one soldier to be shot at Villafranca, and he will order all others to be executed who are guilty of similar enormities: but he considers that there will be no occasion to proceed to such extremities, if the officers did their duty; as it is chiefly from their negligence, and from the want of proper regulations in the regiments, that crimes and irregularities are committed, in quarters and upon the march.

It is easier to complain than to influence by a rational and animated example. The latter was more worthy of the high mental powers of sir John Moore.

On the morning succeeding these orders, the French brought four pieces of artillery to bear upon the British lines. The British artillery soon dismounted the guns of the enemy. The right was attacked and beat off by the guards and general Leith's brigade.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Sir John observing the enemy towards the left, thought it the most likely object of attack, and whilst the light troops were skirmishing with the enemy.

A part of the 76th regiment at first retired, but the light company, by a powerful charge, drove the enemy down the hill with considerable destruction.

It was rather an interesting incident that the 51st regiment, in which the commander-in-chief of this army had been ensign, was now prepared for action with him, and ordered by their general personally to advance; the only result of which seemed to be the preceding charge, and the wounding captain Roberts, 51st, in the hand.

Private Canner, of the 76th, instantly transfixed the assailant before he could recover his piece; the soldier was promoted, and his corps honourably mentioned.

Notwithstanding this, the general was not perfectly confident in the affection of his troops, as appears by the following

GENERAL ORDERS.

Near Lugo, Jan. 7, 1809.

The army must see that the moment is now come, when, after the hardships and fatiguing marches they have undergone, they will have the

opportunity of bringing the enemy to action. The commander of the forces has the most perfect confidence in their valour, and that it is only necessary to bring them to close contact with the enemy in order to defeat them; and a defeat, if it be complete, as he trusts it will be, will, in a great measure, end their labours.

The general has no other caution to give them, than not to throw away their fire at the enemy's skirmishers, merely because they fire at them; but to reserve it till they can give it with effect.

The necessity of a battle became now every hour more apparent. Certain intelligence arrived (according to the Narrative) of three divisions being in *front*, though it is scarcely to be conceived how they got there; sir John Moore, it seems, wished to engage these, though superior to his force, and for a very good reason, because "he knew he could not get rid of them;" and it was probably for the same reason that, notwithstanding his former opinions on the report of the peninsula, he conceived it more advantageous to fight in his present position, than either at Betanzos, or in the act of embarking.

Preparations were, therefore, immediately commenced for the reception of the enemy; the artillery, which cost great labour, being judiciously

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.
January.
General orders.

Battle contemplated.
plated.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

The British
army offers bat-
tle, which the
French army
rejects.

brought into the field. On the morning of the 8th, notwithstanding the mind of the general seems to have been untimely impressed with the inattention of the Spanish government, and equally with that of the British minister, in not sending after him, to assist in his retreat, a powerful Spanish force! Sir John Moore saw his army, that army which in flight was disorganised and insubordinate, in readiness to give battle to the enemy; the corps which had not been engaged evincing only an emulation of the artillery, cavalry, and reserve, which had so often enjoyed that distinction. Marshal Soult saw it too, and refused them the opportunity for the present.

It is a proud reflection for the country, that an army, suffering as this had been, not more in its economy than in the vacillation which had directed all its movements, till it was benumbed and torpid, should thus, in an instant, resume its elasticity, if so it may be called, and forget every other feeling in that of its duty in presence of the enemy.

The present good effect is attributed by sir John Moore to his recent order. But whatever the eloquence of its diction, or the new regard which might be inspired by their commander, who had so frequently had occasion to curb their spirit, at length, animating them to battle; the true cause is happily to be traced to the human mind.

Let those who regard the soldier as a *mere* machine, remember the feelings with which sir John Moore *now* rode through his ranks;* or let them contemplate on any occasion the reserve of an army in action,—let them mark the impatience bursting forth on every side to be permitted to share the glory which it is difficult to persuade, both subaltern officers and men, is not a boon withheld from them,—and then view them as machines if they can; or think a mere order which is to direct their economy capable of producing such an influence! If commanders, they will find the evils of such a calculation in the moment of conflict, though in the national spirit they can never be disappointed.

General orders are excellent vehicles for the best theories of military ordination, when dictated by judging heads and feeling hearts; but it is to moral influence, personally and judiciously employed, that those deeds are owing which enrich the glowing annals of glory.

Sir John Moore immediately determined on a night-march, continuing his hasty retreat to the coast: and the following were his reasons, certainly more than sufficient, for, to use his own phrase, the game was now ended; and Fortune alone, of whom

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Remarks on the
zeal of British
soldiers.

* Narrative, 322.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Retreat of the
British army.

the general was no favourite, could amend the situation of the army.

It was conceived, from Soult not fighting, that he intended only to harass the army on its progress to the coast, and attack it on the point of embarkation; for his position was so strong, on formidable heights, protected by strong inclosures, that he might have made partial attacks and have retired when he pleased, without the possibility of being approached but with great loss, and with a certainty of reinforcement; while the British had still no alternative but to retreat, and leave any wounded that might occur behind. What is still more decisive, their provisions were exhausted, and so was the country; nor could they be safely conveyed from Corunna for want of convoys, if even the commissariat was prepared for such an operation.

The fear of being cut off, by *lateral roads*, from the coast, it was sufficiently known by the army, was not so well founded, as they did not exist.

At ten at night the army moved, leaving their fires burning; but the same darkness which favoured this movement increased the evils of bad roads and erroneous guides, so much, that the troops again fell into disorder; and having lost the impetus which had recently excited them, abandoned themselves to their fate. They proceeded under

immense torrents of rain, without shelter and without rest, through the night and following day.

At Lugo, which was not reached by some columns till two in the morning, sir John Moore issued the following orders without avail ; for those who should carry them into effect, became incompetent to it. In fact, many commanding-officers themselves, distressed by the elements, lost their powers, and by the first halt at Valmeda, all was misery, confusion, alarm, and dismay !

It is right to remark that sir John Moore has particularized the artillery and reserve as having been the least affected by the disorganisation of the army :—

GENERAL ORDERS.

Head-quarters, Lugo, Jan. 9, 1809.

It is evident that the enemy will not fight this army, notwithstanding the superiority of his numbers, but will endeavour to harass and tease it upon its march.

The commander of the forces requests that it may be carefully explained to the soldiers, that their safety depends solely upon their keeping their divisions, and marching with their regiments ; that those who stop in villages, or straggle on the march, will inevitably be cut off by the French cavalry,

BOOK III
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.
Retreat of the
British army.

BOOK III
CHAP. X.

1809.
January.
Retreat of the
British army.

who have hitherto shewn little mercy, even to the feeble and infirm, who have fallen into their hands.

The army has still eleven leagues to march, the soldiers must make an exertion to accomplish them; the rear-guard cannot stop, and those who fall behind must take their fate.

From whatever cause, Soult did not pursue till after nine on the morning of the 9th: possibly the retreat was for a short time concealed. But the situation of the British army soon gave him an opportunity to make up for the delay. By evening the French advanced-guard approached the rear, which compelled lord Paget, with the reserve, to take up a position for the night a few miles from Betanzos, where the main body was quartered.

To preclude the stragglers from intoxicating themselves in the numerous houses where wine was sold, they were kept out in the cold and heavy rain of a very severe night.

All this was, however, ineffectual, and sir John therefore halted on the 10th to refresh the army, and to again endeavour to correct the evil by

GENERAL ORDERS.

Head-quarters, Betanzos, Jan. 10, 1809.

A great deal of irregularity has arisen from the practice of some commanding-officers allowing

soldiers who pretend to be bad marchers, to precede their corps. Men of this description, whom commanding officers may think expedient to send forward, must be placed under an officer, who is held responsible for their conduct.

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Retreat of the
British army.

(Memorandum for general Officers.)

To prevent the renewal of the same scene which the march of last night presented, the commander of the forces directs, that, previously to the march to-morrow morning, the general officers will see their divisions and brigades properly formed, that they wheel them by sections, and that, during the march, they pay constant attention to the preservation of that order.

On the next morning the following collateral information was received in a letter from Mr. Frere, who, it seems, according to the opinion of the general, was "endeavouring to be of use:"—

Seville, Dec. 28, at night, 1808.

Sir,

The inclosed intelligence appears to me of such importance, that though I should hope there could be little doubt of your having already received it from other quarters, I have thought it

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Mr. Frere to
sir John Moore.

right to send off a courier with it, with the promise of a reward in proportion to his despatch.

There is nothing in the state of things here which can make it worth while to detain him. I am endeavouring to persuade the government to take some steps for securing the great towns in this province, instead of relying upon the defence of military positions, with peasants dressed in uniform.— There are 10,000 in Despena Penos, of whom 6000 only are armed. You will see that the siege of Barcelona has been raised: the beaten army have, however, re-assembled at a very short distance.

In La Mancha there seems to be a beginning of something like enterprise, and a disposition to worry the enemy as far as is in their power. I am not yet able to make any report upon the subject of the despatches of the 10th, from lord Castlereagh's office. Orders are sent, as you desired, to the juntas of Ciudad Rodrigo, Salamanca, and Zamora, for putting those towns in a state of temporary defence, and arming the inhabitants.

I have proposed (I hope with your approbation) that the same measure should be extended to Toro, and even to Astorga.

Believe me, with great truth and respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. H. FRERE.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Retreat of the
British army.

The endeavour however did not prevent a great deal of ridicule of this minister's conduct and opinions; and, to oppose them, an extract is given from the letter of a very sensible officer of engineers, who had been sent by sir John Moore to survey the roads in Sanabria, and to endeavour to rouse up the people there to make an effort. The letter is a report to the general from the capital of the district, dated La Puebla, 1st January, 1809:—

“ With respect to the defence of this place, which I am instructed to promote, I can give your excellency no reason to expect that any will be made. There is no artillery, no garrison, nor arms for the townsmen. The Spanish soldiers now here (about 700) are merely on their way to the marquis de la Romana; and as to any neighbouring passes, there are no people whom I can call upon to occupy them, or should expect to defend them, however naturally strong they may be; for I see no people who are thinking of the enemy's advance with any sentiments beyond passive dislike, and hopes of protection from God and the English army.”

This extract is given here only as co-relative information.

Of the last day's march of the army from Betanzos, the following description is too characteristic to be omitted. There was a bridge at the outside of the town, which was attempted to be blown

BOOK III
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Retreat of the
British army.

up; the enemy's cavalry tried to interrupt this, but they were driven back by the 28th regiment.

Sir John Moore, being anxious to examine the positions near Corunna, left the reserve, under general Paget, and proceeded from Betanzos with the main body of the army. He passed every regiment, and addressed the commanding-officer of each, observing to them, that there was no particular post for a commanding-officer, who ought to range on the front, flank, and rear of his regiment; that his eye should be every where: and that all straggling should be prevented by the activity of the officers.

This was no situation for such elementary instructions. If, as is to be feared, some did not do their duty, they ought to have been exemplarily punished.

The march was conducted with much more regularity than on former occasions; yet eight or nine stragglers were detected, who had preceded the column, and had taken possession of a house and the wine contained in it. They were seized, and brought prisoners to the general; on which he halted the army; and the commanding-officers of the regiments, and the captains of the companies, to which the prisoners belonged, were sent for.— Their haversacks were searched to discover if they contained plunder; and he inquired how long the men had been absent from their regiments.

An officer replied to sir John, that one of the prisoners, not being able to march with the column, had been sent on before, according to the general's orders.

Sir John answered, that when he gave out orders, he considered that he addressed them to military men; for, were he to write every detail, no orderly-book could contain them; that the manner of obeying such an order was, to form up such men as were unable to march with the regiment, and place them under the charge of an officer or a non-commissioned officer; but undoubtedly they should not have been sent by themselves to follow their own discretion, "Sir, (continued he,) had I found plunder in the possession of this man, he must have been condemned to death, and you would have been the cause of his guilt."

Surely all this was better calculated for a private parade of exercise, attended, as it was, with the most fatal delay.

Sir John rode on to Corunna, and viewed all the positions in the neighbourhood.

The guards and general Frazer's brigade were quartered in the town; general Hope's division in the suburbs; and general Paget, with the reserve, at El-Burgo, near the bridge of the Mero, and in the villages on the St. Jago road.

Two bridges in the vicinity were destroyed, at

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Retreat of the
British army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

one of which the superintending officer of engineers lost his life by a premature explosion of the mine; one of the numerous unhappy instances arising from the want of previous practice in the men.

The British
army arrived at
Corunna.

When the army at length arrived at Corunna, it was found that, with the exception of a few ships, in which some sick and lame stragglers who had been sent in advance, embarked, the transports being detained by adverse winds, were not yet arrived.

With the ordinary fortunes of this army, after traversing two hundred and fifty miles of a various country, under every infliction of the elements, in frequent conflict with the enemy, and greatly without confidence in its leader, it had now to experience its greatest danger.

The position at Corunna was bad in the extreme.* General officers, acknowledged by sir John Moore to be of excellent judgment and distinguished valour, regarded this final situation of the army liable to be overwhelmed from the surrounding hills; and, cannonaded from every quarter, as so destructive to it, that they represented to the commander-in-chief the propriety of endeavouring to enter into

* Ferrol would not have been better, commanded by high hills, and with a harbour so intricate, as to be difficult of departure.

terms with the French general for an unmolested embarkation.

It is laconically stated in the Narrative of his Operations, that “sir John Moore, *without a moment's hesitation*, rejected this advice;” it might have been added, as he had done every other!—with what success, is best seen in the results. Yet sir John Moore *hesitated* at every step on his advance, and before the junction of the French armies, or the capture of Madrid, when promptitude and decision formed the soul of his campaign, and the only invigorative power of the poor, enthusiastic, yet brave and patriotic, Spanish armies.

The French soon left no doubt of the situation of the British army; and that army no sooner found itself menaced, than it forgot every other consideration in its duty. All was spirit and activity; and whatever the opinion of the army, of the indeliberate decision of sir John Moore, it exhibited a determination that that decision should be right, under any circumstances which counted on the energies of a British military force; and this, to its eternal praise be it recorded, with as much ardour as it would have done if led proudly victorious into the capital of Spain, and thence against the yet unconsolidated army of the European victor!

On the morning of January 12, French troops were in motion on the opposite bank of the Mero,

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

British army at
Corunna.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

British army at
Corunna.

thence dignified by the name of river, and took a position extending from its left flank on the village of Perillo along the margin.

To oppose this movement, some corps of the British army formed the section of an extensive circle; on the 13th, sir David Baird, with his division, quitted Corunna for a position on the neighbouring rise, commencing at the village of Elvina, as did also general Hope on his left, whose division commanded the road to Betanzos, and in whose rear, about half a mile, was the reserve, under lord Paget, at a village on the Betanzos road. The division of general Frazer was placed about half a mile from Corunna, near the Vigo road, across a valley, between which and that of sir David Baird, the 95th (rifle corps) formed an admirable chain.

The troops now enjoyed a momentary repose and refreshment from the new means within their power; while their officers, under the direction of the commander-in-chief, were occupied in endeavouring to preserve a menacing front towards the enemy, during the progressive embarkation of the army.

Sir John Moore, it seems, performed the minutest duties of a general, examined every plot of ground in the neighbourhood; and the result was, that of two ranges of amphitheatral heights, the superior

must be resigned to the French, and the inferior necessarily occupied by the English.

For otherwise, that is, if the surrounding hills, four miles above Corunna, had been occupied by us, both the right and left flanks of the British, thus extended beyond their force, might have been liable to be turned, by which means, especially on the right flank, the enemy might penetrate to Corunna. Mr. Moore has represented that this, disadvantageous as it was, was better than in fact retiring altogether within the town, with an in-lying piquet, with which it would be difficult to dispute.

The personal situation of the British general, for the first time, becomes a real scene of interest, though not from the notices which in these historical arrangements one is compelled to recognize: for really the facts in the statement of the Memoirs of Mr. Moore, of sir John Moore being on horse-back four hours and a half (without any *cold* calculation, from day-break of January 13 to eleven of that forenoon) when compared, to go no farther, with a horse-guards parade, or even a Hyde-Park morning-ride, are not such as to excite a valuable attention, and are accompanied by circumstances too painful not, at the same time, to excite regret, that the whole should not be otherwise.

The best picture is afforded from the most valuable documents, yet such as, from their minuteness

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Position of the
British army at
Corunna.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

British army at
Corunna.

and peculiarity of feeling, to excite particular regret.

Sir John Moore had been on horseback from day-break to make every arrangement for battle. He returned about eleven in the forenoon, exhausted with fatigue, and sent for brigadier-general Stuart, and desired him to proceed to England, and explain to ministers the situation of the army.

He said, a vessel would convey him, for he was so tired he was incapable of writing, but that general Stuart, being a competent judge of every thing, required no letter.

He then rested, and took some refreshment; and two hours afterwards, the vessel not being quite ready, nor general Stuart gone, he called for paper and wrote off his last despatch to government.

The following is most extraordinary :—

* *Corunna, 13th January, 1809.*

My lord,

Situated as this army is at present, it is impossible for me to detail to your lordship the events which have taken place, since I had the honour to address you from Astorga, on the 31st December. I have therefore determined to send

* This being a private letter, and not written in the usual manner of official despatches, it was thought proper, by the secretary of state, to omit some passages.

to England brigadier general Charles Stewart, as the officer best qualified to give you every information you can want, both with respect to our actual situation, and the events which have led to it. From his connection with your lordship, and with his majesty's ministers, whatever he relates is most likely to be believed. He is a man in whose honour I have the most perfect reliance; he is incapable of stating any thing but the truth, and it is the truth which at all times I wish to convey to your lordship, and to the king's government.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

January.
1809.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

Your lordship knows that had I followed my own opinion as a military man, I should have retired with the army from Salamanca. The Spanish armies were then beaten; there was no Spanish force to which we could unite; and I was satisfied that no efforts would be made to aid us, or favour the cause in which they were engaged. I was sensible, however, that the apathy and indifference of the Spaniards would never have been believed; that, had the British been withdrawn, the loss of the cause would have been imputed to their retreat; and it was necessary to risk this army to convince the people of England, as well as the rest of Europe, that the Spaniards had neither the power, nor the inclination, to make any efforts for themselves.

It was for this reason that I marched to Sahagun. As a diversion, it succeeded: I brought the whole

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castlereagh.

disposable force of the French against this army, and it has been allowed to follow it, without a single movement being made to favour its retreat. The people of the Gallicias, though armed, made no attempt to stop the passage of the French through their mountains. They abandoned their dwellings at our approach, drove away their carts, oxen, and every thing that could be of the smallest aid to the army. The consequence has been, that our sick have been left behind; and when our horses and mules failed, which on such marches, and through such a country, was the case to a great extent, baggage, ammunition, stores, and even money, were necessarily destroyed or abandoned.

I am sorry to say that the army, whose conduct I had such reason to extol on its march through Portugal, and on its arrival in Spain, has totally changed its character since it began to retreat. I can say nothing in its favour, but that, when there was a prospect of fighting the enemy, the men were then orderly, and seemed pleased, and determined to do their duty. In front of Villafranca the French came up with the reserve, with which I was covering the retreat of the army. They attacked it at Calcabalos. I retired, covered by the 95th regiment, and marched that night to Herreñas, and thence to Nogales and Lugo; where I had ordered the different divisions which preceded

to halt and collect. At Lugo, the French again came up with me; they attacked our advanced posts on the 6th and 7th, and were repulsed in both attempts. with little loss on our side.

I heard from the prisoners taken, that three divisions of the French army commanded by Marshal Soult were come up: I therefore expected to be attacked on the morning of the 8th. It was my wish to come to that issue; I had perfect confidence in the valour of the troops, and it was only by crippling the enemy that we could hope either to retreat or to embark unmolested. I made every preparation to receive the attack; and drew out the army in the morning to offer battle. This was not marshal Soult's object: he either did not think himself sufficiently strong, or he wished to play a surer game by attacking us on our march, or during our embarkation. The country was intersected, and his position too strong for me to attack with an inferior force. The want of provisions would not enable me to wait longer. I marched that night; and, in two forced marches, bivouaching for six or eight hours in the rain, I reached Bentanzos on the 10th instant.

At Lugo I was sensible of the impossibility of reaching Vigo, which was at too great a distance, and offered no advantages to embark in the face of an enemy. My intention then was to have re-

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Sir John Moore
to Lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

treated to the peninsula of Betanzos; where I hoped to find a position to cover the embarkation of the army in Ares or Rodes Bays; but having sent an officer to reconnoitre it, by his report I was determined to prefer this place. I gave notice to the admiral of my attention, and begged that the transports might be brought to Corunna. Had I found them here on my arrival on the 11th instant, the embarkation would easily have been effected; for I had gained several marches on the French. They have now come up with us; the transports are not arrived. My position in front of this place is a very bad one; and this place, if I am forced to retire into it, is commanded within musket-shot; and the harbour will be so commanded by cannon on the coast, that no ship will be able to lie in it. In short, my lord, general Stewart will inform you how critical our situation is. It has been recommended to me, to make a proposal to the enemy to induce him to allow us to embark quietly; in which case, he gets us out of the country soon, and obtains this place with its stores, &c. complete; that, otherwise, we have it in our power to make a long defence, which must ensure the destruction of the town. I am averse to make any such proposal; and am exceedingly doubtful if it would be attended with any good effect: but, whatever I resolve on this head, I hope your lordship will rest

assured, that I shall accept no terms that are in the least dishonourable to the army, or to the country. I find I have been led into greater length and more detail than I thought I should have had time for: I have written under interruptions, and with my mind much occupied with other matter. My letter written so carelessly can only be considered as private; when I have more leisure, I shall write more correctly. In the mean time I rely on general Stewart for giving your lordship the information and detail which I have omitted. I should regret his absence, for his services have been very distinguished: but the state of his eyes makes it impossible for him to serve, and this country is not one in which cavalry can be of much use.

If I succeed in embarking the army, I shall send it to England—it is quite unfit for further service until it has been refitted, which can best be done there.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN MOORE.

On the 14th of January, the enemy commenced a cannonade on the left, near the road to El-Burgo; the British artillery returned this fire with great effect, and finally compelled the enemy to draw off their guns.

There was found on a hill on the outside of the

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1809.

January.

Sir John Moore
to lord Castle-
reagh.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.
1809.
January.

British posts a magazine of 4000 barrels of gunpowder, which had been brought from England, and was uselessly (let us say unfortunately) left in store, while the Spanish armies were without ammunition. The general ordered that as many barrels as possible should be conveyed to Corunna, which, for want of carts and mules, was a small portion, and that the rest should be blown up. The explosion was tremendous, and shook Corunna like an earthquake.

In the evening the transports from Vigo hove in sight.

The following is from the general's journal:—

January 15th, the enemy advanced to the height where the magazine had been blown up, and opposite to the position of the British.

The rifle-corps skirmished with the enemy's light troops on the right.

In the evening, colonel Mackenzie of the 5th, commanding the advanced post on the left, perceived two of the enemy's cannon not far distant. He imagined that by a sudden attack he might surprise them. He accordingly rushed forward, gallantly, with a part of his regiment; but, in crossing a field, this enterprising officer was shot, and the attack failed.

In forming the disposition for action, sir John found that, from the nature of the ground, much artillery could not be employed. He directed that seven six-pounders and one howitzer should be placed along the line; and four Spanish guns were kept as a reserve, to be advanced to any point where they might be useful. The rest of the artillery were all embarked this day.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January 15.
Preparations
for embarking
the army.

When the out-posts became quiet, the general was busily occupied with colonel Murray, quartermaster-general; lieutenant-colonel Anderson,* of the adjutant-general's department; and the naval officers, in making arrangements for the embarkation; which was fixed for the next evening. But, both on this day and on the 14th, the sick, artillery, dismounted cavalry, and horses, were incessantly embarking.

Sir John Moore, continues the Narrative, had this day the pleasure of receiving another letter from Mr. Frere, communicating the efforts he had made to check the advance of the French.

Seville, Jan. 2d, 1809.

Sir,

Upon the receipt of your letter of the 23d, informing me of your march upon Carrion, I wrote

Mr Frere
to sir J. Moore.

* Brigadier-general Clinton, adjutant-general, fell sick, and lieutenant-colonel Anderson acted in his stead.

BOOK III.
 CHAP. X.
 1809.
 January.
 Mr. Frere.
 to sir J. Moore.

to the duke of Infantado, who was at Cuenca with a force superior to that which the French had left in Madrid, urging him, in the most pressing manner, to make a forward movement upon that capital.

I left this letter with the junta, by whom it was agreed that corresponding instructions should be sent to the duke by the minister of war. It was likewise agreed, that similar orders should be forwarded at the same time to the marquis of Palacios.

I have the honour to transmit a copy of them, which has since been communicated to me; and, though I find them by no means so pressing as I could have wished and expected, I have still thought they were of sufficient importance to justify my forwarding them to you.

I have the honour to be, with great truth and respect, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. H. FRERE.

It is exceedingly agreeable to hear this judgment of Mr. Frere.

“There is no letter of Mr. Frere’s undeserving of attention; this is distinguished by urbanity in the expression, and energy in the matter.”

While these discussions were occupying the British army, it is worthy of military notice to observe the cool, calm proceedings of the enemy.

On the morning of the 16th of January, (says Mr. Moore,) the French posted on the hills were apparently quiet; no firing was heard: and the preparations for embarking the army being now completed, the general resolved to accomplish it that night.

Orders were given that the transports should receive on board the troops of every corps, as fast as the boats came along side. It was intended to sail to Vigo, and there shift the troops into their proper ships.

This last order of the general, according to the same authority, was then issued.

GENERAL ORDERS.

Head-quarters, Corunna, 16th January, 1809.

The commander of the forces directs that, commanding-officers of regiments will, as soon as possible after they embark, make themselves acquainted with the names of the ships in which the men of their regiments are embarked, both sick and convalescent: and that they will make out the most correct states of their respective corps: that they will state the number of sick present, also those left at different places: and mention at the back of the return where the men returned on command are employed.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January 16.

Embarkation of
the army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January 16.

General orders
for the embar-
kation.

About noon, (continues the same authority,) the general sent for colonel Anderson, to communicate his final instructions respecting the embarkation. He directed that he must continue to send sick men, horses, and baggage, aboard the ships as quickly as possible: but that he wished all the boats to be disengaged at four in the afternoon; for he intended, if the French did not move, to begin embarking the reserve at that hour. And that he would go out himself, as soon as it was dark, to send in the troops by brigades in the order he wished them to embark. He continued transacting business until a little after one o'clock, when his horse was brought. He then took leave of colonel Anderson, saying, "Remember I depend upon your paying particular attention to every thing that concerns the embarkation; and let there be as little confusion as possible."

One would thus, with every degree of deference for the character of a brave and accomplished general, be almost led to conceive that sir John Moore had not the smallest idea of any interruption from the enemy during the embarkation of his army, were it not for the circumstances in regard to arrangement that had already taken place, and the nature of his marches to Corunna.

Various are the accounts which tend to shew

the lamentable want of every kind of necessary information in the general, and of organization in his army. Painful indeed are the details, by no means unauthenticated, of the want of the principal requisites to both, in the commanding-officers of regiments, and of the manner in which they attempted to effect a shew of supplying the deficiency. Some affecting extraordinary severity,*

BOOK III.

CHAP. X.

1809.

January 16.

Di-orders of
the army.

* The following observations of a journal of the time which were uncontroverted, may give some idea of a detail which could be very much, and perhaps impartially extended.

“ A desire has been manifested in vain in the house of commons, to ascertain the *discipline* of sir John Moore's army, and its conduct, by the production of his orders, and their refusal is singular enough; but, as to the question, we found a mode of satisfaction to ourselves very simple and easy. We inquired of such parts of that army as we met, on its return, if it continued well organized, and were answered in the affirmative—for, whenever a soldier offended, the regiment desired leave to halt behind the brigade, and immediately tied him up to a tree and flogged him, often in the very face of the enemy. Again, when the sick, who could be but poorly provided for, from laziness, (or else weakness,) violated decorum in the functions of nature, too near the temporary hospital, such was the care of officers in regard to their health, that they immediately disgusted them with their own improprieties, by a prostration of the most sensible organs, in the same way as the cleanly housewife teaches her offending cat! We inquired if the Spaniards really refused all aid to the army, and were also answered yes; for—often they had been left nothing to themselves; and, in the suddenness and rapidity of retreat, one body was disappointed from another having been before it. On inquiring if they were ill-treated—or their women often violated? it was answered,—when they would not (or could not)

Discipline of
sir John Moore's
army.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January 15.
Disorders of the
embarking ar-
my.

and some peculiar forbearance, according to the influence of the particular varieties of their military education.

And in truth, it is not much to be wondered at, that, when both officers and men had so long been held in suspense; so often led to expect the approach of that consummation they so long devoutly wished,—possession of the capital, and a serious conflict with the enemy; and so repeatedly, and so suddenly, not to say conspicuously, disappointed; and at the moment of hope and expectation, led to the reverse;—in a retreat, disgraceful in every thing but the unsullied valour of the army: it cannot excite surprise that, in such a situation, an army constituted as this had been should experience disorganization, and occasion severe grounds for complaint in return.

Whatever was wanting in some departments, which appears sometimes to have been peculiarly the case, it is very agreeable to recognize the individual merit of the medical officers during this melancholy period of this disastrous campaign. Though suffering themselves every deprivation attendant on its numerous evils, they were ever at their post, and in addition to their particular duties,

furnish the soldiery, they naturally endeavoured to compel them to do it: and that as to the women, whenever the men did offer them violence they were punished for it.”

found means to assist the allies, and even occasionally to perform professional offices of humanity towards the enemy.

The junior members of the commissariat, to use sir John Moore's phrase, "were young," and the men employed in the operations of the engineer were often unequal to them.

The trying moment was however arrived when all were to be proved, under all the disadvantages of their various circumstances, and when it would be difficult to find any that were deficient. If aught were wanting to stamp the character of the British army when rightly instructed, and led with animation, let the circumstances preceding, and the conduct of, the battle of Corunna, be considered, and more can never be wanting.*

* It has been mentioned in the course of correspondence which is solicited from every quarter for this work, and may therefore be stated here, that the second battalion of the 31st regiment, and the third battalion of the 27th, were sent by sir David Baird round to Lisbon, and were not in the retreat of sir John Moore.

BOOK III.
CHAP. X.

1809.

January 16.

State of the embarking army.

CHAP. XI.

BATTLE OF CORUNNA, AND EMBARKATION OF
THE BRITISH TROOPS.

New Character of the Campaign.—Preparations of the Enemy.—Dispositions of the conflicting Armies.—Sir David Baird wounded.—The Right Flank of the British Army in Action.—Majors Napier and Stanhope wounded.—Sir John Moore killed.—Honourable Death of the British General.—The British Army withdrawn under General Hope.—Embarkation of the Troops.—Conclusion of the Campaign.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January 16.

Description of
the new charac-
ter of the cam-
paign.

WHATEVER the feelings which may have accompanied the reader in his progress through the disastrous campaign, which it has been the purpose of these pages to describe, or whatever the facts which it has been the unpleasing task of the writer to oppose to the declarations and conduct of its

ill-fated general, they must cease with the commencement of this chapter; where the British army will once more be seen in its native character, and sir John Moore appear only to claim the highest glory that can shine upon the soldier's fortune.

He who had treated with injurious coldness an increase of his British force, and refused the chief command over that of Spain; who had hesitated and declined to fight the enemy in detail while yet in lesser numbers, with an army high in spirit and perfect in equipment; was now to fight a battle, on terms every way reversed; and that army to support the honour of its country under circumstances which reflects the greatest splendour on the British arms.

An hour and a half after noon of the 16th of Jan. sir John Moore in continuation of his preparations for the embarkation of the army, mounted his horse, in great spirits, to visit the out-posts, but soon received a report from general Hope, confirmed by a deserter, that the enemy's line was getting under arms. He had scarcely arrived on the field, when the enemy's light troops were beheld, pouring down upon the right of the British army, formed as it has been described, and the advanced piquets were firing on them.

Sir John Moore ordered general Fraser to take a

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January 16.

Preparation for
battle.

BOOK III.

CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Preparation for
battle.

position on the right; and general Paget to support lord William Bentinck with the reserve, while a heavy cannonade from eleven guns on the hills covered the advance of four strong columns of the enemy: two approached the right from a wood, one the centre, and the other from El Burgo, the left of the British line, supported by a corps which rested half way down the hill. To the right, the attention of the general was chiefly directed, from an idea of its weakness of position, though it was composed of the 4th, 42d, and 50th regiments, with the guards in their rear, to which was added, the reserve under general Paget.

The enemy's artillery descended rapidly, the two armies approached each other under a heavy fire. Sir David Baird leading his division, lost his left arm by a grape shot, and was compelled to quit the field: but it had no effect on the steady advance of the troops.

Action com-
menced.

The ground was intersected by hedges and stone walls, except on the right, which in consequence was attempted to be turned by a French corps from the left of the enemy's line, (which outflanked that of the British) moving up the valley. The right wing of the fourth regiment instantly fell back, so as to form an obtuse angle with its left, and commenced a heavy and effectual fire from the right flank, which sir John Moore immediately approved, exclaiming,

“it was exactly what I wanted to be done.” The fiftieth regiment under majors Stanhope and Napier, passed the inclosure which separated them from the enemy, and charging most gallantly, drove him with great loss from the village of Elvina, at the expense of major Napier, having been wounded and taken prisoner, and the mortal wound of major Stanhope. The general also approved this charge with the exclamation, “Well done fiftieth! well done my majors!”

The forty-second rushed on the enemy with their usual fire till a wall obstructed them. The commander-in-chief bade them “remember Egypt,” and praised their conduct. A momentary error of the light company arose from his ordering a battalion of guards to their left flank, which, as their ammunition was exhausted, appeared coming to relieve them, but it was instantly repaired when the general pointed to their bayonets. The French artillery was now playing round the spot, from which a cannon-ball struck the left shoulder of the commander-in-chief and he fell.*

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.
1809.
January 16.
Battle of Co-
runna.

Death of sir
John Moore

* Of the fall and death of lieutenant-general sir John Moore, fortunate in the most affectionate of eulogists, various accounts have been given; which it would not be just to withhold.

The following letter from captain Hardinge describes his fall:

The circumstances which took place immediately after the fatal

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January 16.

Battle of Co-
runna.
Death of sir
John Moore.

Captain Hardinge reported the circumstance to general Hope, who now assumed the command.

blow which deprived the army of its gallant commander, sir John Moore, are of too interesting a nature not to be made public, for the admiration of his countrymen. But I trust that the instances of fortitude and heroism of which I was a witness, may also have another effect, that of affording some consolation to his relatives and friends.

With this feeling I have great satisfaction in committing to paper, according to your desire, the following relation.

I had been ordered by the commander-in-chief to desire a battalion of the guards to advance; which battalion was at one time intended to have dislodged a corps of the enemy from a large house and garden on the opposite side of the valley; and I was pointing out to the general the situation of the battalion, and our horses were touching, at the very moment that a cannon-shot from the enemy's battery carried away his left shoulder and part of the collar-bone, leaving the arm hanging by the flesh.

The violence of the stroke threw him off his horse, on his back. Not a muscle of his face altered, nor did a sigh betray the least sensation of pain.

I dismounted, and taking his hand, he pressed mine forcibly, casting his eyes very anxiously towards the 42d regiment, which was hotly engaged; and his countenance expressed satisfaction when I informed him that the regiment was advancing.

Assisted by a soldier of the 42d, he was removed a few yards behind the shelter of a wall.

Colonel Graham Balgowan, and captain Woodford, about this time came up; and, perceiving the state of sir John's wound, instantly rode off for a surgeon.

The blood flowed fast; but the attempt to stop it with my sash was useless, from the size of the wound.

Sir John assented to being removed in a blanket to the rear. In raising him for that purpose, his sword hanging on the wounded

The fall of sir John Moore, any more than the removal of sir David Baird, did not for *a moment*

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January 16.

Battle of Co-
rrunna.

Death of sir
John Moore.

side, touched his arm, and became entangled between his legs. I perceived the inconvenience, and was in the act of unbuckling it from his waist, when he said, in his usual tone and manner, and in a very distinct voice, "*It is well as it is. I had rather it should go out of the field with me.*"

Here I feel that it would be improper for my pen to venture to express the admiration with which I am penetrated in thus faithfully recording this instance of the invincible fortitude, and military delicacy, of this great man.

He was borne by six soldiers of the 42d and guards, my sash supporting him in an easy posture.

Observing the resolution and composure of his features, I caught at the hope that I might be mistaken in my fears of the wound being mortal; and remarked, that I trusted when the surgeons dressed the wound, that he would be spared to us, and recover.—He then turned his head round, and, looking steadfastly at the wound for a few seconds, said, "*No Hardinge, I feel that to be impossible.*"

I wished to accompany him to the rear, when he said, "*You need not go with me. Report to general Hope that I am wounded, and carried to the rear.*"

A serjeant of the 42d, and two spare files, in case of accident, were ordered to conduct their brave general to Corunna; and I hastened to report to general Hope.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

H. HARDINGE.

The tidings of this disaster were brought to sir David Baird when the surgeons were dressing his shattered arm. He instantly commanded them to desist, and run to attend on sir John Moore. When they arrived, and offered their assistance, he said

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Battle of Co-
runna.Death of sir
John Moore.

arrest the energies of the troops. They pressed on with astonishing ardour.

to them, “*You can be of no service to me, go to the soldiers, to whom you may be useful.*”

As the soldiers were carrying him slowly along, he made them turn him round frequently, to view the field of battle, and to listen to the firing; and was well pleased when the sound grew fainter.

A spring waggon bearing colonel Wynch wounded from the battle came up. The colonel asked, “*who was in the blanket?*” and being told it was sir John Moore, he wished him to be placed in the waggon. The general asked one of the Highlanders, whether he thought the waggon or the blanket best; who answered, that the blanket would not shake him so much, as he and the other soldiers would keep the step, and carry him easy. Sir John said, “*I think so too.*” So they proceeded with him to his lodgings in Corunna, the soldiers shedding tears as they went.

In carrying him through the passage of the house, he saw his faithful servant François, who was stunned at the spectacle. Sir John said to him, smiling, “*My friend, this is nothing.*”

Colonel Anderson adds as follows:

I met the general in the evening of the 16th, bringing in a blanket and sashes. He knew me immediately, though it was almost dark, squeezed me by the hand, and said, “*Anderson, don't leave me.*”

He spoke to the surgeons on their examining his wound, but was in such pain he could say little.

After some time, he seemed very anxious to speak to me, and at intervals got out as follows: “*Anderson, you know that I have always wished to die this way.*” He then asked, “*Are the French beaten?*” which he repeated to every one he knew, as they came in. “*I hope the people of England will be satisfied!—I hope my*

Colonel Beckwith with the rifle-corps returned the attempt of the enemy, by advancing on their

BOOK III.

CHAP. XI.

1809.

January 16.

Battle of Corunna.
Death of sir John Moore

country will do me justice!—Anderson,—you will see my friends as soon as you can.—Tell them—every thing—Say to my mother—” Here his voice quite failed, and he was excessively agitated.—“*Hope,—Hope,—I have much to say to him,—but—cannot get it out.—Are colonel Graham—and all my aides-de-camp well?*” (a private sign was made by colonel Anderson not to inform him that captain Burrard,* one of his aides-de-camp, was wounded in action.)—“*I have made my will, and have remembered my servants.—Colborne has my will,—and all my papers.*”

Major Colborne then came into the room. He spoke most kindly to him, and then said to me, “*Anderson, remember you go to —, and tell him it is my request, and that I expect he will give major Colborne a lieutenant-colomecy.—He has been long with me,—and I know him most worthy of it.*” He then asked major Colborne, “*if the French were beaten?*” And, on being told they were on every point, he said, “*It’s a great satisfaction for me to know we have beaten the French.—Is Paget in the room?*” On my telling him no; he said, “*Remember me to him.—It’s general Paget I mean—he is a fine fellow.—I feel myself so strong—I fear I shall be long dying. It is great uneasiness—It is great pain.—Every thing François says—is right.—I have the greatest confidence in him.*”

He thanked the surgeons for their trouble. Captains Percy and Stanhope, two of his aides-de-camp, then came into the room. He spoke kindly to both, and asked Percy, † *if all his aides-de-camp were well?*

* Son of sir Harry Burrard, a promising young officer, who died two days afterwards of his wound.

† The honourable captain Percy, son of lord Beverly.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January 16.

Battle of Co-
runna.
Death of sir
John Moore.

flank and nearly capturing a piece of cannon, till the force in the valley became superiour. General

After some interval he said, "*Stanhopc,*—remember me to your sister.*" He pressed my hand close to his body, and in a few minutes died without a struggle.

This was every syllable he uttered, as far as I can recollect, except asking occasionally to be placed in an easier posture.

P. ANDERSON, Lieut-col.

The monument of sir John Moore was now the subject of deliberation among his military friends who had survived the engagement; when colonel Anderson informed them that he had heard the general repeatedly declare, "that if he was killed in battle, he wished to be buried where he had fallen!" General Hope and colonel Graham, immediately acceded to this suggestion; and it was determined that the body should be interred on the rampart of the citadel of Corunna.

At twelve o'clock at night, the remains of sir John Moore were accordingly carried to the citadel, by colonel Graham, major Colborne, and the aides-de-camp, and deposited in colonel Graham's quarters.

A grave was dug by a party of the 9th regiment, the aides-de-camp attending by turns. No coffin could be procured, and the body was never undressed, but wrapt up by the officers of his staff in a military cloak and blankets.

Towards eight o'clock in the morning some firing was heard. It was then resolved to finish the interment, lest a serious attack should be made; on which the officers would be ordered away, and not suffered to pay the last duties to their general.

The officers of his family bore the body to the grave; the funeral service was read by the chaplain, and the corpse was covered with earth.

* The honourable captain Stanhope, third son to earl Stanhope, and nephew to the late Mr. Pitt.

Paget, with part of the reserve, the fifty-second in particular, then attacked this force of the enemy,

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

Besides showing these extraordinary marks of respect to the British army, the duke of Dalmatia, before he left Corunna, gave orders to Mr. Foureroy, the French consul, to erect a commemorating stone on the spot where sir John Moore fell, to testify the high estimation he was held in by his enemies. But this design was frustrated by the French being soon obliged to evacuate the town. The marquis of Romana, then, excited by similar sentiments, raised up, on the field of battle of Corunna, a monument to the British general.

To these may be added, as an evidence of readiness to yield every testimony to merit, the following

GENERAL ORDERS.

The benefits derived to an army, from the example of a distinguished commander, do not terminate at his death; his virtues live in the recollection of his associates, and his fame remains the strongest incentive to great and glorious actions.

In this view, the commander-in-chief, amidst the deep and universal regret which the death of lieutenant-general sir John Moore has occasioned, recalls to the troops the military career of that illustrious officer, for their instruction and imitation.

Sir John Moore, from his youth, embraced the profession with the feelings and sentiments of a soldier; he felt, that a perfect knowledge, and an exact performance of the humble, but important duties of a subaltern officer, are the best foundations for subsequent military fame; and his ardent mind, while it looked forward to those brilliant achievements for which it was formed, applied itself with energy and exemplary assiduity to the duties of that station.

In the school of regimental duty, he obtained that correct knowledge of his profession so essential to the proper direction of the gallant spirit of the soldier; and he was enabled to establish

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

and so pressed its left wing, that it was compelled to throw itself entirely back, and the whole strength

a characteristic order and regularity of conduct, because the troops found in their leader a striking example of the discipline which he enforced on others.

Having risen to command, he signalized his name in the West Indies, in Holland, and in Egypt.* The unremitting attention with which he devoted himself to the duties of every branch of his profession, obtained him the confidence of sir Ralph Abercrombie; and he became the companion in arms of that illustrious officer, who fell at the head of his victorious troops, in an action which maintained our national superiority over the arms of France.

Thus sir John Moore, at an early period, obtained, with general approbation, that conspicuous station in which he gloriously terminated his useful and honourable life.

In a military character, obtained amidst the dangers of climate, the privations incident to service, and the sufferings of repeated wounds, it is difficult to select any one point as a preferable subject for praise: it exhibits, however, one feature so particularly characteristic of the man, and so important to the best interests of the service, that the commander-in-chief is pleased to mark it with his peculiar approbation.

The life of sir John Moore was spent among the troops.

* It is observed, and not altogether perhaps graciously, by his brother, that in enumerating the scenes where sir John Moore conspicuously distinguished himself, Corsica and Ireland have been forgotten.

In Corsica, he adds, that sir John stormed the convention-fort, and the out-works of Calvi, which was followed by the conquest of the island.

In Ireland he gained the battle of Wexford, which was the prelude to the suppression of the rebellion.

of the enemy now drew itself against the British centre.

Here they were at once repulsed by its generals, Leith and Manningham, who occupied good ground, and were therefore enabled to use artillery with effect. The enemy, also, tried the left without success; it was still more favourably posted. In turn they were attacked, in a small body, in the village of Betanzos, by lieutenant-colonel Nicholls, with some companies of the 14th foot, and compelled to evacuate it with loss. The firing, which, on the part of the British, had been quick and steady throughout, continued, though desultorily, till dark: that of the enemy ceased at six o'clock. They had given way at every point, though not in a degree, perhaps, to permit the ordinary claim of a brilliant victory on the part of the British army,

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.
January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

During the season of repose, his time was devoted to the care and instruction of the officer and soldier; in war, he courted service in every quarter of the globe. Regardless of personal considerations, he esteemed that to which his country called him the post of honour; and by his undaunted spirit, and unconquerable perseverance, he pointed the way to victory.

His country, the object of his latest solicitude, will rear a monument to his lamented memory; and the commander-in-chief feels he is paying the best tribute to his fame, by thus holding him forth as an example to the army.

By order of his royal highness the commander-in-chief.

HARRY CALVERT, Adj.-general.

Horse Guards, Feb. 1, 1809.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

yet certainly so decisively, as to leave to it the ground it occupied at the commencement of the battle, and which ground also its picquets and reserve maintained, till every object of utility was effected.

Of the loss on either side, it is not likely that a perfect estimate could be formed. That of the British troops was considered by the officer, who held the final command, at between seven and eight hundred; that of the enemy, double. Other accounts state the enemy's loss greater; but the civilities of a polished enemy are not the surest means of ascertaining such a fact; and though the impression thus made, on certainly a larger force of the enemy, would seem to claim a victory, (by no means bloodless,) yet there is reason to fear that, under all the circumstances, of withdrawing the British army, but few means were left to ascertain even any numerical statements.

Under all circumstances there could not be wanting, even in the enlightened and vigorous mind of the new commander-in-chief, sufficient arguments to induce him, in this *last step* of the plan of sir John Moore, to complete it, and embark the army.

In less than four hours, therefore, having shewn the enemy the nature of the composition of a British army, under the worst circumstances, the

troops moved towards Corunna, by brigades, leaving strong picquets, and a rear-guard of 2000 men, under major-general Beresford.

Every arrangement, it appears, was made highly creditably in every instance. Boats were so in readiness, that nearly the whole army was embarked during the night, and even including picquets, *before day-light.*

The rear-guard still remained on shore.

On the morning of the 17th, the French made a demonstration with their light troops on the heights of St. Lucia, and planted cannon on the rising ground, near the harbour. General Hill's brigade embarked at two o'clock, under the citadel. General Beresford sent off all the sick and wounded that could be removed; and, lastly, the rear-guard got into their boats without interruption.

The whole was conducted, as far as regarded the navy, and also the officers concerned in the transport service, with the greatest energy and skill.

From the fire of a French battery, four transports having cut their cables, ran aground; and, the troops being taken out, were burnt.

A degree of peculiar deference was shewn by the enemy on this occasion. Major Napier, of whose capture mention has already been made, was treated with the highest distinction, and sent back

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

by the French generals, as were also the sick and wounded troops and the women.

The intention to commemorate respectfully the fall of the British general, was also a mark of peculiar complacency.

There are, in addition to the various documents from which the preceding accounts have been drawn, some fleeting circumstances, preserved by others, who had a share in the actions they describe, of which it is proper the reader should be enabled to avail himself. From one of these,* the following incidents are selected:—

On the 14th the British and French videttes were quite near to each other, within hearing; and several riflemen, concealed on the side of the road, were ready to direct their aim at any of the enemy's officers who might advance to reconnoitre. Two English officers inadvertently rode past their own videttes, and would, in all probability, have fallen into the hands of the French, had they not been called to by some of the soldiers, and made sensible of their danger, which they escaped by returning as quickly as possible.

The same day were seen two French officers, apparently amusing themselves by picking up shells

* Milburne, Narrative of circumstances attending the retreat, &c. 36.

on the sands of the bay at low water, who might easily have been shot by the riflemen, had they been permitted to fire on them, being far within the range of their pieces. On several parts of the road, in this neighbourhood, walls of loose stones were thrown across, for the purpose of obstructing the progress of cavalry, which also afforded excellent cover for the riflemen to conceal themselves behind. The houses and villages on both sides of the road were completely abandoned by the Spaniards, and of course taken temporary possession of by the armies.

During the night, the French fires, from their number and extent, evinced their force to be very considerable, and in the morning it was discovered they had received a large reinforcement, and that they had moved their position to the heights on the right.

On the 15th the advanced guard of the British army, which was stationed on the heights near a place called Villaboa, was attacked by the enemy, as were the other outposts, probably with the view of ascertaining with more certainty the nature of their position, and the amount of their force. This was considered as a preliminary measure to a general battle, which was confirmed by the events of the following day.

The French this day posted two guns at a de-

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

tached house on the road, from whence they fired on the British lines. They were soon silenced by two English field-pieces, and obliged to retire with precipitation.

The English guns were so extremely well served and pointed, that a shot from one of them was seen to kill several of the enemy, whilst their efforts were attended with little effect, the shots mostly falling short of the objects they were aimed at; indeed, I neither saw nor heard of any mischief done by them, unless the killing of a mule may be considered deserving of that appellation. One shell passed over the advanced post it was directed against, falling near the road amongst several British soldiers, without occasioning any of them the smallest injury.

The whole day was passed in continual skirmishing, during which the cool and intrepid conduct of the British troops was eminently conspicuous and exemplary.

The late lieutenant-colonel Mackenzie, of the 1st battalion of the 5th regiment, particularly distinguished himself by his activity and bravery. Having had one horse shot under him, he remounted another, advanced again to the attack, and unfortunately received a wound from a musket-ball, which occasioned his death in a few hours afterwards.

A most interesting spectacle presented itself, during this day, in the movements and operations of the contending parties, being sufficiently near for me plainly to distinguish every thing that took place. In one instance I noticed a detachment, consisting, I should think, of more than a hundred of the enemy, take possession of a house on the side of a hill, from whence they were speedily dislodged by the British artillery, the first shot from whom penetrated completely through the house, compelling them to seek safety on the height by a precipitate flight.

This day and the preceding a great number of horses and mules, which had been disabled, were shot in the square of the arsenal at St. Lúcia, near Corunna.

The firing did not entirely cease till the evening, when the outposts were relieved, and the brave English troops who had been engaged were withdrawn to take that rest which their vigorous and arduous exertions rendered so requisite.

The army in general had been supplied with their due proportion of rations since their arrival at Corunna, which the uncommon rapidity of the retreat, and the local circumstances previously detailed, prevented their receiving with regularity during their march. Those soldiers who required them were also furnished with shoes, stockings,

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.
January.
Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III.

CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

and other articles of clothing, and new arms were delivered out, to replace those that had been lost or rendered unfit for service.

On the morning of the 16th, an unusual degree of bustle and animation appeared to prevail amongst the Spanish troops and inhabitants, his excellency the commandant, *Don Joaquin Garcia Morena*, having, by proclamation and other methods, exhorted them to exert their utmost efforts in co-operating with their brave allies to repel the assaults of the enemy, and to afford them every possible facility towards effecting their embarkation, declaring, at the same time, it was his determination to defend the place to the last extremity.

This venerable and patriotic officer, though apparently upwards of seventy years of age, evinced the utmost activity and zeal in the performance of his duties, being the greatest part of every day on horseback, personally inspecting the progress of the works, and the organization of the volunteers.*

Mr. Milburne states, I again this morning vi-

* The confidents of the inhabitants appeared to be considerably increased by the events of the preceding day. At the house wherein I had apartments, the females of the family, who were in high spirits, amused themselves by dancing to their castanets, at the same time expressing their admiration of the English, and contempt for the French, whom they stigmatised with the appellation of *piccaroon*.

sited the English advanced posts, which had not altered their position since the preceding day; at this period, every thing appearing perfectly quiet, the soldiers, excepting those on sentry, were resting and taking refreshment, but still in a situation ready to turn out at a moment's notice. The men had erected for themselves huts, formed of boards, straw, and other materials, hastily collected from the buildings in the neighbourhood, there being very few tents.

Notwithstanding the fatigue the English soldiers had altogether undergone, and the severe conflicts they had recently been engaged in, they appeared in excellent spirits, expressing the highest confidence in their officers, and seemed anxious, by being again opposed to the enemy, to bring to a conclusion the object of their illustrious general-in-chief, of the favourable issue of which they entertained no doubt. It was between the hours of ten and eleven that I rode to the English outposts.

The morning was extremely fine, and I had a very distant view of the enemy's army. A large body of cavalry and infantry, evidently a reinforcement, at this time were marching up to the heights in front, accompanied by bands of music, drums, and fifes. A few shots were fired at their

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

rear by the British, but I believe the distance was too great for them to do execution.

The extent of the French lines could plainly be ascertained through a telescope, and I could distinguish engineers and artillery-men busily employed in their front, as I imagined, erecting a battery. Were I permitted to offer an opinion of the numbers of which the enemy's army consisted, to judge from the extent and depth of their line, I should certainly estimate them at upwards of thirty thousand. Soon after I reached Corunna, where I had business with the inspector of hospitals, the French army commenced their attack on the British outposts, which I had just visited.*

A heavy discharge of artillery took place about one o'clock, from the enemy's batteries on the heights, in front of the army, which was returned by such of the British artillery as had not been embarked, a brigade of which had been previously

* Having settled my business with Dr. Shapter, to whose polite attention I feel myself greatly indebted, I rode back to the scene of action, where I took a station from whence I could see what passed, and also be at hand to afford any professional assistance in my power that might be required. This enables me to offer what I trust may be deemed not altogether an uninteresting detail of events that passed under my actual inspection; and, as I subsequently ascertained the names of officers and corps engaged, I hope it will be found tolerably correct.

stationed in the main road, ready to act as circumstances might require. The commanding position of the enemy's guns enabled them to have a superior effect to those of the English, who were so much below them. The principal attack of the enemy was directed to the division under sir David Baird, which was undoubtedly the weakest portion of the British line, against which they advanced three very strong columns. Nothing could possibly exceed the intrepidity, firmness, and good order, with which this division sustained the attack. After a very arduous struggle, the British succeeded in driving the enemy down from the heights, whereon they had attacked them, and charged them with the utmost spirit and ardour half way up the hill, on the other side, which they had before occupied, to the place where they had posted their guns, which very nearly fell into the hands of the English, and were only preserved by being hastily withdrawn.

A village to the right of general Baird's division became an object of obstinate contest between the two armies. It was situated at the foot of a hill, and crowded with French troops; these were gallantly attacked by the English, no less than three several times, who at length succeeded in carrying the place, after an immense slaughter of the enemy.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

The fifty-second light infantry, and the ninety-fifth rifle-corps, also particularly distinguished themselves near to this place, being engaged on the right of the village, and actually pursued the French up the hill, who fled before them with confusion and dismay.

The left was so strongly posted, that the enemy did not consider it prudent to hazard an attempt at forcing them, contenting themselves with directing at them a very furious cannonade. Towards the evening, however, a part of the fourteenth regiment of infantry, who formed part of the left of the line, were detached, and who executed a most gallant and glorious enterprize. A very numerous body of the French troops having occupied a village at a considerable distance in their front, they were ordered to dislodge them. This they succeeded in effecting at the point of the bayonet, but not without sustaining severe loss, as the French disputed the possession of the place with determined obstinacy and perseverance, the conflict only ending with the flight.

The British army commenced its retreat for embarkation about eleven o'clock, taking with them as many of their wounded as were in a condition to be moved; the remainder they were under the painful necessity of leaving on the field along with those of the enemy. The order in which the

troops marched from their positions, was such as to reflect high credit on the character and discipline of British soldiers, the artillery taking the lead. The picquets, however, remained at their respective posts, until between four and five o'clock on the morning of the 17th, when they were likewise withdrawn, without any movements of the enemy having taken place indicative of their being acquainted with what was passing; although it is more than probable, from past experience, he felt no inclination to offer any obstruction to the execution of their plans, until they were too far removed to have it in their power to recriminate.

The commissioner and captains of the royal navy* exerted themselves, in the most strenuous and praise-worthy manner, in co-operating with the commanders of the land-forces, in effecting the embarkation, which was accomplished with a degree of expedition, never equalled, perhaps, upon any similar occasion.

* Commissioner Bowen.

Captains—The Hon. H. Curzon.

———— Gosselin.

———— Boys.

———— Rainer.

———— Saret.

———— Digby.

———— Carden, and Mackenzie.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

The brigades, under the command of major-general Hill and major-general Beresford, received directions to remain on shore, as a rear-guard, and to watch the motions of the enemy. The remainder of the army got safely on board the transports before day-light. The brigade of major-general Hill was stationed on the promontory at the rear of the town, and that commanded by major-general Beresford took post on the inland front of Corunna.

Nothing could possibly exceed the gallantry and resolution displayed by the British soldiers, under the very trying circumstances in which they were placed; by which, in defiance of every difficulty, in the face of an enemy's army of far superior numbers, they were enabled to effect the object of embarkation, without any other loss than what had previously taken place in the field of battle.

From the unavoidable confusion and uncertainty which must ever attend all the operations of an army during the night, it was impossible to pay that regard which would have been desirable towards effecting the embarkation with precision and regularity, and therefore it happened that the regiments became completely intermixed, the troops getting on board any of the ships that could receive them, without paying the slightest regard to their

original destinations. This circumstance occasioned the sick and wounded in many instances to be deprived of the requisite medical and surgical assistance, as on board many of the transports there were no professional men, whilst in others there were several. It was intended to have remedied these inconveniencies the first fine day that should occur after the sailing of the fleet, which, however, the uncommon quickness of their passage to England prevented being accomplished, and fortunately became a matter of less importance.

The boats belonging to the men-of-war, rendered the most important services, being employed during the whole of the embarkation; and were it not for the wonderful intrepidity and exertions of their crews, for which British sailors are proverbially remarkable, much greater inconveniences would have taken place than were actually experienced. The boats continued rowing from the shore to the ships, and back again, the whole of the night of the sixteenth, and during the greater part of the following day, with little intermission; and although it blew a very heavy gale, and the sea ran extremely high, and was very rough all the morning, these gallant fellows, regardless of danger, and despising bodily toil, continued their meritorious exertions with the utmost alacrity cheerfulness, and their solicitude to render every assistance in their power to

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.



1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

the soldiers, evincing the most striking and honourable proofs of their generosity, courage and humanity.* Most of the men-of-war also weighed at the same time, with the exception of the flag-ship, which remained at anchor.

Several of the enemy's shots passed very near and over the transports on which I was embarked, and many fell around her, without doing the slightest injury; and I noticed a few which struck other ships without doing material damage.

Soon after dark, major-general Beresford having taken a friendly leave of the governor, who appeared perfectly satisfied with the necessity of the British movements, withdrew his brigade from the land front of the town, and, together with the whole of the sick and wounded who had not been previously moved, were embarked by one o'clock on the morning of the 18th of January.

The transport † on board which I embarked was

* "In consequence of the good order maintained by the troops, and the unwearied exertions of commissioner Bowen, the captains, and other officers of the navy, the agents, as well as the boats' crews, many of whom were for *two days without food and without repose*, the army has been embarked to the last man."—Vide the hon. rear-admiral De Courcy's despatch to the hon. W. W. Pole, dated 18th January.

† Having applied for a passage to England to the hon. major-general Broderick, and offered to Dr. Shepter, the inspector of hospitals, my professional assistance whilst on board, he was

one of the last that quitted the harbour, as the master, a bold and experienced seaman, was determined to preserve his anchors if possible, which he fortunately accomplished, notwithstanding the shots were flying about in every direction. The appearance of the shipping after dark, from the varied disposition of the lights on the men-of-war, agent-ships, and transports, were extremely beautiful, and had an interesting and grand effect; and the enemy's fires on the heights, as well as those of the British, added considerably to the brilliancy of the scene.

By order of admiral De Courcy, the transports were directed to get clear of the harbour as soon as they had received on board their complement of troops, and then to lay too for further instruction. It blowing extremely hard, it was not possible in every instance to comply with the admiral's orders.

The wounded men being very uncomfortably accommodated, and destitute of every necessary their condition required, the master of the *Alfred*, with the concurrence and approbation of the medical officers on board, was induced to make sail at three

pleased to give me a letter to staff-surgeon Taggart, who was in charge of the sick in the *Alfred* hospital-ship, desiring I might be accommodated in her; and I am happy to acknowledge this gentleman's politeness, and to bear testimony to the humane attention with which (though in a bad state of health) he discharged the duties of his station, as did assistant-surgeon Roe.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Embarkation of
the British
troops from Co-
runna.

o'clock in the morning, and arriving off Plymouth on the twentieth, anchored in the sound on the following day.

Between the period of our arrival and the 25th, near two hundred sail of transports came in, but, owing to the heavy gales that prevailed, the sick and wounded were not immediately sent on shore; this, however, took place as soon as possible, and the scene that presented itself was truly distressing; though I must remark, that most of the descriptions that I have met with have been greatly exaggerated. It is but paying a just tribute to the disinterested humanity of the inhabitants of Plymouth, to state that nothing could possibly exceed their anxiety and exertions to afford every assistance in their power towards the accommodation of the sick and wounded officers and soldiers, and to alleviate their sufferings; and the mayor* and corporation took the lead in these laudable endeavours, in a manner highly creditable to them in their official and individual capacities.†

* William Langmead, esq.

† I am personally indebted to the attention of Mr. Cleather and Mr. Dunsterville, of the corporate body, who at my request were so kind as to procure the attendance of a physician, (Dr. Remmett,) on assistant-surgeon Campbell, of the royal artillery, for whom I was particularly interested; and who, by the care and skill of that gentleman, recovered from a very dangerous typhus fever.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

Arrival of the
British troops
in England.

It has been with a considerable degree of regret, that, since my arrival in this country, I have heard a variety of reports in circulation relative to the events attending the expedition to Spain, and particularly of the circumstances that occurred during the retreat of the army to Corunna, which have not only been very different from the truth, but in many instances totally devoid of foundation.— Amongst other things, it has been asserted, that great numbers of the soldiers composing his majesty's German legion had deserted to the enemy; but, in common justice to this excellent and deserving body, I must declare, that whilst I was on the continent I never heard of any such circumstance having taken place; on the contrary, every officer with whom I have conversed respecting the king's German legion, (and they have been many,) has assured me that they behaved, on every occasion, with the discipline, fidelity, and bravery, which are the characteristics of good soldiers.*

It gives me great pleasure to have it in my power thus publicly to contradict a report, which

* The third regiment of German dragoons were part of the troops composing the picquet, in the gallant affair in which major-general Stewart acquired such well-merited reputation, by the defeat of a large body of French imperial guards, and taking prisoner their commander, general Lefebvre.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

could alone have originated in motives the most base and malignant.

Respecting the death of the late major-general Anstruther, several contradictory stories having been circulated, the following account, as I received it from a gentleman of the highest respectability and unimpeachable veracity, may be relied on as correct; and as it may afford a melancholy satisfaction to his surviving friends, I hope the introduction of it will not be deemed improper:—

General Anstruther died of an inflammation of the lungs, brought on by exposure to the extreme inclemency of the weather, and remaining long in wet clothes.

The gallant general neglecting to use the precautions and remedies his situation required, continued his praise-worthy exertions to the very last, and did not give up till his complaint had reduced him to a state evincing his approaching dissolution, when he became unable to mount his horse, and was then placed in a carriage and conveyed to his quarters, where he expired the next day, universally regretted.

The Spaniards, too, have been accused, not only of apathy and indifference towards the cause of their rightful sovereign, but of absolute hostility towards our troops, particularly the inhabitants of

Benevente, Toro,* Astorga, and Villa Franca, &c. I have, in a preceding part of this letter, adverted to petty disputes which occasionally took place between the British soldiers and the inhabitants of some of the towns through which I passed; but they were by no means of a serious nature, or deserving the appellations with which they have been branded.

It is undeniable, that on many occasions, where provisions and other necessaries were expected to have been cheerfully and abundantly supplied by the inhabitants of towns through which the British troops marched, that little or none could be obtained on any terms whatever. This, however, did not originate, as has been erroneously asserted, in any dislike of the Spaniards to the English, but merely from the extreme distress in which they were themselves involved. Great numbers of the cattle had been driven to the mountains for security against the rapacity of the French; and their stores of other provisions were almost exhausted by supplies for their countrymen in arms; and as the operations in agriculture were in a great measure suspended, they had a dismal prospect to look forward to for future exigencies; these circumstances of course rendered these poor, unfortunate persons

* I did not personally visit either of the two places first mentioned.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.
January.

(exposed to all the calamities of a residence on the theatre of war, of which an adequate idea can scarcely be formed by any one but an eye-witness,) reluctant to part with the slender pittance in their possession.

To the above may be added, that the unexpected retreat of the British army increased all their apprehensions in an eminent degree, whilst its sudden appearance in their towns precluded the possibility of the inhabitants supplying themselves from the adjacent country with the articles required. The total ignorance of the Spanish language on the part of the English soldiers, and *vice versa*, also occasioned mutual misunderstandings, which were in a few instances attended with disagreeable consequences. Another cause why the expectations of the British army, as to receiving requisite accommodations and assistance from the inhabitants, were so frequently disappointed, was the immense numbers of their sick and wounded countrymen, who were flocking from the seats of war in the different quarters of the kingdom towards their respective homes, with whom the towns were continually crowded. The situation and wretched appearance of these unfortunate people were truly pitiable: those unable to walk were conveyed on cars, whilst others, through hunger, sickness, and fatigue, scarcely able to crawl, were compelled to make

their way on foot, almost naked, and generally without shoes or stockings. Even in the Spanish hospitals and other places set apart for the reception of the sick and wounded, the unhappy patients were nearly destitute of every requisite to sustain existence, not to say of the conveniences and comforts necessary for their condition. Some judgment may be formed of their distresses, from the circumstance of one poor man, who, according to the interpretation of my native servant, asserted that he had been fourteen days without any other sustenance than a little bad wine, and sometimes a small quantity of broth made of vegetables and oil: indeed, his appearance fully established the veracity of his statement.

In many instances the British soldiers, with that liberality, feeling, and generosity, which are equally their characteristics as spirit, intrepidity, and courage, would share with these miserable objects their own scanty pittance, the deprivation of which they must have felt most severely.

I met a great number of sick and wounded Spaniards on my journey *from* Corunna, particularly between Lugo and Villa Franca, escorted by armed men, scarcely in a better condition than those under their care. The officers and men exhibited similar appearances of wretchedness and intense fatigue; and the whole advanced at a rate

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.1809.
January.

BOOK III.
 CHAP. XI.
 1809.
 January.

of not more, on an average, than a mile an hour.* Should this statement require confirmation, I can, with confidence, appeal to almost every officer of the British army, most of whom must have witnessed similar scenes during their service in Spain.

Notwithstanding their bigotry and hatred of heretics, usually ascribed to the Roman Catholic priests, I with pleasure observed that these persons on all occasions appeared extremely anxious to do every thing in their power to promote the comfort, and contribute to the accommodation of the sick and wounded of the British army.—Many English officers were greatly indebted to the hospitality and kindness of Spanish monks and friars, who (though by no means in possession of an abundance of the good things of this life) were emulous to share their stores with the distressed.

An instance of goodness and humanity in one of these clerical gentlemen, which I am about to relate, will place the sentiments and conduct of this class of men in the most favourable point of view. My servant being extremely ill, I procured him

* Some of these men, on being asked what was the matter with them, replied, "Muchas enfermos tango hambre, tango mucha sad;" which is, in English, "very sick, very hungry, and very dry." And on giving them a piece of bread, they expressed themselves thus: "I thank you for it, and may you live many years!"

admission into a room which was occupied by an English serjeant and his family at Lugo; but having neither bedding or covering, a benevolent monk instantly offered to supply him with his own, which he accordingly brought from his cell.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

I am sensible that what I have asserted on this subject is in direct opposition to the statements furnished by many British officers since their return from Corunna, who have indiscriminately accused the inhabitants of the peninsula, of every denomination, class, and profession, as having exhibited the most perfect apathy and indifference, not only to the physical wants of the English troops, but towards the cause in support of which they visited their country as disinterested and generous allies. But may it not be fairly presumed, that several of these officers rather withdrew from, than put themselves in the way of, receiving or witnessing those kindnesses and attentions that others liberally partook of; and, from the reports alone of some who perhaps might have individual cause of complaint, have taken occasion to include the whole Spanish nation as deserving of the reproach which in justice should only attach to a few.

Indeed, the manners, customs, and mode of living in Spain, are so widely different from those of England, that every candid and liberal-minded person should make great allowances for these

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

circumstances, in forming an estimate of the sentiments and disposition of the inhabitants, more especially at a period during which they were exposed to such alterations and vicissitudes, privations and distresses, as might rationally be presumed to have a material influence on the natural bias of their temper, which has ever been allowed to be "*noble, generous, and humane.*"

Englishmen are so accustomed to the enjoyment of every comfort and accommodation in their own country, that they feel more sensibly than the inhabitants of other nations the difficulties and inconveniences to which they are under the necessity of submitting in their visits to the continent. There is no country in Europe perhaps so well calculated to conquer British prejudices as Spain, the hardships and privations the traveller must sustain, in a short period, inuring him to the patient endurance of what cannot possibly be avoided. The *passados*, or inns, except a few in the principal towns, are, generally speaking, little better than hovels, affording shelter from the inclemency of the weather, but scarcely any thing else. The beds are commonly nothing more than heaps of straw, usually well stocked with inhabitants of a sable hue; and, in lieu of sheets, blankets, and quilt, the traveller must depend on his own cloak or

clothing for covering during the period of his repose.*

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.
January.

As to their cookery, nothing can possibly be more disgusting to an English palate, most of their favourite dishes being seasoned with articles, amongst which garlic and rancid oil generally compose the principal ingredients. Custom, however, easily reconciles these matters to a person possessed of a common portion of energy and fortitude of mind, and he is amply recompenced by the interesting and sublime scenes which the traverse of any part of the peninsula affords him numerous opportunities of contemplating.

Immense bodies of armed men marching through the country in every direction, and the glorious and important struggle in which they are engaged, for the preservation of every thing that is or

* The difference of travelling post in Spain and in England, is very striking, and I cannot but feel surprised, that the Spaniards, who are naturally extremely intelligent and acute, should not have profited by the inventions of their neighbours in this particular. The post-carriages are exactly similar, at this period, to those described by the ingenious author of *Gil Blas*; clumsy and inconvenient. They have only two wheels, and have some resemblance to an old-fashioned English one-horse chaise, with curtains in front. Mules are generally used for drawing these carriages. In one particular, the Spanish posting possesses a decided preference to that in England, as there is no possibility of the traveller being imposed upon. The rates are fixed by the government, and heavy penalties annexed to a deviation from them.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.
January.

ought to be dear to humanity, at the present momentous æra, renders Spain an object peculiarly interesting.

The whole of the circumstances of the battle of Corunna, are recapitulated in the following despatch of general Hope, which, not more its authority than the eloquence with which it is written, forming, indeed, a model for such documents, demands that it should be inserted here.

His Majesty's Ship Audacious, off Corunna,
January 18, 1809.

Sir,

In compliance with the desire contained in your communication of yesterday, I avail myself of the first moment I have been able to command, to detail to you the occurrences of the action which took place in front of Corunna, on the 16th instant.

It will be in your recollection, that about one in the afternoon of that day, the enemy, who had in the morning received reinforcements, and who had placed some guns in front of the right and left of his line, was observed to be moving troops towards his left flank, and forming various columns of attack at that extremity of the strong and commanding position which on the morning of the 15th he had taken in our immediate front.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

This indication of his intention was immediately succeeded by the rapid and determined attack which he made upon your division, which occupied the right of our position. The events which occurred during that period of the action you are fully acquainted with. The first effort of the enemy was met by the commander of the forces, and by yourself, at the head of the 42d regiment, and the brigade under major-general lord William Bentinck.

The village on your right became an object of obstinate contest.

I lament to say, that soon after the severe wound which deprived the army of your services, lieutenant-general sir John Moore, who had just directed the most able disposition, fell by a cannon-shot. The troops, though not unacquainted with the irreparable loss they had sustained, were not dismayed, but by the most determined bravery not only repelled every attempt of the enemy to gain ground, but actually forced him to retire, although he had brought up fresh troops in support of those originally engaged.

The enemy, finding himself foiled in every attempt to force the right of the position, endeavoured by numbers to turn it. A judicious and well-timed movement which was made by major-general Paget with the reserve, (which corps had moved

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.



1808.

January.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.
General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

out of its cantonments to support the right of the army,) by a vigorous attack, defeated this intention. The major-general, having pushed forward the 95th (rifle-corps) and 1st battalion 52d regiments, drove the enemy before him : and, in his rapid and judicious advance, threatened the left of the enemy's position. This circumstance, with the position of lieutenant-general Fraser's division, (calculated to give still further security to the right of the line) induced the enemy to relax his efforts in that quarter.

They were however more forcibly directed towards the centre, where they were again successfully resisted by the brigade under major-general Manningham, forming the left of your division, and a part of that under major-general Leith, forming the right of the division under my orders. Upon the left, the enemy at first contented himself with an attack upon our picquets, which, however, in general, maintained their ground. Finding however, his efforts unavailing on the right and centre, he seemed determined to render the attack upon the left more serious, and had succeeded in obtaining possession of the village through which the great road to Madrid passes, and which was situated in front of that part of the line. From this post, however, he was soon expelled, with considerable loss, by a gallant attack of some

companies of the 2d battalion 14th regiment, under lieutenant-colonel Nicholls. Before five in the evening, we had not only successfully repelled every attack made upon the position, but had gained ground in almost all points, and occupied a more forward line than at the commencement of the action, whilst the enemy confined his operations to a cannonade, and the fire of his light troops, with a view to draw off his other corps. At six the firing ceased. The different brigades were re-assembled on the ground they occupied in the morning, and the picquets and advanced posts resumed their original stations.

Notwithstanding the decided and marked superiority which at this moment the gallantry of the troops had given them over an enemy, who, from his numbers and the commanding advantages of his position, no doubt expected an easy victory, I did not, on reviewing all circumstances, conceive that I should be warranted in departing from what I knew was the fixed and previous determination of the late commander of the forces, to withdraw the army on the evening of the 16th, for the purpose of embarkation, the previous arrangements for which had already been made by his order, and were in fact far advanced at the commencement of the action. The troops quitted their position

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January -

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

about ten at night, with a degree of order that did them credit. The whole of the artillery that remained unembarked, having been withdrawn, the troops followed in the order prescribed, and marched to their respective points of embarkation in the town and neighbourhood of Corunna. The picquets remained at their posts until five on the morning of the 17th, when they were also withdrawn with similar orders, and without the enemy having discovered the movement.

By the unremitting exertions of captains the honourable H. Curzon, Gosselin, Boys, Rainier, Serret, Hawkins, Digby, Carden, and Mackenzie, of the royal navy, who, in pursuance of the orders of rear-admiral De Courcy, were entrusted with the service of embarking the army; and in consequence of the arrangements made by commissioner Bowen, captains Bowen and Shepherd, and the other agents for transports, the whole of the army was embarked with an expedition which has seldom been equalled. With the exception of the brigades under major-generals Hill and Beresford, which were destined to remain on shore until the movements of the enemy should become manifest, the whole was afloat before day-light.

The brigade of major-general Beresford, which was alternately to form our rear-guard, occupied

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

the land front of the town of Corunna; that under major-general Hill was stationed in reserve, on the Promontory, in rear of the town.

The enemy pushed his light troops towards the town, soon after eight o'clock in the morning of the 17th, and shortly after occupied the heights of St. Lucia, which command the harbour. But, notwithstanding this circumstance, and the manifold defects of the place; there being no apprehension that the rear-guard could be forced, and the disposition of the Spaniards appearing to be good, the embarkation of major-general's Hill brigade was commenced and completed by three in the afternoon; major-general Beresford, with that zeal and ability which is so well known to yourself and the whole army, having fully explained, to the satisfaction of the Spanish governor, the nature of our movement, and having made every previous arrangement, withdrew his corps from the land-front of the town soon after dark, and was, with all the wounded that had not been previously moved, embarked before one this morning.

Circumstances forbid us to indulge the hope, that the victory with which it has pleased providence to crown the efforts of the army, can be attended with any very brilliant consequences to Great Britain. It is clouded by the loss of one of her best soldiers. It has been achieved at the

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809

January.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

termination of a long and harassing service. The superior numbers, and advantageous position of the enemy, not less than the actual situation of this army, did not admit of any advantage being reaped from success. It must be however to you, to the army, and to our country, the sweetest reflection, that the lustre of the British arms has been maintained amidst many disadvantageous circumstances. The army, which had entered Spain amidst the fairest prospects, had no sooner completed its junction, than, owing to the multiplied disasters that dispersed the native armies around us, it was left to its own resources. The advance of the British corps from the Duero, afforded the best hope that the south of Spain might be relieved; but this generous effort to save the unfortunate people, also, afforded the enemy the opportunity of directing every effort of his numerous troops, and concentrating all his principal resources, for the destruction of the only regular force in the north of Spain.

You are well aware with what diligence this system has been pursued.

These circumstances produced the necessity of rapid and harassing marches, which had diminished the numbers, exhausted the strength, and impaired the equipment of the army. Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, and those more

immediately attached to a defensive position, which the imperious necessity of covering the harbour of Corunna for a time had rendered indispensable to assume, the native and undaunted valour of British troops was never more conspicuous, and must have exceeded what even your own experience of that invaluable quality, so inherent in them, may have taught you to expect. When every one that had an opportunity seemed to vie in improving it, it is difficult for me, in making this report, to select particular instances for your approbation. The corps chiefly engaged were the brigades under major-generals lord William Bentinck, and Manningham and Leith; and the brigade of guards under major-general Warde.

To these officers, and the troops under their immediate orders, the greatest praise is due. Major-general Hill and colonel Catlin Crauford, with their brigades on the left of the position, ably supported their advanced posts. The brunt of the action fell upon the 4th, 42d, 50th, and 81st regiments, with parts of the brigade of guards, and the 26th regiment. From lieutenant-colonel Murray, quarter-master-general, and the officers of the general staff, I received the most marked assistance. I had reason to regret, that the illness of brigadier-general Clinton, adjutant-general, de-

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.
January.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809:
January.
General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

prived me of his aid. I was indebted to brigadier-general Slade during the action, for a zealous offer of his personal services, although the cavalry were embarked.

The greater part of the fleet having gone to sea yesterday evening, the whole being under weigh, and the corps in the embarkation necessarily much mixed on board, it is impossible at present to lay before you a return of our casualties. I hope the loss in numbers is not so inconsiderable as might have been expected. If I was obliged to form an estimate, I should say, that I believe it did not exceed, in killed and wounded, from seven to eight hundred; that of the enemy must remain unknown, but many circumstances induce me to rate it at nearly double the above number. We have some prisoners, but I have not been able to obtain an account of the number; it is not, however, considerable. Several officers of rank have fallen or been wounded, among whom I am only at present enabled to state the names of lieut.-colonel Napier, 92d regiment, majors Napier and Stanhope, 50th regiment, killed; lieut.-colonel Winch, 4th regiment, lieut.-colonel Maxwell, 26th regiment, lieut.-colonel Fane, 59th regiment, lieut.-colonel Griffith, guards, majors Miller and Williams, 81st regiment, wounded.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January 15.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

To you, who are well acquainted with the excellent qualities of lieutenant-general sir John Moore, I need not expatiate on the loss the army and his country have sustained by his death. His fall has deprived me of a valuable friend, to whom long experience of his worth had sincerely attached me. But it is chiefly on public grounds that I must lament the blow. It will be the consolation of every one who loved or respected his manly character, that, after conducting the army through an arduous retreat with consummate firmness, he has terminated a career of distinguished honour by a death that has given the enemy additional reason to respect the name of a British soldier. Like the immortal Wolfe, he is snatched from his country at an early period of a life spent in her service! like Wolfe, his last moments were gilded by the prospect of success, and cheered by the acclamation of victory! like Wolfe, also, his memory will for ever remain sacred in that country which he sincerely loved, and which he had so faithfully served!

It remains for me only to express my hope, that you will speedily be restored to the service of your country; and to lament the unfortunate circumstance that removed you from your station in the

BOOK III.

CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

General Hope
to sir David
Baird.

field, and threw the momentary command into far less able hands.

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN HOPE, Lieut.-general.

To Lieut.-General Sir David Baird,

&c. &c. &c.

Thus ended this hapless expedition, which, though it cannot certainly be said to have been commenced under great promise, yet could not but excite very considerable expectation, and consequently produce in its results the most poignant disappointment.

If the comparatively small use made of the advantages derived from the battle of Vimiera, as described in the former book, tended to impair the confidence of the allies, how much more must the fruitless advance and extraordinary retreat of this army check their hopes of support, or increase their fears of its utility, should the honour of the British government induce any further attempt in the cause.

Of the conduct of sir John Moore in this command, some observations, of the present writer at the time,* may be repeated.

He went to Spain, probably, as he did to Sweden, without a knowledge of the nature of the al-

* Speculator, April 16, 1809.

liance under which he was sent to act;—what is worse, it is certain that he was unacquainted with the country, and the force his army was to strengthen, and that he conceived himself so bound and swaddled in ministerial orders, as even to render the energies of a life devoted to military tactics, of no avail, but to mark with more agonising precision, at every step, the certain ruin of his hopes and his army—terrible contemplation! But, most of all, was to be regretted the result of that cautious desire of preserving his army unimpaired, from a *fear of public outcry*, at any sacrifice it might experience. Little as the British public might be inclined to hear of a “sacrifice of blood and treasure,” (a prominent theme in the political discussion of Englishmen,) merely to create a diversion in favour of an ally, the result of which must be extremely equivocal; it must still less relish the idea of that army, *selected* from the flower of Britain, and better appointed than any other on the face of the globe, driven with ignominy and in misery through Spain, destroying horses, abandoning treasures, gradually sinking through exhaustion into death; and, its remains at length, compelled to fight that very enemy, powerless, and at every disadvantage, which before might have been combated with, at least a greater

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.
1809.
January.

BOOK III.

CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

chance of success. Had Buonaparte hesitated at the bridge of Lodi, or contemplated the vacillations of public opinion, on the morning of Marengo, he had not, at this moment, been the despot of Europe. Had Moore, contemplating the disgrace of increasing the number of courts-martial for the inefficiency of our armies, determined rather to court one for the loss of an army, which, while powerful and well appointed, sacrificed itself dearly in dealing destruction upon the foe till the last moment of its existence, the public would not have had to behold its shattered remains halting through our streets, nor to regret its miserable inefficiency,—yet let us not with cold ex-post-facto reasoning, impugn the conduct of such a general; let no rude hand untimely wither the flowers which lie scattered on the tomb of Moore! Still less let any regard with unmerited distrust such an army, which there can be no fear, improved by the past, will ere long retrieve the hapless fortunes of Corunna.

As to the prospects afforded by a different conduct of the campaign, the following rational deductions are formed by an authority, whose opinions, if ever doubted, can never fail to inspire respect:—

With all due respect to the memory of that great

man,* (says major Pasley, †) although the army under his command was inadequate for deciding the fate of Spain, still it was capable of doing something; fully capable at least of maintaining its footing in the peninsula, in which it might have derived considerable assistance from the Spaniards; and, as the war between France and Austria broke out immediately afterwards, such a system would have been, not merely practicable, but highly advantageous to the common cause of Spain, of Germany, and of Britain. If sir John Moore had fought any where on the frontier of Galicia, instead of fighting after his harassing retreat to Corunna; as the army would have been both less exhausted and more numerous, surely the chances are, that we should have been equally, if not more, capable of beating the French

* Sir John Moore was certainly great in every sense of the word; as an officer skilful, gallant, and zealous; an excellent subject, a true patriot, a high-minded, amiable man. And surely those who, admitting all this, merely state their opinion, that he was for once mistaken, advance nothing that ought, in justice, to be considered derogatory either to his talents or reputation. Buonaparte seems equally to have mistaken the character of the Spaniards, or he would certainly have been prepared to act more vigorously at the commence of the contest. In all probability he must have supposed that the army, which he had in Spain in May, 1808, was capable of overwhelming all opposition. By his former experience in Italy, in Germany, &c. the would have been fully warranted in such a supposition.

† Essay on the Military Policy, &c. p. 201.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

in the former, than in the latter supposition, particularly if we had acted in concert with the marquis de la Romana, who, it must in candour be confessed, shewed every disposition to act in concert with us.

The same intelligent writer observes, in another place, those who ascribe the misfortunes of the Spaniards to any thing but a want of good-will in their own cause, were soon confirmed in their favourable opinion of that nation by the most convincing facts. What stronger proof could be desired of patriotism in any country, than that the people of Asturias and Galicia, after they saw themselves abandoned by a gallant body of more than 25,000 British troops,* disdained to submit to that very French army, from which it was generally supposed, that we had made a fortunate escape, in being able to effect our re-embarkation, after a rapid retreat.†

Happy for the cause of Europe that this spirit

* Such was our force in December, 1808, before we began to retreat.

† We have in England an unreflecting way of saying that the Spaniards, from the advantage of fighting in their own country, may, after every defeat, disperse and re-assemble at will, as if they were men of a peculiar species, exempt from the hardships of war. On the contrary, I do not know whether the Spaniards may not suffer more misery than either the French or English. They are always half-starved; for if our commissariat be defective, their's is a perfect chaos. They are often half-naked, and

did exist; and no less happy for the character of Great Britain was it that a small number of British officers, claiming their chief distinctions less from rank, than ability and courage, had so far improved the small number of Portuguese troops, for which arms could be obtained, (with the exception of the force under their own generals,) as to form even under all the evils entailed upon the allied arms by the retreat of sir John Moore, not only a diversion of the enemy, wonderful from the extent of the force, but even a defence of the frontier of Portugal! A diversion and a defence, which there is at the same time reason to believe, not only re-

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.

1809.

January.

without shoes. At the period of sir John Moore's retreat, a contagious fever prevailed among the marquis de la Romana's troops, owing to the hardships which they had suffered in Biscay. A man's being in his own country can neither feed, clothe, cure, nor shelter him; if food, clothes, medicine, and lodgings, are not to be found. To me the distresses of the Spaniards were the most moving sight that I ever beheld. Men, whom a few months before I had seen full of health and courage, and who, if they had been better disciplined, were capable of destroying the French to whom they were opposed, in rags, without a cloak to cover them, in the depth of winter, worn out by wounds or disease, with despair in their countenances; such was the condition of the Spanish sick. I once saw a great number of open carts full of poor men, in the lamentable state just described, stop at a village when the snow was on the ground, where, instead of the shelter and food which they expected, they found that almost every house of it had been burnt. What became of them afterwards, God knows! I can scarcely, however, suppose that one of them is alive at this moment. These are no common sufferings.

BOOK III.
CHAP. XI.
1809.
January.

inspired the Spanish nation, as far as it had opportunity, with confidence, but gave time for the British commander-in-chief, at Lisbon, to form his determination against the abandonment of Portugal.

Of this force, of which too little is generally known, and which, from its consolidation with the Portuguese army, has no longer an opportunity of distinguishing itself, some account will be found in the ensuing book.

For the present, it may generally be observed, upon the whole, that as even the convention of Cintra was productive of a certain good in the restoration of Portugal, so the campaign, of which it has been the endeavour of this book to present, from every military source, a tolerably faithful account, was not, with all the errors of its conduct, without a certain utility; since the force employed by the enemy in its pursuit might have otherwise overwhelmed some Spanish army, possibly have affected in detail the whole: and the result of the battle of Corunna was such, as to shew that a British army is at all times great, whatever the superiority of constitution, which may be attributed to that of the enemy by which it is opposed, or whatever the circumstances under which it is engaged.

INDEX.

A.

- Anecdotes, in proof of the favourable disposition of the Spanish people to the British, 13, 118, 122.
- recovery of the marquis Romana to his country's service, 15.
- Army under sir John Moore, preparations for its march into Spain, 18.
- returns of its numbers, 32.
- march of, from Lisbon, 42.
- departments of, deemed incapable, 37.
- difficulties of its service examined, 48.
- advance of, in Spain and route, 71.
- junction of its divisions after the long vacillations of its commander, 241.
- its disastrous retreat commenced, 290.
- in contact with the French army, 291.
- distinguished bravery of, in skirmishing, 322.
- sufferings of, 325.
- prepared for an action in junction with marquis Romana, near Sahagun, 351.
- its retreat, prosecuted, 355.
- its multiplied disasters, 359.
- its disorders, arising from the dissatisfaction of retreating before the enemy, 416.
- extraordinary discipline of, 437.
- its final bravery at Corunna, 442.
- its embarkation, 452.

B.

- Baird, sir David, arrival of, with his division of the army, 75.
 ----- soon imbibes the despairing principles of sir
 John Moore, 124.
 ----- wounded, 442.
 Biographical sketches of the conduct of sir John Moore in minute
 affairs, 145.
 Buonaparte, his preparations to meet the British army in
 Spain, 16.
 Burrard, lieut.-gen. sir Harry, his ingenuous assistance in the for-
 mation of sir John Moore's army, 28.

C.

- Charmilly, M. de, disliked by sir John Moore, 170.
 ----- its unfortunate con-
 sequences, 208, 218.
 ----- account of the services and character of, 226.
 Command in chief of all the armies of Spain refused by sir John
 Moore, 52.
 Construction of armies, 405.
 Corunna, battle of, 442.

D.

- Despair, an evil quality in a general, 370.
 Despatch of the French general intercepted, 292.
 Difficulties of armies considered, 48, 493,
 ----- magnified in perspective by sir John Moore, 51.
 Disorder of the campaign, 169.

E.

- Error, acknowledged, sir John Moore, 321.
 Execution of a British soldier on the advance, 79.
 Expressions extraordinary, of sir John Moore, 247.

F.

- French army, its construction deemed miraculous, 404.
 Frere, the right hon. John Hookham, appointed his majesty's
 plenipotentiary to Spain, 95.
 ----- Absurd deductions of the British general, respecting, 135.
 ----- Severe remonstrance of, to the secretary of the supreme
 junta respecting the difficulties of the British army, 137.
 ----- his excellent views of the campaign, both civil and mili-
 tary, 201.
 ----- strong and just remonstrance with the British general, 316.

H.

Hardinge, his glowing picture of sir John Moore's death, 441.

Hope, general, his conference at Madrid, 131.

——— his eloquent detail of the battle of Corunna, 478.

I. J.

Ignorance, absurd and dangerous effects of, in a British officer, 122.

——— of scenes of action, its evils, 387, 393.

Intelligence ill conducted in the British army, 129.

Junta, supreme, central of Spain, its appointment and members, 9.

——— proclamation of, 54.

——— polite answer of, to a severe remonstrance of Mr. Frere on behalf of sir John Moore, 141.

L.

Leigh, colonel, his dashing charge, 371.

Leith, major-general, his excellent report, 113.

Letter of Mr. Charles Stuart to Mr. secretary Canning, 4.

——— lord Castlereagh to sir John Moore, 19.

——— the same to lord William Bentinck, 24, 81.

——— sir John Moore to lord Castlereagh, 34, 36, 45, 146, 158, 159, 161, 162, 262, 266, 269, 273, 288, 327, 426.

——— to Mr. Frere, 95, 100, 108, 164, 168, 220, 228, 253, 298, 352.

——— to Mr. Stuart, 168, 187, 189.

——— Mr. Frere to sir John Moore, 98, 132, 195, 196, 208, 216, 259, 315, 339, 345, 418, 433.

——— Mr. Stuart to sir John Moore, 106.

——— general Leith to sir John Moore, 111.

——— sir David Baird to sir John Moore, 124.

——— general Hope to sir John Moore, 131.

——— Mr. Frere to Mr. de Garay, 137.

——— Mr. de Garay to Mr. Frere, 141, 310.

——— to sir John Moore, 203.

——— to sir David Baird, 181, 211, 212, 245, 256.

——— to general Hope, 184.

——— to the marquis Romana, 214, 252, 320, 346, 350, 357, 362.

——— to the duke of Castlefranco, and M. de Morla, 231.

——— to the junta of Toledo, 235.

——— don Morla to sir John Moore, 201.

——— the junta of Toledo to sir John Moore, 234.

——— don Escalante to sir John Moore, 242.

- Letter of colonel (afterwards general) Graham to sir John Moore, 248.
 ——— lieutenant-colonel Symes to sir David Baird, 299.
 ——— to sir John Moore, 364.
 ——— the marquis of Romana to sir John Moore, 307, 332, 347, 354.
 ——— duke del Infantado to sir John Moore, 336.
 ——— sir John Hope to sir David Baird, 480.

M.

- Madrid, conference of general Hope at, 131.
 ——— surrendered to the French, 219.
 Maxwell, colonel, his distinguished bravery and death, 432.
 Money of the army strangely lost, 404.
 Moore, lieut.-general sir John, his appointment to command the British army in Spain, 19.
 ——— absurd imputation of Roman spirit to, *note*, 29.
 ——— his excellent general orders on marching into Spain, 40, 41.
 ——— magnifies his difficulties in prospective, 51.
 ——— his extraordinary refusal of the chief command in Spain, 52.
 ——— his mistaken idea of the relations of the British and Spanish armies, 53.
 ——— his querulous complaints, 73.
 ——— erroneous views of the campaign, 89.
 ——— dissatisfaction with the appointment of Mr. Frere, 95.
 ——— dejection on, and dislike of, Spanish affairs, 101, 160.
 ——— hasty censures on the officers deputed to Spain, 105.
 ——— eulogizes the Spanish people, 117.
 ——— curious reason for declining to attend the conference at Madrid, 145.
 ——— disordered plans of, for the campaign, 169.
 ——— his early determination to retreat in opposition to the united wishes of the Spanish nation, the British ministers in Spain, and the opinions of his own army, and even staff, 187.
 ——— his extraordinary hauteur towards the British minister, 221.
 ——— singular remarks on the employment of M. Charmilly, 224.
 ——— ill-timed, weak, and contemptuous remarks on the intelligent Spanish generals deputed to him from the sovereign power, 229.
 ——— his vacillations, 230.
 ——— strange ideas on the surrender of Madrid, 233.
 ——— his charge of treason on Morla and Castlefranco, 238.

- Moore, his treasonable imputation against Mr. Frere, 237.
 ——— extraordinary views and expressions in regard to British officers and Spanish generals, 247.
 ——— singular political remarks, 317:
 ——— disastrous retreat, 290.
 ——— blames his army, 428.
 ——— his death, 443.
 ——— generous fondness of his memory, *note*, 444.
 Morla, absurd deductions of the British general respecting, 135.
 ——— his treason, or infidelity, not proved, *note*, 248.

N.

- Napier, major, wounded, and made prisoner, 443.
 Narrative of the campaign, by sir John Moore's brother, its un-
 military remarks on men and things, 29.
 ——— its peculiar incorrectness, 52, 91, 107.
 ——— inordinate expectations on the part of the British ge-
 neral, 88.
 ——— absurd importance attributed by it to sir John Moore's
 private occupation, 145.
 ——— elevated views of sir John Moore's plans and expres-
 sions, 248.
 ——— visionary deductions on ordinary results, 360.

O.

- Officers deputed to Spain, censured by sir John Moore, 39, 105,
 109, 156, 246.
 ——— their utility and services evinced, 99, 106, 111, 112,
 299, 364.
 Orders, general, of the army, excellent, 40, 41.
 ——— singularly cautionary; on the march, 79.
 Otway, colonel, his gallant charge, 319.

P.

- Paget, lord, his gallantry, 319, 323.
 Pasley, major, his admirable views and anecdotes of the war in
 Spain, 13, 14, 116.
 Proclamation of the supreme junta to the Spanish nation, 54.

Q.

- Querulous complaints of sir John Moore, 73.

R.

- Retreat of the British army commenced, 290.
 Returns of British troops, 32.
 ——— Spanish troops, 16.
 ——— French troops, 239.
 Romana, marquis of, with his troops, how recovered to the service of his country, 15.
 ——— good conduct in action, 115.
 ——— his just picture of his army, 309.

S.

- Soldiers, true qualities of, 413.
 Spain, state of, previous to the approach of the British army, 1.
 ——— central junta of, described, 9.
 ——— people of, attention to discreet British officers, 13.
 ——— army of, its strength at the commencement of sir John Moore's campaign, 16.
 ——— chief command of, refused by sir John Moore, 52.
 ——— proper operations of, characterised, 53.
 ——— people and army of, dislike any other foreigners than British among them, 38.
 ——— army of, just view of, by M. Romana, 309.
 ——— by the duke del Infantado, 336.
 ——— disregard of, evinced, by sir John Moore, 363.
 ——— general view of, 492.
 Stanhope, major, killed, 443.
 Stewart, general, his brave skirmish, 291.
 Stragglers from the army, their unhappy fate, 399.

V.

- Vaccillations of sir John Moore, 170.
 Unfounded ideas formed of the Spanish character, and their attachment of the allies to the British army, 122, 230.
 Ventura Escalante, a Spanish general, his just prediction relative to sir John Moore's movements, 242.
 ——— called an old woman by sir John Moore, 229.

W.

- Wilson, sir Robert, his Portuguese corps, 493.

THE END OF VOL. III.







