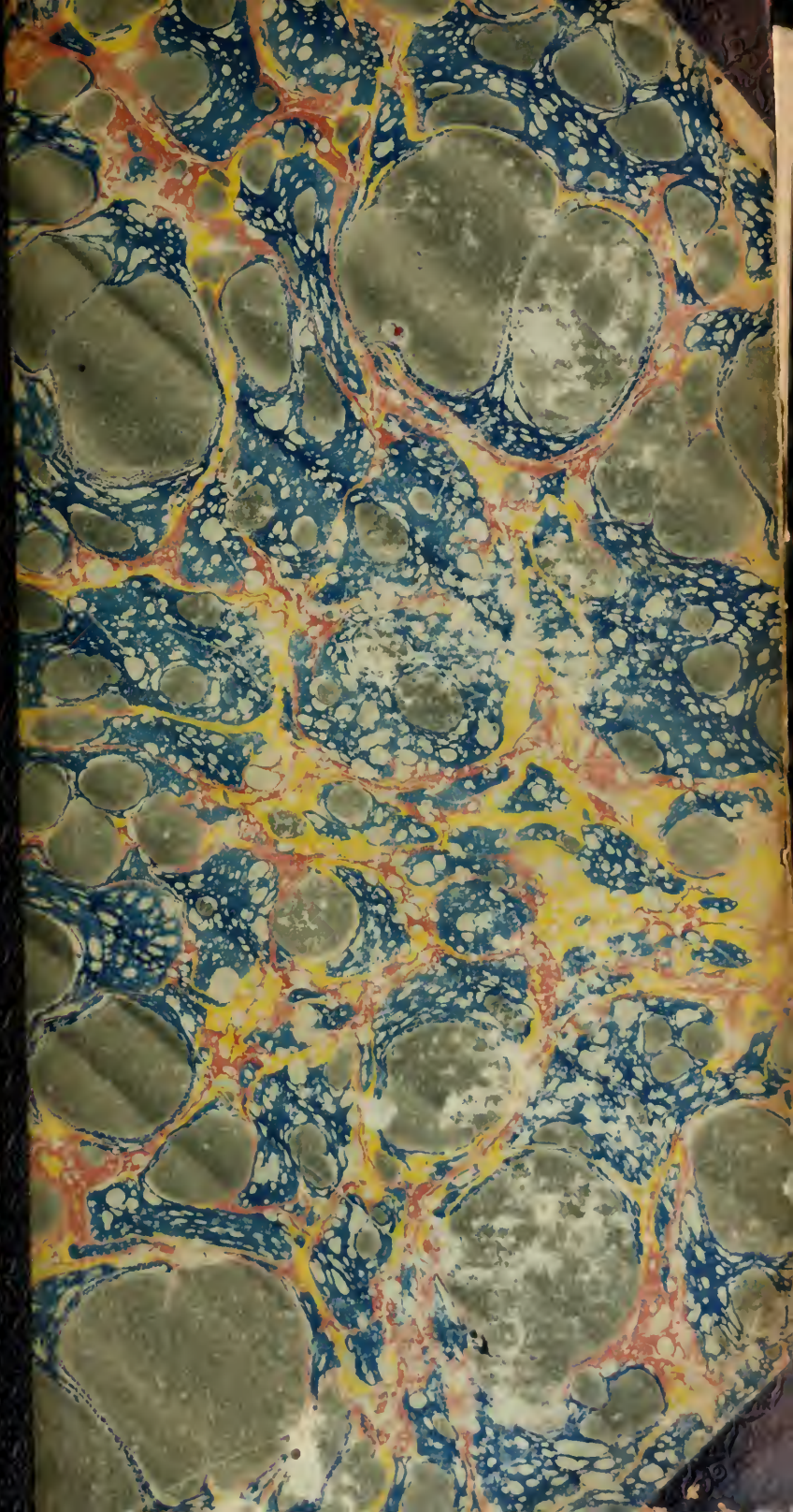


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THE RIVER FISHING BOAT

ON THE RIVER FISHING BOAT



THE RIVER FISHING BOAT



LIFE AND CAMPAIGNS  
OF  
ARTHUR,  
DUKE OF WELLINGTON, K.G.

MARQUESS OF DOURO, DUKE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO,  
A GRANDEE OF THE FIRST CLASS IN SPAIN, DUKE OF VITTORIA, COUNT OF VIMPERA,  
MARQUESS OF TORRES VEDRAS, FIELD-MARSHAL IN THE ARMY,  
KNIGHT GRAND CROSS OF THE BATH, CONSTABLE OF THE TOWER,  
WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS, CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,  
A KNIGHT OF ALL THE MOST DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN ORDERS, AND  
PRINCE OF WATERLOO.

BY THE  
REV. G. N. WRIGHT, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE AND REIGN OF WILLIAM THE FOURTH."

VOL. II.

FISHER, SON, & CO.  
NEWGATE STREET, LONDON; RUE ST. HONORE, PARIS.





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# LIFE AND CAMPAIGNS OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

## CHAP. I.

REPLY OF LORD CASTLEREAGH TO LORD HENRY PETTY—GENERAL TARLETON DISAPPROVES OF SIR A. WELLESLEY'S OPERATIONS AT ROLEIA AND VIMEIRA—SIR A. WELLESLEY EXPLAINS THE TRUE ORIGIN OF THE CONVENTION OF CINTRA, AND LAYS THE STATE OF THE PENINSULA BEFORE PARLIAMENT—DEBATE ON THE ARMISTICE AND CONVENTION CONTINUED BY MR. WINDHAM—THE RIGHT HON. SPENCER PERCEVAL—MR. WHITEHEAD, THE HON. CHRISTOPHER HEYLI-HUTCHINSON, AND MR. SECRETARY CANNING—LORD HENRY PETTY'S MOTION OF CENSURE UPON MINISTERS, LOST—MR. PONSOMBY CALLS FOR AN INQUIRY INTO THE CAMPAIGN IN SPAIN—CORN-DISTILLERY PROHIBITION BILL SUPPORTED BY SIR A. WELLESLEY—TREATY WITH SPAIN—SIR A. WELLESLEY RESIGNS THE CHIEF-SECRETARYSHIP FOR IRELAND, AND HIS SEAT IN PARLIAMENT—ACCEPTS THE COMMAND OF THE ARMY IN PORTUGAL—1809.

By the resolutions moved in the House of Commons on the twenty-first of February, 1809, Lord Henry Petty had put the cabinet on it's trial. Those resolutions went not merely to the extent of registering the indignation of the country at the convention of Cintra, but endeavoured to attach the entire culpability of that unpopular measure to the ministry. Lord Petty's eloquent speech certainly substantiated the charges of ignorance and vacillation against the members of the cabinet, and a lamentable want of decision in the appointment of a commander-in-chief over our Peninsular force; but it was obviously unjust to impute all errors in the practical detail of his instructions, to the secretary at war: he had only laid down the general principle of action, leaving it to the commander-in-chief to carry out his plan of operations

conformably, and the armistice and convention being purely contingencies, provision for them should have been made by the discretion of the senior officer. Lord Castlereagh was no more deserving of blame for the misfortune or error of the armistice, than entitled to praise for the victory of Vimeira. One arose from the indiscretion, the other from the genius, of the public servant to whom the conduct of the respective expeditions was entrusted; and, in fact, the secretary at war might claim to himself the sole merit of having pushed his private friend (in whose great talents he had unbounded confidence) into the temporary command of that army which distinguished itself at Roleia and Vimeira; while to other members of the cabinet belonged the misfortune of having superseded him, through etiquette and influence, and by those very general officers who were so unlucky as to have facilitated the escape of the French, in force, from Portugal. However, a public convenience and advantage resulted from the able attack of Lord Petty upon ministers: Lord Castlereagh was warned against the want of that decision in future, for the exercise of which his gallant friend had ever been so celebrated; and public feeling was tranquillized, by the clear statement of the circumstances that led to the armistice and convention, as well as by the defence of those concerned in it, which they now heard from Sir Arthur Wellesley, in his parliamentary character.

When the buzz of approbation, at the eloquent and able impeachment of his majesty's ministers for incapacity, by Lord H. Petty, had subsided, Lord Castlereagh arose, and in an able, collected, and impassioned manner, entered on a vindication of his conduct and measures. He commenced by stating, that he had expected an additional inquiry would have been proposed, under the feeling that the late one had proved inadequate, and congratulated the House, that although Lord Petty did not applaud, neither did he condemn the course adopted by government, nor ask for further investigation. As to boards of inquiry, he could assure the House that they had been adopted in the most important periods of our military history. Had government pursued another course, and



assembled a court-martial, they would have been accused of adopting a narrow system of concealment as to themselves, and of having provided for their own safety, by bringing the officers whom they employed to trial: whereas, they had chosen a line of proceeding which the ablest opponents of their measures had not thought it expedient to impeach; and although Sir Hew Dalrymple had no objection to submit to a court-martial, yet the mode adopted by government was one calculated to satisfy individual feelings and public justice, and one which the opponents of ministers did not arraign. He trusted the House was then about to decide finally upon the transaction itself, as there was nothing government had more feelingly at heart, than that the subject should be sifted to the bottom. Although he feared not to follow his eloquent opponent into all his general points, he thought he had gone a little too far in saying, "that all our exertions had failed, all the swords of our gallant countrymen had been drawn in vain." This was a cruel retribution to make to all those who had bled for us. All the consequences of the operations were not such as the country desired, but the failure, he was prepared to prove, had resulted from causes beyond the power of government to control. When a government, entrusted with such extensive means, as he allowed the government, of which he was a member, had been on the occasion alluded to, could be proved to have been deficient, or wanting in assiduity or zeal, they had a heavy responsibility to answer, and a difficult cause to plead before that country which had confided in them. Under this admission, he was ready to meet the resolution of Lord Petty, and had every expectation it would terminate in the exculpation of his majesty's ministers.

As to sending out expeditions in search of adventures, he contended, that the expedition despatched to Sweden, and that in preparation at Cork, were fully as beneficial in their effects to the country, as those sent to Egypt or the Dardanelles. At the commencement of the campaign, ministers had a disposable force of five thousand men, under General Spencer, at Gibraltar; of ten thousand men, at Cork, under Sir Arthur

Wellesley ; and it appeared to them to be more advantageous to send those forces to the immediate aid of the cause, than to delay them until additional succours could be provided by England. The force under Sir J. Moore could not have been calculated upon immediately, as its getting free of the Baltic was uncertain ; so that there was no probable chance whatever, that these corps could be brought speedily to act together on the same service, still less in one expedition. This army would, even if concentrated, have amounted only to twenty-five thousand men, a force certainly inadequate to seize on the Pyrenees, through which, instead of one pass, there were forty-three, and where, instead of an army of twenty-five thousand men, we should have had to contend with a French force of two hundred thousand men in Spain, and four hundred thousand in France, according to the calculation of Mr. Ponsonby, whose aspiring views had suggested this plan of operation for the British army. The Pyrenean expedition, however, was ultimately abandoned by the opposition members, as a forlorn hope, so that it would be only necessary now to prove what was the best mode of employing the remaining disposable force. Here Lord Castlereagh introduced, into his elaborate defence of ministers, an explanation of the circumstance of having provided transports for four thousand horses in time of peace, while in the emergency of war a less number was found in readiness, observing, that he had followed, in this instance, the general policy of Mr. Pitt, by reducing the number without destroying the establishment ; and prudence and economy pointed out the error of continuing its maintenance at the highest amount, until required. As the question of “the disposable force” was narrowed into the employment of Sir A. Wellesley’s force at Cork, and of General Spencer’s at Gibraltar, ministers adopted that plan likely to afford most immediate relief, and directed Sir Arthur to sail for the Peninsula, first with general instructions, secondly with particular directions, the result of information received from Sir C. Cotton.—Lord Castlereagh has since been accused of having hastened the departure of Sir Arthur Wellesley from Cork, in order that he might reach

Spain or Portugal before Sir John Moore's, or any other of our scattered expeditions, for such was his confidence in the military genius of his friend, that he felt assured of his beating the enemy, if he could only find them. It is probable, it is even natural, to suppose that Lord Castlereagh was desirous of giving to his gallant friend the chance of striking the first blow; and he was borne out, by the past history of that brave officer, in concluding that it would be struck effectually.

Whenever a dispassionate memoir of this unhappy minister shall be given to the world, how large a debt of gratitude will be acknowledged by his country, for having promoted, and at such a moment, the future defender of an empire; and to what an amiable quality must that stretch of ministerial influence, that exertion of ministerial power, be attributed—an early, unalterable, indissoluble friendship!

Lord Castlereagh next protested against the charge of inconsistency in having given instructions, almost contrary in their tendency, to the general officers employed in the expedition to relieve Spain—and of ignorance, in being unable to give specific instructions, so as to bind up their generals by particular mandates, applicable to every possible case. “However right or advisable such policy may be in particular cases,” said his lordship, “is uncertain; but if ever there was a case in which it would have been wrong to fetter the judgment of an officer, it was that in which Sir Arthur Wellesley was concerned. If the letter addressed to Admiral Purvis spoke of Spain only, it was because his opinion on that question only was required for the instruction of Sir Arthur Wellesley, and it was thought advisable to conceal from the admiral the alternative of a descent on Portugal. As to General Spencer's destination, had he gone to the Tagus rather than to Cadiz, it would, in all probability, have attracted the attention of the enemy, and induced him to concentrate a greater force in that quarter, to oppose the debarkation of the force under Sir Arthur Wellesley, than he would otherwise be able to do.

Relying on the sufficiency of his arguments to show that neither was the expedition an unwise measure, nor the

instructions given to the officers contradictory, his lordship proceeded to convince the House that the equipments had not been neglected. It was no argument against the equipments, that an army, just landed, did not advance forthwith in search of the enemy; the army had a three months' supply of provisions, exclusive of the transport stores, which amounted to eight weeks more; but a number of cattle was required, amounting to about half that of the private men, to convey the provisions and other necessaries along with the army. This was a point of much consequence in the explanation; the number of sumpters required by the Austrian army amounted precisely to half the number of men, and this proportion varied with the season. As it was necessary that an army should land at some distance from the enemy, to obtain time for forming, and means of advance; so that distance always creates a necessity for beasts of burden; and the greatness of their proportion to the number or amount of the force, leaves no alternative to the landing army, but a reliance upon the country where they are about to act. To such an inconvenience must every expedition, furnished and sent out by a naval power, be subject. It was urged by the opposition party in that House, that the number of artillery-horses\* furnished to the expedition, was three hundred; that was incorrect, as it in fact amounted to seven hundred and seventy-eight. He confessed, that had Sir Arthur Wellesley's means been more liberal, there was no doubt his services would have been more brilliant: but, at the same time, there could hardly be a question that he would not have advanced, if he did not think his means sufficient to the occupying of Lisbon and the forts of the Tagus. In addition to the possession of certain resources, prospective assistance was known not to be far distant, either

\* These horses, while attached to the ordnance-department, in Ireland, were much abused by their drivers, and, upon being reported ill-conditioned, were put up to public sale. Being then purchased by private agents, who were made acquainted with their temporary defects, and the probability of restoring them by kind treatment, they were turned into "a grass yard" for half a year, and sometimes resold to government for five times the sum given for them at the sale on Aston's Quay, or in the Lower Castle-yard.







THE RIGHT HON<sup>BLE</sup> HENRY FITZMAURICE PETTY D.C.L. F.R.S. MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE

*Lansdowne*

as to time or space. Sir Harry Burrard was acquainted with the arrival of Sir John Moore's army, and therefore calculated with certainty, upon an equipment of artillery-horses. "With respect to the quality and condition of his countrymen, (the *Irish* horses,) his lordship contended, that they had not shown that worthlessness, of which they were now accused, in the glorious affair of Vimeira. They were very much admired by the French, and one hundred of them had been actually selected to pursue the campaign in Spain, through one of the most fatiguing marches ever made by an army. Farther, it was a question, whether an army was useless without any horses at all. In Egypt we had only one hundred and fifty, and circumstances were similar when Sir Ralph Abercromby was in Holland; nor would the ministry be now culpable, unless that a larger supply of horses had been at first deemed necessary—that government possessed the means of furnishing that supply, and had neglected to adopt that course. In General Wolfe's battle, the picture of which was so universally known and admired, it might be observed, that the sailors drew the guns. The *Irish* horses, although so much abused by Lord Henry Petty, had done their work well, only thirty-three having fallen, and of that number thirteen had been killed. Neither were the operations of Sir Arthur Wellesley retarded by a deficiency of cavalry; had he felt a serious want of them, he would doubtlessly have waited their arrival; on the contrary, they were found fully equal to the enemy, and under that impression, their brave, but cautious leader, advanced towards Lisbon and the Tagus, beating the French, and driving them before him. Heavy artillery were not required; and had they been, the ships of war could have furnished them; but the truth was, that no carriages could be borne by such wretched roads as existed in Portugal. In extensive military operations, it is hardly possible that the chief command shall not change hands. In the Low Countries, (the case was not cited for imitation,) four such changes had taken place within the short period of forty-eight hours. Sir Hew Dalrymple might have been guilty of an error in judgment; that was, however, problematical; but no complaint had ever been brought against

his propriety, skill, or bravery. Lord Petty held light the consequences that flowed from the campaign in Portugal; but on this point, Lord Castlereagh totally differed from him: his lordship asked, "Was it nothing, in a short campaign of three weeks, to have taken possession of a country of great strength; to have defeated, signally, a veteran army of twenty-five thousand men; to have liberated a whole country from the grasp of an enemy; and to have restored it again to its own people and to its native government? Did it redound nothing to the military character and glory of the country, to have assembled such an army, and to have gained two such victories? Was it nothing to have restored Portugal to its legitimate sovereign? It was but natural to have looked for some great result from such gratifying efforts; and equally natural to conclude, that after a victory, where the public feeling had broke loose, they should not be easily satisfied: but had the intelligence of the victory, and of the armistice, arrived together, every thinking man would have received it differently; there would neither have arisen that extravagant joy, nor would that great disappointment of the country's too sanguine hopes have followed."

As to the details of the marine convention, of these government approved: they had only given instructions to Sir Charles Cotton in the extreme case of starvation, he was therefore left to exercise his own discretion in all contingencies; but the conditional surrender of the ships, the ministers regretted. Here Lord Castlereagh concluded his lengthened, but necessary explanation of the conduct of ministers, leaving the military details to be still fully unfolded by Sir Arthur Wellesley, by expressing his matured and decided conviction, "that the expedition to Portugal was a wise and expedient measure, and that the various plans of operations suggested as preferable, would have been visionary in some cases, and dangerous in all; that the object of the expedition was the best that could be adopted; the equipment, the most perfect that circumstances would permit; the execution as complete as the nature of the case would allow; nor had any failure resulted, except what arose from causes which neither the administration nor

the military officers could control. If the equipment of the expedition was maintainable, the result of the operations was such as at any other time would have satisfied the feelings of the country. It had expelled the French army, its principal object—put the Russian fleet into our possession—and released from a tedious and hazardous blockade, a British squadron of nine sail of the line. His lordship declared his intention, as the resolutions of Lord Henry Petty, in his opinion, would answer no beneficial purpose, of moving the previous question on the first resolution, and taking the sense of the House on the second.

The explanation of Lord Castlereagh was followed by an inconsiderate attack, not merely on ministers and their measures, but upon the military skill of the experienced officer whom his lordship was instrumental in placing in the command of the expedition, and whose gallantry, enterprise, and good fortune had rendered him then, what he ever afterwards continued, an object of national admiration and respect. This unwise assault was made by a military man, General Tarleton, who lauded the clear, comprehensive, and convincing speech with which Lord Henry Petty opened the debate on the convention of Cintra, and pronounced a strong condemnation of the defence set up by the minister at war, whom he bantered as having wandered over the Pyrenees, and lectured on the qualities of Irish horses—a mode of treating so solemn a subject, that did not correspond with the dignity of that House. He then proceeded to view the question professionally, analyze Sir Arthur Wellesley's plan of operations, and descant on its deformity. In his opinion, an invading army could advance immediately on its landing;—when Sir William Howe was sent to New York, he landed with his cavalry and artillery, after having been a long time at sea, moved forward the same day, and shortly after came into action. In reference to the armistice, he called on parliament to reflect what must have been the situation of the armies previous to that infatuated measure. The French were dispirited by defeat, their situation extremely critical, hazardous, and miserable. They could not have been

able to cover the extent of ground from Fort St. Julian to Lisbon, fourteen miles, particularly if they meant to occupy the former; and their position at Lisbon was a bad one. He acknowledged that heavy artillery would have encumbered the army, and could, if required, be had from the ships;—but it should be remembered by the favourers of a convention, that Lisbon and the country around were friendly to us, hostile to the French, and it was exceedingly unlikely that the Russians would act against us. He professed himself as entertaining sentiments of respect individually for the officers composing the court of inquiry; but that seven men of such known experience and talent should agree in such a decision, appeared to him extraordinary. He totally dissented from the opinion of that court, that the French could have passed the Tagus, and occupied the fort of Elvas; the plea was absurd, for the Tagus was one of the most rapid rivers in the world, and four miles broad at Lisbon. History often presented useful lessons; Lord Cornwallis was shut up in York-Town, with this advantage, that he had not been beaten; he had to cross a river only a mile broad, his horse and artillery were on the other side, his boats were ready in a bay defended from the enemy, the two points of the crescent which the bay formed were defended by redoubts, and he had no plunder to carry over; the event then was well known; the French had to cross a river of four miles in width, they had to carry over their artillery, their horses, their plunder, and all their baggage; and notwithstanding all these disadvantages, they had obtained from us that convention which had been so much reprobated, and this was the result of two brilliant victories—a result which had disgusted Spain and Portugal, and covered England with disgrace. Had ministers judgment or moral courage enough to have left the whole conduct of the campaign in the hands of Sir Arthur Wellesley, in his opinion the result would have been very different. It was allowed by the minister, that Sir Henry Dalrymple was eminently useful in his command at Gibraltar; if so, why was he removed, and placed in a situation of the greatest perplexity? It was pleaded that it would



have been injustice to many officers in the army to have continued Sir Arthur Wellesley in the command; he thought, if there was any injustice, it was in the original appointment of that brave soldier, but that, when once chosen, he should have been continued; they had precedents in the case of Lord Chatham and General Wolfe. It was from this want of manly decision, in appointing Sir Arthur Wellesley only *pro tempore*, in allowing him to expect the arrival, every hour, of a senior officer, to receive from him the command, that that general “was roused to do something before he was superseded, and this induced him to act rather rashly. As the conduct of that gallant officer was already approved of by the country, he would abstain from the full developement of his sentiments on that point, although he thought he could convince that honourable officer, that there was something rash in the action of the seventeenth, and something wrong in that of the twenty-first.” General Tarleton considered that it was indecent to desire senior officers to consult an inferior on all occasions,—that the rage for changing the command, evinced by ministers, was deserving of censure—that the parallel introduced to justify their conduct, was abortive, because the Austrians did not, in consequence, make a successful campaign; and finally, however the genius, fortune, or gallantry of Sir Arthur Wellesley had succeeded in raising the character of British arms, the conduct of ministers tended to depress it.

The serious statements of Lord Henry Petty, and sarcastic commentaries of General Tarleton, had they been attended with no other results, proved beneficial by calling forth from Sir Arthur Wellesley, in his place in parliament, a luminous explanation of his own operations, and the circumstances that led to the armistice and convention. Lord Castlereagh had evidently thrown the weight of this part of the ministerial defence on the gallant general, who was also the most competent witness; and his lordship trusted not a little to the popularity of that officer, as auxiliary in resisting the acknowledged talents of the opposition party of that day. The explanation of General Wellesley, therefore, on this occasion, is not merely

associated intimately with his individual character, but must be viewed and valued as an historic record of indisputable truth, and a final judgment on a much-controverted subject. Taking his opponents in the order of their attack, Sir Arthur commenced by adverting to the speech of the proposer of the resolutions, part of whose observations applied to the government, part to the officers who had the conduct of the expedition. In his judgment, government were answerable for the plan and equipment; for the execution and result, all responsibility rested with the officers. He had already given it as his opinion, and he had not departed from it, that the operations in Spain could only be carried on with any chance of success, in conjunction with, and by the consent of, the people and public authorities of that country; and, therefore, it was necessary to come to a right understanding with the juntas, before the commencement of the campaign. When he first communicated with the juntas of Galicia and Asturias, it was conceived that the expulsion of the enemy from Portugal would be a valuable object, not only with a view to the naval station which this would procure for us, but also with a prospect of supporting the operations in Spain. When he arrived at Corunna, the junta had just heard of the defeat of their army at Rio Seco, and he then proposed to them to land his troops, and co-operate with General Blake in covering the seat of their government. To this they replied, that they did not want men: but, that the best service, which could be rendered to themselves and their cause, would be to expel the French from Portugal. He certainly had received, through Sir Thomas Dyer, a species of requisition from the junta of the Asturias, to drive the French from St. Andero; but the junta of Galicia assured him that they had taken effectual measures for the accomplishment of that object; that the occupation of that place would be of little moment, as regarded the possession of the Asturias, the main object of the enemy; and concluded by again repeating their conviction, that the cause of Spain, and Portugal, and the liberty of the Peninsula, would be best consulted by the expulsion of the enemy from

Portugal. There the British army would become a link between the northern and southern armies of Spain, which hitherto had no point of union; and, in order to demonstrate their sincerity, and, show what importance they attached to this service, although threatened by the enemy from two points, after the defeat of Rio Seco, they sent two thousand men to Portugal, to assist his operations in that quarter. The expulsion of the enemy was not, therefore, an immediate British object, but a British object of great consequence in reference to the future operations in Spain.

With respect to the question of the equipment, government had received intelligence from Sir C. Cotton, that there were only four thousand French in Lisbon, the rest having proceeded to Spain; and, surely, it could hardly be alleged as a charge against ministers, that they acted upon the information of an officer who had been eight months on the station, and might, therefore, most naturally have been supposed to possess the best and most accurate knowledge. Under the impression produced by the communication from Sir C. Cotton, the ministers acted, and despatched him to the Tagus with a force and equipments fully equal to the undertaking. Although other arrangements, and perhaps preferable, might have been made for the choice of horses, yet a more ample equipment was not absolutely necessary for the contemplated operations in the Tagus, nor an equipment such as the operations he subsequently undertook required. When he embarked at Cork, he was to have proceeded to the coast of Spain, without any certainty whether he should be allowed to land at all, or, if he should, where he might land: and it was, therefore, considered that the horses must suffer considerably on board, and, consequently, those of an inferior description were chosen, which, under all the circumstances, might be best fitted for a service of this nature.

The next point that demanded explanation from Sir A. Wellesley, respected the operations which he himself undertook; and, although the noble author of the resolutions was silent on that head, the honourable general who spoke after him,

adopted a different policy, and rendered it necessary, therefore, that he should reply. That speaker asserted, "that he, Sir A. Wellesley, had been hurried forward by an honourable ambition, to undertake an operation of considerable risk." Now, he had stated already, before the board of inquiry, that he had a larger British force than any which the enemy could bring into the field against him; he was, indeed, inferior in cavalry, but he expected to be joined by some Portuguese troops of that description, which, together with the British, would form a respectable corps, though then, no doubt, he might in that respect, be still inferior to the enemy. But under all these circumstances he asked, whether General Tarleton himself would have hesitated, if he had been in his situation, to act as he had done? and he assured the honourable general, "that he would much rather follow his example in the field, than his advice in the senate." As to the adoption of a line of march on his landing in Portugal, he preferred that along the coast for many reasons, some of which were repeatedly submitted to the government and the country; and, touching his strength and numbers, he had reason to expect reinforcements under General Acland, Sir H. Burrard, and Sir J. Moore. But to demonstrate the satisfaction he felt in the sufficiency of his own force to execute his object, he did not intend to have employed the corps under General Acland in the field at all, but meant to have sent it to besiege Peniche. When Sir H. Burrard arrived, he, Sir A. Wellesley, had no longer the command, but he recommended to him a plan of operations for the corps of Sir J. Moore; and, if that plan had been adopted, he should not then have had the mortification to hear Lord H. Petty propose a resolution, "that the expedition to Portugal had disappointed the hopes and expectations of the nation." That plan was, that Sir J. Moore should advance upon Santarem, with a view to intercept the enemy, as he imagined they would attempt to cross the Tagus. It was feasible, not only in his opinion, but in that of all the general officers who had given evidence at the court of inquiry. Sir H. Burrard, however, thought proper to call that corps to the assistance

of the army, a circumstance which altered the whole system of operations. With respect to the change of commanders—when he left England, Sir Arthur Wellesley did not expect to be continued in the command, after large reinforcements should have arrived, to the exclusion of many valuable officers; but, at the same time, he did not think that the command ought to be changed in the middle of expeditions. In the course of a campaign, the command might be changed without injury, but these expeditions were not campaigns, they were only operations: however, as a change in command was attended with a total alteration in the system, this circumstance necessarily governed him in his subsequent views. His original plan was to have engaged the enemy as near to Lisbon as possible, and to have followed up the advantage, which he undoubtedly expected, with the utmost expedition; by which means he would have got to Lisbon nearly as soon as themselves, and prevented their crossing the Tagus. His opinion still was, that if he had been allowed to pursue the enemy closely after the battle of Vimeira, they would have been unable to cross the Tagus. He was no party to the question of the convention, its propriety, or the contrary; he had never come forward as the accuser of Sir H. Burrard, but, having commanded at Vimeira, and holding himself responsible for that action, he thought his opinion ought to have had some weight, both on that occasion, and with the court of inquiry; especially as that opinion had been supported by all the general officers whom he had under his command. It had been stated that his friend, General Spencer, had given a different opinion; but, notwithstanding the delicacy and the caution with which that officer had spoken, yet a close examination of his evidence, would show that he coincided perfectly in the plan of operations proposed by him, and, in reply to one question from the court, expressed that coincidence of opinion in the strongest terms. This was the principle upon which he had advanced from Mondego Bay, and he never could understand how the court of inquiry, which approved of all he had done up to the close of the battle of



Vimeira, could have said that those troops which had been constantly beaten in the field, ought not to be pursued when beaten. He would certainly have pushed them so hard after that battle, if he had retained the command, that it would have been impossible for them to have crossed the Tagus. But there was one part of the report of the board, with respect to the question of advancing after the action of the twenty-first, to which Sir Arthur Wellesley desired to refer; it was as follows:—"This very circumstance of a superior cavalry retarding our advance, would allow the enemy's infantry, without any degree of risk, to continue their retreat in the most rapid manner, till they should arrive at any given and advantageous point of rallying and formation: nor did Sir Arthur Wellesley, on the seventeenth of August, when the enemy had not half the cavalry as on the twenty-first, pursue a more inconsiderable and beaten army with any marked advantage, for he says, (we refer to the *Gazette Extraordinary*,) 'the enemy retired with the utmost regularity, and the greatest celerity:' and, notwithstanding the rapid advance of the British infantry, the want of a sufficient body of cavalry was the cause of his suffering but little loss on the plain:" and again in the same despatch, "he (the enemy) succeeded in effecting his retreat in good order, owing principally to my want of cavalry." Here the court of inquiry appeared to consider him, Sir Arthur Wellesley, to be either inconsistent or incorrect in his statement, a conclusion which he was prepared to show had been injudiciously drawn. The fact was, there were two parts of the action of the seventeenth; the one in the mountains, the other on the plain. In that part which took place in the plain, the enemy retired in good order. After the battle of the twenty-first, they had retired in great disorder. And it was the good order of the retreat in the one case, and the disorder in the other, that made all the difference. Although it might not be proper, without an adequate force of cavalry, to pursue the enemy closely, when they retired in good order on the seventeenth, it by no means followed that they ought not to be pursued on the twenty-first,

when they had been completely beaten, and had retired in great disorder. The disorderly retreat of the enemy on the twenty-first was the ground of his opinion, that they ought to be hard pushed : and if they had been vigorously followed up on that day, *he was satisfied in his own mind, that there would have been no reason for concluding the convention* which had given so much offence. With respect to the convention, it was Sir Arthur Wellesley's opinion, that government was not justly chargeable with the fault of that measure, because, had a certain plan of operations been adopted, the reason for it would never have existed. The necessity for concluding a convention had been ascribed to the want of artillery, of horses, of equipments of various kinds, but he felt it due to fairness to state, that, in considering the propriety of concluding an armistice, and afterwards a convention, those wants had never been taken into account by him, nor by any of the officers concerned in the negociation on that subject. The only question at all connected with the state of the army, in point of equipment, was, the difficulty of supplying it with provisions, when the whole of the troops should have been collected.

Sir Arthur Wellesley next called the particular attention of the House to the arguments urged against the armistice and convention, by the political opponents of the government. In treating this question dispassionately, the relative position of the two armies, at the precise time when the armistice was concluded, was of material consequence. The French, after the battle of Vimeira, were allowed to retreat, and take up a strong position, in which they would have been able to stop the progress of a superior force for three or four days. The advancing army, after having been occupied in dislodging them from that position, would have further to drive them from two or three other lines, which lay between the main position and Lisbon. During the whole of this time, the French would probably have been employed in preparations for the passage of the Tagus, which it would have been almost impossible to prevent. General Tarleton had



alluded to the situation of Lord Cornwallis in the American war; but Sir Arthur Wellesley assured that House, without entering into any comparison between General Junôt and Lord Cornwallis, that the circumstances in which they were placed differed totally. The British general was shut up in a town, and actually besieged, while the Duke of Abrantes might be said to have the military possession of the country. General Tarleton also asked, "how was it possible for the French to cross a river from four to six miles broad, in such a situation?" To this Sir Arthur replied, "that was matter of opinion;" and it was the opinion of all the officers who were there at the time, and of all the members of the board of inquiry, that it was impossible to prevent them from crossing the Tagus. He had heard that Earl Moira, a high military authority,\* was of opinion, "that if the French had been driven to cross the Tagus, they would have been reduced to extreme distress:" to this his plain answer was, "in the first place, that it was the duty of Junôt to have suffered that distress, however severe, rather than have surrendered at discretion; and there is no reason to believe that he would not have done his duty in that respect. But, in the second place, he did not allow that the French would have been reduced to this extreme distress. General Loisson had crossed the Tagus, quelled the insurrection in Alentejo, returned again across the Tagus, and by these means removed the difficulties which the French might otherwise have experienced in the retreat to Elvas." The ablest opponents of government, however, asserted their conviction that Junôt would have surrendered at last: "this was true," said Sir Arthur, "but at what time of the year?" He spoke confidently, when he affirmed, that the British army would not be in a condition

\* *Services of General the Earl of Moira (afterwards Marquess of Hastings,) K.G., G.C.B.*

Ensign 15th foot	-	-	7th August, 1771	Major general	-	-	-	12th Oct., 1793
Lieutenant 5th foot	-	-	20th Oct., 1773	Lieutenant general	-	-	-	1st January 1798
Captain, 63rd foot	-	-	12th July, 1775	General	-	-	-	25th Sept., 1803
Lieut.-colonel by Brevet,			15th June, 1778	Adjutant-gen. in America				15th June 1793
Lieut.-colonel 105th foot	-	-	21st March, 1782	Commander-in-chief on a				
Colonel by Brevet	-	-	2nd Nov., 1782	particular Service	-	-	-	20th Nov. 1793
Colonel 27th foot	-	-	23rd May, 1804	Master-gen. of the Ordnance				14th Feb., 1806

to reduce the fort of Elvas till the beginning of December, and then, perhaps, it might have been thought advisable to grant the French army the same, or nearly the same terms, as those which were conceded to them in August. Considering, therefore, the relative situation of the armies at that period, he did not think it disgraceful to allow the French to embark; and the gaining of time was important, with a view to operations in Spain, as the presence of a British army there would give the Spaniards strength in their own union, and prevent their being cut off in detail. The high military authority before alluded to, had said, "that the officers in command of the expedition, ought to have attended more to the great advantages which, in the then situation of affairs, would have resulted, for compelling the enemy to lay down their arms, and surrender at discretion." But it should be stated in reply to this insinuation, that no such object had been prescribed in the instructions to the officers commanding the British forces. It was, undoubtedly, the duty of every officer to endeavour to oblige a hostile force opposed to him to lay down their arms; but the question was, whether, in order to prosecute that object, they ought to have given up other material points, in time and circumstances, and abandon the advantages they had gained.

If it were not disgraceful to have allowed the French to evacuate Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt, the convention for the evacuation of Portugal could not have been disgraceful. The circumstances of the two cases were certainly different, as well as the state of Europe; but the result in both cases, Sir Arthur considered, unstained by disgrace. The institution of a court of inquiry, was another topic connected with the campaign in Portugal and convention of Cintra, to which he was anxious to advert. He agreed with those who wished that this might be the last court of the kind that should ever assemble: nor was it a tribunal before which any officer would desire to be tried. A general impression had gone abroad, that this inquiry had been instituted by Lord Castlereagh, from friendship to him: it was rather hard that

he should be subjected to such a reflection, especially, as if he had been tried by any other mode, he must have been acquitted; and, without imputing blame to any individual member, he protested that the court was a source of injustice, and on that account it was that he hoped it was the last board of that kind to which the investigation of the conduct of officers would be submitted. As to the letter sent by his friend Lord Castlereagh, desiring his superior officers to consult him particularly, had he been aware of the existence of such a document, he should have felt his situation very uncomfortable. And he now *acknowledged*, that from the first hour these officers landed, and even before they disembarked, he perceived that he was not in possession of their confidence. However, he felt that he had done every thing he could to forward their objects, although he differed from them in opinion. There was a wide distinction between military and civil inferior situations: in a civil office, if the inferior differed materially from the superior, he ought to resign: but in a military appointment, it was the duty of the inferior officer to assist his commander in the mode in which that commander might deem his services most advantageous: if he thought himself capable of giving advice, and of suggesting plans, it was his duty to endeavour to carry them into execution; but if the commander did not think proper to listen to his advice or suggestions, it was then his duty to assist his superior in that way which, to that superior, might appear most eligible. This was the principle which, in his opinion, ought to regulate the conduct of military officers. It was a principle on which he had, on that occasion, as ever before, acted, and on which he ever would act.

Mr. Windham, who rose to refute the explanations both of Lord Castlereagh and of Sir Arthur Wellesley, commenced by stating, that he should be sorry to have it supposed, that in rising after General Wellesley, he had a wish to do away any part of the impression which his speech could not fail to have made. Nothing could be more clear, fair, and manly, than the manner in which that gallant officer had spoken of

all the persons with whom he had acted, and of all the transactions in which he had been concerned. He necessarily felt diffident in delivering any opinion upon subjects of which he could know so little, as of military operations: and was aware that, in adding his testimony to the merits of the gallant general, he was offering what was of little value. But he could not, for his own sake, abstain from expressing how entirely he concurred in opinion with the views and conduct of Sir Arthur Wellesley, not only in those parts where his measures might seem to have a voucher in success, but in those also where his intentions had been unfortunately over-ruled. Confident judgment on professional subjects from persons not professional, was always objectionable; and the merit of an officer, possibly, could not be judged but by a judgment on the merit of his particular measures; yet there was a certain character of talent and ability, that might be capable of making itself visible even to persons the most unlearned, and might show the superiority of one player over another, even to those who were ignorant of the game. It was impossible not to discern in the whole style of General Wellesley's conduct, those characteristic marks which have, at all times, and not least in the period of the Peninsular war, distinguished the successful from the unsuccessful side, the victor from the vanquished. Sir Arthur Wellesley's statement, though proper for him to make, and satisfactory for his justification, was no vindication of ministers; whilst it justified his character, it was the condemnation of theirs. It was the glory of a military officer to achieve success under great disadvantages. There was no credit to be gained from good fortune, where there were no disadvantages to be encountered, no difficulties to be overcome. But the boast of an administration consists in placing their officers in circumstances where success shall be easy, where they cannot choose but win, and where of consequence their glory must be little. The merits of executive officers, and of those who employ them, move often in this respect in inverse order. What is the boast of the officer, is the reproach of the minister: and

the triumph of the minister in preparing an easy victory, takes from the officer his means of distinction. The circumstances, therefore, which enhanced the merit of General Wellesley, constituted the blame of the ministers who produced them. As to the convention, he perfectly coincided in the opinion of those who disapproved of that measure, and attributed its origin in the first instance to the misconduct of ministers, however far from blame they might be as to the mere circumstance itself. The court of inquiry thought that Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard were justified in declining to pursue the beaten foe: he could not but believe that Sir Arthur Wellesley was right, and that, if left to himself, he would have accomplished all that he said he could. Upon that point Mr. Windham declared he could hardly entertain a doubt. Yet the court doubted—the generals doubted: the doubt originated in the deficiency of cavalry; this deficiency led to the refusal of Sir H. Burrard to pursue the enemy; from which it resulted that, instead of the whole French army being destroyed or captured by General Wellesley, they were permitted, disgracefully, to retire from the field of contest. And certainly the ministers were culpable for not supplying a sufficient cavalry force, which was the origin of the evil. That the campaign in Portugal disappointed the expectations of the country, no one had the hardihood to deny: there was a failure to be accounted for, a ship lost, for which the commander must be tried, whether blame must ultimately be imputed to him or not. The court before which the officer was brought was incompetent; a court of inquiry should be secret; but ministers perverted the whole nature of such tribunals, by producing a strange, anomalous, inconsistent proceeding, never known in the laws of this country, that could not be made conclusive for any purpose at once rational and honest; a monstrous production, unknown to our usages, “an *open* court of inquiry.” He differed from Sir Arthur Wellesley in his statement that the convention “had *then* become necessary,” and also, “that time was gained thereby;” both these arguments were fal-



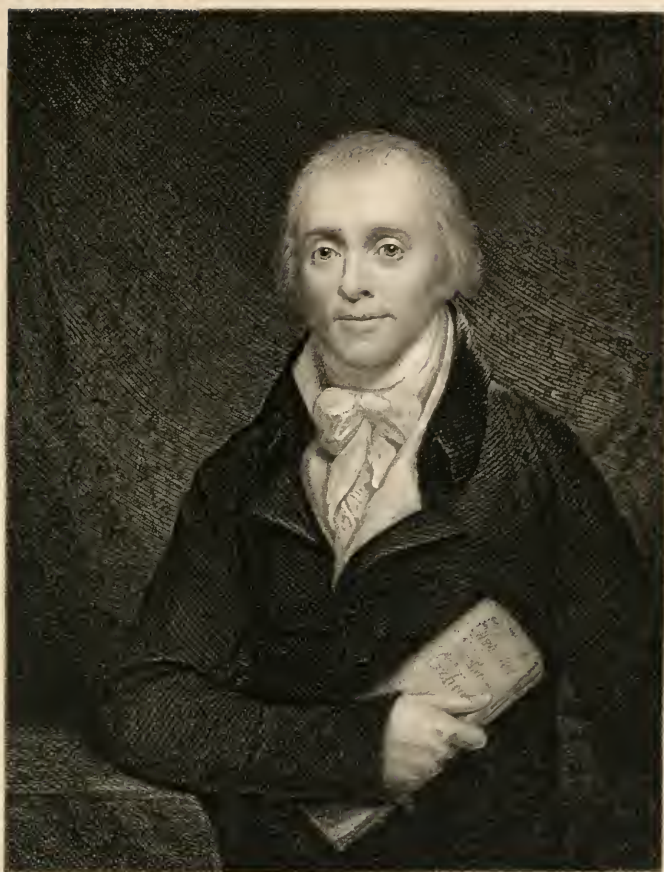
lacious, because, as General Wellesley had proved himself quite an overmatch for the marshals of Napoleon, by beating them under the greatest disadvantages, *à fortiori*, he could have beaten them when his means became improved and his numbers trebled. His arguments, therefore, if valid, would probably sustain the ministerial cause, without detracting from his own inimitable conduct and example. Sir Arthur, however, confessed that he had not the confidence of his successors in the command. "This was a natural consequence of the rapid supercession, in which general succeeded general, as wave succeeded wave, rising some of them, as it were, literally out of the sea: assembled upon the stage like persons at the end of a comedy, with all the happiest effects of surprise, some from one part of the world, some from another; one from Syracuse, another from Stockholm, bringing with them their various vices and prejudices, and marring whatever was to be done, by their total ignorance of all that had preceded." Ministers took credit to themselves for having expelled the French from Portugal, but it was, and would be an everlasting disgrace to their administration, that Junôt was allowed to escape from the grasp of his powerful opponent, and the nation and its favourite general plundered of their share of glory. Had Junôt been made the captive of a British army, what an impression would that circumstance have made upon our allies, our enemies, ourselves, and upon all Europe, as to the comparative character of French and British troops! an impression more than equivalent to most of the objects of the campaign. What had the nation gained at Maida? In point of territory, nothing! in point of acquisition of any pecuniary value, nothing! but we had gained glory, military glory, and this single circumstance was sufficient to render the battle of Maida one of the most useful, as well as most honourable, of any that had ever been fought for the country. It was the loss of glory, this deplorable neglect of the opportunity to make an indelible impression upon the French themselves, and the Spanish nation, as to the striking superiority of the British army, that were most to be



regretted in the unfortunate result of the campaign in Portugal. He, Mr. Windham, was convinced, that Sir Arthur Wellesley himself would not say that any thing could compensate the loss of so precious an object, and such a golden opportunity; for this it was that ministers, in his judgment, stood condemned before their country.

The next member of the administration who contributed the aid of his talents, to sustain the character of his associates against a public impeachment, was the chancellor of the exchequer.\* He considered the proposition of Lord H. Petty as untenable, and unsupported by the eloquent language of Mr. Windham, whose view of the question fully justified the measures of the government. It was stated, "that had Sir Arthur Wellesley followed up his plans, and pursued an already discomfited enemy, the result would have been as decisive and glorious as ever marked the progress of the British arms;" and it was further stated, "that the interruption to this happy consequence, was to be found in the conduct of Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard;" but, instead of blaming those who were the immediate persons that over-ruled Sir A. Wellesley's plans, the opposition, turned round unfairly, and laid the burden on the shoulders of ministers, because they had left an excuse to those general officers, by not having furnished a sufficient cavalry force. Now, in Mr. Perceval's opinion, since the campaign would have terminated gloriously for this country, had Sir Arthur Wellesley's plans been adopted, ministers could not be culpable, because it failed through the timidity or caution of those general officers who over-ruled him. It was the great enterprise and superior genius in one commander, which were not present in the minds of his seniors, that would have obtained the consummation of his glorious objects; that officer had never seen or felt the deficiency of cavalry on which the

\* The Right Hon. Spencer Perceval, second son of John Earl of Egmont, in the Irish peerage: this amiable statesman fell by the hand of an assassin, named Bellingham, on the eleventh of May, 1812, as he was entering the lobby of the House of Commons.



*H. Perceval*



opposition dwelt with so much obstinacy, although they acknowledge that he could have beaten the French, and captured their whole army, without further reinforcements, if left to pursue his own bold plans. How then could ministers be considered culpable for the result of that day, and it was that result alone which led to the armistice and convention. He, Mr. Perceval, regretted the admission of the convention, and was ready to accede to Lord Petty's first proposition, which only adopted the language of the speech from the throne, and expressed the sentiments of the country, if it were not followed by a second, which went to cast a censure upon ministers, they had not merited. He taunted the opposition with having mistaken all the measures of the existing administration, and forgotten those of their own: the four thousand tons of shipping promised by Lord Castlereagh, he asserted, were engaged in the Baltic, nor was their assistance requisite in an expedition to the Tagus, (the original destination,) where cavalry were not deemed necessary. When the late administration promised assistance to the continental powers, the transports were all laid up, dismantled, or destroyed; and that party in the state which had not sent cavalry to the Tagus, when they had power, would, of course, allow that no necessity now existed for that species of force. On the question of the superseding of officers, it ought naturally be presumed, that the party of which Mr. Windham was a supporter, spoke feelingly on the point, as that gentleman, when in office, "had employed a junior officer, Brigadier-general Craufurd, to proceed with four thousand men, by the antipodes, to Botany Bay, from whence they were to sail to Chili, which they were to conquer: this done, a line of posts was to be established across the Andes to Buenos Ayres, to secure the possession of that settlement. The proposer of such a scheme of conquest could hardly, it was supposed, have ever forgotten it." After a tedious voyage, this officer was recalled, and placed under the command of General Whitelocke at Buenos Ayres. It must, and did frequently happen, that a small expedition became increased to a large army, in which case, as Sir

Arthur Wellesley had stated to parliament, it was necessary to change the command, and appoint a senior officer, in order to retain in the service many excellent officers, who could not, from the usage in the army, serve under a junior commander. The ministers must have lamented, equally with their political adversaries, the convention; they lamented that it had not been demonstrated to the world, beyond the possibility of controversy, that the British army was infinitely superior to the French. But it should not be forgotten in history, that the character of the British army, under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley, in the course of this brief campaign, had been established in the mind of every impartial man in Europe, for incomparable discipline, irresistible valour, and unwearied perseverance. It had also been urged confidently, that the possession of Portugal was nothing; but were not the feelings of every Briton interested in the rescue of our ancient allies from the grasp of an usurper? was it of no value to have secured the Russian fleet in the Tagus? The whole world was fixed in attention on the British government, to see whether they would aid their ancient allies, or desert the cause of those to whom they were bound by the long-accustomed ties of friendship and amity. It was at this momentous interval, when doubt was the language of every tongue, the expression of every look, that the noble mover of a vote of censure, would have kept our forces at home, in inaction, rather than have entrusted a discretionary power to our generals to act as circumstances might require. It was also advanced as matter of grave offence, that the victory of Vimeira was announced in England amidst the thunder of artillery from the ancient ramparts of the tower; "endeavouring," it was asserted, "by noise and clamour, by a bold and confident show of exultation, to confound the sense of the country," but the authors of this sarcastic language would be obliged to admit, that since the commencement of the French revolution, except in the issue of the campaign in Egypt, there had been no instance of so signal a defeat of French objects, as in the expulsion of Junôt's

army from Portugal. The triumph, therefore, had been sufficient to justify the demonstration of joy manifested by the firing of guns. The chancellor of the exchequer acknowledged that Sir Arthur Wellesley had expressed what he thought necessary for his own justification, in a fair and manly manner, but could not coincide in his opinion upon the subject of the court of inquiry. A court-martial could not have been held without injustice to one of the general officers, against whom a particular charge might have been instituted, and the officers whom it would have been necessary to examine, were out of the country: a court-martial had not been demanded, although some inquiry was deemed necessary, and no objection could be taken to the honour of the individuals that formed that tribunal. This course of proceeding also was justified by two precedents in recent times. To those who instanced the case of General White-locke, he replied, that there existed no analogy between that case and the present, because government were in possession of documents fully sufficient to warrant them in bringing a distinct charge against that officer.

Mr. Whitbread next rose to address the House: he declared that, notwithstanding the able speech of Sir Arthur Wellesley, the lucid harangue of Lord Castlereagh, and the ingenious remarks of the chancellor of the exchequer, the spirited charge of Lord Petty was so feebly encountered, as to leave him in perfect possession of the field. There was, however, one literary and political warrior\* still remaining, who might yet retrieve the fortunes of the day. Lord Castlereagh professed to disapprove of the convention, "yet he was accessory to the answer given to the citizens of London, which the servants of the crown had put into the mouth of their sovereign." "Sir Arthur Wellesley too," in an impressive speech, "stated, that, had he been left in command, he never would have entered into a convention, yet, after such an avowal, he would not support the proposition of Lord H. Petty: and the chancellor of the exchequer thought the convention was

\* The Right Hon. George Canning.



justified, and, therefore, would withhold the confirmation of the sovereign's opinion by the House of Commons." Thus, then, said Mr. Whitbread, had the swords of the gallant Wellesley, and of his brave companions in arms, been drawn in vain: not in vain for their own glory and character, but most ineffectually for the honour, the credit, the glory, the interests, and the superiority of their country. The public had before them a great stake, and by whom was it thrown away? Guilt attached somewhere; and public indignation had been consequently excited. The court of inquiry decided that all the general officers were blameless, and zealous, and firm: yet blame remained. Had Sir Arthur Wellesley been in the command of a sufficient body of cavalry at Vimeira, he would have made captive the whole French army, in which case, the convention would have been unnecessary; that he had not done so was, because ministers neglected to supply the cavalry force which he solicited; wherefore, the whole, the original sin of the convention of Cintra, belonged to the ministers alone. The ministers were also unable to explain away the supersedure of Sir Arthur Wellesley from the command, "they had not appointed men of extensive talent and acknowledged genius, too proud to admit in their breasts a narrow and illiberal jealousy: they had not selected officers under whom Sir Arthur had previously served, and who entertained the high and merited opinion of his capacity and his services." Such were not the palliatives of ministers; and the gallant general himself, who, while he defended his own reputation, was known always to spare that of others, stated, "that he had no reason to expect being superseded, unless a very considerable increase should take place in the army." Mr. Whitbread declined passing any opinion upon the fitness or character of Sir Hew Dalrymple, or Sir Harry Burrard, but of Sir John Moore, "whose apotheosis had taken place," he observed, "that throughout the whole of the heroic army of Britain, there could not be found any officer with claims to distinguished command, greater than his: why, therefore, was not he allowed to assume that lead of

which the gallant Wellesley was deprived?" Lord Castlereagh had alluded to precedents, to extenuate his inconsistency in so frequently changing the command: but these were taken from the miserable policy of Austrian military councils; councils which so often cramped the exertions of the Archduke Charles; councils which teemed with treachery, to whose corrupt and baneful influence prostrated Austria and enslaved Europe might fairly attribute their forlorn condition; councils which led to the disastrous, but decisive victory of Jena, to the recapture of Madrid, and to the exclusion of Great Britain from almost every port of the continent of Europe. Such were the precedents accumulated by the British secretary at war. He trusted parliament would inquire into the causes "by which a gallant army, after unprecedented efforts of valour, patience, and endurance, were obliged to terminate a campaign in a victory, from which, in the words of Sir John Hope, no useful consequence would follow." Had we imitated the conqueror, rather than the conquered, we should not then have to lament that so great a victory had been attended with so little advantage.

Reports had been for some time industriously circulated throughout England, and the opposition side of the House of Commons seemed rather disposed to adopt them, "that Sir A. Wellesley was totally free from any participation in the convention." Upon this point, Sir Arthur claimed the attention of the House, only while he referred members to his evidence before the court of inquiry, and to his letter, dated the sixth of October, 1808, to his friend Lord Castlereagh; that letter contained his detailed opinions on the subject, and from those opinions he never should depart. Here Mr. Wellesley Pole (afterwards Lord Maryborough) rose, for the purpose of assuring the House, that he had no connexion with the paragraphs that appeared in the public newspapers, relative to the part his gallant relative had taken, or rather refused to take, in the convention; being the only member of the Wellesley family at that time in London, he had been applied to for information on the subject, but uniformly declined affording any, observing,

“that when General Wellesley returned, he would be found fully capable of vindicating his own character.” Mr. Hely-Hutchinson,\* who next addressed the House, complained that a parallel had been instituted between the convention of Cintra and that of Alexandria and Cairo, and felt himself called on, as one of those who had shared the honours of the campaign in Egypt, to reject all such comparison as implying disgrace, for in that light was the armistice of Lisbon viewed by the whole nation. The association of these conventions by Sir Arthur Wellesley, gave Mr. Hutchinson more pain than if that observation had been made by any other member of that House; yet he gladly declared himself amongst the most enthusiastic admirers of the brilliant exploits performed by that brave general and his troops, while in active operation in the field. Mr. Hutchinson entered into a minute detail of the operations of the army in Egypt, the daringly heroic descent of Sir Ralph Abercromby, in the presence of the enemy, upon the Egyptian shore; the glorious but lamented fall of the brave commander of the expedition, and perilous position of the British at that crisis. “Such were the difficulties of that moment,” said the honourable member “that, were he allowed to have chosen between the fate of Sir R. Abercromby, and the situation of the individual who succeeded to the command, without hesitation he would have preferred, for his gallant relative, the death of his lamented friend.” Sir John Moore, in a letter to Lord Hutchinson, thus characterises the war in Egypt at that momentous period. “I hope you see some prospect of terminating this expedition with success: left to my own mind, I own it suggests nothing comfortable.” This tone of despondence was not congenial to the feelings of Lord Hutchinson, who persevered in all the meditated movements of his brave predecessor, even in the most awful responsibility, and at length obliged Belliard to capitulate; but, by the terms of that capitula-

\* The Honourable Christopher Hely-Hutchinson, brother of General Lord Hutchinson and of Lord Donoughmore, and son of the provost of Dublin University: he served in the campaign in Egypt, and, on his return, was elected to parliament for the city of Cork.

lation; all the cavalry and field-train of the enemy were captured, and their hold of the country so essentially weakened, that it was scarcely possible, with any succours that they could expect, for them to recover Egypt. Twelve thousand French soldiers were escorted to their ships by four thousand five hundred British, under Sir John Moore; the inequality of numbers between the escorted and escorting, being the ridicule even of the French army. Menou actually treated Belliard as a traitor, and as such reported him to his government. "In what respect, therefore," demanded Mr. Hutchinson, "did the convention of Cairo resemble that of Cintra? Had not the voice of the empire been as distinct in approving and admiring the one proceeding, as it had been loud and unanimous in condemnation of the other? It was the capture of Cairo that rescued Egypt from the grasp of French domination." It is here important to remark, in instituting a comparison between these two conventions, that in Egypt the enemy was more than double the number of the British, possessed every military advantage, and, when beaten in the field, retired behind his strong works; whereas in Portugal he was inferior to the British during all periods of the operations, and, at the signing of the convention, considerably so; and when beaten in the field, and almost without a shelter to retire on, he was permitted to dictate the conditions of an armistice. During the campaign in Egypt, Europe was in a state of profound peace; pending the operations in Portugal, war raged in Spain; the French soldier was removed from Egypt, where he was mischievous to our ally, to France, where he was harmless: by the convention of Cintra, an army was released from its captivity in Portugal, and transported to Spain, where it became an immediate reinforcement to the enemy: the army of Egypt were compelled to disgorge their plunder; the army of Portugal carried the treasures of Portugal away with them. From these and other considerations, Mr. Hutchinson was justified in stating, "that the conventions were made under circumstances totally dissimilar, and attended by results the most opposite;" and as he was himself a brave and honest partici-

pator of the glory of that memorable campaign, his testimony has ever since been deemed conclusive as to the inappropriateness of any comparison. Mr. Hutchinson complained, that General Wellesley defended the result of the campaign in Portugal, at the expense, in some degree, of the military glory of those who conquered in Egypt; but his complaint had no real foundation, as few public men have ever been more cautious in abstaining from individual aspersion, or depreciation of personal merit, than Sir Arthur Wellesley; nor was the honour or character of the British army ever more jealously shielded against calumny, than by that generous and able advocate. Indeed, Colonel Hutchinson did not conclude his able professional statement of the discrepancies that existed between the two conventions, without amending the implication, which he did by paying a warm tribute of admiration to the Arthur Wellesley.

The question had now agitated the public mind so long and so anxiously, that Mr. Secretary Canning rose, to give to the country his decision also on the painful point. He agreed with those who saw little or no analogy between this unpopular measure and the convention of Cairo; such comparisons were as invidious as incorrect; he wished to see his country rising continually in character and glory; the idea of its degeneracy he could not endure. It was unfair to exclude the Portuguese government from all participation in the armistice; it was wrong to exchange civil prisoners for Spanish troops. In the other points, Mr. Canning concurred with his brother ministers. It is here material to observe, that Mr. Canning undertook, in the name of his colleagues, the responsibility of having placed Sir Hew Dalrymple in the chief command; thereby relieving Lord Castlereagh individually from that part of the charge, and even establishing the fact, that he had concurred in that officer's appointment, to the manifest prejudice of Sir Arthur Wellesley's hopes and interests, the state having required that sacrifice of friendship from him. Mr. Canning proceeded to eulogize "the spirit, the boldness, the courage, and the correctness with which Sir A. Wellesley achieved the



victories of Roleia and Vimeira, and regretted that he had been stopped in his career." But in his defence of Ministers from the charge of inconsistency, vacillation, and want of information, he appeared, on this occasion, totally unequal to himself. His eloquent pleading, was, for this time, disregarded. Ministers succeeded in obtaining a majority of fifty, upon Lord Castlereagh's moving the previous question, although the first of Lord Petty's resolutions embodied the sentiments of every British subject, both within and without the walls of parliament.

On the 27th of February, in this session, Mr. Ponsonby brought forward his motion relative to the campaign in Spain, in which the question of the convention of Cintra was again debated, the conduct of ministers a second time bitterly censured, by one of the most powerful oppositions ever associated in parliament, and the gallantry of Sir A. Wellesley occasionally alluded to, in terms honourable to the impartiality of those from whose political opinions he was known to dissent. In this angry debate, General Wellesley took no part, but, soon after its close, was called on, as Irish chief-secretary, to explain "what necessity could possibly have existed for the expenditure of forty thousand pounds on telegraphic buildings in Ireland." Mr. Martin gave it as his opinion, that, from the cloudy atmosphere of that country, it was ill suited to the establishment of such a mode of communication, and therefore it was unwise to be extravagant in the attempt. Sir Arthur Wellesley replied, that it was contemplated to convey telegraphic intelligence from Galway to Dublin, through Athlone, instead of the former circuitous mode by the line of coast; and that, though it might be expensive at first, it would ultimately prove more economical. This explanation being considered sufficient, the subject was discontinued. A question of much more importance to the interests and happiness of the people of Ireland was immediately after brought under the notice of the House, by Sir John Newport, who moved that the report upon "the corn-distillery prohibition bill" be recommitted, for the purpose of introducing a clause extending the prohibition to Ireland. The debate which followed was



not marked by any display of knowledge on the particular question; on the contrary, it seemed merely to afford an opportunity to members on different sides of the House, to express their unqualified dissent from each other's opinions. The mover of the resolution affirmed, that if the author of the bill, Mr. Foster, were desirous to confer a benefit on Ireland, he would do infinitely more to tranquillize the people, by comprehending that country under his prohibitory act, than by all the penal laws on the statute-book." Sir Robert Peel\* expressed his conviction "that if the bill were passed in the shape it then assumed, the most fatal consequences would ensue. He wished the two countries might go hand in hand, and mutually assist each other. The north of England stood much in need of the produce of Ireland, and, owing to the depression of manufactures and trade, the people there were not half fed, so that the oats of Ireland would content them. Hitherto the manufacturers had conducted themselves with great prudence and propriety, but whenever they should understand, that a part of that which might be appropriated to their support, was permitted to be consumed, not in the preservation, but the destruction of man, they might probably not remain so well satisfied." This declaration, from a practical man, who understood and felt for the necessities of the working classes, was calculated to produce a strong impression on the House in favour of Sir John Newport's motion. To correct this evil, and place the question in its true light as regarded Ireland, Sir A. Wellesley presented himself to the notice of the members, and assured those interested in this argument, "that the people of England would not receive a grain of corn less out of Ireland, if the bill should stand as it then was, than if the prohibition were extended to the latter country. Grain, in Ireland, was much more abundant than in the last year, the price of provisions would show this, for, though comparatively high in the market of Dublin, it was much lower in Ireland generally. If he thought that the measure would bear hard

\* The first baronet of that name; he was born at Peel Cross, near Blackburn, in Lancashire, and died at Drayton Park, Staffordshire, on the 3rd of May, 1830, in the 74th year of his age.



ROBERT PEELE

Robert Peel



upon Great Britain, he would unquestionably vote against it ; but, having given much attention to the subject, and being satisfied of the contrary, the bill should have his cordial support." This brief statement of Sir Arthur Wellesley, made in his official capacity, and deduced from diligent and patient examination into facts, produced a deep impression, and called forth the talents of Mr. Curwen, an eminent agriculturist, as well as those of Sir Henry Parnell, who grounded his opposition to the Irish secretary's views, on the fact, that the non-extension of the bill to Ireland, was a direct violation of the act of union, and unprecedented in its character since the passing of that measure. The feeling of the House, however, was with the opposition ; and the amendment was carried by a majority, against ministers, of thirty-eight.

In the discharge of his civil duties, Sir Arthur Wellesley did not confine himself to questions purely Irish, or to those on the fate of which ministerial majorities depended, but, while his mind must have been deeply engaged in weighing the foreign fortunes of his country, and eagerly waiting a moment to throw his sword into the scale, he still took part in every debate involving a vital or important interest to the nation at large. An instance of this attention to his country's happiness, appears in his commentary on the mode of selecting committees in the House, occasioned by Mr. R. Dundas's motion for a renewal of the committee on the East India Company's affairs. It is one of those simple, sensible, sufficient speeches peculiarly his own, and a singular instance of the calmness of his manner in debate. Having been objected to personally, as ineligible to serve on the committee, Sir A. Wellesley observed, "that it was rather an odd way of selecting a committee, to fix upon those persons, who were ignorant of the business to come before that committee, to the exclusion of those who were informed upon the subject." Mr. Creevy had objected to him in a pointed, he might almost say in a personal manner, but he appealed to that gentleman himself as to the line of conduct pursued by him in the course of the proceedings of the late committee. He begged leave to observe, that it could

not be owing to any material difference as to the sincerity of his views, with respect to East India politics, for he, (Sir Arthur) had divided with Mr. Creevy on a question of no trifling importance, that had been before the committee: and he assured the honourable gentleman, that of this he might be certain, that whenever the conduct of his noble relation (Marquis Wellesley) came before that committee, the fullest and the most rigid inquiry into that conduct should at all times have his most cordial support. Indeed, he never should shrink from not only inquiry into that, but into all that either his noble relative, himself, or the Marquis Cornwallis had done, even from the year 1782. That our East India settlements had been considerably extended, he did not think to constitute in itself a serious accusation, but he was fully prepared to prove to the committee, whenever they were ready to go into it, that the extension of our dominions had not been owing, as had been presumed, to any aggression on our part: neither had they been undertaken with any view of ambitious aggrandizement. Whether, and how far, they were to be followed up, would be a question of a very different nature. It was certain that war was in no country so expensive as in the East Indies. Since the peace of the Deccan, concluded by him in 1803, there had not been in that province the slightest symptom of a tendency to hostilities. With respect to the exposition, he thought that every paper relating to it ought to be produced. He wished the exposition to have fair play, and it should be the intention of the committee to give the details of all matters of exposition. He could only say, with respect to the propriety of his own appointment, that if the House should think proper to add his name to that committee, he never would oppose any question with respect to India, and he would, in every respect, discharge his duty with impartiality, and to the best of his abilities."

The decided tone of Sir Arthur's language, his disinclination to obstruct inquiry by his presence, while he preserved a fixed resolution to act on the committee if appointed, and his proper confidence in his own integrity, called up Mr. Creevy

a second time to say, "that he intended no personal objection to the gallant general. His opposition was directed against all persons, generally, filling official situations. Other members, amongst whom was Mr. Whitbread, argued on the principle of excluding servants of the crown from seats in committees of inquiry; but the opinion of Sir Arthur Wellesley was strongly and strenuously sustained by Mr. Wilberforce, who contended, "that although impartiality was not only a desirable but an indispensable qualification, yet he could not go so far as to assert, that due information upon any questions to be tried was inconsistent with impartiality." It was at the close of this debate, and when the motion was negatived without a division, that the chancellor of the exchequer (Mr. Spencer Perceval) moved the order of the day for the House going into a committee on the corn-distillery prohibition bill already alluded to. The secretary for Ireland, on this occasion, after Sir John Newport and other Irish members had urged the extension of the bill, repeated his conviction, "that last year there was not a sufficient quantity of food in Ireland for the demands on her, but he was of a different opinion as to the period when he was speaking. It was also his opinion, that if the distillers were not allowed to go on in their usual course, they would go on privately, and defraud the revenue of the country." The ministry were ultimately successful in their object, but only by a majority of three.

Amongst the many measures proposed by Sir Arthur Wellesley, while secretary for Ireland, that for the improvement of the inland navigation of that country was not the least important. On the twenty-eighth of March, 1809, he moved, pursuant to notice, "that the House do resolve itself into a committee to consider upon the further extension of inland navigation in Ireland," and as soon as that form had been assumed, addressed them to the following effect, "that the benefits which had been experienced by the late extension of inland navigation in Ireland, in consequence of the act of the Irish parliament, to which he desired to call the attention of the committee, were so evident and striking to every one



who was acquainted with the progress of internal improvement in Ireland within the last seven or eight years, that it was unnecessary for him to expatiate upon it: he would venture to assert, that no other species of internal improvement, nor any other medium through which public bounty might be bestowed, could produce such marked and decided national advantages as had arisen from the operations of the act to which he had referred. The increase of agriculture in Ireland, (the prime object of inland navigation,) was a benefit not merely bestowed on that country in the spirit of liberality, but a measure of sound and necessary policy for this country to adopt, and one upon which, if any man could heretofore have doubted, the present political and commercial state of Europe and America would furnish sufficient arguments to bring conviction to his mind. It was an uncontroverted fact, that the agriculture of Great Britain had not for many years been equal to the production of grain sufficient for her own consumption; and that we had, for several years past, most lavishly and improvidently expended millions in improving and extending the agriculture of foreign and of hostile nations, by purchasing their corn, while we suffered the fertile lands of Ireland to remain untilled, for want of a cheap and easy conveyance of their produce to market. It was also admitted that the deficiency of capital in Ireland was so great as to render it impracticable to obtain an extensive inland navigation, without considerable parliamentary aids: and if he was founded in those points, the only thing that remained to be considered was, in what manner, and under what regulations, these bounties should be administered, and the system which had proved so beneficial should be further extended? He professed himself to be unacquainted with the detail of the business; and indeed the other necessary avocations of any man holding his office, would render it completely impracticable for him to enter into the inquiries necessary to form a correct judgment on matters of this nature: and therefore he conceived himself justified in bringing forward the measure of continuing the present board of directors of inland naviga-

tion, whose duties it would be to examine and inquire into the different lines of navigation that were already or might hereafter be proposed for, and to state their opinions on the respective advantages, in order to guide the judgment of his majesty's government, as to which of those lines they ought to recommend to parliament to be carried into execution by public aid." This appeal in favour of the promotion of public works in Ireland, delivered in the year 1809, by the substitution of 'rail-road transport' for navigation, remained precisely applicable to that country, after a lapse of thirty years. It was highly approved of by Sir John Newport, a man whose life was devoted to the interest of his native land particularly, without being in the least degree insensible to the sufferings of the human race in every climate. To this testimony in favour of the Irish secretary's plan for the amelioration of the agricultural interests in Ireland, was added the approbation of Sir H. Parnell. Ranged uniformly on the opposite benches to Sir Arthur Wellesley, and to those with whom he acted, this honourable member still felt bound, in fairness, to state "that he sincerely rejoiced to find that the right honourable secretary for Ireland, not only agreed with him in principle, but had adduced one of the strongest arguments that could be urged in favour of the measure, namely, that it was a measure of sound British policy, independent of any advantage that Ireland might, as a distinct member, derive from it." Some trifling opposition was given to this valuable proposition, on the ground of the incompetence of the persons composing the board in Ireland, an objection but too well founded, after which Sir Arthur Wellesley's motion was carried by a majority of four to one.

With this parliamentary success, Sir Arthur Wellesley concluded his labours in the lower house of British representatives. In the few months that had elapsed, since the termination of the court of inquiry, up to this period, his attendance on parliament was constant and regular, and his zeal, in all matters tending to alleviate the condition of Ireland generally, unremitting. If the length of his civil services be

taken into consideration, he may truly be said to have been the most active secretary for Irish affairs that has been appointed for many years, or in fact since the enactment of the union; having introduced a greater number of Irish bills in one month, than his successors have done in as many years. His fostering care of the existing institutions, introduction of a better constabulary force, extension of privileges to officers of rank in that country, watchful regard of the agricultural interests, promotion of statistical improvements, establishment of more economic semaphoric communication from shore to shore, and his assertion of the claims of Irish militia-soldiers to the same advantages of enlistment which other parts of the United Kingdom enjoyed, all these did not interfere with Sir Arthur Wellesley's active co-operation in saving his colleagues from the well-aimed blows of an able opposition, nor prevent him from taking part in the angry debates that occurred, during the same period, upon the state of India, a country to which he always seemed to turn with the fondest feelings. Sir Arthur Wellesley has left more numerous and lasting memorials of his activity, in the discharge of his civil duties, than any individual who ever filled the office of chief-secretary for Ireland, for so limited a period: and by a reference to the parliamentary debates, which have here been largely quoted for the purpose, it will appear that he was, at that period of his life, known and regarded, not merely as a soldier, but a financier, diplomatist, and statesman, by both parties in the House of Commons, and that, had he preferred the life of a mere politician, or civil officer, to that of a soldier, the path to honour was equally open to his entrance.

It may be remembered, that about this period the king of England, and Ferdinand the Seventh of Spain, had agreed to a treaty of peace, friendship, and alliance, the former guaranteeing the succession and possession of the crown and empire to that monarch, who in return engaged never to cede to France any part of his territories in any part of the world, and not to make peace with France, except by common consent. To carry out the objects of this league, England begun

to collect her armies from their scattered positions, with a view to throwing her concentrated forces into the Peninsula, and boldly opposing the French legions there. Amongst the first corps despatched to the scene of action, was that under Major-General Hill, who reached Lumias on the sixth of April, where Sir John Cradock had fixed his head-quarters.\* This experienced officer did not exhibit any intention of taking offensive measures, although much pressed by Generals Hill and Beresford. However, it was ultimately decided that the combined British and Portuguese army should make a forward movement, and threaten the enemy's outposts, which were then between the Vouga and the Douro. From this demonstration, it was confidently hoped the evacuation of Oporto by the enemy would quickly follow, and that Portugal would soon after be entirely relieved from his presence.

While preparations were actually in progress for the accomplishment of this object, intelligence arrived of the appointment of Sir Arthur Wellesley to the command of the British army in the Peninsula, by which Sir John Cradock was superseded. As Sir John was a much older officer, government remedied the difficulty that presented itself, by appointing him governor of Gibraltar, thereby leaving his command open to Sir Arthur Wellesley without impropriety or injustice. Of this change in the command, the Earl of Buckinghamshire loudly complained, as being an ill reward for Sir John's exertions in collecting the scattered British force, and preparing it for resistance; to which it was owing that the determination of embarking from Lisbon was abandoned. This complaint was answered by a deprecation, on the part of Lord Liverpool, against thus trenching upon the prerogative, and virtually destroying that responsibility which ministers possessed. "The measures of General Cradock had certainly obtained the approbation of the government, and he had actually commenced the campaign, when, by an extraordinary effort of the war-minister of the day, Sir Arthur Wellesley was appointed to the chief command in Portugal."†

\* Marquis of Londonderry's Narrative of the Peninsular War. † Ibid.

“ It would appear that this arrangement was adopted after a struggle in the cabinet, and, certainly, neither the particular choice, nor the general principle of employing men of talent without regard to seniority, can be censured : nevertheless, Sir John Cradock\* was used unworthily. A general of his rank would never have accepted a command on such terms : and it was neither just nor decent to expose him to an unmerited mortification.”†

\* Sir John Cradock, afterwards General Lord Howden, expired at his residence in Hereford-street, London, on the 18th of July, 1839, after he had attained the age of eighty years. He was senior Knight Grand Cross of the Bath, a member of the board of general officers, and colonel of the forty-third regiment. He served with great distinction in various parts of the world. He commanded a battalion of grenadiers at the taking of the West India Islands ; was wounded at Martinique ; and was present at St. Lucie, Guadaloupe, and the siege of Fort Bourbon. He was a quarter-master-general in Ireland during the rebellion of 1798, and severely wounded at Ballinahinch, in the action with the French troops and rebel forces. He commanded a division of the army under Sir Ralph Abercromby in the Egyptian campaign, when he received from the Sultan the imperial order of the crescent of the first class, as an acknowledgment of his services. In 1804 he was appointed commander-in-chief in India ; and in 1809, commander of the allied armies in Portugal. Upon the appointment of Sir Arthur Wellesley, he was made, first, governor of Gibraltar, and subsequently of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1819 he was created Baron Howden of Grimston and Spaldington, and of Cradock's town in the county of Kildare, in the peerage of Ireland ; and in 1831 an English peerage was conferred upon him. His lordship, on his promotion to a peerage of the realm, exchanged the Irish family name of Cradock, by royal license, for that of Caradoc, its Welsh original. Lord Howden was the only son of Doctor John Cradock, archbishop of Dublin, and was succeeded in his titles and estates by his only son, Lieutenant-colonel, the Hon. John Hobard Caradoc. As a senator, General Lord Howden was moderate in his political opinions, but an advocate of liberal principles, and uniformly supported the Whigs in parliament. The following table presents an accurate statement of

*The Services of General Lord Howden, G.C.B. K.C.*

Cornet 4th horse - - -	15th Dec. 1777	Colonel half-pay, ditto -	25th March, 1798
Ensign Coldstream Guards	9th July, 1779	Colonel 54th foot - - -	8th May, 1801
Lieut. and Captain, ditto	12th Dec., 1781	Colonel half-pay, ditto -	25th June, 1802
Major 12th Light Dragoons	25th June, 1783	Colonel 71st foot foot -	6th August, 1803
Major 13th foot - - -	16th Sept., 1786	Colonel 43d foot - - -	7th January, 1809
Lieut-Colonel 13th foot -	16th June, 1789	Major-general - - - -	1st January, 1798
Colonel by Brevet - - -	26th Feb., 1795	Lieutenant-general - -	1st January, 1805
Colonel 127th foot - - -	16th April, 1795	General - - - - -	4th June, 1814

Wore the First Class of the Crescent.

† Napier's Hist. Pen. War.



The contest in the cabinet being brought to a conclusion, by the selection of Sir Arthur Wellesley, that officer, recollecting the resolutions proposed by Mr. Whitbread, immediately resigned the chief-secretaryship for Ireland, the duties of which he had performed for three months with so much benefit to that country, and character to himself, and at the same time vacated his seat in parliament. Thus disencumbered of every civil office, he accepted the important command of the Peninsular army.

In addition to the desire of aiding her new ally, the Spaniard, England was urged to still further exertion by the importunities of the Portuguese regency, to respect her ancient friendship with that country; and the instructions given to the British officer in command of the expedition were, "in case he should find that Lisbon had been evacuated by the British troops, (an event prevented by the prudence of Sir J. Cradock,) to proceed to Cadiz, and land the British troops there, if the government would admit them into the garrison." Mr. Canning was aware, as he acknowledged in his letter to Mr. Freire, of the delicacy of this step, owing to the refusal on a former occasion, but circumstances had materially changed since that rejection, and England entertained no resentment in consequence of it. Previous to the departure of Sir Arthur Wellesley from England, he drew up a plan for the defence of Portugal, which was submitted to the ministry on the 7th of March, 1809, and very fully unfolds his able views, as to the future progress of that glorious campaign upon which he was just about to enter. In this memorandum, minute in every particular, he gives it as his opinion, that Portugal might be defended, whatever might be the result of the contest in Spain; and meanwhile, that measures, adopted for the defence of Portugal, would be highly useful to the Spaniards in their struggle with the French. He was also convinced, that the Portuguese military establishment, upon the footing of forty thousand militia and eighty thousand regulars, ought forthwith to be revived; and that his majesty ought to employ an army in Portugal amounting to twenty thousand British troops.



including four thousand cavalry. He had always held, that even had Spain been conquered, the French would not have been able to overrun Portugal with a smaller force than one hundred thousand men; and, as long as the contest should continue in Spain, this force, if it could be put in a state of activity, would be highly useful to the Spaniards, and might eventually decide the contest. The military establishment of Portugal could not be revived without extensive pecuniary assistance and political support from England; and the only mode he could perceive, whereby it would be safe, or even practicable, to give this assistance, or to interfere in a military way in the concerns of Portugal, was to trust the king's ambassador at Lisbon to regulate the amount of such sums as he might think necessary for the support of the military establishments only, and instruct him to see that the revenues of Portugal were similarly applied. By the operation of such powers, that civil officer would possess a complete control over the measures of the Portuguese government; and, had such a line of conduct been pursued, we might have expected, by this time, to have had in the field an efficient Portuguese army. As it was not possible to adopt these measures at that time, Sir Arthur concluded, that the military establishments of the Portuguese had made but little progress; and in considering the extent of the British force required for the defence of that country, the small extent of the Portuguese force, and probability of an early attack by the enemy, must be considered on the one hand; and on the other, the continuance of the contest in Spain, and the probability that a very large French force will not be disposable in a very short period of time, for the attack upon Portugal.

In recommending the adoption of these political measures, and the revival of the Portuguese military establishments, Sir Arthur Wellesley considered that an expense would be incurred, in the first year, of one million sterling. But should they succeed, and the Peninsular war continue, the benefit would be more than adequate to the expenditure. Under this view of the question, he conceived that the British force, to be

employed in Portugal, should not be less than thirty thousand men, of which number, four or five thousand should be cavalry, and a large body of artillery would also be requisite, because the Portuguese were deficient in the two latter branches. It would be further indispensably necessary that the whole of the allied army should be placed under the command of British officers, the staff and the commissariat, in particular, should be British, and extensive in proportion to the duties to be performed. As far as the details of these measures were concerned, General Wellesley deemed it expedient that the British army in Portugal should be reinforced, expeditiously, with three thousand cavalry, and some companies of British riflemen; that the complement of ordnance should be made thirty pieces of cannon, two brigades being of nine pounders, and all completely horsed; that twenty pieces of brass (twelve pounders) ordnance upon travelling-carriages, should be sent to Portugal, with a view to the occupation of certain positions in that country; that a corps of engineers, for an army of sixty thousand men, should be sent forward, and a corps of artillery for sixty pieces of artillery.

The British army in Portugal, when Sir Arthur Wellesley was chosen to the command, was but twenty thousand men, including cavalry; this he required to be augmented to twenty thousand, exclusive of that particular force, by the addition of riflemen and other veteran infantry from the army returned from Spain, as soon as they should be recovered from their fatigues, and could be refitted. He further demanded that thirty thousand stand of arms, clothing, and shoes, for the Portuguese army, should be forwarded to Lisbon with all convenient expedition. It was in the highest degree advisable that the general and staff-officers should proceed to Portugal, as soon as the necessary arrangements were made, for Sir Arthur Wellesley was of opinion, that the moment the public journals announced the departure of officers for the Peninsula, the French armies in Spain would receive orders to make their movements towards Portugal, in order to anticipate our measures for its defence."

Having submitted this general view of his plan for the defence of Portugal, a plan built upon experience of past services on the continent, and originating in foresight of the future, he hastened to Portsmouth, where the *Surveillante* frigate, which had been commissioned for the purpose of conveying him to Portugal, was in readiness. Detained here for a few days by adverse winds, he addressed a communication to Don Domingos de Souza Coutinho, (afterwards Conde de Funchal) apologizing for not having waited on his excellency before his departure from London, on the ground, that he considered it important not to delay his departure one moment after he had received his instructions from government; he also declared himself much flattered by his excellency's expressions of gratulation at his appointment to the command in Portugal—promised to attend to the different subjects mentioned in the ambassador's letter; and concluded by referring his excellency to Mr. Secretary Canning, for the accomplishment of his wishes with respect to the distribution of ammunition and arms amongst the Portuguese.

On Saturday, the 15th of April, 1809, two days subsequent to the date of the preceding letter, although the wind was still contrary, Sir Arthur Wellesley and his suite were received on board, and "set sail," says Lord Londonderry, who was attached to the staff as adjutant-general, "with a stiff breeze blowing ahead, but we had not proceeded beyond the Isle of Wight, when an event occurred which had nearly proved fatal to us. It might be about midnight, or rather later, when the captain of the *Surveillante*, (George R. Collier,) burst into the cabin, entreating us to rise without delay, for that we were on the eve of shipwreck. As may be imagined, we lost no time in leaping from our cots, and mounting to the deck, when a very awful as well as very alarming spectacle presented itself. In attempting to clear a shoal which runs out from St. Catherine's point into the sea, the ship missed stays; this occurred again and again, each failure bringing us nearer and nearer to danger; and now, when we looked abroad, the breakers were to be seen a stone's throw from the bow. There

was not an individual amongst us who anticipated any other result, than that in a few minutes, at the furthest, the vessel would strike; but we were deceived. The wind, which had hitherto been blowing on shore, suddenly changed, and we were at once relieved from a situation, than which the whole progress of our lives had not before brought us into any more uncomfortable. But it was the only adventure which befell us by the way. The fair wind, which sprung up at a moment so critical, did not desert us during the remainder of our voyage, and we anchored in the Tagus, after a passage of only six days, on the 22nd of April.\* In addition to this circumstantial statement of the peril to which the *Surveillante* was exposed, we have the authority of Colonel Gurwood "that the frigate was very nearly lost in very bad weather at the back of the Isle of Wight, in the night after quitting Spithead."† These accounts most probably emanate from the same source, and the facts detailed are undoubtedly true, but they augment the amount of supposed peril much beyond the estimate of an experienced seaman, on board the *Surveillante* at the same time, who asserts, that there was no absolute danger, and that the only injury sustained on the voyage was the loss of the topsail during the rough weather of Monday the 17th. As Sir Arthur Wellesley had been in Christian's fleet during the celebrated six weeks' storm, the stiff breeze of the Channel struck no terror to his heart; his fortune, too, prevailed as happily on this occasion, and, reaching the port of Lisbon in safety, after a quick and lively passage, he disembarked with his suite, at four in the afternoon of the day on which the *Surveillante* cast anchor in the Tagus.

\* Narrative of the Peninsular War.    † Despatches, note to p. 264, Vol. iv.

## CHAP. II.

SIR A. WELLESLEY ARRIVES IN THE TAGUS—HIS ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION BY THE PORTUGUESE—MARCHES AGAINST SOULT—THE PHILADELPHES—BERESFORD MARCHES ON THE DOURO—HILL PASSES THE LAKE OVAR—AFFAIR AT GRIJO—PRECIPITATE RETREAT OF THE FRENCH ACROSS THE DOURO—SIR A. WELLESLEY PASSES THE DOURO, AND DRIVES SOULT OUT OF OPORTO—BERESFORD DRIVES IN THE FRENCH OUTPOSTS, AND OCCUPIES AMARANTE—SIR A. WELLESLEY PURSUES THE MAIN BODY OF THE ENEMY TO BRAGA—DESPERATE SITUATION OF SOULT'S ARMY; THEIR ESCAPE, AFTER THE SEVEREST LOSS AND SUFFERING—DIFFICULTIES OF SIR A. WELLESLEY'S SITUATION—MARCHES TOWARDS THE SOUTH OF PORTUGAL—THE PASSES OF BANOS AND PRERALES—TALAVERA—1809.

It has been frequently asserted that the Portuguese entertained no sincere regard for the English character, and that the faith and fondness of an ancient amity were, with them, but empty sounds; but it is highly improbable that such a conclusion could ever have rested on any solid support. "The connexion between England and Portugal was not an ordinary one, built on immediate interest, liable to change with the change of circumstances. These were nations with whom, during the long struggle with Buonaparte, we were in league one day, and at war the next, the hostility being without anger, and the alliance without esteem. Our friendship with Portugal was, like our enmity to France, founded on something deeper. From the day when Portugal first became a kingdom, with the exception of that unfortunate period when the Philips usurped its crown, England had been its tried and faithful friend. When Lisbon was conquered from the Moors, English crusaders assisted at the siege—English archers contributed to the victory of Aljubarotta, which effected the first deliverance of Portugal from Castile. An Englishwoman, a Plantaganet, was the mother of that Prince Henry, whose name will for ever remain conspicuous in the history of the world. The Braganzan family, when it recovered its rights, applied, and not in vain, to its hereditary ally; and when Lisbon was visited by the tremendous earthquake of 1755, money was immediately voted by the English parliament, for the relief of the Portuguese people; and ships laden with provisions were despatched to them in a time of scarcity at home.



These things are not forgotten—if there be a country in the world where the English character is understood, and England is loved as well as respected, it is Portugal. The face of its rudest mountaineer brightens, when he hears that it is an Englishman who accosts him: and he tells the traveller that the English and the Portuguese were always—always friends.\* Yet these past services were, in a moment of irritation, in an hour of sorrow, forgotten, and the English flag was insulted, the soldier that fought under it spurned, and saved from violence and death, at the hands of those whom he had so often protected, only by measures of the last extremity, the planting of British artillery in the squares and market-places of the different garrisoned towns.† That Portugal ought to have retained a

\* Southey.

† “At the commencement of the Peninsular struggle, all classes of the Portuguese, according to their means, rich and poor, the clergy and the laity, the fidalgo and the peasant, expressed an eagerness to save, an eagerness to honour the British. In these early marches, the villa, the monastery, and the cottage, were thrown open at the approach of our troops; the best apartments, the neatest cells, the humble but only beds, were all resigned to the march-worn officers and men with undisguised cheerfulness. It is with pain I am compelled to confess, that the manners of my strange, but well-meaning countrymen, soon wrought a change in the kind dispositions of the people. When they saw many assume as a right, all which they had awarded from politeness, and receive their respectful attentions and cordial services, as expressions of homage due to the courage, wealth, and power of the British nation—when the simplicity of their manners, their frugality, the spareness of their diet, the peculiarities of their dress, and their religious prejudices, were made the subject of derision and ridicule—when they witnessed scenes of brutal intoxication, and were occasionally exposed to vulgar insult from uneducated and overbearing Englishmen,—when all this occurred, they began to examine our individual titles to their esteem; they were, after, very soon disenchanted: and the spirit which we had awakened in them, manifested itself in various acts of neglect, rudeness, and even resentment. The English are admired, not only in Portugal, but over all Europe, as a free, enlightened, and a brave people, but they cannot make themselves beloved; they are not content with being great, they must be thought so, and told so. They will not bend, with good humour, to the customs of other nations, nor will they condescend to soothe (flatter they never do) the harmless self-love of friendly foreigners. No: wherever they march or travel, they bear with them a haughty air of conscious superiority, and expect that their customs, habits, and opinions should supersede, or at least suspend, those of all the countries through which they pass.”—*Recollections of the Peninsula.*



deep sense of gratitude to the British people, the page of history amply testifies : that this feeling was for awhile suspended, is equally authenticated ; and the fact is confirmed by the testimony of an eye-witness, whose memoranda afford some explanation of the cause that led to so deplorable an effect.

It was during that interregnum of British popularity, and at the precise moment when a council of British generals had boldly determined upon retaining Lisbon to the last, that Sir Arthur Wellesley landed upon the shores of Portugal. Never was a more certain demonstration afforded of any fact, than this gallant soldier's arrival gave, of the clear and decided character which he had acquired on the continent, for courage, ability, and honour. It was for Sir Arthur Wellesley that the Portuguese deputies before applied, when Beresford was fortunately chosen, and sent to discipline their rude hordes : and now the voice of all Portugal was raised in proclaiming welcome to the victor of Vimeira, and hailing the only man in existence whom they could follow, undoubtingly, to the field of battle. When the native forces of Spain or Portugal were victorious, it was their constant custom to attribute the successful issue to the bravery of the men alone : whenever they suffered a defeat, the blame was imputed to the general, and death, invariably, became his portion in such cases. This infamous policy necessarily destroyed all confidence between the native commanders and their followers, and was attended with the worst and most lamentable consequences. It was a peculiar quality of General Wellesley to be able to inspire his troops with the firmest confidence ; and instances are not rare, in the eventful military history of his life, of an inferior in command, although perhaps an able officer, having made the best possible disposition to attack or receive the enemy, yet still unable to convince the soldiers of the security of their position, when General Wellesley has unexpectedly arrived, perceived the wavering feeling of the men, and, with the rapidity of thought, directed some new movement to be made : this was followed uniformly by a murmur of approbation, —evidence of new and boundless confidence in the result of

that day: and this, though the least bloody, was perhaps the most fatal blow struck against the enemy on such occasions. That the Portuguese had the same implicit reliance on the genius and destiny of Sir Arthur Wellesley, was rapidly evinced by the numerous and extravagant demonstrations of joy exhibited in every town of Portugal where a spark of freedom remained unquenched. The streets of every large town were occupied with groups, engaged in calculating upon the fortunes of Portugal under the command of the invincible British general; for three successive nights, every window in Lisbon shone bright with illuminations in honour of the hero's return to the field of his glory. Spectacles, chiefly allegorical, were exhibited in the different theatres, in which Mars and Victory were the chief performers; laurel crowns were distributed abundantly; and the fêtes in honour of the British chieftain resembled those scenes with which ancient Spain was once familiar, when chivalry was held in high esteem. The public authorities invited Sir Arthur to an entertainment, a compliment which he respectfully declined; but he cheerfully accepted the rank of "marshal-general of the armies of Portugal," to which he had with much propriety been nominated by the regency.

The first step taken by Sir Arthur Wellesley, after his acknowledgments were made to the government and municipal authorities, was dictated, not merely by a correct view of his duty, not solely by the etiquette of the service, but by a considerate feeling for every man in every class of society, with whom in his long and active public life circumstances brought him into contact. This was now manifested by the delicate manner in which he assumed the command. The day after his arrival, and while the loud *vivas* of the delighted Portuguese were borne to his ears by every breeze that blew, he calmly, courteously, delicately, addressed Mr. Villiers (Lord Clarendon) to say that "he thought it best that Beresford should come to Lisbon, unless inconvenience to the public service was to be apprehended by his absence from his corps:" he despatched a second letter, on the same day, to General Beresford, couched in similar language, but leaving it at that

officer's option to come to Lisbon, or wait to receive the new commander at the head of the Portuguese forces, which, although still under that commander's immediate control, were at the disposal of General Wellesley in his capacity of marshal-general of Portugal. Beresford was assured, through both communications, that the business of war could be advantageously transacted for a few days at Lisbon, and in one he was requested to mention to Sir John Cradock, the invitation he had received from the Marshal-General. These precautionary acts of kindness did not yet complete the measure of respect, which Sir Arthur felt due to the rank, conduct, and character of the gallant officer whom he had been sent to supersede, for the invitation to Beresford was quickly followed by a letter to Sir John Cradock, in which the new commander-in-chief informed that officer "of the concurrence of his opinion with that which his predecessor appeared to entertain, with respect to a further movement northward:" he next proceeded to speak of the positions of Soult and Victor, and how far the latter seemed enabled to make an attack on Portugal, and alluded to the means of defending Lisbon and the Tagus in such case. These, and other subjects equally important to the further prosecution of the Peninsular campaign, Sir Arthur expressed an anxious desire to talk over with Sir John Cradock, in company with General Beresford. If these various communications, and the manner of them, do not sufficiently prove that no thoughts ranged higher in the reflections of the commander-in-chief, than how the feelings of Sir John Cradock might be most delicately consulted, the concluding paragraph of his private letter to that general, will remove every doubt: "It might possibly also (says Sir Arthur) *be more agreeable and convenient to you to see me here, than at the head of the army*; and if this should be the case, it would be a most desirable arrangement to meet you here: I beg, however, that you will consider this proposition only with a view to your own convenience and wishes." The sincerity of this courtesy was further established by the tenor of Sir Arthur's communication to the right honourable J. H. Frere,

then British ambassador at the court of Spain. To this civil officer it was announced, that Sir Arthur proposed to assume the command of the army, as soon as he should have communicated with Sir J. Cradock. This interview, unseen by the army which the late commander-in-chief had directed with so much ability and prudence, being terminated, Sir John, on the seventh of May, went on board the *Surveillante* frigate, which had brought out his successor in the command, and sailed for Cadiz bay, where he lay until the first of June, on which day he landed at Gibraltar, and assumed the government of that impregnable fortress.

The prosecution of the approaching campaign now wholly engrossed the comprehensive mind of the commander-in-chief. With his accustomed penetration, he quickly solved the cause of those perplexities with which Cradock, Beresford, Hill, and Cuesta were beset—difficulties of no ordinary character; and while he partially adopted the remedy proposed by Cradock, formed a new plan of operations, embracing all possible contingencies. When Sir Arthur undertook the command, Sir J. Cradock was at Leiria, and General Beresford at Thomar, without any decided intention of moving forward: on the contrary, they were disposed to await intelligence of Victor's definite objects. With respect to Soult, he continued in possession of Oporto, having pushed his posts as far only as Ovar, on the north of the river Vouga. The left of his corps was engaged in attacking General Silveira, on the Tamaga, with a view to open the province of *Tras os Montes*, and acquire for his army the option of retreating into Spain, should they be pressed by the British. General Lapisse who had advanced from Salamanca, at first threatened an attack on the province of Beira, but, abandoning that object, marched along the Portuguese frontier to Alcantara, where he passed the Tagus, and effected a junction with the Duke of Belluno, at Merida, on the Guadiana. This post had been occupied by Victor since the fatal affray with the Spaniards under the brave old warrior Cuesta. His country's admiration of this venerable patriot-general was substantially attested by the meritorious

sufficient time for copying the originals before they were transmitted. This interesting fact is proved by a passage in one of his letters to Mr. Villiers, dated from head-quarters at Coimbra, in which Sir Arthur says, "I am obliged to you for your offer to procure me assistance to copy my despatches: but I have plenty of that description. The fact is, that, excepting upon very important occasions, I write my despatches without making a draft; and those which I sent to you were so written before I set out in the morning, and I had not time to get them copied before they were sent, which is the reason why I asked you to return me copies of them."

Upon leaving England, Sir Arthur Wellesley made a promise to Mr. Huskisson, then secretary to the treasury, that he would immediately communicate the exact state of "the money-concerns of our army." This pledge was redeemed by an able statement, and one which could not fail of being satisfactory and intelligible to that great master of finance to whom it was addressed. "Instead," writes Sir Arthur, "of £400,000, which we both expected would be found in Portugal, I find not quite £100,000, and this in Spanish coins, which could not be circulated in Portugal, excepting at a considerable loss, and without revealing to the money-dealers at Lisbon our want of money, which would have raised the expense of drawing bills excessively. I have, therefore, sent the Spanish gold to Cadiz to be exchanged for dollars, and am now here with the whole army, proceeding to attack Soult—with only £10,000, and monstrous demands upon me." Sir Arthur also furnished an estimate, to the treasury, of the expenses of the army, which he calculated at £200,000 *per mensem*,—showed the proper mediums through which this sum should be distributed, namely the deputy paymaster-general, the ambassador, and the commissary-general,—recommended the transmission of specie from England, as the best mode of commanding and keeping down the expense of drawing bills in the money market; and concluded by assuring the secretary of his determination to guard both the honour and the treasure of their common country. General Wellesley coinciding in the opinion of General





THE RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM HUSKISSON.

*W. Huskisson.*





Buonaparte, already expressed, as to the absolute necessity of obtaining intelligence of an enemy's movements, and of maintaining regular and secure communication between the divisions of the same army, the establishment of a post was, in consequence, amongst the first objects of his care. Officers were employed, immediately on his arrival at Lisbon, to convey information all along the frontiers; and Sir Arthur wrote from Coimbra, on the sixth of May, to request that there might be a daily post established between that place, Lisbon, and Abrantes. It will be seen hereafter how perfectly sensible he was of the importance of this object, and what incalculable advantages attended his successful exertions to improve the post-office system of Portugal generally.

In addition to the composition and transmission of so many despatches in a few short days, a novel and startling subject also engaged the attention of Sir Arthur Wellesley. A society, adopting the name of the *Philadelphes*, had been, some time before, formed amongst those officers of the French army, who were either disgusted with the injustice, or wearied with the continuance, of the Peninsular war; or who, from that unsteadiness and discontent, which for the last fifty years have created such agitation in French society, were impatient of imperial restraint, and desired nothing more ardently than the restoration of republicanism. No matter to which of these causes its origin is attributable, its existence was indisputable, and Jacques Joseph Oudet, a native of the Jura, who was slain the night after the battle of Wagram, not, it is asserted, by the Austrian enemy, but by secret assassins, employed for the dastardly purpose by his imperial master, was its founder. The cause of Oudet outlived the author, and discontent spread itself from the army of the continent through that of the Peninsula, and murmurings were overheard, yet none were ever found to violate the bond that bound the traitors, or break their premeditated silence and secrecy. In Portugal, the French marshal, acting on the principles of his employer, a consummate master in the art of war and government, concealed from his corps the existence of a continental war; but marshal Beresford, having

got possession of an intercepted letter from Kellerman, found a Portuguese, Manuel Francisco Camarinho, bold enough to carry copies of this document to Oporto, and post them on the defences of Soult's head-quarters. The secrecy of Soult was now met, by the Philadelphes, in a spirit, perhaps of natural, although ignoble and unsoldierlike feeling—a resolution to betray him into the hands of the British. History taught them that it was improbable a British officer would be a participator in the guilt and meanness of selling a brave general to his enemy, and, to evade this difficulty, the conspirators attempted to give a better colouring to their crime: this they did by declaring, that they always detested the tyranny of Napoleon, and were themselves the only restraint upon his extravagant exercise of power; that the love of liberty and of legitimate rights was the fundamental principle of the brotherhood; and, rather than submit to the usurpation of the conqueror, that they would restore the royal line of Bourbon to the throne.” To accomplish their purpose, it is asserted that they first sought a co-operation with the English, and then looked around for a leader. Ney would have been the object of their traitorous choice; but circumstances pointed out St. Cyr, as a fitter instrument.

It was in the month of April, 1809, and before the arrival of Sir Arthur Wellesley at Lisbon, that John Viana, the son of a Portuguese merchant, presented himself at Thomar, the head-quarters of Marshal Beresford; he was accompanied by a French officer, whose object it was to create a disposition, in the officers of Soult's corps, to revolt, and seize upon Soult and other principal persons of the army. Having requested that an English officer should be sent to negociate and arrange with their deputy, Major Douglas, then a lieutenant-colonel in the Portuguese service, and subsequently Major-General Sir James Douglas, K. C. B. in reluctant obedience to the orders of General Beresford, proceeded to the advanced posts of the French, at night-time, and there held a conference. The interview was to have taken place on the lake of Aveiro, but the boats having passed each other in the dark, Douglas returned to the village of Aveiro, where he found Adjutant-Major D'Argenton

and John Viana had already arrived. In the conference that followed, the conspirators dwelt upon the sufferings of the French army in general, and the extreme distress of the corps under the Duke of Dalmatia. They protested that discontents had long prevailed in France on account of the conscription, which were much increased by a sense of the great injustice of the measures adopted towards Spain, and the seizure of the king: that if the English would only press Soult, so as to oblige him to concentrate his forces in a situation chosen rather for defence than subsistence, a large proportion of the army was prepared to revolt, who would immediately seize the general, as well as all those officers in the interests of Napoleon, and put an end to the unjust war in the Peninsula. Major Douglas relieved himself from the unpleasant duty of negotiating with these wretches, who were base enough to violate that tie of loyalty, that compact of honour, sacred and observed with fidelity, by all nations, from the infancy of old time, by sending forward D'Argenton to Lisbon, in order to communicate with General Beresford personally. There he had an interview, not only with the Portuguese marshal-general, but with Sir A. Wellesley also, to whom he represented the ambitious views of Soult, who, he said, had his thoughts fixed on the vacant throne of Portugal; and his earnest request was, that the British commander-in-chief would grant passports to himself, and two other French officers, to proceed to France. At this meeting, Sir Arthur declined paying any attention to the communication of D'Argenton, whose opinion, as to the best mode of pressing Soult, had already been adopted, and was in active progress; but he requested that Admiral Berkeley would grant the passports which the traitor so urgently begged. When pressed for the reasons which induced them to hazard an absence from duty, and exposure to the authorities in France, the chief conspirator replied, that the officers under whom they immediately served were participators in the plot, and would, therefore grant leave of absence; besides, activity was indispensable in communicating with the disaffected at home, as Napoleon, the moment he received intelligence of the event, would seize every one on whom the slightest suspicion lighted.

The regulations of Soult also, which permitted vessels of all nations to sail from Oporto, added, at that moment, to their facilities of escape.—Not only did Sir Arthur decline every co-operation with the malcontents, but he caused it to be communicated to their associates in the French army, that he had only granted the representatives passports to proceed to France: he cautioned D'Argenton against the risk of carrying such documents about his person; and, in communicating the extraordinary narrative to Lord Castlereagh, while he acknowledges that "the successful revolt of a French army might be attended by the most extensive and important consequences," he adds, in the true spirit of a generous enemy, "but their defeat or surrender would add much more to the reputation of his majesty's arms." On the seventh of May, Sir Arthur had another interview with a deputy from the Philadelphes, at midnight, on the road between Fornos and Martede, where they watched each other's countenances by the light of a fire. Here further and baser plans were proposed by the conspirators; one of which was, to persuade the Portuguese to address Soult, inviting him to accept the crown of Portugal, and, should he so far forget his allegiance to the emperor, and fall into the snare, then the army of Laborde and Loisson would immediately declare against him, lead the troops back into France, and release Portugal from the French power. As this plan included an understanding that Sir Arthur was to urge the Portuguese to the insidious policy of seducing Soult, by offering him this great encouragement to treason, it was calmly but decidedly rejected, as a measure "that would justly disentitle the British general to the confidence of the Portuguese, and unworthy of the character of a British soldier." With respect to the military operations recommended by the deputy, as they were precisely those which Sir Arthur had previously decided on, whether the French army was revolutionized or counter-revolutionized, he determined upon operating against Soult as soon as ever he should be ready, and he was then using the utmost activity to become so. Sir Arthur did not disbelieve the existence of a deep-laid plot for the seizure, perhaps the assassination, of Soult, but he indignantly rejected

the addresses of any who dared to think him a fit instrument in so villanous a proceeding. He confidently believed that hatred, jealousy, and weariness of an imperial tyranny had closely cemented a strong band of malcontents, in the French army; but he prudently determined to rely on his own activity, strength, and genius, in preference to placing confidence in those who were only known to him as traitors. Unable to shake the firm resolve of the high-minded Briton, D'Argenton withdrew with the passports given to him by Admiral Berkeley; but scarcely had he reached the French camp, when he was arrested, and brought before the Duke of Dalmatia. He now, too late, learned the value of General Wellesley's advice, not to accept of British passports, as they would probably, at some time or other, appear as witnesses of his infidelity, and now being found on his person, no further proof of guilt was required. At first Soult offered pardon, if he would disclose the extent of the conspiracy, the depth of the abyss that gaped to receive the imperialists, and name his associates in the dark design of throwing their victims into its depth; but D'Argenton was immovable. So far from holding out any hopes of compliance with the wishes of the general, he cautioned him against his perilous position, and reminded him of the precipice on the brink of which he and his ambitious views then tottered; admitted that he had visited the British quarters at Lisbon and at Coimbra, where he was admitted into the presence of Sir A. Wellesley and General Beresford; and informed Soult that the enemy, thirty thousand strong, would open the campaign on the banks of the Vouga in less than eight and forty hours: "Confess then," said D'Argenton, "the injustice of the war in which you are engaged, unite with the honest British, and march in concert with them, back to your native land; and, at the foot of the Pyrenees you shall be reinforced by sixty thousand men, prepared to combine with you in the recovery of the liberties of Europe." This mysterious, startling appeal, averted the fate of the traitor, who was committed to close confinement, with a view of examining him further on a future occasion; but that opportunity never presented



itself, D'Argenton having effected his escape during the hasty movements which the rapid advance of Sir Arthur Wellesley rendered necessary. This bold man, who had formerly been one of Soult's aide-de-camps, and whose desertion was on that account more base and flagrant, was not the only officer of rank who sought and succeeded in holding midnight councils with the British commander-in-chief; the names of Colonels Lafitte and Donadieu may also be added to the list of traitors. These officers are believed to have given Soult all the information they possessed, relative to the strength and intentions of the British, but its amount could not have been considerable; for, General Wellesley, although he believed that they sincerely desired to betray their commander, never received them by daylight, never admitted them within the camp-boundaries, and always heard their propositions with silence and reserve.

A slight deviation from General Wellesley's original plan of operations, was rendered necessary in consequence of the defeat of Silveira. Sir Arthur, trusting to that officer for the defence of the Tamega, intended to have reinforced his little band with Beresford's and Wilson's corps, which were to have crossed the Douro at Lamego: this plan would have placed a force of thirty thousand men between Soult and the *Tras os Montes*, by which he would either have been forced to engage under a disadvantage, or to retire behind the *Minho*, a task of extreme difficulty when closely pressed by the allies, and rendered still more so by the season of the year. On the fourth of May, however, intelligence reached the head-quarters at Coimbra, that Silveira was beaten, his army driven across the Douro to Lamego, and the bridge of Amarante in possession of the enemy.

Few actions, in which the numbers were so trifling on both sides, were ever attended with greater effusion of blood. The Portuguese being driven from the bridge, fell back in disorder on the town, whither they were followed closely by the enemy; there they were rallied by Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick, an English officer; and, entrenching themselves behind the dead bodies in the street, and occupying the convent of St. Gonçalo, they poured such a destructive fire upon the enemy, as com-

pelled them at length to evacuate the town. In this desperate discharge of musketry, Colonel Patrick was mortally wounded ; and his death, which followed immediately after, left the Portuguese no sufficient example of bravery in a leader, to imitate. Confidence forsook them, and energy was, in consequence, abated : it was at this moment that Soult arrived, at the head of the reinforcement, and, resolving to win the bridge at any price, advanced with such a force as compelled Silveira to decline the contest, abandon the venerable bridge of Amarante to three of the marshals of Napoleon,\* and retire upon Entre ambos os Rios.

This disaster called for a correspondent change in Sir Arthur's movements, but did not affect his general design. Previous to the commencement of offensive measures, the security of Lisbon had been provided for ; and the designs of Victor sufficiently guarded against, by disposing along the line of the Tagus two regiments of British cavalry, two battalions of infantry, with eight thousand Portuguese regulars. Instruc-

\* Antiquaries have maintained that the bridge of Amarante was the work of Trajan ; but a long-established, and fondly cherished tradition ascribes its foundation to St. Gonçalo de Amarante, who, fixing his abode there in a hermitage, and commiserating the many accidents that befell travellers in passing the river, resolved on building a bridge. The alms which he received falling far short of the sum required to pay his workmen, the saint made the sign of a cross on the water, which drew as many fish to the surface as he had occasion for, while he obtained oil and wine from a rock that was contiguous. The bridge consists of three arches, the centre one being disproportionately large, as far as beauty is concerned ; but the saint foresaw the necessity of this arrangement ; for, many years after its construction, the flood carried down a huge oak-tree of such size and weight, that, had it struck, it must have thrown down the bridge : the accident was anticipated by St. Gonçalo, who, rising from his grave, with his staff guided the monstrous tree through the central arch, and sent it on its journey to the sea. In gratitude, not only for the construction, but for the miraculous preservation of the bridge, the Portuguese pay an annual commemorative visit to the shrine of the benevolent saint : where not the low and solemn accents of prayer fall on the travellers' ears, but joyous notes of song and revelry, music and fire-arms, and every noisy demonstration of gratitude, which the means of the pilgrims supply. On some occasions, thirty thousand clamorous worshippers have visited the shrine of Gonçalo, and the quantity of wax-tapers, the usual offering, presented on a single festival day, has been known to exceed twelve hundred weight. — *Southey's Hist. Pen. War.*

tions were given to this body, to occupy the flying bridges of Villa Velha and Abrantes, while Colonel Mayne, at the head of the Lusitanian legion, seized the bridge of Alcantara, and, in case he was unable to hold it against the superior numbers of the enemy, the commander-in-chief then, reluctantly, consented to his blowing up that noble work of art. The conduct of the whole plan of operations on the Tagus, which may with more propriety be called the defence of Lisbon, was entrusted to Major-General Mackenzie. As this service did not promise active employment for the British, Sir Arthur directed "that the assistance of our officers and men should be given, till their services were otherwise called for, to discipline the Portuguese regulars:" a plan for the occupation of their leisure, of the utmost value, should the main army be employed in the north of Portugal, until the Tagus became fordable.

To calm the importunities of the brave Cuesta, Sir Arthur addressed an explanatory letter to his excellency, reminding him, that "although he had every reliance on the valour, zeal, and loyalty of the Portuguese, he did not consider them in such a state of discipline as to confide to their exertions the safety of Portugal, the object especially committed to his care." He opened to the Spanish general his intention of marching against Soult in the first instance, and, when he should have succeeded in removing from the north of Portugal the evils with which it was threatened, of proceeding forthwith, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, to the eastern frontiers, in the neighbourhood of Elvas, and there co-operate with Cuesta in attacking Victor. It was therefore advisable that General Cuesta should continue, in conjunction with the corps of observation on the line of the Tagus, to act strictly on the defensive, until Sir Arthur should be enabled to come to his assistance, by which co-operation the destruction of Victor's army would be rendered certain.

The advance and concentration of the British were silently, simultaneously, safely progressing: on the first of May the main body reached Pombal, and on the following day arrived at Coimbra, where the head-quarters were fixed; and, in every town through which the army marched, at every spot where

a halt was made, the active mind of the commander-in-chief was engaged in preparing instructions for the direction of every officer in a detached position, and giving them the benefit of his great experience, and wisdom, in the minutest matters of commissariat and other departments.

His despatches almost mark every mile of his march: to the gallant Mackenzie, who fell afterwards at Talavera, he addressed a long and able memorandum, from Leiria, on the first of May, which was followed, a few hours after, by a second, dated Pombal, where the army halted for the day, and by a third, on the following morning, directing that officer to destroy all the boats on the Tagus, or carry them below Salvaterra, where the river was wide enough to place them out of the reach of musketry from the opposite bank, on the approach of the enemy: thus, as nothing was too great or too difficult for the comprehensive mind of the British general, so nothing was too minute or trifling to be undeserving of his attention; of his labour he was lavish, at all periods of his life. The entrance of the allies into Coimbra was hailed vociferously by the inhabitants; had they been returning from a field of victory, their reception could not have worn more of the character of a triumph. The commander-in-chief was welcomed with millions of *vivas*, and the name of Wellesley was pronounced in every house with praise, confidence, and gratitude. If ever there was a man wholly indifferent to popular applause, from a devoted resignation to a just and powerful sense of duty, it was the commander-in-chief of the allied army at Coimbra on this day. Amidst shouts of exultation, the blaze of illuminations, addresses and congratulation from the higher and more wealthy classes, he continued, unmoved,\* to issue his cautious and well-digested orders, and give, as he had done at Lisbon, his un-

\* "Affairs were in too critical a posture to authorize waste of time, even in the agreeable occupation of giving and receiving compliments; and Sir Arthur was not a man to gratify his own vanity at the expense of the public good. He accordingly cut short many of the dispositions which the Portuguese authorities had made, for the purpose of manifesting their good-will, and set himself, on the very day of his arrival, to the task of arranging and distributing his army for immediate operations."—*Marquis of Londonderry's Narrative*.

divided thoughts to the objects of the expedition. It was from Coimbra that Sir Arthur Wellesley forwarded his acknowledgment of thanks, to the regency, for the honour they had conferred upon him, in the appointment of marshal-general of the armies of Portugal, and which he communicated through Don Miguel Pereira Forjez, a man of consummate genius, but whose character was at first misunderstood by the British.

By the disposition of the French army of the north, after the affair at Amarante, their strength was considerably weakened: Laborde proceeded to Oporto; Loison kept possession of the position from which the enemy had been driven; and Mermet advanced to the Vouga—nor could their force be concentrated, on its centre, in a shorter period than eight days. Thus scattered and extended, communication became slow or interrupted. Meanwhile, Sir Arthur Wellesley, baffling the vigilance of the enemy, succeeded, without exciting the least suspicion even of the proximity of such a powerful enemy, in uniting his forces at Coimbra on the fifth of May; a plan which gave him a choice of two lines of operation.\*

\* The command of the fourteenth, sixteenth, and twentieth regiments of British cavalry was given to Major-General Cotton. The first battalion of the Coldstream, the first and third of the Guards, one company of riflemen from the fifth battalion of the sixtieth regiment, was under Brig.-General H. Campbell. Major-General Hill was at the head of the first brigade, consisting of the Buffs, the sixty-sixth, the forty eighth, and one company of the fifth battalion, sixtieth. Major-General Tilson had the third brigade, composed of five companies, fifth battalion sixtieth, the eighty-eighth, and first battalion Portuguese grenadiers, and the eighty-seventh. The fifth brigade, made up of the seventh, first battalion tenth Portuguese. The fifty-third and first company fifth battalion, sixtieth, was headed by Brig.-General A. Camphell. Brig.-General Cameron commanded the seventh brigade, consisting of the ninth, second battalion tenth Portuguese, the eighty-third, and one rifle company. The sixth brigade, consisting of the first battalion detachments, first battalion, sixteenth Portuguese; and the twenty-ninth was under the orders of Brig.-General R. Stewart. The fourth brigade, consisting of the second battalion detachments, second battalion sixteenth Portuguese, the ninety-seventh, and a rifle company was headed by Brig.-General Sontag. The second brigade, made up of the twenty-seventh, forty-fifth, and thirty-first, acted under Major-General Mackenzie. The Germans were divided into two brigades, under the orders of Brig.-Generals Longthvert and Drieberg, the whole being commanded by Major-General Murray. Four Major-Generals: namely, Sherbrooke, Payne, Lord William Bentinck, and Paget, received local rank



The allied army was formed into three divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, exclusive of the corps under General Beresford. Lieutenant-General Paget was appointed to the command of the first division, which consisted of two brigades of infantry. The second, made up of three brigades, was placed under Lieutenant-General Sherbrooke; Major-General Hill headed the third, composed of two brigades only; while the cavalry was to be led by General Payne. The whole amount of this force did not exceed sixteen thousand men. Of the two routes which were open from Coimbra, that which led through Vizeu and Lamego would facilitate the design of turning the enemy's left, and probably intercept his retreat on 'Tras os Montes; the other, by the high road to Oporto, would give an opportunity of falling suddenly, and in superior force, on the enemy's right, between the Douro and the Vouga. On the fifth of May, a detachment, consisting of one brigade of British infantry, one squadron of British cavalry, and a corps of six thousand Portuguese, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, moved towards Vizeu, under General Beresford. On the sixth, the main body, under Sir Arthur Wellesley, and including Paget's division, advanced by the Oporto road, but halted on the seventh, to give Beresford time to get forward to the upper Douro. General Hill's division had taken the Aveiro route, and all were now cautiously marching towards the Vouga. To lull suspicion still longer and more securely, Paget's division was directed to halt on the ninth, and not join the main army until night, lest they might be seen by the enemy's advanced guards, their outposts being established along the Vouga. These decisive and offensive operations were executed with such rapidity, that Soult remained totally ignorant of the approach of a new and powerful army, before the ninth of May, on which day Sir Arthur Wellesley addressed Mr. Frere in language full of that species of determination

as lieut.-generals, that they might severally take the command of such divisions as the general-in-chief saw occasion to consolidate. Brig.-General Stewart (Marquess Londonderry) was at the head of the adjutant-general's departments; and Colonel Murray, third guards, acted as quarter-master-gen. *Lord Londonderry's Narrative.*

which strongly characterises the private letters of Admiral Nelson to his friends in England. That great man always stated in simple, candid, unaffected terms, his confidence of being able to beat any force opposed to him, his resolution of doing so, and generally concluded by expressing his apprehension, no matter what their superiority in numbers, that the enemy might, through dimness of weather, or any accident, escape his grasp. General Wellesley, in his letter of the ninth of May, dated Quinta de la Graciosa, almost within gun-shot of the enemy, expresses his regret at leaving Victor behind; his anxious wish to attack Ney, who was then in Galicia; his apprehension lest Soult might still effect a retreat into Spain; and speaking of that general, declares, "I shall omit nothing in my power to destroy him." There is here a remarkable analogy to the uniformly confident tone of Nelson's simple letters. Can such self-trust, such an instinctive feeling of success, such a total unconsciousness of defeat, or danger, or disappointment, flow from any other source than a genuine and innate magnanimity?

On this day, however, the thunder-bolt burst over the head of Soult, and all its outpourings fell upon him in an instant. D'Argenton was arrested; treason had existed, and its baneful influence was then diffused through the ranks of his army to an extent impossible to ascertain. His forces were scattered over too wide a field to be speedily concentrated; and intelligence arrived, every moment, of the approach of the allies, headed by the victorious Wellesley, the conqueror of Rolcia and of Vimeira. Completely out-generalled, altogether surprised, and basely betrayed, Soult presented, nevertheless, a noble picture of a brave man struggling with misfortune. He called aloud on those who had not forsaken the emperor, to assemble under the wings of his eagles. Loison was despatched to Mezam-frio and Rajoa, with orders to retain Amarante even with the blood of thousands; and to assist in effecting this all-important object, Lorge was instructed to evacuate Viana, and march on Amarante. All the ammunition that could not be removed he caused to be destroyed,—the guns and military stores to be all moved upon the Tamega, and everything

put in a state of preparation for a retreat through *Tras os Montes*.

Although the masterly plan of surrounding the French in Oporto, and reducing them to the necessity of surrendering, had been partially interrupted by the failure of the Portuguese at Amarante, still, so perfect was the design, that no successes, short of defeating the British in the open field, could extricate them from the web in which they had unconsciously become entangled. Every movement was made in silence and in secret, and none displayed more decisively the absolute coolness of the British general on the approach of danger, than the little plan of operations laid down for General Hill, and for the force under his immediate command. During one of the midnight interviews, between Sir Arthur and the deputies from the *Philadelphes*, it had been casually mentioned by the latter, that the lake of Ovar, which extended a length of twenty miles behind their outposts, was left unguarded. This fact did not escape the attention of the general, although apparently hanging on the conspirators' narration; and now, in still greater secrecy, he despatched General Hill, on whose genius, energy, and courage he could rely, to the shores of that estuary, directing him to seize all the fishing-boats, and cross the lake. The appearance of an army in battle-array in the solitude of the lake of Ovar, at first surprised the hardy fishermen that dwelt there, but soon, from their local knowledge, comprehending the wisely laid plan of the British general, conviction flashed across their minds, which was scarcely more rapid than their zeal in manning the boats, and their energy in rowing the troops to the further shore: one brigade was soon debarked, and a second quickly followed. Hill's movement having succeeded to the fullest extent, the right of the enemy was virtually turned. This was effected on the tenth, on which day General Beresford, who had incorporated Sir Robert Wilson's corps with his own, and who, it will be remembered, had been ordered to march by Vizeu upon Lamego, in order to turn Soult's left, and cut off his retreat on Braga, there fell in with the victorious division of Loisson, on which he inflicted a severe chastise-

ment, compelled them to abandon the position from which they had driven the Portuguese, and drove the affrighted French before him on the road to Amarante.

Sir Arthur Wellesley did not apprehend any deficiency of gallantry on Beresford's part, but, on the contrary, believed him to be feelingly awake to every temptation which the least opportunity of acquiring glory would throw into his onward path; and with all that watchfulness of a great and perfect commander, from the midst of his difficulties, and before he had heard of the dashing gallantry of the marshal, he thus addressed him on the eleventh.—“If the French weaken their corps about Amarante or Villa Real, attack them, and get possession of either of those points. But, in doing so, remember you are a commander-in-chief of an army, and not to be beaten: therefore do not undertake anything, if you have not some strong hopes of success.”

It was hardly possible for the French army to have escaped from the grasp of the British, although fortune so frequently favoured the arms of Napoleon, and the indiscipline of the Portuguese had hitherto allowed them to obtain easy victories: for now both wings of the enemy were turned, and the commander-in-chief just about to surprise their advance-guard under Franceschi, before Soult was roused from the slumber of security to behold the imminent danger at his threshold. He quickly formed his resolution, which was to evacuate Oporto, and retreat through the *Tras os Montes*, but, if possible, to check the impetuosity of the British general, whose incomparable manœuvres had so begirt him with toils. This, if done at all, must be at Amarante, and some provision had already been made in that quarter against an enemy. But had Soult been able, at any period, to cope with Sir Arthur Wellesley, he was now completely beaten; he was in ignorance of the enemy's proximity, and of course of the various divisions that were marching down in the radii of a circle, on the centre which was occupied by a surprised enemy. The British advance-guard, with General Cotton's division of cavalry, reaching Andeja, having learned that two regiments of the enemy's

cavalry, with a small infantry force, and a few guns, were cantoned at Albergaria Nova, resolved upon surprising them. To effect this object, Cotton diverged from the track, along with the cavalry, intending to make a circuit round the village to the right. Paget was to cross the rough ground called the Pass of Vouga, where he was to wait for the cavalry—while to Colonel Trant and his Portuguese, the labour was allotted of getting the guns over the rugged waste. The darkness of the night, an error of the guides, and the great difficulties of the way, delayed and deranged the well-concerted plans of the British advance. Trant, interrupted in bringing on the guns, by a deep ravine, which reached from Lake Ovar to Oliveira de Azamiz, carried on his own artillery only, by the bridge of Vouga, leaving General Stewart to bring forward the remainder, which was not accomplished without the loss of many of the carriages. This delay permitted Trant's corps to get in advance of Paget's column, and it was morning on the ninth before the defiles were cleared. Meanwhile, Cotton's guides losing their way in the darkness of night, the cavalry found themselves, at sun-rise on the tenth, not in the-rear or flank of Albergaria, but in front, with the enemy drawn up and ready to receive them. Franceschi's cavalry, a fine body of men, were in ready line, his small body of infantry posted in a pine-wood, on which the flank of his line rested; and his position, altogether, was well chosen, and sufficiently strong. Cotton himself, surprised, and not anticipating such a reception, was indisposed to attack him until the arrival of the main body. Franceschi displayed the most gallant bearing and military skill, challenging his enemy, and skirmishing occasionally with Trant's corps, in total ignorance, however, of the powerful force that was within an hour's march of him. In this situation were the opposite parties, when Sir Arthur Wellesley arrived with Paget's infantry, and having ordered an attack to be made on the wood, whence the enemy's infantry was immediately dislodged, the astonished Franceschi fled, but not disorderly, to Oliveira, and by his coolness and ability succeeded in escaping, without serious loss, from the pursuit of the enemy, to



Grijo, which he reached at day-break on the following morning, and united his forces with those of Mermet. In this affair some prisoners were taken, and a few pieces of cannon, all that the enemy had brought into the field; and the conduct of the Portuguese riflemen, students from one of the colleges, was highly applauded by the commander-in-chief. A miserable scene, however, was here enacted—calculated to detract from the dignity of war, and, since such things must be, from the glory of conquest. The French had disgraced themselves on many occasions by cruelty to the inhabitants of captured towns, and too frequently indulged, not merely in plundering, but in a wanton destruction of such effects as they were unable to remove. Nowhere, during the war, were these vicious propensities more lavishly gratified than in the village and vicinity of the Albergarias. Here the bodies of the ordenanzas, who had the misfortune to have fallen into their hands, were found suspended from the trees, with horrible proofs of cruelties inflicted upon them before death: every house had been broken into, the furniture burnt, the cattle all slaughtered and left putrefying on the field, the wine and liqueurs spilled upon the earth, and insatiable, yet petty malice, wreaked on those that should least and last have been its objects. It is to be regretted, although the desire of vengeance was almost natural under such circumstances, that the Portuguese also could not have been restrained from its exercise; after the retreat of the French, all the sick, wounded, and prisoners, on whom they could lay hands, the villagers put to death by the most excruciating tortures.

The allies having thus repulsed the enemy's cavalry, and driven in their outposts on the tenth, reached Oliveira on the eleventh of May; and, at six o'clock on the following morning, Sir A. Wellesley informed Beresford of his success, made him acquainted with a report that reinforcements were advancing to strengthen the enemy; but, so unconscious was he of failure, at this as well as all periods of peril, that he added in his despatch, "I hope we shall have finished with Soult before these can arrive." On the same day coming up with the enemy

at Grijó, where they were strongly posted on an eminence, their right flank being covered by a thick wood, their front defended by the village and some uneven ground, Sir Arthur renewed his attack ; and the spirits of the men were so high, that nothing could resist them : the head of the British column was immediately in action, and the sixteenth Portuguese, led on by Colonel Doyle, quitted the line of march, and in a gallant style drove the infantry from the wood that covered the enemy's right. The cavalry, under the honourable Charles Stewart, did great execution, and the German legion, commanded by Major-General Murray, made a movement upon the enemy's left flank, originally badly placed, which would have compelled any troops to quit their position, and instantly turned the enemy. Both flanks being turned, the ruin of the enemy was inevitable, had they stood their ground ; and fully sensible of their situation, they began to retire, pressed on by General Charles Stewart with his cavalry, and continued their retreat to the heights of Carvalho, where they rallied, and offered a faint resistance to their pursuers ; but the infantry approaching, they turned their backs once more, and fled precipitately towards the Douro, which they crossed on the night of the eleventh, and immediately after destroyed the bridge. The British took advantage of the flight of the enemy, and rested for the night, but at day-break they were again in motion, and eager for the fight. To this expectation a difficulty of such magnitude presented itself, that few military men, whose achievements are remembered by the historian, ever seem to have conceived or executed so hardy a design : this was to force the passage of a river one thousand feet wide, deep, rapid, and enclosed between high and rocky shores, and this in the face of ten thousand veterans that defended the opposite bank : this was an enterprise "from which Alexander the Great might have turned without shame ;" but Sir Arthur resolved, if but a single boat could be obtained, to effect the daring deed.

Soult intended to evacuate Oporto leisurely, and with that view he proceeded to blow up his magazines, to destroy such stores as it would be inconvenient to remove, himself inspecting

the destruction of the floating bridge ; and he had previously given orders to collect all the boats together at the city-side of the river, and place them under the care of a vigilant guard. In ignorance of the enemy's movements, he still believed that he was in possession of the bridge of Amarante, and, by some strange infatuation, the marshal became filled with the conviction that the British would take advantage of their maritime means, and attempt a landing below the city, near to the embouchure of the Douro. Upon this belief he acted, and in this fatal error he was still further confirmed by the report of his own cavalry, who, having observed Hill's division at Ovar, assured the marshal that they must have arrived from the ocean, and disembarked there. Precautionary measures were taken accordingly. Soult continued at his head-quarters, which were between Oporto and the sea ; Franceschi was directed to watch the coast, and give the British such a reception as would render their debarkation impracticable. Every necessary arrangement for the defence of the river *below* the city, being completed, Mermet was ordered to place one brigade at Valonga, two at Baltar, and to pay attention generally to the line of the river on his right, securing or destroying every boat that could be found. To render his retreat still more secure, Soult despatched orders to Loison, to maintain the position which he still believed that officer occupied at Mezam-frio and Pezo da Ragoa, and, having completed his plan of defence, resolved upon resting one day longer in the enjoyment of his usurpation, and then retiring in good order and at leisure, while the British were sailing up the Douro from their congenial element the ocean.

It was almost noon on the twelfth of March before the clouds that obscured the reality, from the mental vision of the marshal, were dispelled, before the mists in which infatuation and error had wrapped him were dissipated, before the veil of enchantment fell off, and disclosed all the perils of his embarrassment. At that hour the British columns begun to arrive at Villa Nova, on the opposite bank, and concentrate rapidly, yet secretly, for the high grounds of the convent still concealed them from obser-

vation. The British general now felt an intense anxiety relative to the support of Beresford's operations, the result of which materially depended upon the main body being able to pass the Douro. But this was a labour of unexampled difficulty, one of the boldest conceptions, and most gallantly performed exploits, to be found not only in the history of the Peninsular war, but in all military annals to their remotest limits. At an early hour in the morning, Major-General Murray had been despatched with a battalion of the German legion, a squadron of cavalry, and two six-pounders, to endeavour to collect boats, and, if possible, also to cross the river at Avintas, about four miles above the city. This operation could not be noticed by the enemy, from the graceful sweep which the Douro makes around the base of the Serra heights, by which the reach above the town is concealed from view of the city.

Confiding in the ability and resources of General Murray to effect the passage of the river above the city, and calculating upon the bravery of Lieutenant-General Sherbrooke for the accomplishment of the more arduous passage from Villa Nova directly across, Sir Arthur ascended the highest pinnacle of the convent, and, fixing his keen glance upon the glorious landscape spread out beneath him, while his imperturbable mind was intent upon those measures best calculated to baffle a renowned commander, and sustain his own great fame, he instantly perceived the advantages which this part of the river presented, could he only obtain a few boats; and it is well known that he had resolved to risk the attempt with one boat, if one only could have been procured. The convent of St. Agostinho de Serra stands on the summit of a lofty promontory, that presents a precipitous front to the river; and, on an eminence on the opposite bank, is the Seminary, a large unfinished building, originally designed for the bishop's palace, the sloping ground in front being enclosed by walls reaching down to the edge of the water, and the enclosed area being capable of containing about two battalions: there was no ingress to the building from the Valonga road, except by one iron gate; and the Seminary commanded every object around, without being itself commanded by any, except one summit about gun-

shot distance, which was too pointed to be employed as a battery. Here Sir Arthur resolved to pass: the enclosed area, in front of the Seminary, would afford some protection to the brave fellows who should be the first to land; the bend of the river would effectually conceal the boats in their passage from the view of the enemy, whose watch was chiefly kept below the town; and, when a sufficient number should have crossed, the Seminary would become their citadel. One boat was all that could at first be procured, the property of a poor barber, who had eluded the vigilance of the French patrol in the night, and passed over to the Villa Nova suburb. Colonel Waters discovered the skiff, and, taking with him the prior of Amarante and the owner of the boat, returned to the city, unmoored, and brought over with him three large barges, without having attracted the notice of the sentinels. The next important step was the establishment of a battery in the garden of the convent, to protect the walled enclosure where the troops were to land.

When the four boats were ready, and the boatmen of one were lying on their oars, the commander-in-chief was informed—to which he calmly replied, “Well, let the men cross.” A sentence expressive of as perfect confidence in the result, as if an armed flotilla were ready to convey them. General Wellesley’s army were strangers to doubt, indiscipline, or delay, and the irrevocable order to embark was executed by an officer and twenty-five men of the Buffs, who passed to the other side under a silent gaze of admiration from their fellow-soldiers, and the calm but not less anxious watching of their intrepid commander. In half an hour the little voyage was safely accomplished, and the remainder of the first battalion, with Lieutenant-General Paget, were all landed before the enemy awoke from their inexplicable lethargy. Then suddenly the beating of drums, sounding of trumpets, firing of rockets and guns, ringing of bells, and every possible accession to noise, tumult, and confusion, were called into operation. The enemy now ran down in numbers, but without order, and, throwing out clouds of sharpshooters, furiously attacked the Seminary; but the resistance made by the Buffs was sufficient to repulse them until the arrival of the forty-eighth and sixty-sixth



regiments, with a Portuguese battalion, to their support. Soult, now become furious, rushed to the attack with a large body of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, but his efforts were unattended by better results. In the violence of the last assault, Paget, who had ascended to the roof of the Seminary, was wounded by a musket-ball, and obliged to retire, the command devolving upon Major-General Hill. At this crisis, the French artillery were playing upon the Seminary, and volleys of musketry, from the still increasing numbers of the enemy, were pouring in upon the enclosure; while Murray did not yet appear on the approach from Avintas. These circumstances seemed sufficient to demand the personal presence of Sir Arthur amidst his advanced guard; but he was dissuaded by those around him, from attempting the passage of the river at such a moment, when thousands of pieces would be levelled at his barge. Yielding to solicitation, he now augmented the fire from the battery in the convent-garden, which swept the left wall of the enclosure, and obliged the enemy to confine all their efforts to the entrance-gate and wall on the Valonga road. As soon as the citizens understood that the British had actually arrived, landed on the city-side, and were in strength also on the farther shore, new hopes arose, a prospect of delivery was near, and their own exertions were calculated to accelerate the consummation. While General Hill kept the enemy very fully employed, the citizens were making signals to Sherbrooke and the allies on the opposite bank, and, as soon as they had descended to the shore, pushing off, they transported the guards and the twenty-ninth by the lower ferry. These, debouching from the narrow streets, took the enemy in the rear; while Hill, advancing to the wall of the enclosure, discharged a thick fire of musketry down upon the astonished and confounded enemy, who now perceived Murray advancing from Avintas to cut off their retreat: thus surrounded, further resistance was vain, and, abandoning their ordnance, which had just been brought out from the city, they fled towards Valonga, each column receiving, as it passed, the destructive volleys of the well-trained battalions under Hill. As the

enemy fled along, their flank was exposed to the attack of General Murray's column; but this officer declined acting upon his own responsibility, and pursued, but too implicitly, the orders of the commander-in-chief. There were two officers, however, under his command, who had no apprehension of consequences when their motives were correct, and who felt the truth of the maxim, "that political courage is as necessary as military, in an officer abroad;" these were General Charles Stewart and Major Hervey, who, with a laudable gallantry, dashed from the inactive line, pursued, and fell on the enemy's rear-guard. Too well experienced in both defeat and victory, they turned, and defended themselves; but the British officers, being unsupported, and having done enough for glory, returned to their column, not, however, before General Laborde had been unhorsed, and General Foy severely wounded: this latter officer narrowly escaped being made prisoner, in the confusion and anxiety of his men to resume their retreat. Major Hervey was wounded severely in this skirmish, but his brave troopers sustained little or no loss. Thus ended the much-celebrated achievement, "the passage of the Douro," in which one of the most complete victories ever obtained, was won from a general of the highest military reputation, and who had actually fought himself into the city, from which he was so unexpectedly driven, with a loss comparatively trifling, and against difficulties such as have hardly ever been surmounted by any commander. Soult is accused of inactivity; and his supineness palliated on the plea that the Portuguese concealed, or would not afford, information of the advance of the British, and also that he was surrounded by traitors. These pretexts, the offspring of an unnatural prejudice in the minds of what may be called an Anglo-Gallican party, do not deserve any attention. Inactivity is a grievous fault in a general; and Soult's state of ignorance cannot be justified in opposition to the standing orders of the emperor, one of which concludes with this aphorism, "In an inhabited country, the general that is not well instructed, must be ignorant of his trade."\* And, as to the last argument, namely,

\* Vide page 256, Vol. I.

that treason was in his camp, this should rather have been an incentive to activity, and was in itself sufficient to have aroused the most lethargic disposition. Sir A. Wellesley, however, in his private letter to the Duke of York, (no longer at the head of the army,) gives the truest, the simplest, the real explanation of Soult's conduct. "It is," he observes, "almost impossible to say what induced Soult to be so careless about the boats on the river, particularly near Oporto, or to allow us to land at all at a point so interesting to him as that we occupied. I rather believe *we were too quick* for him, and that he had not time to secure the boats on all the points necessary to protect the retreat of the troops." It was activity, coupled with great military daring and ability, that achieved the passage of the Douro, and it was, from the exercise as well as possession of such high qualities, that Napoleon, when he heard of the bold adventure, declared, "Wellesley was a general fully capable of coping with the very best of his marshals."\* Military men have been found, possessing so much of either discernment, or jealousy, as to censure Sir Arthur for not pursuing his victory: to this charge it may be answered, generally, that he was not unused to conquest, and knew, as the day of Vimiera attested to his countrymen, when to follow a beaten adversary: but in this instance he thought otherwise, for his men were fatigued by a march of eighty miles, through the whole of which length they were engaged in skirmishing with the enemy: they had just accomplished a hardy, laborious, and exciting achievement; they had outmarched their supplies, in order to come upon the enemy unawares: and, although General Wellesley did not reproach the inertness of General Murray, who had performed strictly the orders delivered to him, yet it is highly probable that, had that general felt himself in a situation to have given the flying enemy such a reception as they expected, and from the fear of which they

\* "This was a most brilliant opening of the campaign, and justly regarded as reflecting as much credit on the daring and skill of the young British general, as it cast a shade on the vigilance and circumspection of the veteran French marshal."—*Hist. of Europe*, vol. vii.

then sped before him, the greater part of Soult's corps would have been either taken or destroyed. This, however, is no more than conjecture; nor did the commander-in-chief, at any subsequent period, impute blame to any of his officers; praise he bestowed upon almost all with a lavish generosity. Perhaps an additional reason, for declining the immediate pursuit of the enemy, was the absence of Marshal Beresford, whose precise situation and circumstances were, at that moment, unknown to the commander-in-chief, in whose comprehensive mind the highest degree of boldness was ever associated with the greatest caution and thoughtfulness for every part and person in the whole plan of his operations.

It was on the twenty-second of April, that Sir A. Wellesley landed at Lisbon, when the councils of the nation were wavering as to whether Portugal should be given up to the battalions of Napoleon, and exposed to the inhumanity and cupidity of his generals, or, with the assistance of the small British force in the kingdom, resistance should once more be offered to the invaders: on the twentieth day from that date, by the genius and gallantry of one man, Lisbon was restored to the provisional government—the movements of one French army effectually checked—a march over two hundred miles of broken, difficult ground, accomplished with a degree of secrecy that appears incredible—the passage of a broad, deep, and rapid river, effected by means of only half a dozen boats, in presence of twenty thousand victorious veterans, led by perhaps the ablest of Napoleon's marshals—and the second city in Portugal rescued from his grasp; with a loss, on the part of the allies, comparatively insignificant. The Portuguese had previously held the military talents of Sir A. Wellesley in the highest esteem; the passage of the Douro flattered their judgment, and strengthened still further their confidence in his ability to recover for them their liberties. Entering Oporto, the commander-in-chief fixed his head-quarters in the spacious house which Marshal Soult had quitted only two hours before; and, along with his suite, sat down to the sumptuous repast which had been spread for the general of the hostile army—

an extraordinary illustration of the uncertainty of human hopes, and a singular instance of the fickleness of fortune in the affairs of war. As evening approached, the boundless joy of the citizens was exhibited by demonstrations the loudest and most conspicuous that they could express or invent. While the dead bodies of the enemy, stripped and mangled, obstructed the public ways—while numbers lay stretched upon the bed of sickness, pain, and death—the Portuguese were employed in manifesting gratitude to their deliverers by pealing the church-bells, and by a general illumination throughout the city; and, hurried along by an extravagant delight in victory, were about to steep their laurels in the blood of the helpless victims, whom surprise prevented Soult from removing out of the hospitals—when the humane proclamation of the British general, whose watchfulness no circumstance connected with his duty seemed to escape, especially if humanity claimed his attention, instantly stopped all further effusion of blood.

This manifesto called, imperatively, on the inhabitants to be merciful to the wounded and prisoners, and reminded them that by the laws of war they were entitled to the protection of the commander-in-chief, *a protection which he was determined to afford them.* It also appealed to the generosity and bravery of the nation, not to revenge injuries on the enfeebled instruments of the more powerful enemies who were still in arms against them. All persons were prohibited from appearing in the streets with arms, and the general threatened any, who should dare to injure the wounded or the prisoners, with immediate punishment. Colonel Trant was appointed commandant of the city, until the pleasure of government should be known, and the observance of the proclamation was entrusted to him. To secure a regular and sufficient supply of necessaries for the army, he permitted the corregidor to remain in office, but cautioned him against the least inattention to its duties. In addition to compassionate care of the sick and wounded, which Sir Arthur evinced by the language of his proclamation, and the means adopted to carry its provisions into operation, he addressed a letter to Marshal Soult upon



the same subject, almost the very moment he entered the city. "You know," said General Wellesley, "that you have left in this city a considerable number of sick and wounded, of whom, you may rest assured, I shall take the greatest care; nor permit any one to injure them. But you forgot to leave medical attendants with them. I have only a sufficient number for my own army; and I do not think, in the present excited state of feeling amongst the inhabitants, that I ought to trust your poor soldiers to the medical men of this city. I pray therefore that you will send, forthwith, a number of attendants sufficient to relieve the wounded prisoners; and I promise, that as soon as they have administered relief, they shall be sent back to you. You have some English officers and soldiers prisoners, for whom I shall be happy to exchange an equal number of yours."

On the twelfth, the remainder of the allied army passed the Douro, with all their stores, ammunition, and baggage, and, during the time occupied in crossing, the commander-in-chief was engaged in writing a despatch to Lord Castlereagh, detailing, minutely, the ever-memorable event, praising the gallantry of his officers and men, and deploring the fate that deprived him of the services of his brave companions, Lieutenant-General Paget, whose arm had been amputated, and Major Hervey, who had been severely wounded. The total return of killed, however, amounted only to forty-three; of wounded, to one hundred and sixty-eight; and of missing, to seventeen—while five hundred of the enemy fell in the action, many were taken prisoners, and fifty-two pieces of ordnance were captured. Making Captain Stanhope the bearer of this despatch, which could not fail of being welcome to his country, he directed him to proceed to England in the *Nautilus*, Captain Dench; and found leisure also to acquaint Beresford with his successes and situation, in perhaps the briefest description ever written of a day of battle. "We have taken some pieces of cannon—many prisoners—killed vast numbers: the infantry went off towards Valonga and Amarante in the utmost confusion; some of the cavalry went the same way.

I am much afraid that we shall not be able to march till the day after to-morrow. Keep Villa Real, if you can do so safely, *and depend upon my being close upon the heels of the French.*" This is precisely the language calculated to give confidence to an army, and it was such bold words that inspired the broken ranks of the Portuguese with perfect reliance on the genius of the British hero, and with courage to face, once more, the veteran legions of Gaul. There is another species of courage, already noticed, which Sir A. Wellesley possessed, to which the final expulsion of the enemy and the conquest of France are mainly attributable, that is, "political courage," which is just as necessary as personal, to an officer at a distance from the seat of government, and left either to the exercise of his own discretion, or to the caprice or ignorance of a civil agent. Sir John Moore fell a victim to *political* timidity; his apprehension of displeasing Lord Castlereagh, who had never treated him with kindness, was the cause of his attending, so entirely, to the wishes of the British agents in Spain; and to this misfortune, solely, his ruin is attributable, his military genius and personal bravery having been often tried, and universally acknowledged. But, in this respect General Wellesley may be compared with any hero of ancient or modern times; historians have established a striking parallel between Scipio and Wellington, and there are many points of resemblance in their military lives; modesty and humanity are perhaps the most obvious: in caution and ingenuity, the British general is compared to Hannibal; but the latter, like Moore, became the victim of political timidity, by submitting to civil authorities, and abandoning the country of the enemy. Cæsar, it is true, possessed this species of boldness, but he grossly abused its acquisition, by refusing obedience to all authority. To General Wellesley has been reserved the great merit of being able to guide the judgment of those civil envoys, opposition to whose authority is disobedience to the sovereign. When Sir Arthur landed at Lisbon, the British officers, civil and military, were unable to agree, definitively, upon a plan of operations: one party approved of advancing boldly against

the enemy, another of abandoning Portugal altogether to its fate, and carrying the British army from the Tagus to the Thames. His extensive diplomatic experience, his familiarity with similar services in India, his knowledge of character, and his great share of political courage, enabled him to unweave the web, to cut the knot, to reconcile discrepancies, and to allay all agitations. The civil officers he addressed in the mildest and most conciliating language, in many cases complimenting them upon the formation of right judgments, but, in others, cases of the extremest difficulty, and of vital importance to the success of his measures, he showed himself superior not only to the agents with whom he was in connexion, but to all the British general-officers who had preceded him in Portugal. It formed part of his system to congratulate himself, in his written despatches, upon enjoying the approval of those gentlemen as to the measures he was then actually pursuing : these measures being uniformly successful, and the envoys in some instances bewildered in their complexity or extent, forgot whether they had ever formed any opinion on the subject, and gladly partook of the sunshine that followed the tempest. Occasionally, however, he opposed the weight of his own opinion and authority more directly : having received intelligence, on the ninth of May, from a civil agent, of the advance of the French corps from Arragon, accompanied by a suggestion of a corresponding change in his plans ; General Wellesley replied, "The intelligence you have communicated, were it even confirmed, should not induce me to alter my plans." The agent had not the hardihood to disapprove ; and, as the decision ultimately proved correct, the difference of opinion was not remembered.

The inevitable delay at Oporto being ended, Sir Arthur prepared to pursue the enemy ; and the manœuvres of the British army in this pursuit have been represented by military men as unequalled in the records of arms. Soult displayed greater energy than he had been supposed to possess, and skill that entitled him to wear the honours he had won ; still he was exceeded in all those high qualities by Wellesley, whose

mind seemed inexhaustible in the production of expedients, and in the creation of counteracting operations.—Soult escaped, but not before Corunna was avenged.

When Sir Arthur Wellesley planned the expedition against the Duke of Dalmatia, he calculated upon Silveira's being able to maintain his post on the Tamega until reinforcements could arrive; which, in addition to the possession of Chaves, would have cut off the enemy's retreat, with the exception of the route across the Minho, and even that would have been interrupted, had the commander-in-chief been otherwise successful. This plan was necessarily altered by the loss of the bridge of Amarante, and Sir Arthur doubted the ability of the force under Marshal Beresford to accomplish much more than confining the enemy on the side of Lamego, and compelling him to retire into Galicia by Chaves, rather than by Villa Real into Castile. Beresford had performed more than was hoped or promised, in obliging the enemy's posts at Villa Real and Mezam-frio to fall back; then crossing the Douro, and driving in Loisson's outposts at the bridge of Amarante, he recovered possession of the left bank of the Tamega. These successes were obtained on the twelfth, the same day on which the famous passage of the Douro was effected, and Soult, surprised amidst his fancied security; and so signal and decided were they considered, that timidity, if not treachery, has more than once been imputed to the French general. On the morning of the thirteenth, the appalling intelligence of the capture of Oporto reaching the army of Loisson, that general immediately retired from Amarante, and, as he evacuated the town, was met by the advanced guard of Soult's corps: thus strengthened, it is a matter of surprise that he made no demonstration against the enemy; on the contrary, he allowed Beresford to occupy that important position, and basely, or perhaps treacherously, abandoned the advancing columns of Soult to the blows of a powerful antagonist, and marched away to Guimaraens. Soult relying on the integrity and resources of Loisson, despatched Colonel Tholosè to Amarante, with intelligence of the fall of Oporto, and the precipitate flight of the French: and, as he

was retreating upon the Tamega, desired Loisson to keep possession of the bridge at any sacrifice; but this he could not be persuaded to attempt, and the officer returned, on the morning of the thirteenth, with the distressing communication. Soult now rose up to struggle with misfortune; and his genius and character never shone more brightly, nor will any portion of his history be remembered by his countrymen with more gratitude or admiration. In an instant his resolution was formed; meeting with a Spanish pedlar at Penafiel, who was acquainted with the by-ways of the district, he took him for his guide, and, following his footsteps up the steep sides of the Catalina mountains, crossed over to Pombeira, and overtook the irresolute Loisson at Guimaraens. As they crept along under the veil of night, by the course of the Souza river, they were unexpectedly joined by Lorge's cavalry, so that thus far, Soult had combated successfully with his evil genius, and once more attached the disjointed members to the main body of the army. Amongst the grievances with which the French general had to contend, the most painful were the murmurs of the troops, and the voice of cowardice: some spoke of the kindness shown to captives by the generous English, while others demanded a convention like that of Cintra; of the latter, Loisson is supposed to have been the adviser. If such treaties were not agreeable to the English, the French emperor was much less inclined to peace or mercy, therefore there was little difficulty in convincing his followers of the futility of such a hope; while prompt and firm measures soon silenced the whispers of disaffection amongst the officers. Orders were immediately issued to the whole army to advance, first taking the precaution to spike the heavy guns, break up the military chests, and scatter abroad all, both money and stores, which they were no longer in a condition to carry with them.

The retreat of the French was so expeditious, and so many events of the highest consequence had occurred within the space of forty-eight hours, that it excites no surprise to be informed, that on the thirteenth, when General Wellesley



commenced the pursuit of the enemy, by directing Major-General Murray with the Hanoverian legion, which were in a condition to march, to move on Valonga, he was unacquainted with the route which they had taken, with the destruction of their waggons, abandonment of their artillery, and painful sufferings at Penafiel: that he was also uninformed of the success, or even the precise movements, of General Beresford, although provided for every possible case of failure or misfortune that could arise in either army. It was the evening of the day on which Murray marched from Oporto, before intelligence of Soult's route reached that city, and a probability appeared of his having marched on Braga. There were two lines of retreat, by one or other of which Soult must necessarily have moved; the first into Galicia by Ponte Ave, Ponte Lima, and Valença; the other towards Valladolid by Chaves. As Sir A. Wellesley had resolved on intercepting the return of the French, and avenging the shade of Moore, all the necessary orders had been issued for occupying those lines. Beresford had been instructed on the thirteenth to move on Chaves, in case the enemy abandoned Amarante; but while Murray was pressing forward after the fugitives towards Penafiel, Beresford, anticipating the orders of the commander-in-chief, had actually advanced to Chaves, and sent forward Sylveira to occupy the defiles of Ruivaens and Melgaço near to Salamonde; but the flight of the enemy was too rapid, and Sylveira arrived too late. Beresford received also a further conditional instruction, which was, to push on for Monterrey in the event of the enemy taking the road to Montealegre.

On the fourteenth the corps of Generals Stewart, Campbell, and Hill, accompanied by the guards, took the lower road from Oporto towards Barcellos and Valença, but learning, the evening of the same day, that Soult was moving on Chaves or Montealegre, the army was drawn off from that route, and directed to the right upon Braga, where they arrived on the fifteenth, at which date, it should be observed, Murray was at Guimaraens, Beresford near to Chaves, and the enemy fifteen miles in advance of Braga. On the sixteenth, having commanded

General Hill with four brigades to halt at Braga, Sir Arthur advanced towards Salamonde, and, being joined on the route by General Murray, came up with the enemy's rear-guard at that place on the sixteenth.\*

Soult, meanwhile, had applied all the energies and resources of a powerful mind to the relief of the misfortunes which had befallen his army: aware of the impression which the capture of his ordnance by the enemy would produce, he boldly anticipated the evil, by destroying them in the face of his army, and then, without reluctance, relinquishing a worthless prize. Abandoning the road to Braga, he once more betook himself to the mountain-paths, whither it was impossible to convey heavy guns, and, making in a direct line for the heights of Carvalho d'Este, gained an entire day upon his pursuers. Previous to his arrival at this point, the marshal perceived disorganization spreading amongst his veterans, and suddenly commanding a halt, drew up his whole force in order of battle, upon the very spot where once before they had won a brilliant victory from the Portuguese. This politic stroke gave a new impulse to the men, and now gallantly taking the command of the rear himself in person, and placing Loisson over the advance, he pushed on to Salamonde. From this he had calculated upon still having two lines of retreat open to him; one by Ruivaens, a second, shorter but more difficult, by the Ponte Nova and Misarella, leading into the Montealegre road. But the Portuguese had already succeeded in obstructing the former line, by the destruction of the bridge over the Cavado, on the road to

\* General Sarrazin says, "that with a general more experienced, more active, and more enterprising than Sir Arthur Wellesley, Portugal would have beheld the scene of Baylen repeated;" but General Mackinnon, on the contrary, observes, "that Sir Arthur's conduct, during this short campaign, gives him the first rank amongst the British generals of the day." Speaking of one of the skirmishes on this memorable pursuit, he says, "I was near Sir Arthur, by his orders, when the attack was about to commence: and if I had never seen him but at that moment, I could decide upon his being a man of a great mind." General Mackinnon was capable of forming such a judgment: he it was in whom England has perhaps lost more than in any soldier, since Sir Philip Sydney.—*Anon.*

Chaves: and a few hardy peasants undertook to check the retreat of the whole French army by cutting the Ponte Nova, and resolutely defending the narrow causeway of the Miserella, a bridle-ridge, over which but two persons, at most, could march abreast. It was now the approach of night, the situation and circumstances of the army were not only miserable, but desperate; they were foot-sore, starving, half-naked, without artillery, their ammunition almost wet, the rain having continued to fall incessantly for eight and forty hours, and the British army approaching rapidly, as the distant booming of their well-served guns occasionally informed them. Retreat by Ruivaens being hopeless, Soult resolved on forcing the passage of the Ponte Nova, and, summoning into his presence Major Dulong, one of the bravest of his officers, addressed him nearly as follows, "I have chosen you from the whole army, to seize the Ponte Nova, which has been cut by the enemy. Select one hundred grenadiers and twenty-five horsemen: surprise the guards, and secure the bridge. If you succeed, say so; if otherwise, your silence will suffice." Amidst the heavy downpourings of a thunder-storm, Dulong reached the bridge unobserved, and, killing the sentinel, passed along the top of the parapet, which was still standing, and dispersed the Portuguese posts that had kept such a careless watch. The gallantry of Dulong opened the rugged way, for a few miles further on their harassing march, but there a still greater difficulty presented itself, and one which seemed to demand the exertion of still greater enterprise. A deep ravine, that interposed between two mountains, was spanned by a single arch, called the Saltador, or leaper, resembling those sublime and picturesque constructions in Switzerland, in Italy, and in Wales, which geographers and tourists usually call, "the Devil's bridges." The arch was still unbroken, but its narrow way was commanded by Portuguese sharp-shooters, planted like trees amongst the rocks that dotted the opposite brow, and from these native ramparts, a fire so unerring was aimed at the attenuated passing columns, that many a time the whole bridge's length of men was seen to fall at once. At last Dulong rushed

singly over, setting a glorious example of bravery, and was followed by a number sufficient to take possession of the mountain, and drive away the authors of so much ruin.

While the advanced guard and main-body of Soult's corps were either struggling for life with the Portuguese peasants, or trampling each other to death in the gorges of the mountains, or in the still narrower enclosures of a narrow bridge, the British army came up with the rear, where Soult had gallantly posted himself, at the village of Salamonde, and where he made a demonstration of resistance by taking up an exceedingly strong position. But scarcely had Lieut.-General Sherbrooke advanced against them with the guards, and turned their left by the heights, than they abandoned their ground, leaving one gun and many prisoners behind them. In the enemy's rear was the Cavado river, and crossed there by two small bridges; to these the whole force of the routed army directed their course, but from the rapid approach of night it was considered imprudent to pursue them even to that limit. Their fears, however, acted as destructively upon them as the cannonade, which had been kept up against objects that were scarcely visible, and, when morning dawned, the spectacle that presented itself was such as could not fail to excite commiseration even in the breasts of their most implacable enemies. The dark mass on which the guns had played at night-fall now presented a vast heap of slain, five hundred corpses lay mingled with the carcasses of as many horses, the bed of the river was choked with dead, and its banks strewn everywhere with broken carriages, knapsacks, and plundered property of every kind. Gold and silver vases, embroidered tapestry, and treasures of various descriptions, were at length unwillingly disgorged, and dropped, like golden fruit, in the path of the pursuers, to retard their speed. So completely was the road impeded by the accumulation of dead bodies, shattered carriages, and abandoned stores, that Sir Arthur Wellesley was necessitated to turn from the ensanguined field to the little village of Ruivaens, and halt there during the night of the sixteenth. On the following day, when the British were about

to resume the pursuit, Sir Arthur found that the enemy had fled by a mountain-path towards Orense, in which it would be impossible then to overtake or stop him; upon which he resolved to discontinue the chase, having driven him across the frontier, and thereby executed the precise orders under which he sailed from England. In this flight, so similar to the race of Benevente, Soult lost everything, cannon, ammunition, baggage, and military chest; and his retreat was, in every respect, even in weather, a *pendant* for the retreat of Corunna. "He left behind him," says the official despatch, "his sick and wounded, and the road from Penafiel to Montealegre was strewn with the carcasses of horses and mules, and of French soldiers who were put to death by the peasantry before the British advanced guard could save them."

This last circumstance was the natural effect of the system of warfare carried on by the French in that campaign. The soldiers plundered and murdered the peasantry, and many were found hanging from the trees on the road-side, who had been executed for no other reason than not being friendly to French usurpation: the route of their column in the retreat from Oporto could be traced by the smoke of the villages to which they had set fire. It may be regretted for the sake of humanity, because capturing the general might have brought the war to an earlier issue—it may be lamented by the infuriated Portuguese, who thirsted for their blood—and it caused perhaps disappointment to the British, that Soult's army was not overtaken, and compelled to surrender. But the reasons assigned by the commander-in-chief for not pursuing the enemy across the frontier, at a subsequent period were better understood; and Sir Arthur Wellesley himself was perhaps the only officer in his army, who felt convinced that it was a more complete triumph to drive Soult out of Portugal with such losses, "and so crippled that he could do no harm," than to have accepted his surrender, and undertaken the provision and security of the French army on the Portuguese side of the boundary. Sir Arthur asserts, in a letter to Lord Castlereagh, that he had omitted no measure that could intercept the enemy's retreat;



and adds, "it is obvious, however, that if an army throws away all its cannon, equipments, and baggage, and everything which can strengthen it, and enable it to act together as a body, and abandons all those who are entitled to its protection, but add to its weight and impede its progress; it must be able to march by roads through which it cannot be followed, with any prospect of being overtaken, by an army which has not made the same sacrifices." When the loss of military equipments is taken into account, the sufferings and deaths of his men, the number of sick abandoned, the disgrace inflicted on the French name, perhaps it will be acknowledged that the British general was wise in being content with his triumph. Soult had invaded Portugal, only eleven weeks before, with twenty-five thousand men; he returned with but eighteen thousand—he brought with him, in his unjust attack upon the liberties of that country, fifty-eight pieces of artillery, every one of which he was obliged to abandon. Napoleon always felt grateful to the marshal for rescuing so many of his best troops, from the snares which had been so deeply laid to surprise and cut them off. When Sir Arthur Wellesley himself hesitated in the chase, there the pursuit virtually ended, for the enchantment of his presence was wanted, and even his officers seemed to require the light of his countenance to seeking out the foe. On the eighteenth, Soult escaped from the guards as well as from Silveira's corps, and, passing the frontier at Allaritz, on the following day entered the gates of Orense with a plumeless helm.

Having disposed of Soult as he had originally intended, and driven the French out of Portugal according to the orders he had received, he was now informed by Major-General Mackenzie, through a letter of the nineteenth, that Marshal Victor had broken up on the Guadiana, that he had attacked and carried the bridge of Alcantara on the fourteenth, and advanced on Castello Branco. That post had been occupied by a small garrison, consisting of the second battalion of the Lusitanian legion, and the Idanha à Nova battalion of Portuguese militia, from the time when the allied army marched to the northward.

Colonel Mayne, who commanded this small force, withstood the attack of the united corps of Victor and Lapisse for six hours, and then effected a well-ordered retreat without the loss of a single gun, but at a considerable sacrifice of lives, one hundred and seventy having fallen of the legion alone. The Portuguese troops generally fought well under Sir Arthur Wellesley, and it was his opinion, "that no troops could have behaved better than the Lusitanian legion did at Alcantara; and further, that they would have held their post against the twelve thousand enemies, had the Idanha battalion not given way." Mayne attempted to blow up the bridge, but failing in that object, the enemy's cavalry crossed immediately. Sir Arthur, in a letter to Mr. Frere, seems rather to regret that Sir R. Wilson had been withdrawn from the important post of Alcantara; but surely the gallantry of Mayne left no cause for either repentance or reproach, and Sir Arthur himself frequently acknowledged that the defence was highly meritorious. This intelligence, however, quickened the movements of the British: four brigades, which had been left at Braga, were ordered to return to Oporto; while the head-quarters were moved in the same direction. Beresford was advised to form a junction at Braga, where a conference also might be held; and Silveira was left with his Portuguese, to continue the pursuit of Soult. He could not, however, have followed him hotly, or to the Spanish borders, for it is known that hunger and fatigue would have almost annihilated the fugitives, had not the peasantry at Allaritz mistaken the red coats of the Swiss, for British uniform, and, under the delusion, brought them wine and refreshments.

Sir Arthur Wellesley now marched to the southward, to renew active operations by attacking Victor. On his arrival at Oporto, on the twenty-second, with part of the army, his mind was there fully employed, his diplomatic genius amply tested, and his patience severely tried. Remittances had been promised from England, but they were delayed, and, when they did reach Lisbon, were encumbered with fiscal technicalities. "If," said the general, "we are to carry on war in this country, money must be sent from England;" and in the same despatch

he complained "that he could not be certain of the subsistence of the army, unless the Portuguese government would let him have three or four hundred mules." At this anxious moment, intelligence reached him of the appointment of the Marquis Wellesley, as ambassador-extraordinary to the Spanish government, which he did not consider to be a subject of congratulation to his lordship or his friends. He thought the task that would devolve on him would be most arduous, and that some time would elapse before he would become sufficiently "*au courant des affaires*" to be able to form a judgment of its extent." His next duty was that of providing the traitor D'Argenton, who had escaped from confinement during the attack on Oporto, with safe-conduct to England: he gave him a recommendation to Lord Castlereagh, in which he urged the strength of D'Argenton's claim on the British government "for such an allowance as might enable him to live decently in England." Sir Arthur's influence procured for him both an asylum and a pension; but, soon after venturing over to France, to bring away his wife and children, to whom he was ardently attached, he was apprehended and put to death.

A question of some difficulty next arose, but one of little moment, any farther than illustrating, as it does most happily, his character for integrity, and purity of principle, of which it is so frequently the gratifying duty of Sir A. Wellesley's biographer to speak. Upon the capture of Oporto, there were several ships, Danish, Swedish, French, and English, in the harbour, loaded in some instances with valuable cargoes. Of this property, three thousand tons of wine belonged to the English merchants; and an immense collection of cotton had been made there by the French, and placed in charge of the French consul. The admiral, who lay off the coast, thought that all property at Oporto should be treated as prize, and that the army, therefore, were entitled to salvage. To this Sir Arthur replied, that if entitled to any, he was entitled to all; but that Oporto being a Portuguese port, and the British acting there as auxiliaries to his royal highness, everything taken in Oporto necessarily belonged to that government, and not to his

Britannic majesty's. He also argued against the policy of such a step, as one likely to offend the Portuguese: "however convenient it might be to me to share in this benefit myself, I am very unwilling (said Sir Arthur) to be instrumental in forwarding such a claim, if it is to have the effect of putting our friends out of temper with us." Admiral Berkeley and Mr. Villiers persevered for some time longer in endeavouring to alter his view of this question: to the former he replied by informing him, "that as his right could only be founded on that of the army, and would arise from their success in a joint expedition, it followed, that until the right of the latter could be proved, which he thought could not be done, the admiral need not make any application, nor complain of any injustice." In his letter of the first of June, to Mr. Villiers, he expresses an anxious desire to end the dispute totally; observing, "as I am of opinion that none of us have any claim whatever, if you are of the same opinion, I think you had better say no more upon the subject, except to let the government know that there is a large property in cotton and wines at Oporto." This appeal to the liberality and generosity of the claimants, appears to have obtained more respect than that which rested solely upon justice.

A contemptible, ungrateful, pitiful party, at Oporto, complained to our civil agent of the severity with which they had been treated by the British commander-in-chief, who had made a specious display of justice, by qualifying the amount he wrung from them with the name of *loan*. The impartiality and generosity of Sir Arthur Wellesley had long been proverbial, and the preceding anecdote very fully establishes his title to both; the imputations therefore of these mendacious monopolists were totally devoid of foundation. When Sir Arthur returned to Oporto from the pursuit of Soult, he was miserably deficient in money, and his men were without every species of necessary store: all wanted shoes, and there was not one farthing in the chest. He asked Murray, privately, whether he thought the exposure of his distress at Oporto, by borrowing from the senate or the merchants, would have a baneful influence upon the

money market at Lisbon; and that gentleman conceiving that it would not, he applied first to the senate, who at once consented to advance as much as they could spare, and afterwards to the *wine company*. This worthless association seemed unwilling to lend one shilling to the generous soldier, who, with his sword in his hand, had abandoned a claim to prize-money, upon a doubt of his title—to an army that had recovered the whole amount of their property from the clutches of one of the most iniquitous enemies that ever invaded an unoffending country. Finding that their penury was precisely measured by their ingratitude, Sir Arthur turned round, as he was leaving their board-room, and said, “Consider the statement I have made, and my application for assistance: if you refuse to assist me with money, after all I have done for you, the world, when the story shall be told, will never believe it.” What would have been the language of Napoleon under similar circumstances? “And this,” says this great and upright man, when called upon to account for his severity to the good citizens of Oporto, “is the amount of the *duret  * which has been put on them. I believe I did *shame* them into lending us a sum of money. After all, the sum borrowed at Oporto, *for it was not levied*, amounted to ten thousand pounds, and this is what the government calls ‘severe.’ I believe that I saved for them property which will sell for one hundred times that amount: and had I waited to attack Soult till I had received a sum sufficient to supersede the necessity of this loan, (for which I may wait the next time my assistance is wanted), the support of his army would have cost the *wine company* ten times the amount.”

A subject accompanied by perplexities, and encircled by difficulties, forced itself a second time on the attention of the commander-in-chief; this was the question of rank between the English and the English-Portuguese officers. He had always viewed this point as a subject of extreme delicacy: he thought that the officers in the two services should rank according to the dates of their respective commissions, but that English officers, taking temporary Portuguese commissions, should rank



in respect to British officers, according to the date of the commission which they held in his majesty's service. It was the practice, when an officer was about to enter into the Portuguese service, to advance him one step in the king's, as an inducement to volunteer; upon which he received, in the Portuguese, rank, still a step higher, and hence the disagreeable anomaly which engendered so much discontent. The vexation and mental pain which Sir Arthur felt, at this interruption to the good feeling that should subsist amongst British officers, he thus powerfully expressed in a letter to Mr. Villiers, "I wish to God that Marshal Beresford would resign his English lieutenant-general's rank. It is inconceivable the embarrassment and ill-blood it occasions. It does him no good; and if the army was not most successful, this very circumstance would probably bring us to a stand-still." This inconvenience can hardly be said to have applied to junior officers, but, as respected general officers, it operated injuriously to the service. Tilson, Murray, Hill, and Cotton, were all seniors to Beresford, although, in every case of junction or alliance in the field, Beresford took precedence, as commander-in-chief of the Portuguese native forces. Against this collision of rank and precedence, General Murray appealed to the commander-in-chief, and was in consequence permitted to resign the command of his brigade, and return to England, Sir Arthur, feeling it "impossible to engage to any officer, that the troops under his command should not be employed in concert or co-operation with any particular description of troops." When he accepted General Murray's resignation, he was fully conscious of the hardship of his situation. He had never desired to give a definitive opinion upon this delicate, difficult point, but when called on, in his official capacity, to act, his decision of character became strikingly observable. Scarcely had one general-officer been victimized by his just yet unavoidable judgment, when he remonstrated powerfully and feelingly against the operation of the law under the peculiar circumstances. "We take," said Sir Arthur "a captain from our army, make him a major, and then

a Portuguese lieutenant-colonel; a British lieutenant, by the same process, becomes a Portuguese major, and lieutenant-colonels are made brigadiers over the heads of all the colonels and senior lieutenant-colonels of the British army serving in Portugal. This rank, besides, is not permanent, but, on the contrary, after having commanded their permanent superiors in the British army, they may return to the king's service, and be themselves commanded by those superiors." Sir Arthur did not mean to dispute or undervalue the rank of the Portuguese commission, which he asserted was on every account deserving of respect, he only desired that the feelings of the officers, in the British service, should be consulted for by a proper arrangement, and a sufficient satisfaction afforded to their minds. "Men's minds," he observes, "are so constituted, that when they conceive they are injured, they are not satisfied until the injury is removed. Dissatisfaction on one subject begets it on others, and I should have (indeed I may say I have, for the first time) commanded a dissatisfied army." He therefore prayed that the reasonable ground for dissatisfaction then existing should be removed, either "by British officers entering the Portuguese service, continuing to serve in the same rank which they held in that of his majesty, or, if superior rank should be given them in the new service, whenever they should meet British officers of superior rank, they should receive their orders."

The preceding were amongst the causes of anxiety to the commander-in-chief during his short stay at Oporto, but others might be added, even more important to the objects of humanity, and of the expedition generally; perhaps none more pressing, in the deplorable state of the army during such inclement weather, and while rapidly traversing such rugged roads, than their want of shoes. His pressing application for twenty thousand pairs, and his request that they might, for greater expedition, be sent by sea from Lisbon, was dated from Oporto, the twenty-fourth of May; and it was to this laudable desire of obtaining, by honourable and just means, a sufficient supply of shoes for

his poor sore-foot men, that Sir Arthur gave to the senate, and the wine company, that memorable opportunity of distinguishing themselves by a display of gratitude and generosity, which they so memorably abused.

It may be uniformly observed of all Sir Arthur Wellesley's decisions, that is, where the sentence of forgiveness or condemnation was to emanate from himself solely and exclusively, that they have ever leaned to the side of mercy. His opinion on capital punishments was obtained, casually, at an early period of his life, during the campaign in India, and the cruelties, violence, and insubordination of our Peninsular allies taxed his patience and forgiveness much and many times. A Portuguese noble, who held the rank of captain in the army, having absented himself from the field without leave, on his return, by order of Brigadier-General A. Campbell, was put under arrest. An appeal being now made to the commander-in-chief, that humane umpire gave a written judgment, in which he beautifully, yet unconsciously, draws his own great character, and inadvertently alludes to those claims which a nation has upon its aristocracy, and, calling the noble culprit's attention to this example, dismisses him with a hope that the admonition may not be forgotten. "Point out to him," said the British chieftain, "that all the exertions of our country, all that the valour and discipline of British soldiers can effect, will not save Portugal and secure her independence, unless the people of Portugal exert themselves in their own cause: tell him it is *particularly incumbent upon the nobility, and persons of great fortune and station*, to set the example of that devotion to the service of their country, and of that strict attention to the rules of military discipline and subordination, which can alone render any exertions useful, and lead to that success to which all must look forward with anxiety. Say, that I hope the lenity with which his fault has been treated now, will induce him to be more attentive in future: that I shall expect from him exertions in the cause of his country, patience to bear the hardships of a military life, and submission to the rules of discipline, in proportion as his rank, station, and

fortune are superior to those of others of his countrymen in the service.—You will then release the marquis from his arrest.”

Before the head-quarters broke up from Oporto on the twenty-fifth, General Wellesley had opened a correspondence with Cuesta, the obstinacy of whose character had been previously known to him : he had endeavoured to bring over to his assistance, in his attempt to conciliate the veteran general, the brave Marquess de la Romana, and he felt it necessary also to caution Major-General Mackenzie, who was in Cuesta's country, against lending too willing an ear to the arguments and solicitations of the Spanish chief. Mackenzie was directed to decline affording him any hazardous co-operation, on the plea, that his instructions and duty forbade him acting beyond the direct and immediate protection and defence of Portugal.

All things being now arranged, or rather negotiated, for the advance of the main body of the British, General Wellesley marched to Quinta de le Mealhada, and from thence to Aveiro, which he did not reach before the twenty-seventh, owing to the remissness of the magistrates at Ovar and Aveiro, who failed in supplying boatmen to transport the troops across the lake. While he awaited the ferrying over of his horses, he addressed a communication to Sir J. Cradock, governor of Gibraltar, enclosing a letter from the secretary of state, directing that officer to send to Portugal from his garrison, the forty-eighth and sixty-first regiments : and a second despatch to Vice-Admiral Berkeley, requesting that he would prepare tonnage for two thousand men, for that particular service : at the close of this day, the twenty-seventh, Sir Arthur returned to Coimbra, having retraced his triumphant march from Lisbon, and here head-quarters were established for a few days, for the purpose of obtaining that rest which fatigue demanded, an ill-provided commissariat rendered necessary, and daily increasing sickness, amongst the young and unseasoned men, absolutely required. At this moment, when neglect, privations, and their natural consequence, disease, began to thin the ranks of the brave British, intelligence reached head-quarters of the arrival of a reinforce-

ment of five thousand men, ready to share in the dangers as well as the honours of the war. "We should have felt greater satisfaction," observes Lord Londonderry, "had the number of our recruits been doubled, but five thousand British soldiers were not to be spoken of lightly." Thus relieved by the dawning of hope that arose from the ocean, and told him that at home his labours were never forgotten, he applied himself with all the sagacity of a mind fruitful in expedients, and practised in the wily ways of diplomatic agency, to bring over the Spanish general to his views. "Cuesta was brave and true, but old, without talent, bigoted to his own antiquated notions, and, with the obstinacy of age, stout in his own opinions." It was therefore necessary to use the utmost caution not to offend his pride, or excite his jealousy. The efforts of the general for this purpose, consisted in despatching two confidential officers, Lieut.-Colonels Bourke and Cadogan, to Cuesta's head-quarters, with a respectful request to be informed of his excellency's wishes, and directions to pay proper deference to all his military suggestions. These officers were furnished with a memorandum of inquiries, to which they were to obtain from the general satisfactory replies; the tendency of the questions being to guide and influence the judgment of Cuesta, and lead him, unconsciously, into the views of the British commander-in-chief. At the close of the conference, Cuesta consented to a line of operations, at least not contradictory to those of the allies. It was from these head-quarters also, that Sir Arthur Wellesley wrote, on the thirtieth of May, to Mr. W. Huskisson, secretary to the treasury, laying before him the distresses of the army, which had been aggravated by continuance, and by an accumulation of debt. Upwards of £300,000 were then due in Portugal, arrears of pay were owing to the troops; the money sent to Cadiz to be exchanged, had not been returned; the trade of Lisbon was unequal to the demand of two millions per annum in exchange for bills on London, and the Portuguese merchants were sending their whole capital to England, so that money should necessarily come from England, if the war were to be prosecuted. During the halt at Coimbra,



neither money nor shoes arrived, and the patience both of the general and the army was, in consequence, severely put to the test: but "this great and shameful negligence obtained frequently throughout the war; and there can now be but little doubt that it was attributable rather to the villany of some, than to the general indolence of all. This fact is dwelt upon, on this account, that it fettered the illustrious subject of this memoir on this occasion; and because he was a man of great public integrity, and with the strictest notions as to probity and good faith in all dealings with the inhabitants of the Peninsula, and in all engagements made with followers; and desirous, both as their protector and commander, that his soldiers, for the sake of justice and discipline, should be regularly paid; it is known to many who served under him, that the neglect here spoken of weighed often and heavily, throughout the war, upon his firm and elastic mind."

To such a mind, the disgraceful conduct of his soldiers, who seemed unable to wait patiently the arrival of money and necessaries, which, although they might have been thoughtlessly delayed, would assuredly be brought in time, must have been a source of the most painful suffering. Sir Arthur expressed more warmly, more vehemently than usual, his indignation at the many outrages that were committed: "I have," said he, "long been of opinion, that a British army could bear neither success nor failure, and I have had manifest proofs of the truth of this opinion, in the first of its branches, in the recent conduct of the soldiers of this army. They have plundered the country most terribly, which has given me the greatest concern. They have plundered the people of their bullocks, among other property; for what reason I am sure I do not know, except it be to sell them to the people again. They behave terribly ill. They are a rabble, that cannot bear success any more than Sir J. Moore's could bear failure; but I am endeavouring to tame them." The measures of Sir Arthur were more effectual than those of the lamented officer to whom he alluded. He issued a proclamation, threatening the severest punishment for robbery

and violence: he obliged the ministers of the regency to follow his example, by forbidding the people, in positive terms, from purchasing any thing from the soldiers of the British army. Official complaints were also threatened, and the apprehension of being sent home in disgrace, gave further weight to these proclamations of the general.

While the British forces were concentrating at Coimbra, the commander-in-chief resided at Cantahede in the immediate vicinity, and although surrounded by every inconvenience, difficulty, and distress, without shoes for his men, sufficient money to pay them, or to liquidate the debts which the army had contracted with the natives, while the riotous and vicious were exciting insubordination in his camp, he remained unshaken as the oak in the forest, as the rock in the ocean; and, as the highest elevations in nature are of the hardest material, so the lofty mind of this great commander seemed to endure the most violent attacks of misfortune and disappointment without their producing upon it any visible impression. His firmness, decision, and prudence soon restored to his army that respect for discipline, which had fled for a moment; and his despatch from Coimbra of the thirty-first of May, affords the most convincing demonstration of the cool and conscious courage of the man, and his utter insensibility to danger or its approaches. "We are getting on well, and I hope the government are satisfied with us. I shall soon be in Spain; and if Victor does not move across the Tagus, he will be in as bad a scrape as Soult." Such was the language of his public despatch, when every officer in the army, possessed of conduct, character, or right feeling, was pondering on the ingratitude of England towards a brave army, or regretting how that army was losing name, and risking its very existence by violation of discipline, and by licentiousness. On the first and second of June, Sir Arthur was still at Coimbra, and resolved upon remaining there until he saw the greater part of the army pass by, "as there were constant difficulties and distresses that required to be immediately relieved:" and even in this short space, and while these necessities might be supposed to have given him ample occupation, he was endeavouring to form a

corps of guides, consisting of officers and non-commissioned officers to act as interpreters between the army and the people of the country," *who*, the general observed, "*must show the roads*;" and so minute was his knowledge, even of individuals, that in his application to Beresford for co-operation in this design, he names a corporal in the second company of grenadiers of the thirteenth regiment, Jozè Bannas, and begs that he may be included amongst the men of good character, capable of speaking French or English, whom he requires to be sent to him.

On the fifth of June the head-quarters advanced as far as Pombal, where intelligence reached the general of the arrival of one hundred horses from England: directions being instantly given to examine into their fitness for service, it was found that forage had not been delivered regularly for the horses and mules attached to the brigades of artillery, that they were, in consequence, nearly destroyed, and unable to draw the artillery farther than the Tagus. "The officers of the commissariat," says Sir Arthur, in addressing the deputy-commissioner-general, "will be responsible in an eminent degree, if, owing to their want of capacity or management, I should lose the use of the British artillery," and having thus officially admonished those, who alone were or would be culpable, he endeavoured to provide for the serious loss of his own artillery by requesting "Beresford to have some brigades of Portuguese force, of that description, ready to join and do duty with the British army on its entry into Spain." In these perplexities and failures of the commissariat, the admiral on that station, the Hon. G. Berkeley, tendered his assistance, and, after the model of the immortal Nelson—who was just as ready to serve on land as at sea, and gave his gallant co-operation to soldier and sailor—expressed his wish to despatch Captain Sheppard, already known to the reader as commander of the *Brazen*, to help forward the artillery and equipments from the Tagus to Abrantes. This thoughtfulness and activity were kindly answered by stating, "that the commissariat was very bad indeed; but it was new, and he hoped would improve." Not too rigid in the government of his own, his humanity to the soldiers of a

foreign prince, and that prince his enemy, should here be noticed. Having ordered the French prisoners to be put on board the transports and sent to England, the words in which that order was couched establish the excellence of his heart. "You will understand," says the British hero, "that the prisoners must not be unreasonably crowded in these ships; and you will, therefore, report to me what precise number will remain at Oporto, after you shall have sent those whom the admiral may require you to send in the cavalry ships." Thomar next received the head-quarters of the British, and it was here that intelligence first reached Sir Arthur of Victor's having broken up from Caceres, and removed his head-quarters to Truxillo, a town situated between the Tagus and the Guadiana.

Innumerable reports now poured into the British camp, of successes and defeats of allies and enemies, originating partly with the timid amongst the Portuguese and Spaniards, but more industriously circulated by corrupt members of the Spanish local juntas. These false lights led Beresford and other officers into erroneous tracks, where their hopes and their armies would have suffered wreck, but the caution of the commander-in-chief was equal to all dangers, and ultimately saved himself and his followers. Reaching Abrantes, he writes to Mr. Villiers, that "it was impossible to guess what the French are doing, accounts are so very contradictory. However, I shall certainly move eastward as soon as I can." In the same communication, he expresses the utmost anxiety to visit his noble brother the Marquis Wellesley, who was daily expected to arrive off Lisbon in the *Donegal*, Captain Malcolm, and desires that a messenger should be sent, to acquaint him, the moment the ship appeared in the offing, that he might hasten to Lisbon, by the Tagus, and receive him. Circumstances delayed for a time the meeting of these affectionate brothers, and General Wellesley employed every moment of the interval in the able and active discharge of his difficult duties.

Cuesta persevered in preferring his own plans to those of the British general, leaving the latter the alternative of acting by himself against the concentrated force of the enemy, if

he did not consent to accede to his visions of easy conquest: but, by the diligence and energy of Colonel Bourke, his obstinacy was somewhat softened; he was persuaded to pause a little, in expectation of the arrival of the remainder of the British army from the north, and persuaded, at length, not to expose himself to certain destruction by provoking Victor, before Sir Arthur should be in a condition to assist him. Well-directed flattery is rarely unacceptable, and Cuesta was not inaccessible to its addresses: the congratulations of the English general upon the successes of his excellency's countrymen in Arragon, under Blake, probably contributed to second Bourke's efforts to soothe and soften the haughty disposition of the Spanish veteran. General Wellesley also endeavoured to assimilate his plans, as far as possible, to those of his perverse co-adjutor, and, on the tenth of June, they so far coincided, that one point of difference alone remained, which was, that Alcantara should not be occupied by a Portuguese, but rather by a British detachment, which should make a demonstration on the enemy's flank; to this Sir Arthur could not assent, having resolved on concentrating the British army as much as possible.

The impression, which the brilliant successes and established military fame of Sir Arthur Wellesley had produced upon the British government, was now beginning to be attended with that implicit confidence in his genius, and fortune, which was calculated to lead to the most successful results. Authority reached head-quarters, at Abrantes, on the eleventh of June, permitting him "to extend his operations in Spain beyond the provinces immediately adjacent to the Portuguese frontier," which enabled him to propose, and entertain, new plans of operation in conjunction with Cuesta, and he, in consequence, directed Colonel Bourke to confer with General O'Donju, the adviser of Cuesta, upon the measures most expedient to be pursued after the combined armies should have forced Victor to recross the Tagus. At the same time, his advice, too modestly given on this occasion, was, "that the two armies ought to keep so near, as to be able to afford mutual assistance, or form a junction, in case of



necessity: but in other respects to keep separate, for the sake of subsistence.

Besides permission to enlarge the field of his operations at discretion, fresh reinforcements were sent out from England, in addition to General Craufurd's corps, "so that," he observed in a private correspondence, "the ball is now at my foot, and I hope I shall have strength enough to give it a good kick." Still his operations were retarded for want of money, that high sense of honour which characterizes his nation, impeding the movements of the British general, until the debts contracted in Portugal should all have been liquidated—a sum then amounting to £200,000. Although his courage could not have drooped by any reverses or frowns of fortune, yet his spirits and his temper, however stoical, must have been severely tested. Elated by the intelligence from England, he anxiously desired to execute his great movement against Victor, whom he had always considered the more terrible enemy to the liberties of Portugal, by marching from Abrantes to Plasencia, seizing the bridge of Almaraz, throwing himself between the French and Spanish armies, and cutting off the enemy's retreat upon Madrid. This inimitable and all-perfect plan was objected to by Cuesta, from no other motives than jealousy of its origin, and a general unmanageableness of temper and conduct. Sir Arthur expressed his surprise at the venerable hero's immovable pertinacity, in language that strongly evinced his disappointment. "I can only say," he observed, "that the obstinacy of this old gentleman is throwing away the finest opportunity that any army ever had, and that we shall repent that we did not cut off Victor when we shall have to beat the French upon the Ebro." A pressing communication from Colonel Bourke, however, partially reconciled him to his wayward fate, and induced him to address Cuesta as follows, "As I find that your excellency is of opinion that I should co-operate with you in an attack upon the enemy, between the Tagus and the Guadiana, according to the plan I had the honour of submitting, I shall comply with your excellency's desire, and shall direct my march upon Badajoz, as soon as I am able to

move my troops; and not only shall the great body of the British co-operate with your excellency, but a body of British and Portuguese, under Marshal Beresford, will move by Plasencia, on the line which I had before proposed to take with the British army." Many men, of Sir A. Wellesley's rank, genius, and power, instead of saving the obstinate old general from ruin, would have allowed him to fall over the precipice; but he did not hesitate to sacrifice his own feelings to what appeared to him to be his line of duty, or of that policy on which the success of the expedition possibly depended. While Sir Arthur awaited the supplies necessary for the equipment and advance of his army, inactivity, the bane of a large force collected at head-quarters, again engendered misconduct in the troops, which was carried, in some instances, to such a length, that death, at the hands of the outraged peasantry, frequently ensued. These unfortunate and lamentable excesses were duly reported to the commander-in-chief, who assured the government, "that they might rely on his exertions to keep the troops in order, and on his employing all the power which the law had put into his hands, to punish the guilty." In this emergency, he addressed Colonel, (afterwards Lieutenant-General Sir Rufane) Donkin, calling on him to inform the commanding officers of two regiments that were conspicuous for outrage, that if subordination was not instantly restored, their regiments should be sent into garrison, reported to his majesty as unfit for service, and sent home in disgrace. He desired also that Colonel Donkin would have the men hutted outside the town of Castel Branco, and the rolls called every hour from sunrise till eight in the evening, taking care that both officers and soldiers attended. These severe regulations, enforced with the most exact attention to the orders of the commander-in-chief, were instrumental in restoring that good understanding, which had previously existed between the army and the peasantry, by ensuring an adherence to subordination on the part of the former.

That the obstinacy of General Cuesta did not originate in a feeling of conscious rectitude, or a confidence in any superior abilities which he conceived himself to possess, but in a blind

and perverse disinclination to be guided by the leader of a foreign army, will be presently shown ; here it will be sufficient to observe, that the precise plan which he sternly, stubbornly rejected, as wholly inapplicable to the position of the armies, he will be seen immediately embracing with avidity, as the sheet-anchor of his hopes, and the only mode whereby his army could be saved from certain destruction. Of this inconvenience Sir Arthur Wellesley complains to Lord Castlereagh. "My correspondence," he writes, "with General Cuesta has been a very curious one, and proves him to be as obstinate as any gentleman at the head of any army need be. He would not alter his position even to ensure the safety of his army, because he supposed this measure might be injurious to himself, notwithstanding that this alteration would have been part of an operation which must have ended in the annihilation of Victor's army, if he stood our attack ; or, in his retreat through the mountains of Arzobispo, with the loss of all his cannon and baggage, if he went away. I complied because it was urged that the safety of Cuesta's army depended upon it. The best of the whole story is, that Cuesta, in a letter of the twenty-seventh of May, which I did not receive till after I had written to him to propose my plan of operations, proposed the same plan to me, with very little alteration.

While Cuesta, bigoted to his own narrow views, continued to dispute with the general of his allies, Soult was breathing again in Galicia ; and Victor, having heard of Soult's failure, resigned the strong post at Alcantara, which Mayne immediately occupied, and, retracing his steps, took up a central position at Torre-mocha, between Alcantara, Merida, and Truxillo. Victor was somewhat influenced in this last step by the news of Mackenzie's activity, who had at that moment advanced to Sobreira Formosa. He had taken the precaution to leave a garrison in the castle of Merida, while he made that feint in favour of Soult ; and Cuesta, who was ever ambitious of doing something, no matter how insignificant, sent forward a detachment from Llerena, and invested the place during his absence ; but, on the re-appearance of the enemy, the assaulting

party moved off, repassed the Guadiana, and took up a position at Zafra.

Cuesta now fixed his head-quarters at Fuente del Maestro, on the enemy's left flank, and moved his advance to Calemonte on the Guadiana. Victor was also disturbed by the proximity of a Spanish force in the valley of the Tagus, whose presence rendered him apprehensive of interruption to his communication with the other marshals, and with the capital; and, to guard against any accident on that quarter, he detached a strong party from Torre-mocha, to watch the bridge of Almaraz. Sir Arthur Wellesley's original plan for the destruction of Victor's army, was to have made a movement through Castello Branco and Plasencia to the bridge of Almaraz, by which the enemy would have been intercepted; but he was obliged to surrender his judgment to the infatuated opinion of his co-adjutor, by which Victor was permitted to escape from the snare, and elude the attack of the combined armies of England, Spain, and Portugal. The only reparation Cuesta could make was, to pursue and harass the French; but this he performed so ineffectually, that, with little inconvenience, Victor marched on Talavera de la Reyna, resigning to his wrong-headed pursuer the post of Almaraz.

It was now confessed that the British commander-in-chief either understood the art of war, or at least was correct in his suspicions as to the movements of the enemy in their late position; and an experienced officer has remarked; "that the plan rejected was now approved of;" and on the twenty-seventh of June, Sir A. Wellesley, breaking up from the camp of Abrantes, commenced his march towards the Spanish frontier, moving by both banks of the Tagus, and on the first of July, head-quarters reached Castello Branco: thence their route was extended through Coria, while a flanking brigade, under General Rufane Donkin, explored the country between the Tagus and Zarza la Major, and on the eighth the British fixed their head-quarters at Plasencia.

The force with which Sir Arthur undertook to relieve Spain from French intrusion, by uniting with Cuesta on the banks

of the Tietar, and co-operating with him in an offensive movement on the capital, amounted to twenty-two thousand effective men, exclusive of the eight thousand left in garrison at Lisbon. The Spanish force under Cuesta at Almaraz was returned at thirty-eight thousand, independent of the twenty-five thousand worse disciplined men under Venegas in La Mancha. In the south of Spain, there existed also an army of sixty-thousand fighting men. The real strength or true position of the French corps was unknown to Sir Arthur Wellesley when he arrived at Plasencia: on his left rose a bold ridge of mountains that shut out all prospect of Leon and Castile; but he had not forgotten, that on the other side of that high chain, twenty thousand French still lingered, broken in spirit, yet easily exasperated, and capable of being rallied once more around their standard by the veteran who then shared in their discomfiture. This knowledge was sufficient to excite apprehension in a mind so thoughtful and cautious in providing against chances; and, as artillery could be conveyed by two passes only, those of Perales and Banos, although Soult had lost all his in the flight to Orense, he directed Beresford to protect that flank, observe the movements of the enemy, and defend the Puerto Perales, while he applied to Cuesta for a force sufficient to guard the pass of Banos. This request was granted in a manner ungracious and absurd, after much remonstrance, and by sending only six hundred men, and those provided with but twenty rounds of ammunition per man. It was one of those intuitive measures which occasionally emanate from great minds, like brilliant coruscations, which dictated the guarding of Perales and Banos, as Sir Arthur was ignorant of the presence of fifty thousand disciplined troops on the other side of the hills, led by Ney and Soult, just concentrated at Zamora. He had heard that Mortier was advancing from Arragon with fifteen thousand men: the latter intelligence was derived from General Franceschi, who distinguished himself so much in the pursuit to Corunna, by his frequent skirmishes with the British hussars, but was now taken prisoner under the following extraordinary



circumstances. Soult, in his distresses after 'the race of Orense,' despatched Franceschi to Madrid, to put the intrusive king into possession of the real and altered position of affairs in Portugal, since Sir A. Wellesley had taken the command of the allies. Refusing any other escort than his aides-de-camp, Captains Antoine and Bernard, he set out upon his mission; but reaching Tordesillas, he turned from his route, to visit his friend Marshal Mortier, when he was met near the ferry by a Capuchin friar and ten Spaniards, who immediately made him their prisoner. The friar conducted his captives across the mountains, in order to deliver them to the supreme junta at Seville, and, it was in passing the British head-quarters at Zarza la Major, that Sir Arthur had an opportunity of conversing with the prisoner, and examining into the purport of Soult's despatches, which represented the condition of his army as deplorable.\* Franceschi, indignant with fortune, was frequently heard to ejaculate, "O comme c'est pitoyable pour un general d'hussars d'etre pris par un Capuchin!"

The continued frustration of his wisest plans, by the determined obstinacy and blindness of Cuesta, decided the British commander upon seeking a personal interview with him, and endeavouring, by conciliatory means, to obtain a more cordial

\* "Being transferred to Seville, the central junta, with infamous cruelty, treated him as if he had been a criminal, instead of a brave soldier, and confined him in a dungeon at Carthagená. The citizens there, ashamed of their government, endeavoured to effect his escape; but he perished at the moment when his liberation was certain. When his young wife, a daughter of Count Mathieu Dumas, heard of his fate, she refused all nourishment; and, in a few days, by her death, added one more to the thousand instances of the strength of woman's affections."—*Napier*. During the few moments which Franceschi passed in Sir A. Wellesley's presence, he manifested much anxiety that his wife and family should be informed of his safety, although a captive. A few days after, the commander-in-chief humanely complied with the unhappy prisoner's wishes, and wrote to Mr. Flint, saying, "I shall be much obliged to you, if you will convey this intelligence to Madame Franceschi de Somme, through Holland, according to the accompanying address." Franceschi was the prisoner of Spain, so that Sir Arthur's communication was wholly unconnected with any duty, but that of a man of feeling.

co-operation than had hitherto existed between them. For this purpose, leaving his head-quarters at Plasencia on the tenth of July, Sir A. Wellesley and Lieutenant-General Stewart proceeded towards the Spanish camp, near the Col de Mirabete. As they approached the flying bridge which the Spaniards had thrown over the Tietar, they were met by an escort of hussars, belonging to the regiment of Villa Viciosa, well mounted, and superior in appearance to any other corps in the Spanish service. In conducting their visitors towards the bridge of boats upon the Tagus, the guides lost their way, and the party did not reach the camp before night-fall. This accident was a subject of regret to all parties, but particularly to the veteran Cuesta, whose whole force had been drawn out to receive Sir Arthur, while himself, though still labouring under the effects of injuries received in the battle of Medellin, mounted on his charger, remained nearly four hours at the head of his men, in momentary expectation of the British hero's arrival. When the tramp of the horses gave notice of the near approach of his illustrious visitor, a general discharge of artillery took place, and an infinite number of blazing torches were held up; by the red and flaring light of which, Sir Arthur was enabled to behold the entire Spanish line, as he passed with his suite in review.\*

About six thousand cavalry were drawn up in *rank entire*,

\* The Marquis of Londonderry, who accompanied Sir A. Wellesley on this occasion, gives the following interesting account of this review by torch-light. "The effect produced by these arrangements was of no ordinary character. As the torches were held aloft, at moderate intervals from one another, they threw a red and wavering light over the whole scene, permitting, at the same time, its minuter parts to be here and there cast into shade: whilst the grim and swarthy visages of the soldiers, their bright arms and dark uniforms, appeared peculiarly picturesque as often as the flashes fell upon them. Then there was the frequent roar of cannon, the shouklering of firelocks, mingled with the brief word of command, and rattling of accoutrements and arms, as we passed from battalion to battalion: all these seemed to interest the sense of hearing to the full as much as the spectacle attracted the sense of sight. Nor was old Cuesta himself an object to be passed by without notice, even at such a moment and under such circumstances as these. The old man preceded us, not so much sitting on his horse, as held on by two pages—at the imminent hazard of being

and twenty battalions of infantry, each consisting of eight hundred men. The remainder of Cuesta's force was employed in guarding the floating bridge on the Tagus, the passage at Arzobispo, and the Puerto Banos. Although the individuals of this irregular army were well-proportioned, handsome, hardy-looking men, not inferior in manliness of aspect to the soldiers of any army in Europe, they were miserably deficient in clothing, accoutrements, and discipline. They had not been taught to handle their fire-arms properly, and this awkwardness in the army generally, became more obvious from the contrast, which was unavoidable, with the Irish brigade, and some battalions of marines from Cadiz, and the wreck of those fine grenadier companies that fought so bravely, but unfortunately, at Medellin, who were entitled to a high military character. Thus the infantry possessed arms, but were ignorant how to use them; the cavalry were tolerably mounted, but understood nothing of military movements; the artillery was numerous, but incapable of being moved with celerity, either in action or retreat: the generals, like Cuesta himself, were chosen with reference to seniority alone, and, with the exception of O'Donoju and Lagers, were too aged and infirm for a military life. Such was the state of discipline, and such the general who commanded; such the efficiency of the Spanish army of co-operation, with which the disciplined ranks of the British were to associate, and risk the contagious effect of insubordinate example. How must the calm, clear, well-regulated mind of their general have shuddered for the consequences: and yet this review was not unattended with its advantages, as Sir Arthur from it must have gathered a truth useful to be ascertained in time, namely, that if Spain was to

overthrown whenever a cannon was discharged, or a torch flared out with peculiar brightness: indeed, his physical debility was so observable, as clearly to mark his total unfitness for the situation he then held. As to his mental powers, he gave us little opportunity of judging: inasmuch as he scarcely uttered five words during the continuance of the review; but his corporeal infirmities alone were at variance with all a general's duties, and showed that he was fit only for the retirement of private life."—*Narrative*, Vol. I. p. 382.

be recovered from the French, it was by British valour alone that conquest must be effected.

The grand and certainly imposing spectacle of a review of thirty thousand men by torch-light, being concluded, the generals alighted at "a wretched hovel," *casa del Puerto*, and on entering, Cuesta, who was overpowered by fatigue, retired to rest until eleven o'clock, when he returned and joined his guests at supper. His manner being singularly taciturn, he took but little share in the conversation, and he is represented as having carried this *Moslem* habit into his military government, which was conducted on a system of silence and terror. His personal hatred of the French procured for him the most boundless confidence and regard from the Spanish people, and, to strengthen this feeling of reliance on his animosity to his enemies, he invariably hung every traitor to his country that fell into his hands. The silence of Cuesta was habitual, and therefore disconnected with want of respect for his guests, whom he treated with the highest considerations of esteem, affection, and honour. After breakfast, on the forenoon of the eleventh, he presented his aged generals, one by one, to Sir Arthur Wellesley; but the ceremony took place in perfect silence, and with the formality of a levee. This further mark of respect being paid, the general conducted Sir Arthur into an inner apartment, and there remained in conference for four hours, during which O'Donoju acted as interpreter, secretary, aide-de-camp, in arranging a future plan of operations for the combined armies. At three o'clock the whole party sat down to a dinner of at least forty dishes, each of which was strongly impregnated with garlic and onions, after which Cuesta retired, according to the fashion of his country, to the enjoyment of his siesta, while Sir Arthur and Gen. Stewart mounted their horses, and visited those regiments, by the unequivocal light of day, which they had seen but imperfectly by the torches' partial glare. On the morning of the twelfth, Sir Arthur, having first received the embrace of the aged chieftain, returned to his camp at Plasencia.\*

\* The capital of Estremadura: it is a large town, seated on the river Xerto, which is here crossed by two bridges, and enclosed by Moorish walls.

At this conference Sir Arthur Wellesley proposed that an attack should be made on the enemy's posts on the Alberche, by the combined forces, then under the command of the British and Spanish generals; that ten thousand men should be detached in the direction of Avila, to turn the enemy's right; and that Venegas, having driven Sebastiani across the Tagns, should next pass the river at Aranjuez or Fuente Duenas, and threaten Madrid, then only a few hours' march from him, by the enemy's left. To these arrangements Cuesta objected, by insisting on the projected detachment to Avila being drawn from the British, although much fewer in number than his own, and consenting to spare only two battalions of infantry and a small cavalry force, which, in conjunction with the Portuguese brigades under Sir Robert Wilson's command, should march on Escalona, and communicate with the left of the British. So far only could Cuesta be induced to accede to Sir Arthur's plan of operations for the opening of the Spanish campaign, and his obstinacy has deservedly called down upon his name the unqualified censure of historians. The effects of his perverseness are justly regretted; the cause, however, admits of extenuation. Cuesta, one of the most upright, loyal, and gallant men that Spain had ever produced, had been imprisoned by the junta, on suspicion of treason: he did not seek revenge, but he always gave an unwilling obedience to the orders of that unjust and corrupt body: to shield themselves from the power and indignation of the injured soldier, the junta continually heaped honours upon Blake; and when the defeat at Belchite had lowered his high renown, they transferred their affections to Venegas. Besides these secret machinations, these unworthy means of depressing the character of one honourable man, by elevating that of his rival, Cuesta had another enemy to contend with, more wise, more influential, and more persevering; that was Mr. Frere, who persisted in his importu-

The houses are on so large a scale, that two thousand soldiers found accommodation in one of them. The mountains that encircle the site of the town are oftentimes capped with snow, a commodity which is here sold at a high price, for the purpose of cooling lemonade and creams. Chocolate is manufactured here extensively; and this being also a place of considerable trade, the army were enabled to procure a fresh supply of shoes.







THE DUKE OF MUNSTER, CHIEF OF THE BRITISH ARMY, 1812

*Munster*

nities to have the Duke of Albuquerque employed in the immediate vicinity of Cuesta's army, but at the head of an independent force. These circumstances, in addition to a temper naturally morose, rendered more so by years and bodily sufferings, are amongst the excuses that may be pleaded in extenuation of Cuesta's unwillingness to be guided by the Spanish junta or the British general, and of his having regarded the recommendations of both with suspicion.

With the approbation of the Spanish junta, it was at length decided, that the British army should break up from Plasencia on the seventeenth and eighteenth of July, and form a junction with the Spanish main body at Oropesa on the twentieth; crossing the Tietar,\* at the Venta de Bazagona, passing Talegula and St. Julien, this part of the agreement was punctually performed. On the following day, Cuesta went through with his army,† pausing, however, sufficiently long to review twenty thousand British troops, which were drawn out for his inspection, and with the fine appearance of whom he expressed himself highly gratified; then pushing rapidly forward, he collected almost his entire force at Velada. Beresford and the Duke del Parque, with nearly twenty thousand men, guarded the north side of the valley, wholly unconscious of the powerful force then collected on the other side of the mountains:

\* The passage of the Tietar was readily accomplished, Captain Tod, of the Royal Staff Corps, having, in a most ingenious manner, constructed a solid bridge there, in a few hours, from the materials of an old house, which he pulled down for the purpose, united with some pines from a neighbouring wood.

† “On the twenty-first the two commanders dined together; and, in return for the military spectacle which Cuesta had afforded Sir Arthur, the British troops were drawn up in the evening for his inspection. The mounting on horseback, to proceed to the review, showed how ill-fitted was Cuesta for the activity of war. He was lifted on his horse by two grenadiers, while one of his aides-de-camp was ready on the other side to conduct his right leg over the horse's croup, and place it in the stirrup! Remarks were whispered at the moment, that if his mental energy and activity did not compensate for his bodily infirmity, Sir Arthur would find him but an incapable coadjutor. Cuesta passed along the line from left to right, just as night fell, and we saw him put comfortably into an antiquated, square-cornered coach, drawn by nine mules, and proceed to his quarters.”—*Earl of Munster's Campaign.*

Cuesta and Sir Arthur had taken up their positions, Venegas and Sir R. Wilson had each undertaken their respective duties, and all were now in perfect readiness to drive in those divisions of the enemy, which occupied Talavera, to their position on the left bank of the Alberche. The means by which Victor obtained such accurate information of the allies, is still involved in mystery, and the suspicion of treason alone affords a clue. Aware of the advance of his enemies, he strengthened his posts at Talavera, supported the column opposed to Sir Robert Wilson at Escalona on the Upper Alberche, recalled his foraging parties, altered in a masterly manner his line of retreat from the Madrid to the Toledo road, thereby securing his junction with Sebastiani, removed his artillery from St. Ollalla to Cevolla, and concentrated his infantry behind the Alberche. As the allied armies were advancing in two columns towards the enemy's posts at Talavera, Cuesta, moving along the high road, was the first to come up with their rear-guard. This body, consisting of two thousand cavalry, under the command of Latour Maubourg, formed boldly on the table-land of Gamonal, sustained a heavy cannonade, and actually compelled the Spaniards, under General Zayas, to deploy into line, and even then it continued to check their advance. But the British army, which had taken a road through the mountains nearly parallel to the Spanish line, beginning to appear, Latour Maubourg retired leisurely, and with little loss, behind the Alberche. This affair will serve to illustrate equally the courage and discipline of the French, and the folly and indiscipline of our allies the Spaniards. Several batteries and six thousand horse were brought against the French general, without producing any apparent disposition to retreat, until he found that his left was turned by the first hussars and the twenty-third light dragoons, under General Anson, and directed by Lieut.-General Payne, and by that division of infantry under Major-General Makenzie, and that his centre was driven in by the Spanish advanced-guard, under the command of Zayas and the Duke of Albuquerque, after he had compelled the silly Spaniards to expose their real strength. On this occasion the British lost eleven

horses, by the enemy's cannonade from their position on the Alberche, and a three-pound shot was fired, with such good aim, at Sir A. Wellesley, that it cut off the bough of a tree close to his head. Sir Arthur's columns were in readiness to attack the enemy's position on the twenty-third, and a general plan was agreed on, but when the British were about to march, at five o'clock in the morning, their sanguine hopes of glory and conquest were dissipated, by a blast that the keenest perception could not have foreseen, nor the most delicate frame have been sensible of its approach; and this was, that Cuesta and his staff had not arisen from their slumbers, and that, in short, it was his determination\* *not to attack the enemy until the next day*. This unfortunate decision, for which Sir A. Wellesley conceived there were good and valid reasons, "it is probable originated in treachery, but not that of Cuesta, for it is certain that Victor corresponded with the Spanish general's staff, and that the discussions of Sir Arthur and Cuesta were known, at his head-quarters, in twenty-four hours after their occurrence. Cuesta appeared on former occasions to have been under the influence of his aides-de-camp and military friends, while he distrusted both the junta and the British, and at the conferences between the generalissimos, a staff-officer on each side alone was present. The character of the British nation, if not of the British soldier, will be accepted by the world in proof of the unspotted innocence of Sir Arthur's attendant; the state of society in Spain at that time, as well as the movements of Victor, all contribute to stamp the brand of infamy upon the forehead of the Spaniard. After the junction of Latour Maubourg

\* "The old man (Cuesta) finally objected to fight that day, alleging, amongst other absurd reasons, that it was Sunday."—*Napier*. "Offering, among other reasons, his objection to fight on Sunday!—a strange objection, which even the sound sense of a converted chief, in one of the islands of Polynesia, not many years ago, forbade him to entertain; as if a struggle on the Sabbath-day against those who had desecrated the altars of Spain, and stained her hearths with blood, was not a permitted and a sacred duty."—*Sheerer*. "So unaccountable was this conduct in Cuesta, that it had been supposed he scrupled at fighting upon a Sunday."—*Southey*. From the following note, which is attached to the original MS., of "a memorandum of operations" contained



with the Duke of Belluno, the latter, as if in utter contempt of his pursuers, remained inactive during the whole of the twenty-third, although his right and his centre were exposed, the Alberche in front, being fordable; such timidity could hardly have arisen from any other source than a well-founded knowledge of his enemy's intentions. But, Lord Londonderry, himself an actor in the scene, and who writes its history in a style simple, natural, and with the very operations of each day present to the narrator, says, "For my own part, I thought the French never entertained the least idea of fighting, provided they could escape with some credit, and all their plunder. They kept the ground on the twenty-third to remove their baggage, and because they conceived the whole British force could not yet come up, (the Spanish they wholly disregarded); and they retired the very first opportunity that presented itself after the accomplishment of their objects." This is a natural and reasonable explanation of Victor's conduct, but affords no interpretation of Cuesta's delay, to which Lord Londonderry

in Sir A. Wellesley's despatches, and dated Badajoz, ninth December, it is obvious, that the preceding statements are incorrect—"All the discussions upon the subject, and the misrepresentations, show the difficulty of serving the British public, and the small degree of satisfaction any foreign officer has in co-operating with the British troops. General Cuesta chose to delay the attack to the twenty-fourth, for which delay there were not wanting *good and valid reasons*: but no such reasons are conceived, or are allowed to exist. A lie is invented and circulated, viz. that the twenty-third was Sunday, and then Sir Arthur Wellesley is abused for being the author of the lie. There was, however, a curious circumstance attending this transaction, which shows the nature of the war in Spain, and the deficiency of the intelligence by the Spanish general officers, and that is—that although Sir Arthur Wellesley suspected it on the evening of the twenty second, and made preparations accordingly, it was not positively ascertained till the morning of the twenty-third, that the whole French army was at Casalegas: and yet the videttes of the outposts were within shot of each other, and the narrow river of the Alberche alone divided the armies!!! The French must, in the night of the twenty-third, have acquired from our army the knowledge of our intended attack."—*Wellington Despatches*, Vol. V. From the style of the preceding observations, and the information they convey, their author is easily identified, and Cuesta's fidelity, in this instance, at all events, sufficiently ascertained.

acknowledges the preservation of Victor's corps is solely to be ascribed.

During the afternoon of the twenty-third, a Spanish officer reported, that the French guns were withdrawn from the heights beyond the Alberche, and that the enemy appeared making preparation for retreat. This intelligence induced Cuesta to lay aside his apathy for a moment, and, shaking off the lethargy that oppressed him, he entered his coach, drawn by six horses, and proceeded to the British camp, to express his readiness to attack the foe on the following morning; but scarcely had the preliminary measures of reconnoissance been commenced, when he threw himself down at the foot of a tree, and in a few moments was wrapped in sleep. He awoke, however, like Jove from his slumbers, prepared to hurl his thunderbolt with still greater force; but the golden opportunity was lost: Victor's army like "hope's feathered ambassadour," had flitted; the tents, the huts, the standing but deserted camp, as the picturesque pillars of some olden city, just told that inhabitants had once been there. Cuesta appeared surprised at the retreat of the enemy,—Sir Arthur felt no astonishment, but much chagrin. Victor probably anticipated the precise feelings of both, for he had been accurately informed of the intended movements of the allies, and regulated his accordingly. He withdrew during the night, on the Toledo road, to St. Ollalla, and moved thence towards Torrijos, and even farther towards Bargas, in order to form a junction with Sebastiani. Victor had learned also of Sir Robert Wilson's arrival at Escalona on the twenty-third; and the accuracy of this information enabled him to save his column, and alter his line of retreat.

Cuesta now presumptuously, and too late, followed the retreating army, on whose moral or physical strength a Spanish army could have little prospect of making any impression; while Sir Arthur, frustrated in his boldest, best design, by stupidity, perverseness, bigotry, and fraud, declined further co-operation: planting a division of infantry at Casalegas, under General Sherbrooke, to keep up the communication with Cuesta—another at Cardial, on the Alberche, to maintain free

intercourse with Sir R. Wilson at Escalona—he halted the main body of his army at Talavera. Here the situation of the British commander was painful in the extreme: he had crossed the frontier on his own responsibility, but at the earnest solicitation of the Spanish junta, and that mendacious assembly now totally neglected to furnish mules, mode of transport for the military stores, or necessities for his army. He reminded the junta “that he expected to derive that assistance in provisions and other means, which an army invariably receives from the country in which it is stationed, more particularly when it has been sent to the aid of that country; yet, for two days, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth of July, while the army was on forced marches, the men had nothing to eat, although he had engagements from the alcaldes of villages in the Vera de Plasencia, to furnish his troops with two hundred and fifty thousand rations before the twenty-fourth:—that the French were well fed, as the healthy state of the prisoners that the British took, fully proved; and the Spanish army wanted for nothing. While those who did nothing, and those who inflicted injury, were well provided, it was absurd to suppose that the British, on whom every thing depended, should be actually starving.” With this misfortune, Sir Arthur manfully charged himself: “No man,” said he, “can see his army perish by want, without feeling for them; and most severely must he feel, who knows that they have been brought into the country in which they suffer this want, by his own act, on his own responsibility, and without the orders of any superior authority.” Under these circumstances, Sir Arthur, as fearless of retreat as of advance, informed Cuesta, that he considered the engagement entered into with him to be faithfully accomplished, by the removal of Victor from the Alberche; and, if the Spanish general possessed energy enough to take advantage of the crisis, he would be enabled to obtain possession of the whole course of the Tagus, and establish a communication with La Manca and Venegas. Not to pass the Alberche until the promised supplies arrived, was the fixed resolution of General Wellesley; and, to hasten the tardy

measures of the *alcaldes*, and stimulate the proceedings of the *junta*, he talked of returning altogether into Portugal; his commission from his country, "to rid Portugal of the French," being executed in the most entire manner. Cuesta appeared to regret the inactivity and dishonour of his government, but in reality he hated and despised them, and, pursuing the enemy, in the fullest expectation of recovering Madrid unaided by the British, he left Sir Arthur to quarrel with the *junta*, with a cold assurance of respect for his honour and ability. Suddenly, however, the *junta* became more active, apologized for the supineness of the magistrates, and even dared to mention truth, fidelity, and honour, as terms with whose import they were familiar. Supplies at length arrived, but not before the villany and the falsehood of the *junta* had received a check, which threw them back upon their ill-used allies, for that protection which their own arms were unable to afford. It may be remembered, that, by a plan of operations sanctioned by the *junta*, Venegas was directed to move on Fuente Duena, and threaten Madrid, and, in fact, Sir Arthur's position on the Alberche was held principally with a view to the protection of that general: but scarcely had the Spanish officer marched on his destined route, than he received secret instructions from the *junta* not to advance on the capital, but, on the contrary, to remain inactive, with a view to save that corps for their own objects, while the British were to be exposed and sacrificed to the clouds of French soldiers that were now thickening around them: of this last fact, however, the British were then wholly unconscious. The false movements of Venegas were soon noticed by Sebastiani, who, placing two thousand troops in garrison at Toledo, deceived Venegas, whom he had been observing closely near Madrilejos, and effected a junction with Victor's corps. King Joseph also, who had, on the twenty-second, been informed that the combined armies of his enemies were concentrated at Talavera, setting out from Madrid with his entire force, three thousand excepted, who were left in the Retiro, moved towards Casalegas. On his route, he was informed that Sir Robert Wilson

was at Escalona, with a strong detachment; which much increased his fears, and induced Jourdan, who accompanied him, to repeat the orders given to Marshal Soult, that he would move on Plasencia by forced marches. Advancing still further, he was met by couriers, bearing intelligence of Victor's retrograde movements; which caused Joseph to alter his line of march, take the Guadarama for his guide, and follow its course, by which means he fell in with Victor on the twenty-fifth. The junction of Joseph's forces with those of the Duke of Belluno, placed a formidable army, upwards of fifty thousand strong, with ninety pieces of artillery, behind the river Guadarama. Joseph, relying both on the numbers and steadiness of the troops he had collected around him, and justly confiding in the genius of his general, resolved to act on the offensive, and accordingly, on the twenty-sixth, he advanced with that intention, from Burgos upon Torrijos.

Cuesta hastily, haughtily, heedlessly pursued the French, expecting to run over or along with them into the streets of Madrid, nor heard the warning voice of Wellesley, who foresaw the danger of such a pursuit, from the total inequality of discipline and moral force between the contending armies. The French at first baffled the Spaniards, who followed them to Cevolla, by the Toledo road, and then by the Madrid road to El Bravo: but from this place, Cuesta, although he had already begun to suspect that some latent danger existed, moved on Torrijos. The objects of Sir Arthur never being impeded by vanity, folly, or enthusiasm, he had, on the very first commencement of Cuesta's rash pursuit, taken measures for his ultimate preservation; and, although he was unable to save him from exposing himself to the storm, he had prepared an asylum for him to run into and take shelter, should he be able to reach it. The position of the British at Casalegas was central with regard to Talavera, Escalona, and St. Ollalla; so that Sir Arthur retained the power of easy communication, both with Cuesta and Sir Robert Wilson.

The operations of the combined armies had, hitherto, been conducted successfully, owing to the extreme caution of Sir



Arthur Wellesley, and the terror of his name, which will be found henceforth to operate as much for the advantage of the allies as the ruin of the enemy, yet under the most entire ignorance of their position, strength, or intentions. The commanding mind of Napoleon was not limited by the confines of those kingdoms he was overrunning, but extended the benefit of its prudent counsel to the heart of the Peninsula. Accurately informed of the events in Portugal and Spain, burning with a desire to revenge the disgrace of Roleia, Vimeira, and Oporto, which he conceived could only be done with honour to Soult by the destruction of Wellesley, the emperor wrote from his head-quarters, at Ratisbon, to the Duke of Dalmatia, then lingering near Zamora, informing him, that the English general, being perfect master of the art of war, would operate on the line of the Tagus, would beat each French corps in detail, and then creep into Lisbon. "In that case," said the emperor, "fall on his flank and rear, and crush him." From the perverseness and pride of Cuesta, the stupid cowardice of the central junta, and the inactivity of the alcaldes in forwarding supplies, had Napoleon himself being at the head of Soult's corps, the attempt would have been made; in which case possibly the result of Waterloo might have been anticipated, and the lamentable effusion of blood which followed have been averted. It is true, also, that fate might have decided the trial otherwise. Soult immediately communicated the purport of the emperor's despatch to king Joseph, adding, that he was ignorant of Wellesley's exact position, but had no doubt he was seeking to form a junction with Cuesta in order to act along the Tagus. Soult proposed to the king, to lay siege to Ciudad Rodrigo, and menace Lisbon, in order to bring back the British to the north of Portugal, and, confiding in the wisdom of his own suggestions, actually detached Mortier in the direction of the former place. Weakened by the separation of Mortier's detachment, Soult directed Marshal Ney to bring up the sixth corps to Zamora; but this veteran, bursting with indignation at Soult's being placed at the head of the three corps d'armées in the Peninsula,

declared that it would be highly imprudent to uncover Leon and Astorga, and peremptorily refused to obey Soult's orders. Disturbed by Ney's disobedience, he sent forward a division of cavalry and infantry to Salamanca, to explore the way; and being now, that was on the tenth of July, when the British were marching on Plasencia, convinced that Wellesley had no intention of acting north of the Douro, he followed his advanced guard to Salamanca.

Time had somewhat mitigated the anger of Ney, who was now persuaded to place himself under Soult's orders, and co-operate cordially in all his plans. Joseph, who had been as incredulous of the approach of the British, as they were ignorant of the concentration of three great corps under as many able generals, being pressed by Soult to accede to and support the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, replied, by the advice of Marshal Jourdan, that he approved most entirely of the able plans of the Duke of Dalmatia, but was not in a condition to comply with his demands: he begged that a reinforcement of ten thousand men might be sent to Bonnet and Kellerman, to enable them to hold the Asturias, and keep open a line of communication and retreat into France. Against the king's instructions Soult strongly remonstrated, assuring his intrusive majesty, "that the war could not be finished by detachments, and, from his personal experience of the fact, it was only by *large masses* they could hope for success against the British." This much-lauded opinion of the Duke of Dalmatia, was by no means novel, nor established by his single example. Admiral Nelson had long before given his decided judgment upon the comparative individual value of French and British sailors; and Sir A. Wellesley had actually delivered his written conclusion to the same effect, during the campaign of 1809. Adopting his plan of bringing masses of men into the field, "in order that there might be enough to be killed, enough to be taken prisoners, and enough to run away," he now drew in Mortier's division to Salamanca, and thus concentrated in that vicinity a force of fifty thousand men, with their cavalry-posts pointing to the passes of Banos and Perales. And such was the strength and

such the situation of the French army on the day that Wellesley passed the Tietar, in total ignorance of all the enemy's movements, although he had placed Beresford and Del Parque, to guard those very passes; and, as the peasantry were supposed to be favourable to the British, it might naturally have been expected that they would have given them intimation of their danger.

Notwithstanding the success of Soult in drawing together, so secretly, this formidable force, he still felt disinclined to attack the British lion until all the hunters were assembled, and he again called on Joseph to advance, saying, "We should assemble *all* our forces, both on the Tagus and on this side, fall upon him *all together*, and crush him." This appeal was not the dictation of courage or confidence, but, on the contrary, resembled a cry for help. The conduct of Joseph, on assurance of the real position of the allied army, has already been mentioned; as well as his junction with Victor, and assemblage of an army behind the Guadarama, of about the same strength as that under Soult and Ney. On the morning of the twenty-sixth, Cuesta, who was either madly or obstinately brave, and had followed the dangerous phantom too far, now perceived the precipice to which it had led him, and endeavoured to retire from its brink: but the demon had marked his prey too securely, and when the marshal turned to regain the asylum which his generous ally had provided for him, he felt the horrible clutch of a mortal foe. The French suddenly rushing across the Guadarama, fell furiously upon the Spaniards, drove them out of Torrijos, and followed closely in their rear to Alcabon. Here Zayas, a brave and able officer, drew up four thousand infantry, half that number of horse, and eight guns, and for some time kept Latour Maubourg with the French cavalry in check; but, on the appearance of the enemy's infantry, the Spaniards turned their backs, and ran towards St. Ollalla. Thither they were pursued with unabated fury, and a dreadful havoc had commenced, when the Duke of Albuquerque, who had solicited the honour of leading his division to the support of the vanguard, advanced

against Maubourg, arrested the sabres of his cavalry, and inflicting severe chastisement on Maubourg's division, saved Zayas from complete rout, and perhaps preserved the whole army from the deplorable influence of a panic. The fortunate and gallant interposition of Albuquerque enabled Cuesta to prepare for, and to execute a retreat towards the Alberche in better order. At the moment that Zayas was flying before the French cavalry, Cuesta's artillery and stores lay scattered in the streets of St. Ollalla, and the ways were actually blocked up with carts of bread; the commissaries fled, and the men were seen everywhere throwing off their accoutrements, and preparing to abandon the whole of the military stores to the enemy, if, by so doing, they might only preserve their lives. This reckless rabble thus saved from death, and put once more into possession of their property, held on their irregular march for twenty miles, while Albuquerque had received the enemy with swords so sharply pointed, that they deemed it imprudent to renew the attack upon him, until their numbers were strengthened, and the courage of their defeated troops recovered. His object being attained, by the safe retreat of the main body, Albuquerque drew off his cavalry, with whom the French exhibited no disposition to deal again. The distance to the British head-quarters was sufficiently great to allow breathing-time to Maubourg, and admit also of his overtaking the rear of the Spaniards, but he was a second time, and in a similar manner, encountered by a body of British cavalry, under General Sherbrooke, who sallied from his post at Cazalegas, and placing himself between the hunters and their prey, saved the victims from immolation.

Sir Arthur had always viewed the conduct of Cuesta as presumptuous and rash, and looked for his return every hour after his departure; that return, however, would never have been accomplished, but for the gallantry of Albuquerque, to whom the general entrusted the smallest authority with the utmost jealousy, and the check given to the pursuers by General Sherbrooke, who had been placed in that position by Sir Arthur Wellesley, to obviate those difficulties which he had foreseen.

The Spaniards now bivouacked on the left bank of the Alberche, and as the enemy were approaching, the cord of communication between the allies was drawn still tighter by the strong hand that held it, for it was evident the enemy were in such force, that a battle could not be delayed much longer. Sir Arthur, therefore, crossing the river, entered Cuesta's hut, and with much difficulty persuaded him to bring his army over the river, take up a position on the right of the British, and co-operate more sincerely and sensibly in future with his allies. While the Spaniard was yielding to the solicitations of Sir Arthur, the French cavalry caught his eye, as they steadily advanced, and took up the position which Sherbrooke as calmly abandoned, being recalled to the headquarters of the British. Cuesta looked around over the barren plain included between the Alberche, the Tagus, and the hills of Salinas, and feeling that his position was too weak to be held against so powerful an enemy, consented to remove his camp, withdraw from his injudicious bivouac, and, while it was yet practicable, take up his allotted ground near Talavera, where Sir Arthur had resolved upon again establishing the superiority of his military genius to that of Napoleon's most fortunate generals. The zeal with which General Wellesley discharged even the collateral branches of his duty, or what he felt to be such, is very strongly attested by an anecdote related of his interview with Cuesta on this occasion; it is said, that so warmly did the British hero plead the cause of his own army, of Cuesta's, of the Peninsula, in order to bring the veteran to a sense of his duty, that when he was leaving the hut, Cuesta turned to his staff, and said, "Well, I have consented, but I first made the Englishman go down on his knees."



## CHAP. III.

SKIRMISH AT CASA DE SALINAS—SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY NARROWLY ESCAPES BEING MADE PRISONER—FANIC IN CUESTA'S ARMY—DESPERATE ATTACK UPON THE SIERRA DE MONTALBAN—BATTLE OF TALAVERA—THE BRITISH ARMY IN IMMINENT DANGER, AND THE CONTEST DOUBTFUL—THE BATTLE RESTORED BY SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY'S FORESIGHT AND DECISION—THE FRENCH SIGNALLY DEFEATED, AND OBLIGED TO RE-CROSS THE ALBERCHE—EXTRAORDINARY MARCH OF THE REINFORCEMENT UNDER GENERAL CRAUFURD, AND ITS ARRIVAL AT THE CAMP OF THE ALLIES—MISCONDUCT OF THE SPANIARDS, AND CRUEL PUNISHMENT INFLICTED ON THEM BY CUESTA—DESCENT OF SOULT BY THE PASS OF BANOS INTO THE VALLEY OF THE TAGUS—SIR A. WELLESLEY MARCHES AGAINST THE ENEMY, WHO HAD THEN THREE CORPS D'ARMEE CONCENTRATED AT PLASENCIA—CUESTA INHUMANLY ABANDONS THE BRITISH HOSPITAL AT TALAVERA TO THE ENEMY, AND RETIRES UPON OROPESA—AFFAIR AT ARZOBISPO—INGRATITUDE OF CUESTA TO THE ALLIED ARMY—SIR ARTHUR REFUSES TO CONTINUE IN SPAIN—RETIRES ACROSS THE TAGUS, AND TAKES UP A POSITION WITHIN THE PORTUGUESE FRONTIER—THE BRITISH ARMY VISITED BY SICKNESS.—1809.

By virtue of his genius Sir Arthur Wellesley assumed the command of the allied armies, on the twenty-seventh of July, 1809, and proceeded to place his forces in an attitude of defence, having perceived that the enemy were resolved and eager to attack him. The position which he considered most desirable was in the immediate neighbourhood of Talavera de la Reyna ; and Cuesta having consented to occupy the ground allotted to him, Sherbrooke was directed to return with his corps to its station in the line, while Mackenzie, with a division of infantry, and a brigade of cavalry, remained as an advanced post in the wood, on the right of the Alberche, which covered Sir Arthur's left flank. The position taken up by the troops on this occasion extended rather more than two miles ; the ground upon the left, where the British army was stationed, was open, and commanded by a height forming the first range of the Sierra de Montalban, on which was placed, *en echelon*, a division of infantry under the orders of Major-General Hill. Beyond the left of the British line, a valley, watered by the Portina rivulet, a tributary to the Tagus at Talavera, separated the eminence which Hill occupied from

the Gata mountains, a range apparently too distant to have any influence on the expected action, and thence passed along the whole front of the allied army ; besides which, it was commanded by the height just mentioned as in the occupation of the extreme left of the allies. Here the British were placed in front, exposed to the fire of an enraged and vindictive enemy ; but, as the commander-in-chief was aware that his countrymen desired the post of honour, he knew they would not shrink from that of danger. That knowledge of character displayed in posting his British troops was again exhibited, in the cautious disposition of his Spanish allies ; and never was a judgment more prophetic than that which Sir Arthur had formed, nor a prophecy more entirely fulfilled than his, by the misconduct and timidity of his allies. The right of the line, consisting of Spanish troops, was placed in front of the town of Talavera, extending down to the river Tagus on which their right flank reposed ; while their left rested on a mound occupied by a large field-redoubt, and having a brigade of British light cavalry posted behind. Their front was covered by ditches, felled trees, mud walls, embankments, various other obstructions, and by a spacious convent ; while their rear and left flank were protected by a thick wood, in which stood a large mansion-house. The high road leading from the bridge over the Alberche, was commanded by a heavy battery in front of a church, which was occupied by a body of Spanish infantry. All the avenues to the town were defended in a similar manner ; the town was occupied ; and the remainder of the Spanish infantry formed in two lines, behind the banks on the road which led, from the town and the right of the entire line of the allies, to the left of the British. Had the British general taken the Spaniards under his protection, with the promise of fighting for them rather than with them, he could not more faithfully have redeemed his pledge ; for now the position of the Spaniards was almost impregnable, their numbers, their disorder, their persons, concealed from view of the enemy ; they could only be assailed on the left by cutting down the British, and from the right by forcing a passage through the fortified streets of Talavera. In the

event of defeat, no alternative was left to his own soldiers but captivity or death, while for the Spaniard a retreat was open through the town of Arzobispo, or through the wood on Oropesa. "In this position," says Colonel Napier, "they could not be seriously attacked, nor their disposition be even seen: and thus one half of the line necessary to be occupied by the allies was rendered nearly impregnable, and yet held by the worst troops." Sir A. Wellesley only reposed confidence in the Spaniards apparently, or as far as the uncompromising pride of Cuesta and the success of the expedition compelled him to do; and that he both prophesied truly, and regretted the hard necessity, appears from an observation in his letter of the eighth of August to the secretary of war, it is: "I hope my public despatch will justify me from all blame in the eyes of his majesty's ministers, *excepting that of having trusted the Spanish general in any thing.*

Brigadier-General Alexander Campbell was posted on the British right, touching the left of the allies, and at the spot on which Sir Arthur had commenced to form a redoubt; the rear of Campbell's infantry was supported by Cotton's brigade of dragoons and some Spanish cavalry. Sherbrooke's division stood on Campbell's left, behind whom Mackenzie, on his coming up, was directed to form a second line; the German legion was placed to the left still; Donkin's division was next in succession; and the extreme left, the key of the British position, was entrusted to the strong hand and stronger heart of General Hill. Such was the plan, and such the position subsequently taken up in the eventful battle of the twenty-eighth, when the British brought into the field twenty thousand troops; Cuesta was at the head of thirty-five thousand men, forming a rabble rather than a regular corps; and the combined army possessed here one hundred pieces of ordnance. To oppose this force, the braver part of which were raw and inexperienced levies, and the more numerous totally undisciplined, the enemy had fifty thousand veterans well armed, equipped, and provided, led by king Joseph in person, whose judgment was assisted by that of Marshals Victor, Jourdan, and Sebastiani.

While the main body of the allied army were taking up their allotted positions, Major-General Mackenzie and Colonel Rufane Donkin's brigades of infantry remained in advance, in the woods at Casa Salinas, and supported by a strong body of cavalry, under Anson and Payne, drawn out upon the plain between the wood and Talavera. It was about two o'clock on the afternoon of the twenty-seventh, when Mackenzie's division, owing to their having kept no patrols in front, were surprised by the advance of two columns of the enemy's forces headed by Lapisse and Ruffin, which had forded the Alberche, pushed gallantly into the wood, and, by the suddenness of the assault, threw the British brigades, which consisted of young battalions who had then seen fire for the first time, into such confusion, that one part actually fired upon the other; and the whole were dislodged from their cover in the wood, and driven into the plain. At this moment every officer was thrown upon his personal courage, presence of mind, and just sense of military discipline, to illustrate the duties of a soldier in the moment of peril; and never were the expectations of their country more fully responded to. Although the enemy had actually penetrated between Mackenzie's two brigades, and a fatal crisis was impending, the officers kept the men in their new position until Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had witnessed the affray from the summit of the Casa, where he had been making observations, rode up to them, and by his presence alone restored the fight. Instantly the stubborn old forty-fifth and the fifth battalion of the sixtieth, presented a beautiful, compact, and perfect array; and coming to the support of the disconcerted companies, completely checked the enemy's progress, and covered their companions' steady retreat. This recovery was effected principally by the prudence of Sir Arthur Wellesley, although in his despatch of that date he has given all the honour to the brave Mackenzie, with whose conduct "he had particular reason to be satisfied," and never once mentions the fact of his having personally directed those movements by which the division was brought off. The omission is the more remarkable in this particular instance,

because Sir Arthur was not only present, but narrowly escaped being made prisoner by the enemy. Having ascended to the summit of the Casa, he perceived the approach of the French, saw them fall impetuously on his men, and noticed that the latter faltered; this was sufficient; instantly descending, he had only time to mount his horse when the battle was pushed to the Casa, which fell into the hands of the enemy the next instant after he had escaped from it. "Had he been taken at that moment, or had Marlborough, a century before, been recognized and detained when he fell into the hands of a French partisan on the Meuse, how differently would the latter days of Napoleon and of Louis the Fourteenth have closed! and how different at this hour have been the condition of England, of Europe, of the world!" The reserved division now fell back, crossed the plain, passed the Portina streamlet, and took up their ground—Maekenzie in the second line, in the rear of the guards, and Donkin to the left of the German legion on the hill, which he found unoccupied, and which completed the assigned position of the allies.

Animated by this success, which was so far signal, the British having lost in the affray at Salinas upwards of four hundred men, Victor advanced across the Alberche, passed through the plain, took possession of an isolated hill directly in front of Donkin, and opened a heavy cannonade on his brigade, then on the British extreme left, and at the same time made an attempt with his cavalry, supported by voltigeurs, to discover the true position of the Spanish infantry, which the plan of Sir Arthur Wellesley had concealed from him. Scarcely had the French horsemen shown themselves, and a few pistol-shots had just been discharged, to rouse, as they imagined, the lion that was slumbering or crouching in his lair, when ten thousand Spaniards, making one discharge of small arms, broke through the rear ranks, threw away their arms, and some, actually mounting the artillery-horses, fled away towards Oropesa. Amongst the earliest fugitives was General O'Donoju, and suspicion even tampers with Cuesta's fame. The panic, however, although originating







GENERAL SIR RUFANE SHAWE DONKIN, K.C.B. & G.C.H.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE ORDNANCE

*R. Donkin*

in no explicable cause, was spreading far and wide, when Sir Arthur Wellesley advanced at the head of a small detachment from Campbell's division, flanked the main road, encouraged those Spaniards who stood their ground, to return the enemy's fire, and drove off the enemy with considerable loss. Cuesta, recovering from the contagion of a panic, directed the most active of his cavalry to pursue, head, and turn the fugitives, in which they were tolerably successful, bringing back several thousands to their position during the night; but, on the day of the battle of Talavera, the Spanish force, which impeded the operations of the British army, was six thousand less in number than it had been when first drawn up. In this scene of unintelligible, unpardonable cowardice, Colonel Napier says, "some English officers also disgraced their uniforms."

As night begun to throw her deepening shades over those green hills that were soon to be stained with the blood of thousands, the impetuous enemy pushed along the valley of the Portina in front of the British line, leaving the affrighted Spaniards to the recovery of their courage, Victor having directed Ruffin and Villatte to attack the heights on the left of the British position, and ordered Lapisse to make a diversion in favour of that movement, by a feigned assault upon the German legion. Donkin, who then occupied this important post, received the vigorous charge with a cool and steady front, not yielding one foot of ground; but his left was turned by the still increasing numbers who rushed up the hill, and passed on without further resistance to the summit, which was in his rear. This eminence was the position originally destined to be occupied by General Hill, but, by some accident, he had not yet taken up his ground, so that Donkin was exposed to the attack of the enemy in a post which was untenable, unless the hill behind were also occupied by the British. The courage of Donkin compensated, for a brief space, for his want of strength, but now Hill was proceeding to his position, the value of which all parties were aware of, and was engaged in giving orders to the colonel of the forty-eighth regiment to advance, when a ball from the summit passed close by him.

Imagining that it must have proceeded from some British stragglers, idly or wrongly employed, accompanied by Brigade-Major Fordyce, he rode briskly up to inquire into the cause, and was soon astonished at finding himself surrounded by the enemy. Fordyce was instantly put to death, and a grenadier, who had inflicted a wound upon General Hill's charger, had eagerly seized his bridle, when the general, striking his spurs into the sides of his bleeding horse, caused him to plunge forward, with such violence, that he broke from the grasp of the Frenchman, and, galloping down the steep, gained in an instant the ranks of the twenty-ninth. Hill did not fail to make a quick and profitable use of the liberty he had almost miraculously recovered, by heading the advancing column, and returning to the support of Donkin with such vigour and determination, that the sounds of the death-dealing pieces of the enemy were in a moment succeeded by the loud shouts of exultation raised by Hill's division, who had completely dislodged the enemy, and driven them down into the ravine in front of their line. The beaten foe-men fell back upon Ruffin's columns, that were rapidly coming up to their relief, and which would have arrived earlier, but from the difficulty of finding their way through the ravine; and now the whole united force of the French advanced, opening a destructive fire upon the British left, then rushing rapidly up the hill, renewed the struggle for the old point of contest. The firing ceased, the clash of naked steel alone was heard in the still silence of the night; then burst forth again those glorious cheers, which British soldiers raise so high and heartily in the moment of victory, and sometimes even at the approach of death, but which now too surely told the enemy of his defeat. The echoes of the loud hurrah rang through the valley, tossed from hill to hill until they reached the Spanish camp, harbingers of hope to many timid hearts in that great array, while the sounds of the enemy's musketry in solemn murmurs died away.

This bloody skirmish cost the British about four hundred men, and it is believed that the loss of the French, during the twenty-seventh, could not have fallen much short of one thou-

sand. Lapisse had added little to the amount of slain, having discontinued his feint against the German legion, as soon as he perceived the total failure of the attack on the British left, where, falling back across the Portina, the French seemed willing to rest from their work of death, although it was an occupation with which that army had long been familiar, while the allies continued to keep possession of the ground which their general had chosen for them—but under arms, and ready for the contest. The disappointments of the preceding day by no means diminished the hopes of Victor, or checked his desire to get possession of Hill's position; and, having obtained permission, from king Joseph to make a third attempt on that point at daybreak on the following morning, he prepared a plan of attack under the conduct of Ruffin, Lapisse, and Latour Maubourg. This last rash effort of Victor was strenuously opposed by Marshal Jourdan, who was of opinion, that the Spaniards were too securely posted to be affected by any attack or movement of the French: that the right of the British was protected by the redoubt between them and the Spanish, by the rugged ground in the valley that separated the armies, and by their strength of numbers; and, that the French having already failed to make an impression, although many lives had been lost in the attempt, on the left which was the weakest part of the allies' line, he considered it would be more prudent to wait for Soult's arrival, partial enterprises leading to no important results.

During the night of the twenty-seventh, while Victor was plotting the deaths of thousands, friends and enemies, both armies bivouacked upon the field, the cavalry amongst their saddled steeds, with bridle-rein in hand, the infantry around their numerous watch-fires. The return of light on the morning of the twenty-eighth, was announced by the discharge of a whole pare of French artillery from the opposite heights, which swept the British ranks towards the centre and the right, while three regiments of infantry in columns of battalions, ascending in two divisions on either side of the hill, and reaching the summit, closed firmly with Hill's brigade. The struggle was now maintained with an obstinacy, courage,



and vehemence never exceeded: the heavy guns of the French committed havoc in the British centre, while the light ordnance of the allies were unable to make an equivalent reply; under cover of the fire, the infantry reached the top of the hill, but there its fury could no longer be directed; which left the British to the free exercise of personal bravery, and of this high quality they soon gave Victor sufficient proof. The difficult and broken ground, on the front of the hill, separated the compact masses of French soldiers as they ascended, and whenever that occurred, a little band of British heroes advanced, struggled with the party detached, nor ceased till either was completely overthrown. So close did the combat at length become, that the bayonet's sharp point remained sole arbiter of the day. This weapon in the hands of a Briton uniformly excites a panic amongst his enemies, and scarcely had the order been given to charge with bayonets, than the French grenadiers began to give way; retiring steadily at first, they still kept the issue doubtful, but finding the British pushing too hard, they actually flung themselves over the brow into the ravine below, where many of them miserably perished. In the defence of this point, the brigades of Tilson and R. Stewart signalized themselves particularly: frequently their men stood waiting, firm as the mountain rock, until the enemy came within a few paces of them, when they advanced in close phalanx, and threw them down the hill: and this desperate effort was repeated until the French declined the contest. The loss of the British was again considerable, that of the enemy frightful, and had the commander-in-chief extended his left across the ravine, or had a body of cavalry been posted on the rivulet on Hill's left, few of Ruffin's party, that attacked on the morning of the twenty-eighth, would have returned to their line. Besides Fordyce, who was killed at General Hill's side in this last affair, Brigade-Major Gardner fell, and Hill himself was slightly wounded. In consequence of the repeated attempts upon the height on which the British left reposed, Sir Arthur determined upon rectifying his error, in leaving that wing exposed, by placing in the valley two brigades of British cavalry, supported

on the rear by the Duke of Albuquerque with a division of Spanish horse. This movement was answered by a corresponding one on the part of the enemy, who placed a body of light infantry on the mountain above the British cavalry; to which General Wellesley again opposed a division of Spanish infantry, under Camp-Marshal Bassecourt.

The darkness of the preceding night had interrupted the conflict for a few short hours, and given to the half-famished British army, a brief and broken rest: the heat of the mid-day sun now suspended the battle, allowing three hours only for the performance of various sad but necessary duties. The dead were now removed, the ammunition waggons replenished, the wounded carried into hospital, and the lines re-formed. King Joseph took advantage of the awful pause, to hold a council of war, and demand the advice of his Generals Jourdan and Victor: the former gave it as his opinion, that as Wellesley had strengthened his left, it was now too late to think of turning that wing; his front had always been impregnable, and no alternative remained but to await the approach of Soult and the result of his operations. Victor, on the contrary, declared that the French would be unworthy of the military renown they enjoyed, if the force under king Joseph should prove unable to drive General Hill from his position. Joseph was incapable of deciding upon the merits of either opinion, and was influenced only by the apprehension of incurring Napoleon's indignation: but before his indecision could have worked more ruin, intelligence arrived that Soult could not possibly reach Plasencia before the fifth of August, while Venegas was actually threatening Madrid. The capital was the bauble which deluded his imagination, and the recollection of its pageantry overpowered his weak mind: he decided therefore upon attacking the allies, of whose defeat Victor seemed certain, and then turning back to succour his chief city.

Sir Arthur Wellesley held his council of war alone, on the highest point of that memorable hill, for the possession of which so many brave lives had been sacrificed. Here, as he sat upon the grass, rolling his keen glance along the columns of

the enemy, and playing over in forethought the hazardous game of war, Colonel Donkin rode up at full speed to inform him, "that it was the Duke of Albuquerque's conviction Cuesta was betraying the British." This startling intelligence did not produce any alteration in the direction of Sir Arthur's gaze; he never withdrew it from the object of his contemplation, and, without the slightest change in the expression of his countenance, replied, "Very well, you may return to your brigade." "Donkin," says Colonel Napier, "returned, filled with admiration of the imperturbable resolution and quick penetration of the man: and indeed Sir Arthur's conduct was, throughout that day, such as became a general upon whose intrepidity and vigilance the fate of fifty thousand men depended."

While the intrusive king and his veteran officers were assembled in conclave, and disputing acrimoniously upon the most effectual and unerring mode of "crushing Wellesley"—while the single-minded hero sat alone upon the summit of the blood-stained hill, pondering upon the best means of frustrating the great enemies of his country, of Europe, of mankind—the wearied soldiers of both armies straggled down in numbers to the banks of the Portina rivulet, which went its murmuring course along the bottom of the ravine that separated the contending armies, and there indulging in the refreshment of laving both hands and face, and slaking their thirst within a few feet of each other, these brave foemen held an unconscious, unpremeditated, honourable truce; and those hands which had but one hour before been raised in mortal strife, were now extended with noble generosity, forgiveness of personal injuries, and admiration of valour and constancy of purpose, even in an enemy. These exchanges of national feeling, these mutual acknowledgments of the highest virtue, passed in a still and solemn hour. They were accompanied by a mysterious and inexplicable degree of enjoyment, which the survivors must have remembered long after the occasion which gave it birth had died away; and neither party exhibited a desire to resume prematurely the sanguinary duty from which they paused; but, allegiance or loyalty was not shaken for a

second, the roll of the drum, the call of the trumpet, the roar of the signal-guns, recalled them from their trance, their delusion, the mist of leisure, almost of happiness, that enveloped them ; and, without a farewell word, though many were doomed to meet no more on earth, hastening up the front of the opposing hills with a rapidity almost inconceivable, the crowd that just now filled the banks of the rivulet all along the glen, was marshalled under the respective banners of their nations, prepared to deal death to those, from whom, a few moments before, they had parted in that apparent spirit which humanity in vain labours to realize.

A little before two o'clock, Victor's myrmidons being reassembled under the wings of the imperial eagles, the signal to commence the havoc was given, and Sebastiani with the fourth corps was distinctly seen by General Wellesley, descending the opposite hill at a rapid pace, and, with the usual impetuosity of French soldiers, dashing across the rugged ravine that divided the armies, and, falling upon Campbell's division with the most tremendous impulse ; and accompanying it with loud yells indicative of maddened courage, they fairly grappled with an English enemy, to whom they had been always taught to believe themselves superior. The fatal error, however, was soon disclosed : the French attacked in column, an arrangement, the viciousness of which Sir Arthur Wellesley had often clearly shown to the marshals of Napoleon ; while the British received them in line,\* with strict orders to reserve their fire until the heads of the enemy's column almost touched

\* "This system of Lord Wellington was opposed to foreign theories, and particularly to French practice, who always attacked in column, and deployed on the crest of the position, if they ever arrived at it, where the men were generally blown, and, from being under fire, necessarily performed this nice operation under disadvantageous circumstances. The French attacks at Vimeira, Talavera, Busaco, and Sorauren, from acting on this principle, were defeated. The British, in their attacks at Salamanca, Vittoria, the Nive, Orthez, and Toulouse, having previously deployed into line, carried the enemy's positions. At Waterloo, also, the whole of the French attacks were in column, and they were signally defeated : the advance of the British infantry was in line, and the result we all know."— *Observations on the General Orders, &c.*

their front rank; this direction being strictly obeyed, the instant the French had gained the level of the British line, a close volley was poured into their dense mass, with a degree of precision that astonished even the veteran legions of Gaul, and, on attempting to deploy into line, and thereby evade partially the galling and fatal effects of a repetition, they became exposed to a furious volley of musketry from Mackenzie's brigade, that threw them into the utmost consternation. Nothing could exceed the sudden and ruinous consequences of this discharge upon the flanks of the French columns; their accustomed tactics, in which they had been trained to confide, as emanating from the greatest warrior of the age, proved unsuited to those of the British army; the courage of their enemies was at least equal to their own, and their national spirit was more rationally founded, therefore less liable to effervesce and evaporate. Campbell seized on the opportunity created by Mackenzie's prompt attack upon the enemy's flank, and, breaking in upon the wavering and shattered military structure, made frightful havoc amongst its ranks. Encouraged by this brilliant example of British intrepidity, two regiments of Spanish infantry, and one of cavalry, now became eager for the fight, and, impatient of restraint, they boldly advanced against the exposed flank of the enemy, from their position on the right, and completed in the most signal manner, the overthrow which Sherbrooke and Mackenzie had so well begun, by driving the disorganized masses of men before them down into the valley, amidst a tempest of bullets from the whole right wing of the British army. Reaching the bottom of the hill, they attempted to rally, and finding that Mackenzie did not pursue, actually made a demonstration of renewing the attack; but their hopes were in an instant given to the winds, by the incessant play of artillery from the redoubt, and the close, continued, and steady volleys of musketry from the British lines. The whole French column, like the wounded gladiator reeling from the stupor of a mortal blow, staggered, fell, and confessed the victory.

So far the British were conspicuously victorious; and, were



national military prowess to be decided by the attack and resistance in this instance, the British infantry evinced a decided superiority: but the destruction of this day was not confined to the centre of the line: the left was assailed at the same time by Villatte's division, and Ruffin was directed to renew the attack upon Montalban, the hill of blood, for which the French had fought with so much desperation, but in vain, for nearly four and twenty hours: against these advancing columns, the twenty-third light dragoons and the first German hussars were ordered to make a charge, and starting at a canter, then increasing their speed with their growing impetuosity to meet the foe, they rode headlong forward with such an accelerated velocity, that the greater part of the twenty-third fell over into a chasm, which, from the rate at which they were advancing, had not been perceived, and the most frightful confusion consequently followed. Arentschild, an experienced officer, who commanded the hussars, foresaw the danger, reined his steed, and enabled his men to recover the government of their horses, calling out, in his imperfect English, "I will not kill my young mens;" but Colonel Seymour riding wildly forward, was followed, as such a noble example generally is, by his devoted regiment, and in the *melée* that occurred, was severely wounded. As the survivors of this deplorable accident arose from the dell, singly or in small groupes, Major Ponsonby "a hardy soldier," called to the untamed spirits not to despair, and, collecting the fragments of that once fine regiment, galloped through the very centre of Villatte's squares amidst a shower of bullets, and fell upon Strolz's brigade of French chasseurs with such a shock as to rend that mass in two, and penetrate completely to the opposite side. Here, however, the splendid career of this brave Briton, with the remnant of his regiment, was terminated: his numbers thinned, their horses blown, and half terrified by the accident at the ravine, a body of Polish lancers and Westphalian light-horse, that now came to Villatte's relief, rendered the conflict so unequal, that the shade of the brave twenty-third at length deigned to withdraw, and to conceal its emaciated form behind the Spanish

division of Bassecourt, leaving in the hands of the enemy, and on the field of death, two hundred and seven of their number. The attack on Hill, who, like the fabled figure of security, held the key of the British position, altogether failed; Campbell had been victorious in the other wing, but the centre of the line was submitted to the severest trial, and there in fact the battle of Talavera was fought. Lapisse's column crossed the ravine, and, under cover of a battery of heavy guns, to which the British could make but a faint reply, advanced with the loud shrill shouts of conquerors, up to the very beards of Sherbrooke's ranks, in which frightful gaps were broken by the murderous playing of the battery, which was not more than half cannon-shot distant. Concealed by the clouds of smoke that enwrapped his ranks, Sherbrooke withheld his fire until he saw distinctly the object of his aim, so that when the signal was given, every musket told, and the debt due to Lapisse's artillery partly paid: then uttering a loud hurrah, the guards, in the excitement of the moment, added to the desire of avenging the deaths of their comrades that had fallen around them from the distant fire, and flushed with their first success, charged instantly with the bayonet, turned their assailants into flight, pursued them hotly but inconsiderately down the hill, across the vale, and up the opposite bank. But Victor was not inattentive to the operations of his line in any part of its length, and, bringing up his reserve, he forced Lapisse's division to re-form, turn, and attack the guards in front, while the cannonade, at a still shorter distance, assailed one flank, and a body of dragoons was just about to fall upon the other. The guards now in turn gave way, and, falling back in great disorder upon their position, spread the contagion of derangement so far into the ranks of the German legion, that the British centre appeared to be irrecoverably broken, and victory seemed uncertain on which side she would fling the laurel wreath. There are eventful moments in the life of every great man, but especially of a general in the field of battle; it is in a moment that quick death comes, or certain victory; and such critical periods, in the brief career of each distinguished personage, in the histories of all

nations, are those which like chemical tests have ascertained real character, and established either its purity or baseness. Sir Arthur Wellesley had foreseen the consequences of the inconsiderate advance of the guards, and, duly honouring the gallantry of his men, instantly provided a remedy for the disease, and encouragement for bravery. While the moving masses in the glen below were agitated like the waters of a turbulent sea, where wind and tide oppose, and the broken ranks of his brave guards were fighting almost singly for life and honour, the confusion and uproar were suddenly suspended by the steady march of the forty-eighth regiment, led on by Colonel Donellan, which advanced into the very thickest part of the disorganized mass. Unable to resist the waves of men that came rolling down the hill and up the vale, Donellan ordered his veterans to wheel back by companies, and allow the fugitives to flow uninterruptedly along, then, when all had passed, with the accuracy of mechanism, resuming a beautiful line, displaying proudly a perfect specimen of military discipline, he fell in this compact array upon the enemy's flank, and plied them with such a destructive fire, that they were compelled to desist from pursuit, and endeavour to recover their own position. The interposition of the forty-eighth gave the guards time and opportunity to rally, in which they were quickly imitated by the German legion; and at the same moment, Cotton with his light cavalry being brought up from the centre, at a trot, to attack the other flank, the error of the guards was repaired, the centre of the allies strengthened, the battle restored, and ultimately the victory of Talavera won. When Victor saw the forty-eighth advancing, he understood full well that the day was lost, for to this masterly, prompt, and decisive movement, together with the advance of the light dragoons under Cotton, was Sir Arthur indebted for his success. From this period the efforts of the enemy slackened, the roaring of their artillery faded away, their shouts of victory subsided, the rolling of their drums was no longer heard, and under the clouds of smoke that still hung over the field, their columns drew off, in good order, across the plain in the rear of their

position, and, passing the Alberche, took up a defensive attitude on the heights of Salinas, on the evening of the twenty-ninth. The horrors of the day were still further aggravated by an event which took place immediately after the retirement of the enemy: while yet the ground was strewn with dead and dying, that short dry grass and herbage that grew on it accidentally caught fire, and the sheet of flame spreading all across the vale from one position to the opposite, grievously increased the afflictions of the wounded who had not been removed into the hospital.

According to the return, which may yet be seen in the office of the minister of war at Paris, the French had 56,122 effective men engaged in the battle of Talavera, with eighty heavy guns: the British force opposed to them, and by which the whole attack was sustained, only amounted to 20,997; and although they brought one hundred pieces of artillery into the field, seventy of which belonged to Cuesta, most of them were too light to be able to make an equivalent reply to the French cannon. Sir Arthur Wellesley had placed the Spaniards in such a position that the enemy dared not, or rather could not, attack them; and these irregular soldiers disgraced themselves by their timidity, endangered the steadiness of the British by their scandalous example, and took full advantage of their impregnable position, by remaining entrenched there, with upwards of thirty-nine thousand men, during one of the most sanguinary actions that was ever fought. In a contest so violent, so close, and where the enemy engaged with the most inveterate fury, stimulated by the recent disgraces which British courage and discipline had inflicted on them, the loss must naturally have been great on both sides, particularly on that of the British, who not amounting to half the number of their enemies, sustained not only the violence of the first tremendous shock, but the weight of their continued pressure, until Victory declared for their side, being rather injured than aided by their vapouring allies. The Duke of Albuquerque lent the assistance of his talents and gallantry to the cause of Spain, and bravely took up a position of danger, which the British

general assigned him, nor should the steadiness of Bassecourt be passed silently over. The bold front he showed, the steady line he maintained, kept the enemy in check, and enabled Ponsonby's cavalry to find a safe retreat, after the unfortunate affair of the precipitation of the cavalry into the chasm on the left of the line. The British numbered amongst the killed on the field of battle, on the memorable day of Talavera, Generals Mackenzie and Langworth, thirty-eight officers, twenty-eight sergeants, seven hundred and eighty-nine rank and file, and two hundred and eleven horses\*—three generals, Hill, Alexander Campbell, and Henry Campbell, one hundred and ninety-three officers, one hundred and sixty-five serjeants, three thousand five hundred and fifty-three rank and file, and seventy one horses, wounded : nine officers, fifteen serjeants, and six hundred and twenty-nine rank and file, besides one hundred and fifty-nine horses were missing—and

\* Major-General Donald Mackenzie, who fell, covered with glory, on the field of Talavera, was the representative of an ancient highland family, whose estates are situated at Suddie, Ross-shire, in a district usually called the Black Isle. He commenced his military career, in the marines, under the auspices and immediate care of his uncle, General Mackenzie, of that corps, and, for some time previous to the year 1794, performed the duty of adjutant to the Chatham division. Upon the death of his uncle, and succession to the family estates, he relinquished the marine service, and in the spring of 1794, became major in the second battalion of the seventy-eighth foot, which had been raised by Lord Seeporth. Soon after his joining, both battalions being consolidated, Mackenzie and his associates were attached to the first battalion, then at the Cape of Good Hope, whence they proceeded to India, and there served with distinction under the command of Lieutenant-General Mackenzie Fraser. Returning to England in 1801, he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and first placed on the northern staff as a brigadier, subsequently appointed governor of Alderney, replaced again on the northern staff as brigadier-general, and continued in that rank and employment until 1808, when he was removed, at his own solicitation, to the command of a brigade in Portugal. General Mackenzie sat in parliament for Sutherland boroughs, and also for the county. As a soldier he was cool, steady, yet zealous and bold, and most of his actions in the Peninsula are to be styled brilliant rather than merely brave. He was much beloved by his regiment, the seventy-eighth, and the sincerity of his friendship, and benignity of his character, caused his fall to be very widely lamented. Dying without issue, the Suddie estates, which were considerable, devolved to a sister, who had been some years before married to Captain Pott's of the forty-second regiment.



the precise number put *hors de combat*, during the two days' fighting, according to the official return at the war-office, amounts to 4982. Sir Arthur Wellesley uniformly denied that he possessed that inestimable, but uncontrollable quality in a hero, fortune; perhaps the victory of Talavera supports his fanciful theory more immediately than any other of his hardly-fought battles. Never was a position more judiciously taken up, more care, thought, caution, or firmness, was never displayed by the most celebrated soldiers of other days; he totally distrusted the Spaniards, therefore placed them where they need not fight, yet they must have made a show of strength sufficient to alarm the enemy: they might actually have ran away, which they several times attempted, but even this would have happened without exposing their cowardice to the enemy, or infecting the British army. Here nothing was left to chance, yet the Spaniards, without being able to assign subsequently any pretext, became panic-struck. Sir Arthur made one mistake, it is imagined, by not occupying the high ground on his left early on the morning of the twenty-eighth, more strongly, and by leaving the passage of the valley below it unguarded—of this error, if, under the circumstances of his limited numbers, it was an error—his enemies had powerful means, ample opportunity, and took every advantage of both, to turn the left wing, and seize the little mountain, and it was by hard fighting alone that they were driven back. There was little good fortune attendant on the charge of Seymour's horse, but the general's foresight had provided a retreat for those, whom any accident might befall in the valley of the Portina, behind Bassecourt's reserve: there was much misfortune consequent upon the daring bravery of the guards, who rushed in amongst the columns of the enemy, confiding chivalrously in individual spirit and strength; but to this casualty also the general applied a remedy, by bringing up the forty-eighth at the precise and proper moment, by which he conquered both his fortune and his foes. He, who hitherto owned a charmed life, at Talavera was nearly deprived of the veil of the enchantress, and laid prostrate amidst the thousands that fell around him: twice his

coat was perforated by bullets ; a spent ball struck him on the shoulder ; and Captains Bouverie and Burgh were wounded at his side. These startling events, being personal, found no place in his public despatches ; but, in a private letter to his old friend the Duke of Richmond, dated the day after the battle, he briefly alludes to them, “ Almost all my staff are either hit, or have lost their horses ; and how I have escaped unhurt, I cannot tell. I was hit in the shoulder at the end of the action, but not hurt, and my coat shot through.” In this instance, undoubtedly, whatever Wellesley obtained from fortune, was wrung from her fickle patronage. It was to the resolution and genius of the general, seconded by the invincible courage and perfect discipline of his men, that the result of the onslaught at Talavera is to be attributed ; fortune, or blind chance, had no participation in that action. The Spaniards, to this day, reflect as little as events will permit, upon the conduct of their troops on that memorable occasion : they claim the honour of having lost twelve hundred men, but this statement has never obtained credit, for king Joseph’s guard, which did not exceed ten thousand, being left in the olive-wood to observe Cuesta’s movements, it is well known, never fired a shot. During the two days’ struggle, the loss of the enemy was much greater than the total injury sustained by the allies—amounting to eight thousand seven hundred and ninety-four ; and seventeen pieces of artillery, with two tumbrils and ammunition complete, fell into the hands of the British ; sixteen of the guns had been taken by General Campbell’s division in the brilliant affair with the enemy on the British right, the remainder were abandoned on the field. It was in this battle that Sir Arthur first introduced the plan of screening his men from the enemy’s fire, by directing that they should assume a recumbent posture behind the crest of the hill, and advance and deploy only when the hostile columns approached to attack. The fire of an enemy double the number of the assailed, would most probably have thinned the ranks of the latter more widely, but for this novel precaution. If Wellington’s uncompromising political enemies, if his jealous and unforgiving foreign foes, if

bigoted chroniclers of the events of our age, shall still question to whom the glory of that day belongs, they will find their refutation registered in the facts, that the French retired and took up a new position, having left many of their heavy guns to the British; that Wellesley's army kept possession of the hard-fought field, and *bivouacked* on the very spot for the possession of which the French had sacrificed some thousand lives—there too the British remained, and received on the following day, the forty-third, fifty-second, and ninety-fifth regiments, a reinforcement three thousand strong, under General R. Craufurd. As this gallant officer was advancing to join the main body of the British army, while his men were in *bivouac* at Malpartida de Plasencia, an alarm was created and widely spread, by the arrival of six thousand Spanish fugitives, who, either panic-stricken, or never having been entitled to a better name, or higher confidence, than that of a mere rabble, plundered the baggage of their own army, and, escaping from the vengeance of the general, cried out as they hurried rapidly along like some hateful pestilence, "that the English were defeated and flying before the French, that Wellesley was slain, and France again victorious." This painful intelligence added wings to the energies of brave Craufurd's brigade, and having first selected about fifty of his men, whose physical powers he thought would prove unequal to the herculean labour, which the suspected difficulties of his countrymen imposed upon his noble mind—like the Roman dictator setting out at midnight to the relief of the legion hemmed in by the enemy, resolved to surprise the foe at day-break, and recover national glory, or perish in the attempt—the devoted British general marched on for six and twenty hours without cessation, and reached the British camp at Talavera, at eleven o'clock on the morning of the twenty-ninth, after "the battle had been lost and won," when the enemy had totally disappeared, and blood-stained fields, diminished numbers, and scenes of death around, too plainly told of that havoc from which the dastard Spaniards had so ingloriously fled. When it is remembered that this was the sultry season of the Spanish

year, that each soldier carried on his shoulders a knapsack weighing nearly sixty pounds, and that the extraordinary distance of sixty-two English miles was accomplished, with the loss of only seventeen stragglers, in so small a number of hours, it will perhaps be acknowledged, that this effort has not been exceeded by that of any other body of infantry during the Peninsular or other modern European wars. An instance of similar exertion is related of the British cavalry under General Lake, in the battle with Holkar at Furruckabad.\* “Had these honourable facts reached the knowledge of the historian Gibbon,” observes Colonel Napier, “he would probably have spared his sneer at the delicacy of modern soldiers.”

The battle being over, and the danger departed, like a threatening cloud that had floated away to darken the fields elsewhere, Cuesta raised his abject head, looked round upon his coward battalions, recovered his stubborn bearing and ill-sustained pride, and ordering all the runaways that had been brought back, to be drawn out before him, he commenced the execution of stern military law after the manner of consular Rome, whose example he had the folly and the presumption to imitate, by decimating the renegade ranks. In this ferocious design he proceeded until fifty victims† were slaughtered in cold blood, to appease the indignation of a capricious tyrant, of whom General Wellesley thus wrote, on the third day after the battle of Talavera, “I certainly should get the better of every thing, if I could manage General Cuesta: but his temper and disposition are so bad, that it is impossible.” The axe, however, which Cuesta raised to immolate his countrymen, was wrested from

\* “Of the victors, the greater part had ridden seventy miles, during the preceding twenty-four hours, when they took up their ground after the pursuit, besides fighting the whole of Holkar’s cavalry: an achievement far exceeding the boasted celerity of Napoleon’s squadrons, and which is probably unparalleled in modern war.”—*Hist. of Europe*.

† Sir John Jones says that Cuesta, having first separated fifty by the process of decimation, was compelled by the earnest entreaties of Sir Arthur Wellesley to decimate, a second time, the unhappy men on whom the lot had fallen; and that six officers and thirty men comprehended the total of those executed on the occasion.

his murderous hand by the humanity of Wellesley, who first remonstrated, then entreated, and finally ordered the Spaniard to restrain his unnatural appetite. The arguments used to dissuade Cuesta from his cruelty were, that as his soldiers were not distinguished from the peasantry by any uniform dress, desertion was facilitated, because the fugitives could immediately fall back upon the peasantry, and mingle undiscovered amongst them: besides, it was found that disgrace operated with the most salutary results upon the minds of Spaniards, as well as on those of the British and Portuguese, as Cuesta had himself witnessed at the battle of Talavera. He had deprived a regiment of one of their pistols, for misconduct at the battle of Medellin; but so great was the desire of these men to wipe out the stain, and be once more counted amongst the brave and good, that, under the guidance of Albuquerque, Whittingham, and Bassecourt, they alone of the Spanish army were engaged, and behaved with so much spirit and discipline, that the pistol was publicly restored after the battle of Talavera.

To complete the dark portrait of our Spanish allies in the Peninsula, the deep tint, which their treatment of the sick and wounded at Talavera introduces, should be observed. The municipal authorities had given no special orders on the subject; the inhabitants had mostly withdrawn, having first closed up their houses; and when the wounded were carried in from the field of blood, the pavement in the streets and squares was the only place of rest remaining to them. Those that were left all night weltering in their blood in the open field, are said to have recovered more rapidly, and in greater proportions, than those who were removed into the town, and received somewhat early under the inhospitable Spaniard's roof. This inhumanity has been extenuated, on the plea that the French had recently visited the place, and with their love of plunder, and propensity to mischief, had destroyed the public buildings, pillaged the churches, defaced the altars, overturned the tombs, carried away all private property, and consumed what was useless to them as fuel. The French soldiers' huts, from which they were so often and so hastily ejected by the bayonet of the enemy,



were always furnished with so much taste as to become an object of curiosity to the British. In this camp, with that frivolity of disposition which detracts from their national character, a theatre was constructed with materials and decorations plundered from the towns-people, and their huts were all thatched with unthrashed corn; and in all these wanton violences, these culpable eccentricities, the French army indulged, while the British soldier was under standing orders not to fell an olive-tree for fuel, shelter, or any other purpose. The British envoy, Mr. Frere, had always represented the Spaniard as "enthusiastic in his cause, and viewing it in the light of a crusade;" but he was a dupe to their falsehood, and too unsuspecting for the difficult duties his situation imposed on him.

Their inhumanity and barbarity were not confined to the passive guilt of neglecting the poor fellows who had received their wounds in fighting the battles of Spain and Portugal, but were exercised actively in stripping their dead bodies on the field, and in stealing British arms, ammunition, clothing, and money. While engaged in this latter act of infamy, they occasionally deviated from the plunder of a former friend, to beat out the brains of some wounded Frenchman, upon whom they stumbled in their work of spoliation. Sir A. Wellesley remonstrated instantly with the magistrates, upon the folly of robbing the British invalids of their arms, because, as many of them would be likely to recover from their wounds, it would obviously tend more to the interests of Spain that weapons should remain with those who possessed both the skill and the courage to use them; therefore, restitution of the stolen arms, independent of its justice, would be contributory to the general success: with respect to the murder of the wounded Frenchmen, Sir Arthur Wellesley was too old, too experienced, and too great a soldier, to remain a moment in doubt as to the proper remedy for such an evil, and accordingly he placed sentinels on the battle-field, with orders to fire upon any one who should be observed inflicting injury upon the French, as they were his prisoners, and under his protection. That

species of cowardice which originates in the feeling of self-preservation in inferior ranks of the animal kingdom, might have been forgiven by the high-spirited Briton, who sought no light to guide him but the rays of military glory; want of discipline in the ranks would not have excited much surprise, from the hasty character of the Spanish levies, and the limited time allowed, by the rapid succession of events, for training and equipments; but the inhumanity, ingratitude, and base selfishness exhibited by the Talaverans to their deliverers, is without a parallel, admits of no extenuation, and made an impression on the minds of the generous British army as deep and indelible as if graved on marble, and which can only be effaced when the tablet is broken. From this hour a new feeling took root in the British army, engendering contempt, disgust, and hatred of their allies (distrust had long before attached to them,) and the miseries of Badajoz and of St. Sebastian must be ascribed to the recollection of the sorrows, and the sufferings, of the sick and wounded at Talavera. The army wanted food, and the cellars of Talavera were full to their summits with corn, yet neither Cuesta nor the magistrates would render the least assistance to obtain a supply: medical aid was required, owing to the great number of wounded, this also the authorities refused; but with a presumption, which language is unable to explain otherwise than by attributing it to the rankest folly, complained aloud of the supineness of Sir Arthur Wellesley, in not following up the successes of the day by pursuing and exterminating the enemy. Military writers have referred these occasional bursts of *impudence* to an inordinate national vanity; but they need not have sought a source so remote and inaccessible; personal feeling, self-interest, the wretched, narrow-minded policy of relieving themselves from the presence of an army, although a friendly one, were the sole motives which influenced the despicable inhabitants of Talavera, and of many other places in Spain, during the Peninsular campaign.

The sad and solemn duty of providing for the wounded, and interring the slain, being discharged, the active mind of the commander-in-chief was directed to less painful subjects—the

rewarding of the survivors of the fatal day. One of the first objects of his solicitude was Major Middlemore, who commanded the first battalion of the forty-eighth regiment, after Colonel Donellan was struck down, and whose personal bravery tended so much to the final success of the action, by enabling Sherbrooke's division to re-form—conduct which in Sir Arthur's judgment demanded promotion. Marshal Beresford's situation next obtained his anxious attention, a position which was hourly becoming of more importance to the British: to him he recommended strongly the establishment of a good communication between his army and Romana's on the eastern frontier of Portugal; but if this desirable object should be unattainable, Beresford was then advised to respect the safety of his own army, and the interests of Portugal solely, leaving Sir Arthur and Cuesta to the exercise of their own judgment, and reliance upon their own strength.

Notwithstanding the victory of Talavera, by which the enemy were much dispirited, and although the loss sustained by the British was fully supplied by the arrival of Craufurd's brigade, such was the state of weakness and destitution, it may be called, to which his army was exposed by the misconduct and brutality of the Spaniards, that Sir Arthur declined pursuing the enemy. He could not have formed this decision from apprehension of the myriads of French soldiers that were marching down on his flank through the Puerto de Banos, and ready to cut off his retreat into Portugal, because the concentration of the three corps of Soult, Ney, and Mortier, at Salamanca, was not then known to him, nor had the junta of Old Castile, which held its sittings at Ciudad Rodrigo, the least suspicion, or any intimation of such a fact. The circumstances in which his men had been ungratefully left, by those whom they had just released from bondage, was the sole ground of the conclusion which Sir Arthur formed, and of the conduct he thought proper to adopt immediately after the battle of Talavera. This conduct, however, could not have been palatable to the junta, who were desirous of resigning to the British the honour, labour, and expense of driving the enemy out of

Spain; and to such arrogant allies Sir Arthur's measures seemed dilatory. The presumption of the junta was exhibited most audaciously in a letter which they addressed, at this peculiar crisis, to Sir Arthur, accusing him of having left Cuesta to pursue the enemy alone, on the last display of consummate folly made by that officer—an impeachment which, the reader is aware, was totally devoid of truth. Sir Arthur did not condescend to reply to the ungrateful servant of a more ungrateful country, but addressed the British agent, Mr. Frere, on the subject, requesting that officer to inform Don de Garay, that his instructions prohibited him from holding direct communication with any Spanish minister, and desiring that all such, in future, should be made through the British resident at the seat of government, who was the proper, and the only medium, through which he would receive any. "It is not a difficult matter," observed General Wellesley, "for a gentleman in the situation of Don Martin de Garay, to sit down in his cabinet, and write his ideas of the glory which would result from driving the French through the Pyrenees: and I believe there is no man in Spain who has risked so much, or who has sacrificed so much, to effect that object, as I have. But I wish that Don Martin, or the gentlemen of the junta, before they blame me for not doing more, or impute to me beforehand the probable consequences of the blunders or the indiscretion of others, would either come, or send here some loaves to satisfy the wants of our half-starved army, which, although they have been engaged for two days, and have defeated twice their numbers, in the service of Spain, have not bread to eat. It is positively a fact, that during the last seven days, the British army have not received one-third of their provisions, that at this moment there are nearly four thousand wounded soldiers dying in the hospital in this town, from want of common assistance and necessaries, which any other country in the world would have given even to its enemies; and that I can get no assistance of any description from the country. I cannot prevail upon them even to bury their dead carcasses in the neighbourhood, the stench of which will destroy them-

selves as well as us. I cannot avoid feeling these circumstances: and the junta must see, that, unless they and the country make a great exertion to support and supply the armies, to which the invariable attention and the exertion of every man, and the labour of every beast in the country, ought to be directed, the bravery of the soldiers, their losses, and their successes, will only make matters worse, and increase our embarrassment and distress. I positively will not move, nay, more, I will disperse my army, till I am supplied with provisions and means of transport as I ought to be." The insidious slander, the poison of jealousy, the chagrin of disappointed ambition, which discoloured all emanations from the fountain of authority, the junta, were not confined by the shores of the Peninsula, but, floating over the waves of the Atlantic, were hailed by the political enemies of the cabinet, by discontented characters, such as are to be found in every country, and by the opponents of every measure or movement in which Lord Castlereagh was a party. Disapprobation of their great captain, and of the retreat of the army after the battle of Talavera, was publicly expressed, and a virulent faction asked "where were the durable results from the laurels of that day?"

It is important to the truth of history that the reader should here be reminded, that the preceding lucid defence of Sir A. Wellesley's judgment, in not pursuing the enemy, was written on the field of battle, not composed at leisure in after-years to suit the events that simultaneously occurred, although then unknown to him. As calumny, also, has often been busy with this great man's fame, and it has more than once been said "he won no victory at Talavera," it may be well to decide that point by the testimony, not only of British, but even of French historians. We are assured by Lord Londonderry, who was present in the battle, "that the Spaniards were in raptures with us and our behaviour, and declared, with all the clamour of their country, that those who spoke of the British as less capable of fighting by land than at sea, lied in their throats!" Jomini says, "this battle at once restored the reputation of the British army, which, during a century had declined. and it



was now ascertained that the English infantry could dispute the palm with the best in Europe." General Sarazzin confessed, that "la sanglante journée de Talavera avait répandu l'effroi dans l'armée Française et l'on convenait que les Anglais se battaient tout aussi bien que les Russes." Col. Napier will not be suspected, even by the French, of expressing an opinion contrary to the conviction of his mind; and he writes that "this battle was one of hard, honest fighting, and the exceeding gallantry of the troops honoured the nations to which they belonged. The English owed much to the general's dispositions, and something to fortune. The French owed nothing to their commander; and when it is considered that above thirty thousand men were closely and *unsuccessfully* engaged for three hours with sixteen thousand British, it must be confessed that the latter showed themselves to be truly formidable soldiers." This eloquent writer here ascribes some merit to the general, much more to his army, but does not question the fact of the French having been beaten; and, in another place he says, "the moral courage evinced by Sir A. Wellesley, when, with such a co-adjutor as Cuesta, he accepted battle, was not less remarkable than the judicious disposition which finally rendered him *master of the field*." To these testimonies, which are free from the remotest suspicion of partiality, must be added the exclamation of Marshal Soult, on learning the particulars of this memorable battle, and the prudence of the English general in deciding upon falling back, "the English have covered themselves with glory at Talavera, but had they remained two days longer in their position, they would all inevitably have been taken prisoners, or destroyed."

"The battle of Talavera, ably directed, bravely fought, and *nobly won*,"\* was barren of immediate beneficial results, nor could short-sighted statesmen perceive to what glorious consequences it was the prelude: surrounded by difficulties, and ill-used by his allies, still his gallant soldiers naturally looked towards him for those orders, in the wisdom of which they

\* Sheerer's Mil. Mem.

would confidently trust. "The mind of our general was, however, *as we well knew*, full of resources ; and, though most of us saw our embarrassments clearly enough, there was not an individual in the army who entertained a doubt that his talent and decision would, in due time, overcome and disperse them."\*

On the thirtieth of July, intelligence reached the allies at Talavera, that rations had been ordered for a French corps of ten or twelve thousand men, at Fuente Roble, north of the Puerto de Banos, and for twenty-four thousand at Los Santos near the same-place, on the road from Alba de Tormas to Bejar. Sir A. Wellesley, although totally ignorant of the junction of the French at Salamanca, had taken the precaution to guard the pass of Banos, before he advanced from Plasencia, by a Spanish detachment under the Marquess de la Reyna, and had directed Beresford to assemble the Portuguese army in the vicinity of Ciudad Rodrigo, with a view to guard the same pass, to protect the British flank, and to watch the Portuguese frontiers ; still, so sudden was the intelligence, that it must have embarrassed the stoutest heart. He entertained some hope, but formed no certain calculation on it, that the Spanish guard would check the passage of the enemy through the Puerto ; or, that the proximity of Beresford would deter Soult from an attempt so hazardous ; or, lastly, that the defeat of Victor at Talavera might induce him to desist from his purpose. Yet so slender were his expectations of real resistance by the insubordinate troops at the Puerto, that Sir Arthur renewed his earnest solicitations for a reinforcement of that contemptible party, from the Spanish army ; this Cuesta positively refused to grant, and even urged Sir Arthur Wellesley to send thither Sir Robert Wilson without delay. As his arguments were deserving of as little respect as his conduct, and as Sir Arthur now perfectly understood the value of every individual soldier in the British lines, and, in fact, not knowing the magnitude of the danger, he considered a Spanish force might prove equal to the duty, he rejected any recommendation that would tend to diminish the number of his heroic little army, or

\* Narrative of the Peninsular War.

would require him to trust a single British subject to the guidance or remote association with Spaniards. As to Sir Robert Wilson, nothing could have been farther from the intentions of Sir Arthur Wellesley than to have sacrificed that chivalrous man, a hero possessed of romantic courage, to the unerring fate of resisting Soult in the pass of Banos, while the Spaniards either fled or surrendered; and, although Wilson was at Talavera, on the day of the thirtieth, having left his army at Escalona, Sir Arthur insisted upon his continuing to maintain his communication with Madrid, in the same effectual manner that he had hitherto done, leaving Banos to those whose duty and interest it was, more immediately, to defend it. Accustomed, yet unreconciled to the mischievous whimsicality of the Spaniard, Sir Arthur again, on the thirty-first, renewed his application for a reinforcement, with a similar effect; but on the first of August, assurances having reached Cuesta of Soult's entrance into Bejar, without "making the Englishman go down on his knees," he gladly yielded to his solicitations, and on the following day despatched Bassecourt's division; but scarcely had this force lost sight of Talavera, when news was brought that Soult was actually in Plasencia, with two columns of his army, that the Marquess de la Reyna had permitted the French to descend the pass without the interruption of a single shot, having retired to the bridge of Almaraz, and that the battalion at Bejar had deliberately dispersed.

The flight of his panic-stricken men from their unassailable trenches, in which Wellesley placed them before the battle of Talavera, did not alarm Cuesta so seriously as the news of the total abandonment of the strong mountain-pass by his countrymen. Boldly and unhesitatingly, he proposed that one half of the allied army should move to the rear, to oppose the enemy, while the other half should maintain the post at Talavera. To this proposition Sir Arthur Wellesley replied, "that if, by half the army, was to be understood half of each army, he was ready either to go or stay with the whole British army, but that he could not divide it." "Choose, then," said Cuesta, "upon which," conceiving that his army was the

most likely to do the business effectually, and without contest, and also that the preservation of free communication through Plasencia was of more consequence to the British than to the Spaniards. Sir Arthur Wellesley preferred marching against Soult, and with this decision Cuesta appeared perfectly satisfied.

It was on the morning of the third of August, that the allies bade to each other a short farewell, but, just before the breaking up of the British camp, letters were received from Sir Robert Wilson, stating, that the French had appeared in the direction of Nombella, whither he had withdrawn, having sent his artillery to St. Roman. This intelligence induced Sir Arthur to imagine that Victor meditated crossing the Alberche, falling with all his weight upon Wilson, and then forming a junction with Soult on the Tietar, a movement that would have enabled the combined armies of both marshals to move on Talavera. Previous to his departure from Talavera, Sir Arthur waited on General Donoju, pointed out to him the possibility of such an attack; and, as the Spaniards would not be likely to abide the enemy's approach, he obtained a promise from Donoju, that he would collect all the carts, and remove the hospital, on the least appearance of danger. The cause of humanity being regarded, the British army, seventeen thousand strong, marched to Oropesa on the third, at which time Bassecourt's division was at Centinello, where it was ordered to await the junction of the allies, in total ignorance of Soult's numbers, which were supposed not to exceed fifteen thousand men.

The arrangements of the allies, obtaining of supplies, proper disposal of the wounded, and arrival of the British at Oropesa, being detailed continuously, it is now necessary to return to Victor's army, which, it has been already stated, had formed in battle-array on the heights of Salinas after the battle of Talavera,—to the movements of the corps under Venegas, who was supposed to be operating on the side of Madrid, and to the circumstances connected with the sudden apparition of the combined French armies in the vicinity of Salamanca. King Joseph's incessant anxiety about the security

of the capital, which he identified with the virtual possession of the crown, induced him to fall back on St. Ollalla, on the night of the twenty-ninth, to despatch a division thence, to relieve Toledo, and pursue his own march to Illescas, in order to place himself between Venegas and Madrid. Victor, who had been left on the Alberche to watch the allies, and fall on their rear as soon as Soult's movements begun to affect their position, had his attention drawn to his own safety by the operations of the little band under Wilson. This officer was in the neighbourhood of Casalegas during the action of the twenty-eighth; but the next day, returning to his former position at Escalona, he so alarmed Victor, that he retired first to Maqueda, then to Retamar, and would have continued his erroneous movement even on Mostoles, if he had not been stopped by intelligence of the allies having retired from Talavera; upon which he returned, and took up his old ground on the Alberche.

While Sir A. Wellesley gave employment to the corps of Victor—Soult, Ney, and Mortier, having suffered severely in the northern provinces, were ready to abandon them upon any plausible pretext. It may be remembered, that Soult fled, rather than retired, to Lugo, where he had an opportunity of restoring to liberty a French garrison, whom the townspeople had imprisoned; but, having lost all his stores, ammunition, and guns, he resolved on retiring into Old Castile, and putting his troops into cantonments on the banks of the Esla, which he accomplished early in the month of July. Marshal Ney held a conference with Soult at Lugo, after which he proceeded towards Vigo, in order to suppress an insurrection at that place, which had been fomented and prolonged by the sailors belonging to some English men-of-war off the harbour. On arriving at the bridge of St. Payo on the Octaven river, he found ten thousand Spaniards ready to dispute his passage; the bridge, too, had been cut; and any attempt to pass lower down, must have been made in defiance of several gun-boats, filled with resolute and well-armed English sailors. It only remained, therefore, to force the bridge, in which he was twice frustrated,—on each



occasion with terrible loss. No laurels were to be gathered then in Galicia; the harvest of glory was over there: Soult had abandoned him to an enraged peasantry—a harassing mode of warfare—and a country in which each bridge and pass supplied the place of a citadel to the enemy, where they were uniformly found in garrison, and waiting to receive an attack. Under the influence of disappointment, perhaps anger, he determined upon evacuating the province of Galicia, and, in consequence, retired to Astorga towards the end of July. Valladolid received the armies of Kellerman and Bonnet, on the 20th of June, as they marched to the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo; so that, by an extraordinary, unforeseen, and unintentional combination of circumstances, when Sir A. Wellesley was meditating an advance on Madrid, four general officers at the head of nearly forty thousand men, were descending to interrupt his communication with Lisbon.

To these accidental coincidences, another more extraordinary is still to be added; which is, the profound ignorance of all parties of the strength or intentions of each other, allies and adversaries. Victor was frightened by four thousand men under Wilson, whom he mistook for the advanced guard of the allies: Joseph was alarmed for the safety of Madrid, which the junta had treacherously prohibited Venegas from marching against: it was the opinion of Victor and the king, that the British force amounted at least to twenty-five thousand: Sir A. Wellesley was under a delusion as to Soult's corps, not conceiving that it exceeded fifteen thousand dispirited men: and Soult advanced towards the theatre of operations, to enact whatever part the chance of war might assign him, without any certain intelligence as to the co-operation of friends, or strength of enemies. The allies were placed in the midst of these powerful armies, unconscious of their perilous position, but with the power of concentrating their entire force, forty-seven thousand men, in one day's march: the enemy could not effect a junction in less than three days, but their numbers amounted to ninety thousand.

That correct intelligence, the previous want of which had

nearly proved fatal to the allied armies, was now no longer withheld. Information reached Oropesa on the evening of the third, that the French had advanced from Plasencia to Naval moral, and placed themselves between the allies and the bridge of Almarez, leaving one line of retreat only open to the allies. To this bridge there were two direct roads, one from Talavera by Calera, the other from Naval moral; each of them passing at a distance of twelve miles from the British head-quarters at Oropesa, on the fourth. Besides this alarming news, the truth of which was indisputable, a despatch from Cuesta arrived only one hour afterwards, apprising Sir Arthur, that, from intercepted letters addressed to Soult, it was ascertained that the marshal's army must be considerably stronger than the allies imagined; that king Joseph was returning to the Alberche, with the intention of attacking the Spanish, and that, from these circumstances, he was induced to break up from Talavera, and, following the British, again unite, and present such a force as would insure another victory in the neighbourhood of Oropesa. As this foolish, perhaps timid step, resigned the strong and important post of Talavera to the French; as it would also expose the front and rear of the allies to the attack of the enemy at the same instant; as it cruelly and dishonourably abandoned the hospital, which Cuesta gave his word that he would protect; and, as the reasons assigned by Cuesta for his conduct were not deserving of the least respect, his desertion of his post arising solely from want of confidence in the Spanish army, Sir Arthur sent back a remonstrance with the utmost expedition. But the wings of the wind would not have borne it in time to arrest the flight of Cuesta; the sick were left to a protecting providence, "the Almighty helper of the friendless;"—Cuesta's word, like Falstaff's honour, was but an air-filled bubble. Talavera was abandoned, and Cuesta on his march, before the messenger from the British camp arrived. While Sir Arthur was engaged in perusing the intercepted letters of the enemy, Soult was similarly occupied in deciphering some English letters that had fallen into his hands; so

that one general became acquainted with the difficulties, while the other learned the advantages, of his position. The result of this accidental intelligence enabled Soult to take further and more complete measures for intercepting the retreat of the allies, by enclosing them between two armies, one exceeding thirty thousand, the other twenty-five thousand in number, and with this view he detached Mortier to Casatajeda, to seize the bridge of Almaraz, and patrol in the direction of Arzobispo. These movements, with the occupation of Plasencia, completely checked the advance of the British. On their left the Tagus rolled its rapid stream, and rugged mountains raised their stern fronts above the right of their line, while the inglorious abandonment of Talavera by the Spaniards left their rear exposed to Victor's immediate attacks.

While hesitation shook the army to its centre, and accumulated dangers seemed flowing densely in, as the still closing waters over the sword that divides them; while every man of feeling was moved by the approach of that fate which appeared inevitable, the British hero, like the surge-beaten rock, alone remained unmoved, firm, and self-possessed. Viewing with calmness the approaching wreck of all his hopes, distinctly seeing that the fruits of all his labours were never to attain maturity, that the issue of all his toils and labours must be disappointment, he did not hesitate an instant, or remonstrate with his destiny upon the lot which he had drawn, but boldly prepared to meet and to master misfortune. It was now certain that the corps of Soult and Ney were either united, or not far distant from each other; and, as king Joseph, who believed the British army to be twenty-five thousand strong, consented to attack them, it was plain the French force that intercepted their march on the bridge of Almaraz, must at least have amounted to thirty thousand. Victor would, of course, follow Cuesta; and, allowing that he left twelve thousand men to watch Venegas, that he lost ten thousand in the actions of the 27th and 28th, he would still be able to lead twenty-five thousand to attack the rear of the allies. From this difficulty the British general calculated that he could only be extricated by great

celerity of movement, and to this his men were very unequal, not having had their allowance of provisions for several days ; or, by his defeating the enemy signally in two separate actions, for failure in either would have left him without a retreat. Again, on the supposition that Soult and Ney declined fighting until joined by Victor, defeat was almost certain, as the French combined force would then exceed fifty thousand men, and the Spaniards were not to be trusted either in council or in action. So begirt with toils were the allies, that the French calculated upon the surrender of the British, and flight or destruction of the Spaniards ; but Sir Arthur, although reluctantly, adopted the alternative that still remained, which was to march instantly to Arzobispo, pass the river at that place, and take up a position on the other side, before the enemy could seize the Col de Mirabete, and by that means cut off his communication with Truxillo and Merida. This defensive plan of operations is never resorted to by such men as Napoleon, Marlborough, or Wellesley, but in cases of the last extremity ; and now feeling that the ignorance in which he was kept of Soult's real and renewed strength, had acted like a chilling frost in the budding-time of spring, and nipped those blossoms which gave the fairest promise, he resolved on saving both armies, and reserving them for some happier opportunity to bring the enemy to action. Sir Arthur has been occasionally censured for too bold conduct, for a fearlessness of character resembling that of the heroic Nelson, and a total unconsciousness of danger or defeat. However exposed his character may be to this impeachment on other occasions, here the application is inadmissible, his precipitance being now accessory to his caution, for by it alone he escaped from the combined movements, from the simultaneous attacks of Marshals Soult, Ney, Mortier, Kellerman, Victor, Sebastiani, and king Joseph, who had also drawn five thousand men from Suchet to strengthen this force, already amounting to ninety thousand men, and which was within a few hours' march of being concentrated in Estramadura. Cuesta wished to give Soult battle at Oropesa ; Sir Arthur was equally satisfied of the rashness of such a project, and the

worthlessness of its originator ; and, disgusted at his obstinacy, ignorance, and presumption, gave him to understand, that since he had abandoned the British hospital at Talavera, no necessity should arise for the formation of another at Oropesa, he was therefore free to act as his caprice might dictate. This stern resolve was attended with the most salutary consequences ; Cuesta was unable to reply, and yielded consent, when he understood that it was looked upon by his allies with indifference.

The British army halted at Oropesa on the night of the third of August, and at six o'clock the following morning begun to move on the bridge of Arzobispo, halting, however, occasionally to allow the convalescents who had escaped from Plasencia to get forward, and also to cover the passage of the stores and of the wounded men from Talavera, who had just then reached Calera. At mid-day the whole British army crossed the Tagus, and took up a strong position amongst the rugged hills on the other side. By this movement they probably escaped from captivity or death, and the convention of marshals at the head of ninety thousand men was completely baffled. Scarcely had the critical moment, the passing of the bridge, elapsed, than the soldiers, overcome by famine, and maddened by ill-treatment at the hands of the Spaniards, perceiving a herd of swine feeding in the woods, ran violently in amongst them, killing numbers, and in some instances actually cutting steaks off the animals while yet alive. It was impossible to restrain them, and although it was an act attended with individual wrong, it was hardly more than a fair reprisal for public neglect and national ingratitude. From Arzobispo the army continued its march towards Deleytosa, General Craufurd being ordered to advance, and by a forced march gain the Casas del Puerto on the Tagus, opposite the bridge of Almarez, lest the enemy should cross by the ford below that place, and seize the Puerto de Mirabete. The head-quarters reached Mesa d'Ibor on the sixth, the head of the column of the army entered Deleytosa on the following day, and, at the close of the ninth the rear divisions were also in position there, by which the passage of



the river at Almarez was completely commanded, and an unobstructed retreat into Portugal secured to the army. The Spanish army having quitted Talavera at midnight, on the third reached Oropesa at dawn, and Arzobispo at dark on the fourth, but Cuesta, doggedly declining to adopt Sir Arthur's advice, did not pass the bridge until the fifth; leaving a rear-guard on the right bank of the river, which, however, was immediately driven in by the enemy. Establishing his headquarters at Peralada de Garben on the seventh, Cuesta caused entrenchments to be thrown up, twenty guns to be placed in battery to rake the bridge, which was also barricaded, left the Duke of Albuquerque with two divisions of infantry and one of cavalry to maintain that important post, and withdrew the main body to Meza d'Ibor, without ascertaining the fordableness of the river in the neighbourhood of his position, or informing the British of his precautionary measures and intended resistance. Meanwhile Victor, taking advantage of the evacuation of Talavera by the Spaniards, crossed the river at that place, and advanced within a few leagues of Cuesta; while Soult, by watching the particular part of the river where the Spanish horses were brought to water, discovered a practicable ford.

The vigilance of their enemies here forms an appalling contrast to the supineness of the Spanish character. During the heat of noon-tide, a moment when most Spaniards retire into the shade, and indulge in their siesta, Soult thought an attack upon the bridge most likely to be successful: ordering Caulincourt's cavalry to pass the river by the ford, which two swimmers had sounded carefully on the preceding night, the Spanish battery was taken in the rear, the gunners cut down in their places, and those that were spared cruelly compelled to direct them against their countrymen; and such havoc was committed in a few moments, that the attempt and consummation may be recorded together. Albuquerque, a brave, loyal, and able officer, having, after the manner of his country, withdrawn with his horsemen to some cool shelter, nearly a league from the river, on the first alarm spurred his proud charger, and

dashed in amongst the destroying enemy with such a shock, and rode through the ranks of French cavalry displaying so many examples of personal bravery and physical power, that Soult is said to have contemplated firing grape-shot at the Spaniards, through his own men, as the only possible mode of eradicating them. The necessity for employing this cruel remedy was superseded by the arrival of reinforcements; and the remainder of Caulincourt's cavalry having passed the river, came to the relief of their fellow-soldiers: one body of infantry burst the barriers on the bridge, another forded the river, and the concentrated efforts of the whole were directed with so much violence against brave Albuquerque's horse, that they were at length obliged to give way, abandon their position, relinquish nine pieces of ordnance, and resign four hundred of their comrades to captivity. The miseries of this day were increased by an accident similar to that which occurred at Talavera on the afternoon of the twenty-eighth—"the herbage took fire; the wind spread the flames far and wide, amongst stubble, dry shrubs, and groves of ilex and olives: on all sides the cries of the wounded were heard; and, through the night, muskets which the fugitives had thrown away, or the lifeless hand had relinquished, went off, cartridges took fire, and cassoons of artillery exploded." It was Soult's firm resolve to have pursued the advantages he had gained, and welcome the returning smiles of fortune, by marching one body against Guadaloupe and Deleytosa, to dislodge the Spaniards, and with another cross the river at Almarez, and seize the pass of Mirabete. This plan would have annihilated the Spaniards, and obliged the British to make a disastrous retreat. That such must inevitably have been Cuesta's fate, is plain from the fact, that he had, from perverseness, and opposition to every suggestion originating with the British general, neglected to bring over his artillery, and declined informing that officer of his intended plan of operations.

On the evening of the ninth, Albuquerque, who was much attached to the British, reached the camp at Deleytosa, bringing the distressing account of the loss of the bridge, the fall of so

many of his men, the capture of others, and the offensive demonstrations still made by Soult. This alarming information brought Sir A. Wellesley to the quarters of Cuesta on the tenth, where he found the old general the same morose, haughty, yet helpless being. Further conference with such a man was vain, and, adopting the principle that a lunatic or an idiot may be deceived for his advantage, Sir Arthur, without Cuesta's knowledge, persuaded the Spanish staff-officers to have the forty pieces of cannon that lay on the banks of the Ibor, dragged up the hill by parties of men, before the French patrol should pass that way.

Having performed this act of kindness, the last ever to be required at his hands by his obstinate coadjutor, he returned to Deleytosa, and on the eleventh of August removed his headquarters to Jaraicejo, leaving his former position open to the Spaniards, who took possession of it on the thirteenth. By this arrangement the ford of Almarez was guarded, and the heights along the river-side to Arzobispo occupied in strength by the allies: the occupation of these heights secured the country behind the Tagus from Toledo to Abrantes, as cannon could not be introduced anywhere between Almarez and Toledo, and the river from the former place to Abrantes was impassable by an army, except at Alconeta and Villa Velha. Indeed, the passage of the Tagus by the enemy, compactly posted as the allies were, would have been valueless, because their movements would necessarily be confined to the narrow sloping space intercepted between the river and the foot of the mountain-range. In this well-chosen position (for which, as well as for an escape almost miraculous from their inveterate pursuers, they were indebted to the masterly genius of the British commander-in-chief) the allies now remained.

The command of the Spanish force having at length passed from the feeble hands of General Cuesta, who was visited by an attack of paralysis, General Eguia was appointed to succeed him on the twelfth of August, to the unconcealed satisfaction of every soldier in the British army.\* The advocates of Cuesta and

\* The retirement of Cuesta has generally been attributed to sudden indisposition, but that it is really assignable to other motives will appear from the fol-

the junta in that day, and the partisans of Napoleon, accused the British of having resigned the *post of honour*, that is, the defence of the rear, to the Spaniards, after the battle of Talavera. As the Spaniards had taken but little part in that action, it would have been perfectly fair to have employed them after it, when the British were exhausted and half-starved, but even this was not the case: the British army was necessarily the left, throughout these operations, and could not change that disposition without abandoning the defence of Portugal. Besides which, all the operations, from the morning of the fourth, were carried on against the inclination of General Cuesta; and a retreat being necessary, Sir Arthur Wellesley could not have made it, or have forced Cuesta to make it, if the British army had not begun it. Another circumstance explanatory of this groundless complaint was, that the bridge of Arzobispo was *not* reckoned the *post of honour*. The Mesa d'Ibor, till the evening of the fifth, was the point, the loss of which was most to be apprehended.

It was on the fifth that Victor first heard of the flight of Cuesta and his army from Talavera, and forthwith retracing the ground which Wellesley had obliged him to pass over, returned to the deserted town on the day following. Upon the approach of the French, Colonel Mackinnon, who had charge of the wounded, was sent for by Cuesta, informed of the intended movements of the Spanish army, and recommended to remove the hospital in the best way he could, and as soon as he was able. The colonel's previous instructions were, in case of such necessity, to make for Merida by the bridge of Arzobispo; but, as Cuesta would only supply him with seven cars, it was impossible to execute the orders he had received. No alternative therefore now remained, but to recommend the helpless to the honour and humanity of the enemy; and Mackinnon, who had at one period resided in France, and

lowing letter of M. de Garay's to Marquis Wellesley, dated Seville, Aug. 31: "I have given an account to the supreme junta of your official note, in which you pointed out the necessity that existed of altering the command of the Spanish army of Estramadura; and his majesty commands me to inform you, that on this day permission was granted to General Cuesta, to go and take the baths in the kingdom of Granada."—*Marquis Wellesley's Despatches.*

was in every respect one of the most accomplished officers in the British army, performed this part of his duty in a manner which was believed to have obtained, for the wounded, that humane treatment which they received from the French general. Assembling all who were able to march, he advanced to Calera, a village which the enemy had plundered of everything, and on the following morning was overtaken at Arzobispo, where forty additional cars were provided, but, from their ill state of repair, and the badness of the roads, only eleven of them reached Deleytosa. The Spaniards seemed to consider that their conduct in deserting the hospital at Talavera was not an act of sufficient baseness to destroy their fame, and now added a further claim to the contempt of mankind, by plundering the little magazines in the different villages through which the wounded were to be conveyed. To harass the sick men still further, reports were circulated by the Spanish deserters, renegades, and freebooters, that the enemy were advancing against them in front; upon which Mackinnon drew up his two thousand invalids, ready to relinquish, in the cause of liberty, the slight tenure of life they still held, like men of honour only: but this report was as false as it was cruel, and, pursuing his rugged road through the wild mountains, he reached Elvas, not only without any assistance from the magistrates of the country, but in defiance of their dishonourable hostility. Fifteen hundred wounded British were left in Talavera; and Sir Arthur Wellesley said, "he doubted whether, under any circumstances, it would have been possible, or consistent with humanity, to have removed any more of them: besides, judging from the treatment the wounded who fell into the hands of the enemy on the twenty-seventh experienced, as well as from the manner in which he had taken care of their wounded who became his prisoners, he expected that his poor fellows would be well treated by the enemy."

The Duke of Belluno entered Talavera without even a show of resistance on the part of the inhabitants, and found many of the wounded weltering in their gore on the bare pavement of the Plaza. With a degree of humanity which



did honour even to his high rank and splendid talents, he directed that French and English should be treated without distinction; and having complimented his brave enemies upon their knowledge and observance of the laws and the courtesies of war, remarked, there was yet one subject of which they appeared to be ignorant, that was, how to deal with the Spaniards. Orders were instantly issued that into every house two wounded soldiers should be admitted by the owner, one French and one English, and every care and attention which their case demanded bestowed upon them, remembering, however, always to serve the English soldier first. Through the inhumanity of the Spaniards, many had expired in the streets before Victor's arrival, and the pavement in various places was clotted with their blood: the Spaniards were now ordered out with spades and besoms, to bury the dead and clean the Plaza, "so as to render it fit for Frenchmen to walk in." A few hours only had elapsed before the streets of Talavera assumed a character more honourable to the inhabitants, more salubrious also, and the demands of humanity at length, although reluctantly, were complied with.

The next measure by which Victor demonstrated his knowledge of the laws of war, and of what was due to the Spanish character, is unhappily less honourable to his military renown. Assembling his followers at mid-day in the Plaza, he told them "that they were permitted to pillage the town for three hours," and, that this violence might be committed with that mixture of sublime and ridiculous which belongs to Frenchmen, the plunderers were first drawn up in line, each man supplied with a hammer and saw, and with their knapsacks on their backs, they filed off, at roll of drum, to the quarters of the town respectively allotted to them. It was during this systematic robbery, this irresistible mode of pillaging, that the vast magazines of corn were discovered, sufficient, it was supposed, to maintain the whole of the French army for three months: and in a lumber-room of a convent, a quantity of dollars was found, enough to load a dozen mules. His views of humanity and justice being completed, Victor crossed the Tagus at Talavera on the seventh, and, advancing towards the position of Cuesta's

force, placed an advanced guard at Aldea Nueva, on the left bank of the Tagus, and looked on the contest of Arzobispo\* from that point.

The humanity of Victor presented a remarkable contrast to the ferocity of the army under Soult, which, almost at the same instant, was devastating the country around Plasencia. There nine villages were laid in ashes by his troops, who further disgraced the high character of a veteran soldier by the commission of high-way robbery. It was in the month of June that Don Juan Alvarez de Castro, bishop of Coria, then in his eighty-sixth year, was first marked out for destruction by the corps under Lapisse. Escaping the first attempt upon his life, he took refuge at Los Hoyos, where from weakness and infirmity he was necessitated to remain, and abide the arrival of Marshal Soult. When the soldiers surrounded the cottage, where the venerable man lay helplessly upon his couch, his chaplain and domestics, throwing open the door, invited them to enter, and partake of such fare as their master's lodgings afforded: the invitation was accepted, and having indulged heartily in the recreations of the table, the ruffians proceeded to plunder the house, and concluded their infamous performance by dragging the aged bishop from his bed, and assassinating him in his chamber.

Upon the thirty-first of July a congratulatory letter was addressed to Sir Arthur Wellesley by Don Martin de Garay, expressive of the high approbation of the central junta at the gallantry of the British army, and the commanding genius of their leader; and to mark, in the strongest manner, the sincerity of their approval, the despatch was accompanied by a commission appointing Sir Arthur a captain-general in the Spanish army, and by a gift of six beautiful Andalusian horses,

\* "Of this affair," says Sir Arthur Wellesley, "the French talked more than they ought. Nothing could behave worse than they did, excepting the Spaniards. They ought to have annihilated the Spanish army, but they were afraid to follow them, and did not even know that they had taken the greatest part of the cannon; they had not patrolled the ground, three days afterwards, when Colonel Waters went to Mortier with a flag of truce from me."

which were presented to him in the name of Ferdinand VIIth. These distinctions, flattering to vanity, prudent as conciliatory, and evincing true gratitude, were received in a manner that augmented still further the respect of Spain for the individual worth of the British general. In his reply to De Gary, on the eighth of August, Sir Arthur acknowledged warmly the honour done him, both by the appointment, and the present, but, with the most singularly correct notions of propriety, declined accepting even the highest rank in any army, until he should have obtained the permission of his own sovereign, the king of England: with respect to the pay attached to the Spanish commission, he thus generously expressed himself, "I hope the government will excuse me, if I decline to become a burden upon the finances of Spain during this contest for her independence."

While head-quarters were still at Deleytosa, Sir Arthur was very fully occupied in writing and receiving despatches, sustaining and repelling false accusations from Cuesta, and corresponding with his brother the Marquis Wellesley,\* who sailed from Portsmouth, in the *Donegal*, on the twenty-first, and arrived at Cadiz, on the thirty-first of July, upon a special mission. This experienced statesman came to supersede Mr. Frere, an honest but meddling agent, incapable of confining himself to the legitimate objects of his office; he had actually endeavoured to have several British officers removed from their command, upon his private opinion of their insufficiency; and the last effort of his expiring duty was the suggestion of an extensive military project: "the junta, with a refined irony, truly Spanish, created him Marquis of *Union*," but ostensibly in consideration of his having concluded a treaty of peace between England and Spain. To supply the place of this incapable servant, Lord Wellesley arrived in Spain, and at Cadiz received honours that might, with more justice, have been paid to his illustrious brother. These, almost triumphal

\* He had been appointed ambassador to Spain in the month of April, 1800, but a sudden and severe indisposition prevented his leaving England before the date here stated.

demonstrations, were continued all the way from Cadiz to Seville; but it could scarcely have been possible that a man, so much accustomed to command, could have viewed such rejoicings in any other light than as a grateful show of respect towards the king of England and the British nation, never having personally rendered one act of service to the Spanish cause. Still, however, if the phantom lured him one moment from his path, he was instantly restored safely to it by the same hand, and the same head, that so often ministered to his wants in India, and precautionary letters almost hourly arrived from his gallant brother, warning him against trusting in the fair exterior of Spanish promises, reminding him how distantly related were enthusiasm and sincerity, and expressing his dislike of pageantry in general. For this brother Sir Arthur had always evinced the most inviolable affection, and, trembling for his situation, he thus addressed him from Deleytosa. "You have undertaken an herculean task: and God knows that the chances of success are infinitely against you, particularly since the unfortunate turn affairs have taken in Austria. I wish I could see you, or could send somebody to you; but I cannot go myself, and cannot spare the few, to converse with whom would be of any use to you: the best thing you can do, therefore, is to send somebody to me as soon as you can, if I remain in Spain, which I believe to be almost impossible, notwithstanding that I see all the consequences of withdrawing. But a starving army is actually worse than none. The soldiers lose their discipline and their spirit. They plunder even in the presence of their officers; the officers are disconcerted, and are almost as bad as the men; and with the army, which a fortnight ago beat double their number, I should now hesitate to meet a French corps of half their strength." This is the briefest of a series of letters, that poured from the prolific pen of the commander-in-chief on the arrival of his brother, acquainting him with every particular in the details of Spanish politics, that could, in the remotest degree, contribute to prepare his mind for the duties of his new office. Had his own penetration been unable to

develope the mystery and insincerity of the junta, Sir Arthur's instructions would have supplied the deficiency, and accordingly drawing his information from this pure source, he despised the time-destroying intrigues of that senseless assembly, asserted boldly the right, which the victorious soldier at the head of the army possessed, to direct the movements of the great body itself, and impressed his views, which were his brother's, upon the attention of the junta, with a dignity suited to an ambassador of his Britannic majesty, and which no British envoy ever has sustained in a manner more honourable to the nation than the Marquis Wellesley,\* whenever his country required his valuable services as viceroy or diplomatist.

In order to unfold the duplicity, baseness, and inhumanity of the Spanish character sufficiently to enable the new envoy to understand and appreciate it, Sir Arthur drew an accurate picture of the treatment the British had received at their hands, and the hardships they were enduring at the moment that Lord Wellesley was conducted with shouts of triumph into the ancient city of Seville. While the British were left to subsist upon a short allowance of bread, and a drink of water, extravagant supplies passed by the famishing soldiers towards the Spanish camp: several hundred cavalry horses died from the want of barley, the only wholesome food for such animals in the Peninsula, and two hundred of the artillery-horses also perished. As the Spanish cavalry do not admit mares, Sir Arthur applied for a hundred, to recruit his cavalry: to this he received no reply; and after the action of Talavera, when the

\* "A man with *too many weaknesses* to be called great, but of an expanded capacity, and a genius at once subtle and *imperious*." Napier. The author of these volumes has in vain sought for a confirmation of the preceding character, in the long and eventful records of Lord Wellesley's life.—The Marquis Wellesley did not mistake the reception he met at Cadiz and Seville for *personal* respect; on the contrary, in his letter to Mr. Canning of the 11th of August, he ascribes it to "veneration for his majesty's person, respect for his government, zealous attachment to British alliance, affectionate gratitude for benefits derived from British generosity, and from the persevering activity, valour, and skill of his majesty's troops and officers."—*Marquis Wellesley's Despatches*.



British begged for ninety mules to draw their artillery, Cuesta refused their request, although he had some hundreds whose only employment consisted in pulling empty cars. When perverse dispositions become entangled in error and absurdity, they foolishly endeavour to avert censure by impeaching the injured; and Cuesta, after this model, accused the British army of intercepting the supplies intended for him, and of selling the plundered rations to the Spanish soldiers. To these coarse charges, false and flagitious as they were, Sir Arthur calmly answered, that "it was beneath the dignity of Cuesta's situation and character to notice such reports, or for him to reply to them."

The purport of these painful communications was made known, with all possible despatch, to the Marquis Wellesley, accompanied by pressing solicitations that he would inform the junta of the true circumstances of the British army, and hold out threats of an immediate evacuation of Spain by the allies, in the event of supplies being still withheld. On the day preceding that on which Cuesta was visited by a fit of paralysis, Sir Arthur had occasion to retort, bitterly, his accusations against the British: "I have to inform your excellency," observes Sir Arthur, "that as Commissary Richardson was coming from Truxillo, with bread and barley for the British army, he was pursued by a body of Spanish cavalry, which contrived to get from him all the barley: he secured the bread; a small part of which, however, the Spanish cavalry forced him to give up, but for which he made the non-commissioned officer sign the receipt which I enclose." This was almost the last link in the chain of ungrateful correspondence that passed between these commanders of the allied armies, Cuesta having resigned his command, without affording either the promised supplies or an honourable explanation.

Confiding in the penetration of Lord Wellesley, who was now in full possession of the insincerity of the allies, Sir Arthur turned anxiously towards Eguia, the successor of Cuesta, invited him to co-operate warmly, powerfully, and actively with the British, pointed to the lamentable consequences of his pre-

decessor's bigotry, perverseness, and sloth, and hoped that a better feeling would be engendered between the allies, by improved management in the Spanish camp. If Sir Arthur really calculated upon a happier state of things by a change in the commander, he is assuredly open to Victor's charge against the English generally, namely, that they were totally unacquainted with the best mode of dealing with Spaniards; for Eguia promised as much as Cuesta, and performed as little, and, like him, attempted to conceal the blush that rose with violated honour, by assuming the air of plain, blunt honesty, and charging the allies with the crimes of which he himself had been guilty. But the artifice was stale; national character was duly appreciated by the honest Briton, who nobly rejected all further approaches to intimacy, and all further communication with the Spaniard, until compensation should be made for the outrage committed upon his rank and reputation. It was now that the impression began to acquire lasting depth, on the clear mind of the English general, of the necessity of abandoning Spain to her fate, and conducting his little army back to the frontiers of Portugal, a country which he had saved from plunder and from conquest, an ancient ally of Great Britain, and at least a more faithful friend than Spain. Of this determination he apprised Lord Wellesley in a letter of the twelfth of August, in which he states, that "the experience of every day shows the absolute necessity that the British army should withdraw from this country. It is useless to complain, but we are certainly not treated as friends, much less as the only prop on which the cause in Spain can depend." To this inconvenience was to be added the want of resources in the country, and the extreme difficulty of bringing forward what were to be found.

Leaving the dispute pending between the British commander-in-chief and the Spanish junta, touching a regular and reasonable supply of food, to be paid for by Great Britain, the position and circumstances of Beresford, Wilson, and Venegas demand brief notice and attention. The first of these officers undertook the protection of the Portuguese frontier, against

any force which he conceived the French, concentrated at Plasencia, could possibly bring against him; but he was cautioned by Sir Arthur Wellesley against indulgence in an ill-grounded confidence of the precise strength of the enemy, which he was convinced much exceeded Beresford's estimate. It was also the advice of Sir Arthur, that the Portuguese head-quarters should be fixed at Zarza la Mayor, whether the object of the enemy were the invasion of Portugal or not. In this position he was supported by four British battalions, under Generals Catlin, Craufurd, and Lightburn, posted at Castel Branco; and, from the fertile character of the surrounding country, the Portuguese army would experience little difficulty in drawing ample supplies of provisions.

Arrangements which resulted from a consultation between the French marshals, and which shall be noticed presently, caused Marshal Ney to march from Plasencia on the eleventh of August, towards the Puerto de Banos, which strong post he was surprised to find occupied by Sir Robert Wilson, with a mixed force of Spaniards and Portuguese.

When the victorious British marched from Talavera on the third of August, to check the advance of Soult through the Puerto on Plasencia, Sir R. Wilson had been detached upon the left of the army towards Escalona. He had been put in communication with Cuesta, who was to have remained at Talavera, as well as with Cuesta's advanced guard, which had returned from Talavera on the fourth. Being deserted by the Spaniards, and persuaded that a retreat was no longer open to him by Arzobispo, with a promptness and ability for which he has been much commended by Sir Arthur Wellesley, he started from Vellada on the night of the fourth, and, trusting to his local knowledge, pushed on for the Venta de San Julian, and Centinello, crossed the Tietar, and escaped into the mountains that separate Castile from Estramadura. The resources of Wilson's mind were inconceivable, his activity prodigious, and his gallantry the admiration even of his enemies. The rapidity of his movements startled the French, who were never able to ascertain the real amount of his force,

although every movement of the allies was reported regularly at their head-quarters. Separated from the British, and abandoned by the Spaniards, the opportunity was as eagerly seized by the enemy, to surround and destroy him. Villatte pursued him to Nombella; Foy lay in wait at Vera de Plasencia; and detachments were posted to interrupt, and co-operate in encircling him at Monbeltran and Arenas. But his energy and courage were equal to his difficulties, and enabled him to burst the toils that were laid for him at Viandar, to baffle his pursuers, escape over the Sierra de Lanes, descend into the vale of Tormes, and reach Bejar in safety. Intending, judiciously, to effect a junction with Sir Arthur Wellesley, this bold officer pushed on towards the pass of Banos: and it was in this attempt that he unexpectedly encountered Ney. Every precaution that time allowed, every advantage that the natural strength of his position afforded, was improved to the utmost. Colonel Grant, at the head of two hundred Spaniards, was placed in front of Aldea Nueva; but the enemy's voltigeurs and chasseurs, under Lorset, obliged them to give way. An attempt was next made upon Sir Robert Wilson's legion, which maintained its ground against treble its numbers for nine hours, when the enemy, getting possession of the heights on the left, their position was no longer tenable.

Sir Robert retired along the mountain-ridge, leaving the main road open to the great army. Mistaking his sudden retirement for abject fear, the French cavalry ventured to approach him, and call out to surrender, a demand which was answered by a volley of musketry, that killed the whole advanced guard. A second party, rushing forward to avenge the deaths of their comrades, nearly surrounded the little Spanish force; but Wilson cut his way through their ranks, and escaped with trifling loss. Ney now willingly accepted the free passage he had earned, and, pursuing his march, reached the line of the Tormes, where he resigned the command of his corps into the hands of Marchand, and unattended returned to France. Wilson halted for two days at Miranda de Castanos, to collect the stragglers, after which he resumed his march towards the

British camp. Military writers say "they cannot comprehend why Sir Robert Wilson should have ventured to give battle to the sixth French corps;" but they should remember, that he was surprised—that he was never known to fly from danger—and that loss of life would have been preferred by him to the loss of liberty or honour.

It should now be explained how Ney came so suddenly upon Wilson's legion, of whose strength, when he did engage, he was also ignorant. On the eleventh of August, the British, who necessarily formed the left, placed their head-quarters at Jarai-cejo, the Spaniards theirs at Deleytosa; the former watching the bridge of Almaraz, the latter occupying Meza d'Ibor and Campillo. They were disposed in a compact form, and took up a central position. The passage of the river would have been an achievement attended with the utmost risk to the enemy, and unattended with any ulterior advantage; the space between the river, and the ridge occupied by the allies, being too narrow to admit of any operations.

While the fortunes of the Peninsula were poising in the scales of fate, king Joseph, unintentionally, acted as her guardian angel, and interposed his hand to stop the shaft of death. Soult would have followed up the successes of Arzobispo by pursuing the Spaniards to Deleytosa, while Ney was ordered to pass the ford of Almaraz and seize the pass of Mirabete; but the latter was unable to find out the ford, and the delay that took place enabled the British to take up the strong position already described.

At this crisis in the affairs of the Peninsula, when Soult had conceived several projects for the destruction of the small British force under Sir Arthur, as well as for another invasion of Portugal from Plasencia, all his efforts were paralyzed by the folly of king Joseph, who recalled the first corps to the support of the fourth, then controlling Venegas in La Mancha, as well as by the refusal of Ney to co-operate in his plans, whose reasons were approved of by Joseph. The fatigues and sufferings of the army, the jealousy that existed between Soult and Ney, the impregnable position of an able general



then commanding the enemy's forces, the arrival of despatches from the Emperor, dated Schoenbrunn, twenty-ninth of July, (announcing the victory of Wagram, and forbidding future operations against Wellesley, until the arrival of re-inforcements from the continent which recent successes left at his disposal) in addition to Joseph's childish fondness for the gilded halls of Aranjuez and Madrid—decided the intruder upon dispersing his army. Accordingly, Soult was placed at Plasencia, Victor was relieved at Talavera by the fifth corps under Mortier, who, imitating the noble example of his predecessor, generously prohibited the distribution of rations to his own soldiers until the wounded English in the hospitals were supplied; while the sixth corps, marching from Plasencia to quell the insurrection in Leon and Castile, fomented and sustained by the Duke del Parque, encountered and defeated Sir R. Wilson at the Puerto del Banos. This dispersion of the enemy led Sir Arthur to conclude that no offensive operations were about to be undertaken, and that he might rest, and recover strength in his position at Jaraicejo, while Eguia continued at Deleytosa, and Venegas was left to operate as circumstances required in the Sierra Morena. Soult alone advised falling on the British lion in his den. Jourdan confirmed Joseph in his timidity, for which he was subsequently dismissed from his office, which was judiciously conferred upon the very general who had suggested the bolder line of conduct.

After the battle of Talavera, king Joseph marched against Venegas, who was loitering in the vicinity of Temblique, having an advanced post at Aranjuez, and a division under Lacy at Toledo, where he occasionally skirmished with the garrison. On the 30th of July intelligence reached Venegas of the victory of Talavera, at the same moment that Lacy reported the appearance of a French column marching on Toledo, and obtained a reinforcement sufficient, in his opinion, to enable him to keep his ground. The despatches of Cuesta, as inconsistent and contradictory as his actions at this time, bewildered Venegas: one stated that the allies were advancing on Madrid; a second, that Cuesta was just leaving Talavera for a few hours to destroy Soult. after which he would return

to complete Victor's ruin; and a third only proved too plainly to Venegas that he was abandoned to a numerous and fierce enemy, without the remotest chance of relief, and with the greatest difficulty of effecting a retreat. In this perplexity he declined entering Madrid, where Sir R. Wilson would have joined him, and suffered an useless attack to be made on eight thousand French in Toledo. He next concentrated his force at Aranjuez, expressed a wish to confine his duty to the defence of La Mancha, but conceived that he should obey the secret instructions of the junta, although the necessity for their orders had then ceased; and, lastly, it is supposed he would have hearkened to the absurd proposition of Mr. Frere, who recommended the separation of his force into two divisions, the one to threaten the communication with France by Arragon, the other by Morena. The dangerous advice of this meddling minister was obviated by the celerity of the enemy, who attacked Venegas' advance-guard at the beautiful gardens of Aranjuez. The coolness of Lacy, gallantry of Giron, and heroism of Panes, on that occasion, excited the admiration of their country, and were rewarded by its gratitude. The latter having received a mortal wound, exclaimed, "Comrades, I am on my way to heaven, stand by these guns till death." The government desired that the title of Panes should for ever exempt its owner from the peculiar taxes to which *grandees* are subject, and conferred a situation of honour and emolument on his father. Giron,\* who commanded the defence, was created camp-marshal on the spot. This repulse obliged the enemy to repass the Xarama, and prepare to attack the Spaniards from the other side. Venegas called a council of war, stated his resolution of abandoning the line of the Tagus, his determination of attacking the enemy on the 12th, after he had refreshed his troops, whom he would immediately concentrate at Almonacid, and who were flushed with the pride of recent victory; but, during this deliberation, his position was reconnoitred, and attacked by Gen. Sebastiani, with a force more than double that which he supposed the numbers of the enemy amounted to, although General Desolles, with the reserve, had

\* Afterward, Marquis de los Amarillas, and Duke of Ahumado

not yet come up, and he was brought to action on the day he had proposed to devote to rest. Venegas was by no means taken by surprise, nor attacked in a position of insufficient security, but he was ignorant of the enemy's strength. Entrusting the command of his right wing to Vigodet, the left to Lacy, and placing Camp-Marshal Castejon with two divisions in the centre, he awaited the assault of the enemy. The Spaniards stood stoutly for some time; and the left, which had been thrown into disorder, was restored by Venegas, who outflanked the successful party; but the contest was too unequal to be maintained for any length of time, or with the least prospect of success: the Spaniards fought bravely, but on every little advantage they were assaulted by fresh troops, arriving in such multitudes under Desolles and king Joseph, that at last they had recourse to the usual remedy, and, throwing away their arms, ammunition, and clothing, ran off wildly before the cavalry of the enemy. The survivors of this day of slaughter continued their flight to La Carolina, under painful apprehension of being every moment overtaken, or intercepted, by the French dragoons, until they found an asylum in the Sierra Morena: while the fourth French corps established themselves at Aranjuez, the first at Toledo, and the intrusive king accomplished his darling object—a safe return to the palace of Madrid. The Spaniards in this action lost one hundred ammunition waggons, thirty-five pieces of artillery, and a large number of their body was taken prisoners. The French assert that the enemy had four thousand slain, but have not made a return of their own losses on the occasion, which must have been equal to that of their foes.

The alternations of fortune which occur in the game of war are strikingly illustrated in the history of the Peninsular contest, even in the short period that elapsed between the first landing of British auxiliaries in Portugal, and the return of the intruder to Madrid. Wellesley must be acknowledged to have routed, and driven the French from Portugal, in his first campaign, because the convention was a consequence of the victories of Roleia and Vimeira: in the next campaign, the British were compelled to evacuate the Peninsula, having lost one of their

best officers on the field of Corunna: Sir Arthur Wellesley avenged the death of Moore, by the expulsion of Soult from Oporto: and now the British were driven beyond the Tagus, entrenched, it is true, in a position of impregnability, but without sufficient numbers to renew the contest, while the usurper was entering Madrid in triumph.

Having noticed the situations and circumstances of Beresford, Wilson, and Venegas, the narrative of the British army may be resumed, and the trying circumstances in which Sir A. Wellesley was placed be more fully detailed. "He was now called on, not only to consider every military point as connected with the army, but every civil arrangement in the Peninsula was submitted to him: and hence he commenced\* that early practice of universality of reflection and decision, to which, for reasons in the hands of Providence, he seems especially to have been designed." The campaign was concluded; the opportunity that was presented of breaking down the English power in the Peninsula, and which Soult would have seized, lost for ever; and this event, to the last hour of his life, Napoleon bitterly lamented. From this date, one whole month was passed by the British in undisturbed possession of their head-quarters at Jaraicejo, but the mind and feelings of the commander-in-chief were agitated by neglect and insult, not of enemies, but allies. These painful circumstances led to that lengthened correspondence in which General Wellesley was at this time engaged with his brother, Cuesta, Eguia, and the central junta, and which ended only in augmented disgust of the Spanish character and provisional government. Before the resignation of Cuesta, that general proposed to place all the supplies for the allies at Truxillo, whence they should be distributed in proportion to the respective strength of each army: but this was a contemptible trick, as the greater part of the supplies destined for the Spanish army would be conveyed to them without passing through Truxillo. Besides, it had been promised when the British entered Spain, that

\* *Narrative of the Peninsular War.* The noble author seems to have forgotten Colonel Wellesley's diplomatic services in India, which will, at no distant period, be more fully appreciated than circumstances have yet admitted of.

provisions should be found gratuitously, or at all events for payment, without failure on the part of government; which promise was shamefully violated, the men left without rations, and the horses to subsist upon whatever forage they could pick up in the fields, which being of an unwholesome description, great numbers died in consequence. This unkind treatment extracted from Sir Arthur a threat that he would retire into Portugal, but in the mean time such was the opinion he had formed of the general of the allies, that he concluded his despatch to him, of that date, with a request "that the Spanish officers sent to Truxillo might be ordered not to prevent the British from obtaining, for payment, salt and other necessities which the army were in want of."

The Marquess Wellesley was immediately made acquainted with the difficulties of his brother's position, as well as with his determination to fall back upon Portugal, unless his army were furnished with supplies regularly and reasonably; and a complaint was also submitted to his excellency, of the detention of letters passing from the British camp to the British envoys. Sir Arthur, on the fourteenth of August, assured Eguia of his earnest desire to enter into amicable concert with him, and of his having instructed Colonel Waters to proceed to Truxillo, in the hope of forming such arrangements as were calculated to re-establish that reciprocity of good feeling between the allied armies, which the misconduct of Cuesta had extinguished. The Marquess Wellesley was now actively employed in seconding the applications of Sir Arthur for relief, and establishing the reasonableness of that officer's remonstrances; but the reply which the junta made was "very unsatisfactory." The same junta that refused food, wine, and means of transport to the British, had the effrontery not only to demand their continuance in Spain, but that Marshal Beresford might also be induced to advance to their support. This, General Wellesley at once rejected, Beresford's being the only disposable force which Portugal possessed, and all which that country had to depend on for its defence: the object of collecting that corps on the Portuguese frontier was not that it might operate in



Castile, but remain to defend that line, and give an *appui* to the British left flank. In the midst of this vexatious correspondence, consisting of impeachments and reeriminations, the general was frequently called on to calm the fears of the junta, relative to the strength and designs of the enemy; and, in reply to his noble brother on this subject, on the fifteenth of August, says, "I do not think the French are sufficiently strong to undertake an offensive operation; and it is probable that things will remain as they are, unless I can strike a blow on the right of their line, until reinforcements arrive from France." It was Sir Arthur's opinion that he had the advantage of the enemy in the defensive attitude he had assumed; and he promised, if the arrival of food should enable him to make a forward movement, that he would certainly aim a decisive blow at his adversary; and with this object in view, he had commenced repairing the Puente del Cardinal on the Tagus.

The privations of the British still remaining unremedied, the cavalry were moved farther to the rear, on Caceres, in order to procure forage, which had completely failed at Jaraicejo, and up to the fifteenth of August, but one day's issue of barley had arrived for the horses. This indispensable movement destroyed totally his hopes of being able to attack the enemy, and induced the general to break down rather than restore the Puente del Cardinal; besides which, the state of the infantry, who, on the eighteenth, "had no bread," and the boasted supply in the magazine at Truxillo not being sufficient for a single day, obliged Sir Arthur, unwillingly, to carry into execution his meditated abandonment of his ungrateful allies: but previous to which, he advised Eguia to send troops to occupy the British outposts on the Tagus. Eguia replied with drivelling absurdity, by promising to share with the British the supplies falsely stated to be at Truxillo, and thus drew forth the inevitable decision of the hero of Talavera. "Your excellency is mistaken in the conclusion you have arrived at; that which obliges me to move into Portugal is a case of extreme necessity; viz, that description of necessity which an army feels when it has been starving for a month, when it wants every thing, and can get nothing;

this necessity is so urgent, that I must either move into Portugal, where I know I shall be supplied, or make up my mind to lose my army, unless I could be made certain of a sufficiency of bread and corn for the troops and horses daily. I hope, therefore, you will occupy the posts on the Tagus this night; but my troops shall be withdrawn from them, whether relieved or not." His declaration to the Marquis Wellesley on the condition of his army, his protest against the inhumanity and baseness of the allies, was still more strong and explicit, and so decided, that all further coquetry on the part of the junta and their generals became futile. Sir Arthur stated that when he moved he would be under the necessity of relinquishing twelve pieces of ordnance: he assured his excellency *most solemnly*, that from the twenty-second of July, the horses of the cavalry and artillery had not been allowed their regular deliveries of barley, and the infantry had not received ten days' bread. These were the causes that led him to request that his excellency would give notice to the government of his determination to retire into Portugal. That government might possibly have deceived Lord Wellesley by an assurance of their "having issued orders that the army should be provided," but they knew perfectly well that there were no inferior officers to whom such orders could, with a prospect of performance, be directed. No system, no arrangements, no magazines had been formed, and fifty thousand men were collected on a spot which was incapable of affording subsistence to one-fifth of that number, nor were there any means of sending to a distance for supplies to make good the deficiency: starvation, fatigue, and service had so diminished his number of horses, that eighteen hundred of his cavalry were dismounted, and he had lost three hundred artillery-horses, entirely from want of food.

It was at this anxious moment, when the resolution of retreating was irrevocably fixed in the British general's mind, that Eguia disgraced himself by adding insult to injury, by expressing a disbelief in Sir Arthur Wellesley's written statements of the wants of his army. "I feel much concerned," replied General Wellesley, "that any thing should

have occurred to induce your excellency to express a doubt of the truth of what I have written to you: however, since you entertain that doubt, further correspondence is unnecessary, and accordingly this is the last letter I shall have the honour of addressing to you." He next proceeded to assure Eguia that he extended to him, in the fullest manner, the confidence in his veracity which had been refused to a British general, and was satisfied of his having issued orders for the supply of rations: however, as the means were not present, his excellency's orders remained unexecuted. In proof of the truth of his assertions, Sir Arthur reminded him of his having left part of his ammunition at Deleytosa, because the Spaniards refused to lend mules to remove it, and informed him that he would be obliged to abandon another supply at Jaraicejo, which he had offered to the Spaniards in preference to blowing it up.

Totally ignorant of the high sense of honour which influences every man in the British service, a principle that is usually allowed to pervade the breast of every British merchant, and for which the nation itself ranks high in universal respect over the globe, the Spaniard had the insolence to forward a second letter, immediately after the insulting composition alluded to, calling on the British to assist him in a combined attack on the enemy. As this was of a public character, and emanating directly from the junta, Sir Arthur replied to it at once, by informing him, that the junta and himself were equally ignorant of the actual situation of the French army, that Beresford's post was near Salvatera, and that no permanent benefit could result from offensive operations until the arrival of Romana. He took occasion again to reiterate his complaints against the shameful treatment of his men, and the unblushing effrontery of the provisional government. "It is extraordinary," said Sir Arthur, "that the minister at war, while he proposed new operations, forgot that we had no food; that our cavalry, from want, are scarcely able to move from the ground; that our artillery horses are not able to draw the guns: but his having omitted to advert to these circumstances sufficiently accounts for their continued

existence." An auxiliary in the arts of deception was now found in Don Louis de Calvo, a member of the junta, whose low cunning, it was conceived, would enable him to mitigate those stern feelings of justice, for the possession of which he could not seriously give Sir Arthur, or any other mortal, credit. In conversation with Sir Arthur, he insinuated that it was not want of food that influenced the general's decision, but "motives of a political or military nature," although he must have perceived that starvation had impaired the health of the army, and rendered it comparatively inefficient. He assured the general that in three days there should be plenty of provisions, and that in the mean time all the supplies in the magazines at Truxillo should be left for the support of the British. These reasonings appearing to be received with some little hesitation by Sir Arthur, the Spaniard ascended to the climax of folly and falsehood by protesting that "the British should have everything, and the Spanish nothing." To this it was distinctly replied, that the same assurances had been received from every Spanish commissioner, and that each in his turn had disappointed the army; that although de Calvo's rank was higher, and his powers greater than those of his predecessors in office, in a case so critical as that of a starving army, no confidence could be reposed in his assurances. As to the accounts of resources then on the road, the general discredited them altogether; and, with respect to the contents of the magazine at Truxillo, Colonel Waters had examined that place the previous night, and found that De Calvo's statements were false, and that the magazine was as empty as the promises of a Spaniard. To the last extravagant undertaking with which De Calvo professed to encumber his government, for the relief of the British, namely, giving everything to their allies, and nothing to their own poor countrymen, Sir Arthur replied, "Its execution is utterly and entirely impracticable; it was inconsistent with what had hitherto been the practice; and besides, I have in my possession a letter from yourself, stating that you had ordered to the Meza d'Ibor, for the use of the Spanish army, all the provisions required for the British camp by Mr. Downie, the British

commissary, and provided by the town of Guadaloupe and its neighbourhood. I cannot therefore give credit to any plan having for its object to give provisions to the British army to the exclusion of the Spanish. The Spaniards must be fed as well as the British, otherwise neither will be of use; so that I conceive the proposal to have been made to me, only as an extreme and desperate measure, to induce me to remain in Spain."

The day before the British army broke up head-quarters at Jaraicejo, Eguia, in a letter composed of quibbling and servility, attempted to explain away the offence he had offered to the British commander, by refusing credit to his assertions; but his apology came too late. Calvo tried the virtue of flattery, but this stratagem proved as weak even as the meaner efforts of his coadjutor: he talked of the Spaniards being abandoned by those troops who so much sustained their martial spirit, and who had recently inspired them with so much confidence by the valour of their conduct in the field of Talavera. It was in vain that the junta appealed to the Marquis Wellesley, and supplicated his mediation with the commander-in-chief; that dignified and accomplished statesman had heard, with deep attention, his gallant brother's warning voice, "Put no confidence in the promises of Spain," and he confined himself in consequence more strictly to the precise duties of ambassador, avoiding the least personal responsibility. In one of the most beautiful diplomatic compositions Lord Wellesley ever wrote, dated from Seville, twenty-second of August, he pleads, in language delicate, respectful, official, the sinking cause of Spain, and informs Sir Arthur of the alarm and consternation excited by the near approach of the moment when he should remove his head-quarters: that De Garay spoke of the event with the deepest sorrow and terror, declaring that inevitable and immediate ruin must ensue to the government. "These expressions," observed the Marquis, "were mixed with the most cordial sentiments of personal respect and gratitude for your great and splendid services in the cause of Spain. I found, however, that no argument which occurred to me produced



the effect of diminishing the urgency of his entreaties ; and I have ascertained that his sensations are in no degree more powerful than those of the government, and of every description of the people of Spain within this city and its vicinity. I am aware these painful occurrences have not been unexpected, in your view of the consequences of your retreat into Portugal, and that the absolute necessity of the case is the sole cause of a movement so entirely contrary to your inclination." Conscious that no one was capable of affording advice to General Wellesley under the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed, the marquis adds, "I am fully sensible not only of the indelicacy, but of the inutility, of attempting to offer you any opinion of mine, in a situation where your own judgment must be your best guide. I have deemed it my duty to submit to your consideration the possibility of adopting an intermediate plan, and I request your favourable attention to the enclosed note of M. de Garay : but it would be vain to urge these considerations beyond the extent which they may be approved by your own judgment. It will be sufficient for me to receive an early intimation of your opinion, and to be enabled to state it distinctly to this government, which looks to your decision on the present occasion, as the final determination of its fate, and of the existence of the Spanish nation. That declaration, I am persuaded, will be founded on the same principles of wisdom, justice, and public spirit, which have already obtained for you the respect, esteem, and confidence of the Spanish nation."

From the tenor of the preceding letter it is obvious, Lord Wellesley had found that time would be wanting, should he attempt to fathom the intrigues of the Spanish government, in order to establish a basis for conclusions from personal judgment, and he wisely, therefore, relied implicitly on his brother's guidance. Sir Arthur calculated upon the penetration of the marquis, and concluded that he would not be long duped by the acts of the treacherous assembly to whom he had been deputed, and, without awaiting the ceremony of a reply, on the twentieth of August, broke up from his position at Jaraicejo, and the Casas del Puerto, the latter of which

posts was immediately occupied by the Spaniards, and marched by Truxillo upon Merida. Craufurd with the light brigade took the road to Valencia through Caceres. The weakness of his men, want of horses and mules, and the innumerable inconveniences, which were solely attributable to the cruel neglect of their allies, so disabled the British troops, that it was found necessary to halt at Merida. Here the correspondence between Sir Arthur and the junta was renewed, through the more grateful medium of his noble brother, who ventured to propose a reunion of the allied armies, and the occupation of a defensive position behind the Guadiana, in order to cover Alentejo and defend Seville: he also proposed to the junta a plan for the future regular supply of provisions to the British army.\* To all these plans Sir Arthur Wellesley respectfully objected. He did not consider that the British army was bound or pledged to co-operate for any given period with the Spaniards; besides, Portugal required his protection—the line of operations which Spain meditated would withdraw him from Portugal—and the Spanish army had a second time behaved so ill, by its shameful flight at Arzobispo, as to forfeit all claim to the benefit of an alliance upon equal terms. If these arguments were insufficient, it might be added, that absolute necessity (want of food) compelled the British to separate from their faithless allies; and for these amongst other reasons, Sir Arthur resolved upon not forming a second junction of his forces with those of Spain. Lord Wellesley urged the advantage of combining for the defence of the Guadiana, but Sir Arthur felt that a weaker army could not defend that river against a stronger; that the Spaniards were then securely posted on the Tagus, and, should they be withdrawn from that position to the banks of the Guadiana, they would be cut off by the enemy before the British could come to their assistance. It was advisable, therefore, to let the Spaniards continue in their position, because they could defend it against numbers, and their retreat from it was easy; apart from the British, they could be more easily main-

\* Vide Correspondence of Marquis Wellesley, edited by Montgomery Martin.

tained; they were not to be depended on anywhere, but if they could not hold that position, they were incapable of holding any. Separation, therefore, was so far the wiser policy. But the junta asked, and the ambassador-extraordinary tacitly seconded their inquiry, "Was there no chance of resuming offensive operations?" To this Sir Arthur replied, "At present I see none, and hereafter certainly none." The same chain of causes, that led to a change of operations from offensive to defensive, would undoubtedly continue: the French were more numerous than the Spaniards, and superior to them in discipline and every military quality. The passes of Banos and Perales should be guarded, to prevent the multitudinous army of Castile from pouring in upon the rear of the allies; and those of Guadarama and Avila should be kept, in order to check the descent of the enemy from Estramadura and La Mancha in front. The British army could not afford to be still further exhausted by detachments to defend these passes, and Sir Arthur was determined never to place reliance on a Spanish force again in any critical position. Besides, Blake had lost his army; Romana was hiding in the fastnesses of the sierras of Galicia, without cavalry or artillery; and Del Parque, a brave soldier, had but few troops, and was unwilling to employ them at a distance from Ciudad Rodrigo: so that no force remained capable, or properly disposed to make a diversion in favour of the allies, in the event of an offensive operation. The most serious consideration, and that which had the greatest weight in fixing Sir Arthur Wellesley's judgment on this point, "was the constant and shameful misbehaviour of the Spanish troops before the enemy." "We in England, (he observed,) never hear of their defeats and flights: but I have heard Spanish officers talking of nineteen or twenty actions, of the description of that at the bridge of Arzobispo, an account of which has never been published. In the battle of Talavera, in which the Spanish army, with very trifling exceptions, was not engaged, whole corps threw down their arms, and ran off, *in my presence*, when they were neither attacked nor threatened with an attack, but frightened, I believe, by their own fire."

The truth of this statement, so disgraceful to Spain, is sufficiently proved by the conduct of the general who proceeded to decimate the runaways. When these dastardly soldiers abandon their ranks, they plunder everything they meet, and, in their flight from Talavera, pillaged the baggage of the British, who were at that moment engaged in their country's cause." Sir Arthur's reasonings convinced the judgment of Lord Wellesley, who felt still further reconciled to his decision by the promise which accompanied it, "of not retiring hastily into Portugal, but that he would remain near enough to the frontier to deter the enemy from passing the Guadiana, unless he should come in very large force." By this arrangement the British army would actually become more efficient, and therefore more useful to the Spanish government, by hanging on the enemy's flank, while they were also within reach of provisions and necessary supplies. It was therefore evident that the Spanish army rested in the most secure position, unaided as they were by the British; and to give still further safety to their lines, Sir Arthur advised that the bridge of boats opposite to Almaraz should be taken up and sent to Badajoz. Before these reasons for declining future co-operation with the Spaniards had reached the Marquis Wellesley, his own opinion had undergone a serious alteration: having furnished a plan for the future supply of the allied armies, whereby all jealousies and bickerings might be laid at rest, that foolish body wanted the wisdom and the caution to reply at a becoming interval of time, thereby confirming the whole case, which Sir Arthur had submitted to his brother's opinion, against the general conduct of that body, and converting suspicion into proof.\*

\* The following letter from General Hill to Sir Arthur Wellesley laid the foundation of the charge so often repeated by Sir Arthur, and Marquis Wellesley: "I beg leave to report to you, that the parties sent out by the officers of my division yesterday to procure forage, were, in more instances than one, opposed by the Spaniards. The following circumstances have been made known to me, and I take the liberty of repeating them for your excellency's information. My servants were sent about three leagues on the Truxillo road, in order to get forage for me; and after gathering three mule-loads, a party of Spanish soldiers, consisting of five or six, came up to them with their swords

Advancing by forced marches through Truxillo, Meajadas, Medellin, and Merida, upon Badajoz, Sir Arthur there fixed his head-quarters, upon the third of September, and occupied a position on the frontiers of Spain and Portugal, which secured further retreat should it become necessary, protected both countries, left open the means of advancing, and enabled the army to subsist with ease, the troops being disposed in cantonments along the line of the Guadiana. Halting for a few days at Merida, partly in compliance with the request of Marquis Wellesley, Sir Arthur had an attack of illness which obliged him to travel subsequently in a covered carriage, and it was from this place, and while labouring under a feverish distemper, that he communicated to Lord Castlereagh a summary of past events, and a plan of operations for the future. He told his lordship, that "the information he had acquired in the last two months opened his eyes respecting the war in the Peninsula," and then proceeded to submit such facts as were necessary for the guidance of the king's ministers. At the date of this despatch from Merida, twenty-fifth of August, the French force in Spain amounted to one hundred and twenty-five thousand men, seventy thousand of whom were cantoned in the vicinity of the allied armies; twenty thousand, under St. Cyr, engaged in the siege of Gerona; fourteen thousand with Suchet in Arragon; and the remainder occupied in maintaining a communication with France. This force was all disposable for the field, and did not include the garrisons of Barcelona, Pampeluna, and some other fortified places. To oppose this body, the whole of which was in their own country, the Spaniards had a force of only eighty thousand men, of whom the quality and composition were more defective than their numbers were deficient, to continue the contest; and to support this imbecile array there were twenty-five thousand British and ten thousand

drawn, and obliged them to leave the corn they had collected. My servants told me that the same party fired two shots towards other British men employed in getting forage. The assistant commissary of my division likewise states to me, that the men he sent out for forage were fired at by the Spaniards. Signed R. Hill, Camp. 17 August 1809."



Portuguese ; so that eighteen months after the commencement of the campaign, the allies were considerably inferior in numbers to the enemy. With respect to the composition of these armies, the French were well supplied with troops and arms of the different descriptions required, while several of the Spanish corps were so ill equipped as to be obliged to remain in the mountains. With reference to what has been termed the description of the troops, in that point of comparison the failure was even more decided than either in the number or composition. The Spanish cavalry, for example, although well mounted, were never known to have behaved as soldiers ought in the presence of an enemy ; “they made no scruple of running away, and, after an action, were to be found in every village, and every shady bottom, within fifty miles of the field of battle.” As to the Spanish infantry, it was not possible to calculate upon any operation with those troops : it was said they had often behaved well, but Sir Arthur declared “he had never seen them behave otherwise than ill ;” and it had actually become customary for them to run away, throwing down their arms, pulling off their clothing, and often leaving their heavy guns to the enemy, loaded and unspiked. “This practice,” observed General Wellesley is fatal to everything, excepting a reassembly of the men in a state of nature, who as regularly perform the same manœuvre the next time an occasion offers.” The Spanish and Portuguese artillery, however, in general merited the approbation of their officers. “It is extraordinary,” says Sir Arthur, “that when a nation has devoted itself to war, as the Spanish nation has, by the measures it has adopted in the last two years, that so little progress has been made in any one branch of the military profession by any individual, and that the business of an army should be so little understood. They are really children in the art of war, and I cannot say they do anything as it ought to be done, with the exception of running away, and assembling again in a state of nature.” Sir Arthur Wellesley attributed much of this deficiency, in numbers, composition, discipline, and efficiency, to the Spanish executive, who foolishly endeavoured to govern the kingdom,

in a state of revolution, by an adherence to old rules and systems, aided by what is called enthusiasm, which latter was only an excuse for irregularity, indiscipline, and insubordination. "People are very apt to believe," he observed, "that enthusiasm carried the French through their revolution, and was the parent of those exertions that nearly conquered the world: but if the subject is nicely examined, it will be found that enthusiasm is the name only, but that force was the instrument, which brought forward those great resources, under the system of terror, which first stopped the allies; and that a perseverance in the same system, of applying every individual, and every description of property, to the service of the army, by force, has since conquered Europe." This reflection upon the origin of that power which the French republic had acquired, was followed by a caution as to the prudence, or utility, of employing increased strength in support of the cause in Spain. Sir Arthur doubted whether it would have been more advantageous to the general interests of Europe, had the large expedition which was sent to the Scheldt, by a different destiny, been directed towards Spain—as, the greater the army the greater would be the difficulty of maintaining it, so that, after reaching Talavera, they must have separated for want of provisions, and then probably without a battle.

The situation, circumstances, strength, and discipline of the Portuguese army were the next subjects in importance, that demanded the attention of Sir Arthur Wellesley and the British government. It was always his opinion, that the mode of applying the services of English officers to the Portuguese army was erroneous. Beresford ought to have had the temporary assistance of the ablest officers in the British army, who should have acted as adjutants to the field-marshal, without being posted to Portuguese regiments. In addition to this blunder, rank had been conferred capriciously, commissions given away in the most arbitrary manner at the Horse Guards, in consequence of which, the officers from General Wellesley's army quitted the Portuguese service; and every officer who joined from England would also have left, if Sir

Arthur would have allowed it. The Portuguese troops, at this period, were deserting to an alarming degree, so that none of the regiments were complete; and, as the army was at a distance from the civil government, which furnished levies by conscription, and the civil authorities were unable to carry the laws into operation, it followed that Beresford would find it difficult, if not impossible, to fill up his ranks. "Pay," adds Sir Arthur, "has been increased; but I fear the animal is not of the description to bear up against what is required of him—and he deserts most terribly."

As the Spaniards were most assuredly incapable of reconquering their country from the French, it became an urgent question—what should be the policy of the commander-in-chief of the British army? Portugal was exposed, and so easily entered, the whole country being frontier, that it would be difficult to prevent the enemy from penetrating: in that case, the defence of the capital was clearly the wisest measure. The occupation of Cadiz had long been a favourite object with certain individuals in the British cabinet, but the force under Sir Arthur Wellesley in the Peninsula being insufficient, in his judgment, to occupy both banks of the lower Tagus, and secure the possession of Lisbon also, he could not spare a detachment large enough to garrison any town. "If you occupy Cadiz," said Sir Arthur, "you must lay down Portugal and take up Spain; you must furnish a garrison of from fifteen to twenty thousand men; and you must send from England an army to be employed in the field with the Spaniards, and make Cadiz your retreat instead of Lisbon." While want consumed the strength, disappointed feelings cankered the mind of every soldier in the army, and the ravages of disease were also added to the frightful amount of calamitous infliction under which the army laboured while at Merida. A partial supply of rations reached head-quarters, on the twenty-fifth, for the men, but no barley for the horses: the troops continued so unhealthy, that the general now began to be apprehensive lest their removal to Elvas, where an hospital was established, would be attended with considerable difficulty, from want of any

means of transport. In the midst of all these immediate cares for the restoration of his brave companions, the general was enabled to spare some moments for transmitting salutary advice to Marshal Beresford, and in replying to that active, able, indefatigable officer, recommending him to remain on the defensive, and not to co-operate with the Spaniards: leisure was also found to address Mr. Huskisson upon the subject of finance. He congratulated the secretary of the treasury upon the increased facility of obtaining money for bills at Lisbon, Cadiz, and Gibraltar, and upon the prospect of being able to get on without draining England of her specie; and, having concluded official matters, he thus communicated to him the general features of his position in the Peninsula: "I wish that the eyes of the people of England were as open to the real state of affairs in Spain as mine are; I only hope, if they should not be so now, that they may not purchase the experience by the loss of an army. We have gained a great and glorious victory over more than double our numbers, which has proved to the French that they are not the first military nation in the world. But the want of common management in the Spaniards, and of the common assistance which every country gives to any army, and which this country gives most plentifully to the French, have deprived us of all the fruits of it. The Spaniards had neither numbers, efficiency, discipline, bravery, nor arrangement to carry on the contest; and if I could consent to remain in Spain, its burden, and the disgrace of its failure, would fall upon me."

One of the numerous Wellington despatches, dated Merida, thirtieth of August, and addressed to Marquis Wellesley, informed his excellency that the British cabinet approved of the retiring of the army upon Portugal, if supplies were not furnished as they ought by Spain: and also, that a part of the British troops who had marched by Caceres, being ill provided on that road, had pushed on to the hospitable frontier of Portugal, by which means his army was separated, and the divisions at a greater distance than they should be, under any circumstances, but more particularly under the circumstances

of the threatened retreat of the Spanish army from their impregnable position on the Tagus.

Incidents, trivial in comparison with the great event of the reconquest of two kingdoms, but valuable as illustrating the peculiar love of justice, which was innate in the great man to whom those kingdoms looked for their redemption, here claim admission. The importunities of Lord Wellesley, and decided measures of Sir Arthur, at length induced the junta to make some effort to furnish the British soldiers with those necessities they required; among other things, a number of shirts and sheets were sent to Merida, for hospital use. The persons who brought them ran away with their mules, lest the British officers might compel them to remove some of the sick or wounded; so that it was impossible to ascertain who was entitled to payment for the supplies. Nine carts also arrived from Seville, with biscuits for the army, the carts being marked as intended for the service of the British.

Sir Arthur lost not a moment in applying to the proper authorities for information, both as to the expense of these articles, and the persons who were to be paid for them; and as he was probably about to take the carts over the frontier with his wounded men, and employ them in the Portuguese territory, if the Spanish government considered that he ought not to enjoy that advantage, these carts should be returned— notwithstanding, that if the people of Portugal had behaved so illiberally, and adopted the same principle, when the British army entered Spain, they could not have made one day's march within the Spanish territory. Having relieved his conscience from the oppressive feeling that injustice might possibly be attributed to his motives or his actions, he prepared for the resumption of his march towards Badajoz, with the intention of consolidating the greater part of his army within the Spanish frontier, in order to be within easy journeys of Abrantes, Santarem, and Lisbon, where his principal magazines were. The junta now offered to confer upon the British general, the command of a corps of twelve thousand men; which he respectfully declined, not conceiving it prudent that a



single link should remain, by which the British government might be bound to co-operate with the army of Spain. It is not improbable that a feeling of disgust toward the Spanish army generally might have entered into Sir Arthur's reasons for declining this new command. But while he refused, absolutely, the command of the Spanish corps, he gave his opinion in favour of maintaining a strong Spanish force on the frontier, in the immediate vicinity of his army, as the British must necessarily be the foundation of any offensive operation the government might be desirous to undertake, and the proper place of his army would then be on the left of the whole, issuing from the frontiers of Portugal. But it was a suspicion of General Wellesley's, built upon no weak grounds, that the junta were not disposed to leave a larger force than twelve thousand men on the frontier, where a larger body was most desirable, to obviate the designs of Soult upon Ciudad Rodrigo, because they considered less of military defence, and military operations, than of political intrigues and trifling political objects; because, also, should the army on the frontier be strengthened, the junta of Estramadura would insist upon the command being given to the Duke of Albuquerque, an honest man and gallant soldier, while the junta of Seville, viewing an army as an instrument of mischief only, thought that the larger force would be safer in the hands of Venegas, whom they considered a pliant, willing minister of their wishes. Sir Arthur mentions a very characteristic trait, in pointing out Spanish inconsistency to his brother. As to the Portuguese troops, whom the Spaniards with so much effrontery required to remain in Spain or to return with the British, he observed, "I shall no more allow them, than I shall the British troops, to enter Spain again, unless I have some solid ground for believing that they would be supplied as they ought to be; for these troops were worse treated than the British by the Spanish civil officers, and obliged to quit Spain from want of food. It is a curious circumstance, that the cabildo of Ciudad Rodrigo actually refused to allow Beresford's corps to have thirty thousand, out of one hundred thousand pounds of biscuit, which I had prepared

there, in case the operations of the army should be directed to that quarter, and for which the British commissary had paid ; and they seized the biscuit, on the ground that debts due to the town of Ciudad Rodrigo, by the British under Sir John Moore, had not been paid, although one of the objects of the mission of the same commissary was to settle the accounts, and discharge those debts ; but this same cabildo will call lustily for assistance, as soon as they shall perceive the intention of the enemy to attack them.”

From Lobon, which he reached on the second of September, Sir Arthur wrote to Sir Robert Wilson,\* expressing much

\* This gallant and distinguished officer is the youngest son of an eminent historical painter, Benjamin Wilson, who disputed the palm with Hudson and Ramsey, the two most popular artists of that day. He was born at his father's house in Great Queen-street, London, in the year 1777, and received his education at the public schools of Winchester and Westminster, at the latter of which, an anecdote of his early predilection for the profession of arms is preserved. Having heard that a grand review was to be held at Cæsar's camp on Bagshot-heath, regardless of consequences, he broke away from his form, hired a pony with all the money he was possessed of, and hastened to the scene of splendour and delight. From the ability which he displayed at school, his father designed him for the study of the law, but fate ordered events otherwise, and in 1793, when but sixteen years of age, he joined the Duke of York's army in Flanders as a volunteer. His brother-in-law, Colonel Boswell, was employed and fell in that unfortunate campaign ; and it was to the affection and generosity of Mrs. Boswell, his sister, that young Wilson was indebted for the means of pushing his military fortune, as his father had died before he entered the army. He soon became entitled to a commission, and being made cornet in the fifteenth dragoons, was one of the six officers who, with one hundred and seventy dragoons commanded by Major Aylet, attacked and cut their way through ten thousand Frenchmen, at the siege of Landrecy, killing one thousand two hundred, and taking three pieces of cannon. This act of heroism saved Francis II. of Germany, from being taken prisoner, and was rewarded by the emperor with the present of a gold medal to each officer, and admission into the order of Maria Theresa. On his return to England, Sir Robert espoused a daughter of Colonel Belford, and niece of Sir Adam Williamson, and served as aide-de-camp to Major-General St. John, in the Irish rebellion of 1798. In 1799, he again followed the Duke of York to Holland ; but obtaining a majority in Hompesch's mounted riflemen, he proceeded to Egypt in 1801. Returning home, he published an account of that campaign, in which he animadverted severely on the character of Buonaparte ; this called forth a reply from Sebastiani, and produced so much acrimony, that it has often been imagined Sir Robert's volumes were accessory to the kindling

anxiety for the defence of Ciudad Rodrigo, which he considered it probable Soult would besiege, an event of the most mis-

of that conflagration, which soon after flamed out over Europe. Roworth, the printer, is supposed to have been the real cause of the mischief that ensued, by copying into the work some exaggerated Turkish stories, reflecting upon the first consul, for it was of these insinuations that Buonaparte complained to British government. That these strictures were untrue, Sir Robert partly confessed in the year 1815, by stating, that *when they were published*, he believed them to be founded on fact. In 1804, he published "an Inquiry into the present state of the British forces," in which he reprobates the system of corporal punishment in the army.

For some time subsequent to 1804, he held the situation of field-officer in the western counties, from which he was again taken into active service, and assisted at the capture of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1806 he accompanied Lord Hutchinson on a secret mission to Russia, and was present in all the battles fought by the allies, from the engagements at Pultusk to that of Freidland. Upon the signing of the treaty of Tilsit, he was received by the Emperor Alexander with marks of distinguished favour. In 1811 appeared his narrative of the contest between France and the allied powers, under the title of "An Account of the Campaigns in Poland in 1806 and 1807, with remarks on the Character and Composition of the Russian army." In 1808 he was despatched to Portugal, where he raised the Lusitanian legion, and entitled himself to the warmest praises of Lord Wellington. He was, however, sent to Russia in 1812, as British military correspondent, and was with the allied armies in every action that took place from that period until the close of the war. At the battle of Lutzen, he stormed the village of Gross Gorchon, and continued to hold it at the close of the day. On the establishment of the general peace, Sir Robert visited Paris, and took part in the liberation of Lavalette, for which he was censured in the general orders issued by the Duke of York, but found support under this punishment in the testimony of an approving conscience, and the unanimous applause of Europe. Controversy in literature was as much the lot of Wilson, as contest in the field; his "Sketch of the Military and Political Power of Russia" brought upon him a virulent attack from the Quarterly Review to which he replied with spirit and ability. The South American, struggling for liberty, next attracted his attention, and, proceeding to Colombia, he endeavoured to co-operate with Bolivar in effecting that object; but he very soon abandoned this project, and, returning to England, was elected to parliament for the borough of Southwark, when he supported liberal politics, voting for reform and retrenchment. In addition to these anti-ministerial views, he espoused the cause of Queen Caroline; and his exertions to prevent the effusion of blood at her funeral, being mis-represented, he was dismissed from the king's service. His pecuniary loss attending this harsh sentence, was remedied by a public subscription amounting to several thousands. After this unpleasant event, he visited Paris, but was desired by the police to quit France in three days. In 1823, notwithstanding that British subjects were prohibited from taking any part in the war between France and

chievous tendency to the common cause. He wished that Wilson would maintain his ground as long as he was able, with a view to obstruct that object of the enemy, and, if he should fail, then to take up the boats at Villa Velha out of the river, to secure a passage for the British. On the following day, September the third, the head-quarters reached Badajoz,\* and continued in that neighbourhood until the middle of December following. Hitherto the British army had encountered the best disciplined troops in Europe, and defeated them gallantly; they had sustained the most cruel, heartless ill-usage, yet sunk not under its weight, but Providence (the only enemy to whom they ever would have yielded) now placed them under afflictions which human energies were unable to resist. This was a species of epidemic, supposed to arise from the

Spain, Sir Robert entered the latter country, joined the Constitutionalists, received a commission from the Cortes, was wounded at Corunna, and, when his party was crushed, fled to Lisbon: being refused an asylum there, he proceeded to Cadiz, where he remained until it surrendered to the French. His conduct in the Spanish constitutional war, offended the crowned heads of Europe; and the emperors of Russia and Austria, the kings of Prussia and Portugal, deprived him of the orders which they had formerly conferred upon him. He now returned to his native land, was again chosen to parliament for Southwark in 1826, but, ceasing to support reform, he lost the subsequent election. King William IV., restored Sir Robert Wilson to his rank in the British service, at the recommendation of his ministers.

\* The following observations are appended to the original MS. of the Wellington despatches.—“There never was a position better calculated than this, for the purposes of defending Spain and Portugal. The French had, from the end of August, not less than from seventy to ninety thousand men disposable: they have since destroyed two armies, which it was thought proper to expose to their attack: yet they have not been able to advance, or to gain any solid advantage, beyond that of destroying the Spaniards. The fact is, that the British army had saved Spain and Portugal during this year. The Spaniards have no army now that is complete, excepting thirteen thousand men under the Duke of Albuquerque in Estremadura; and yet nothing can be done by the French after all their victories. What would have been the relative state of the two contending parties, if the Spaniards had been tolerably prudent, and had acted as they were advised to act? The advantage of the position at Badajoz was, that the British army was centrally posted, in reference to all the objects the enemy might have in view: and, at any time, by a junction with a Spanish corps on its right, or a Portuguese or Spanish corps on its left, it could prevent the enemy from undertaking any thing, excepting with a much larger force than they could allot to any one object.”

malaria of this unhealthy district. The valley of the Guadiana is peculiarly insalubrious in the autumnal months, when the river ceases to be a stream, and noxious vapours arise from the detached pools of stagnant water that remain in the deepest hollows of the torrent's bed. The natives suffer much inconvenience from this state of the atmosphere, and strangers are still more susceptible of disease from its effects. The cessation of the soldier's active habits and circulation of the bile through the system, was soon attended by intermitting ague and fever. It was, unfortunately, impossible to procure any regular supply of wine and spirits for the army generally, and even the hospitals were but scantily furnished, while numbers of the convalescents died from want of Peruvian bark; the number of medical attendants also was totally insufficient for the lamentably increasing amount of sick. A second time since the march from Jaraicejo, the fiery fever fastened on the general himself, but his excellent constitution and abstemious habits repelled the insidious enemy after a short struggle of a few days. Seven thousand patients were prostrate in the hospitals established around Badajoz, of whom two-thirds died; and the sands of the Guadiana, like the snow-storms of Russia, proved more fatal to a brave army, than the swords of their enemies: so great was the mortality, so malignant the character of this distemper, that the natives, unwilling to believe that ordinary causes produced such extensively fatal consequences, ascribed the extensive prevalence of the malady amongst the army to the eating of unripe fruit, and to a mischievous species of mushroom which grows in the vale. Here, combating with fate, Sir Arthur Wellesley sat down to watch over the sick bed of his companions, and while he endeavoured to soothe their sufferings by his generous feeling and tender care, gave the best powers of his mind to the consideration of future plans of operation—to the most judicious line of conduct for the allies—to the best mode of procuring regular supplies, without relying in any degree on the Spaniards—to the defence of Portugal—to the ill-fated expedition fitted out by his country to the shores of Holland—to questions of military



manœuvre, foreign and domestic politics, to the commissariat and finance, and every subject in which a soldier or a statesman can be supposed to feel an immediate interest. The Portuguese army, under Marshal Beresford, withdrew simultaneously with the British, crossed the frontier, and went into cantonments.\*

\* “ The Portuguese army would have been ruined, if they had remained longer in the field. They wanted clothing, and every description of equipment ; they were raw recruits, detested serving in Spain, where they were ill-treated, and deserted in large numbers during the short time they were in that country. There are now good grounds for hope that something will be made of them.”  
—*Original Note to Memorandum of Operations, &c.*

## CHAP. IV.

THE BRITISH ARMY HUTTED NEAR BADAJOZ—THE SPANIARDS, UNDER EGUIA, BREAK UP FROM DELEYTOSA, AND ENCAP AT TRUXILLO—WELLINGTON FAVOURS RELIGIOUS TOLERATION—IS RAISED TO THE PEERAGE—REMONSTRATES WITH THE JUNTA OF ESTRE-MADURA UPON THEIR INSINCERITY—DEFEATS THE STRATAGEM OF LORD MACDUFF, AND THE MARQUESS DE MALPESINA—CONSPIRACY TO DEPOSE THE SUPREME JUNTA DETECTED BY THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY—THE SPANISH GENERAL INTERCEPTS LORD WELLINGTON'S PRIVATE LETTERS, AND IMPEDES THE EXCHANGE OF FRENCH AND ENGLISH PRISONERS—WELLINGTON VISITS LISBON, AND EXAMINES INTO ITS CAPABILITIES OF DEFENCE—PROCEEDS TO CADIZ, WHERE MARQUIS WELLESLEY EMBARKS FOR ENGLAND—REFUSES TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE SPANISH ARMY—AFFAIR OF TAMANES—AREIZAGA DEFEATED AT OCANA—INVASION OF ANDALUSIA—FALL OF SEVILLE—ABLE CONDUCT OF ALBUQUERQUE IN SUCCOURING CADIZ—BRITISH ARMY CONTINUE INACTIVE—EXTRAORDINARY IGNORANCE OF THE CHARACTER AND PLANS OF LORD WELLINGTON PREVAILS IN ENGLAND—UNGRACIOUS CONDUCT OF THE OPPOSITION PARTY IN PARLIAMENT—THE CITY OF LONDON PETITION PARLIAMENT AGAINST GRANTING A PENSION TO LORD WELLINGTON—CHANGE IN PUBLIC OPINION—SUCCOURS SENT TO PORTUGAL—THE SPANIARDS UNSUCCESSFUL IN THEIR MILITARY OPERATIONS—ASTORGA AND CIUDAD RODRIGO FALL—AFFAIR OF THE COA—ALMEIDA INVESTED.—1809—1810.

INSATIABLE pride, when successful in its object, is often pardoned, and even sometimes admired, but unlimited arrogance has never excited any other feeling than that of decided contempt. Had the presumption of the Spaniards and of the junta that misruled them, originated in that chivalrous pride that made them reckless of life, when liberty or honour was the prize to be fought for, the world might possibly forgive them: but when the cowardice of the Spanish army, treachery of many Spanish officers, and intrigues of the Spanish government, are called to mind, disgust for the national character could alone have been the result, when the central junta expressed indifference as to the military opinion of Sir Arthur Wellesley, pretended to disregard further British co-operation, and had the folly to undertake the direction of their own rude levies, and order them to advance against the enemy. The pettishness, so disgraceful to a national assembly, that dictated this rash conduct, made but little impression upon the great man who now, in his camp at Badajoz, pondered over the present care and restoration of his army, the future salvation of the kingdom of Portugal, and the everlasting glory of his native land. Regard-

less of their ill-conceived projects, so long as they did not endanger the security of his position, or the interests of the general cause, Sir Arthur gave his whole attention, and the concentrated energies of his patient and comprehensive mind, to preparations for the ensuing campaign. In his position at Badajoz he had many minor difficulties to contend with, which were all intimately connected with the individual and general happiness of his men. A retreat is always discouraging to an army, particularly to one that has been victorious, and generally affords the men too many opportunities of committing depredations. The act of violence is to be primarily regretted, but the insubordination that always ensues, becomes still more deplorable. The British, although now comfortably huddled\* considered and felt that they were in retreat, and the usual consequences of that impression were the result. The rash movements of the Spaniards, who had broken up from their strong position at Deleytosa, transferred their head-quarters to Truxillo, and despatched the bestpart of their army to La Carolina, rather increased the disappointment of the British soldier, who viewed these operations as advancing against the enemy. Sir Arthur Wellesley remonstrated against the imprudence of their conduct, and felt the danger to which his position might thereby be exposed; but the junta affected to disregard his opinion, and as to the hazardous consequences, himself alone foresaw or understood them. Inconsistence cannot be more remarkably illustrated than by the arguments which the junta employed on this occasion, to shield themselves from the just indignation of the British and Portuguese: they declared the impossibility of continuing their head-quarters in the vicinity of Deleytosa, owing to the exhausted state of the country on the left bank of the Tagus, although they positively denied the truth of the same argument, when urged by the British general as the cause of his retiring from the same position. Another and still more flagrant act of baseness and ingratitude, was that of throwing

\* The following were the positions occupied by the British near Badajoz in the month of September 1809. Badajoz, Merida, Montijo, Puebla de la Calzada, Talavera Real, Campo Mayor, Albuquerque, La Roca, Elvas, Olivença, Villa Vellha.

obstructions in the way of releasing several British officers from captivity, by an exchange for French officers, whom the Spaniards had taken on the road from Zamora to Valladolid, which they not only opposed by endeavouring to prevent all communication upon the subject between Soult and Sir Arthur Wellesley, but by stopping all the messengers sent out by the British to make inquiries.

During the inactivity of the army in their cantonments at Badajoz, several questions, of importance to the comfort of the officers, the soldiers, their wives and children, relating both to spiritual and temporal matters, were submitted to the decision of General Wellesley; and his judgments are curious, as exhibiting a clearness of conception upon every variety of subject that is mixed up in the great assemblage of human wants and habits, and a most accurate and intimate knowledge of military laws. Upon the question of the propriety of soldiers attending Roman Catholic worship, he replied, "The soldiers of the army have permission to go to mass so far as this—they are forbidden to go into the churches during the performance of divine service, *unless they go to assist in the performance of the service*. I could not do more, for, in point of fact, soldiers cannot attend mass, except in Ireland. The thing now stands exactly as it ought: any man may go to mass who chooses, and nobody makes any inquiry about it." The liberality and toleration here displayed always belonged to Sir Arthur's character; he expressed sentiments precisely similar to those in defending the introduction of Dr. Duigenan into the Irish privy-council; in restoring Mr. Gifford to a situation from which he had been illiberally removed; and, in inducing General Sir John Moore to become reconciled to Lord Castlereagh, and undertake the command of the army in the Peninsula. Another difficulty, referred to Sir Arthur for solution, was the claim of officers' and soldiers' wives and children to rations: the general decided that their title was good, and he also said he "saw no objection to the granting of similar allowances to the wives and children of clerks employed in the service, provided they were British born." This was the law of the

case, to which the humanity of the commander-in-chief appended this further explanation, "I beg you will understand, that I am desirous of extending to the wives of the officers and soldiers every indulgence, to the fullest extent allowed by his majesty's regulations: but I can suffer no abuse, and every appearance of abuse must be checked immediately." These two interesting cases have been selected from a multitude presented to him for judgment while the head quarters of the British continued at Badajoz.

While yet the hand of sickness pressed heavily on him, the cares of his high calling engaged his deep attention; and, before the ingratitude of Spain could have been forgotten, a gratifying communication reached him from his sovereign, whom he had so faithfully served, but who had not neglected him in his extremity; for at this precise moment it was, (the twelfth of September, 1809,) that the following letter from the Duke of Portland, then first lord of the treasury, was brought to the camp at Badajoz:—"My dear Sir Arthur, To congratulate you upon your victories would be so feebly to express my sense of your services, that I must indulge, in the first instance, the gratitude which I feel to be due to you, and request your acceptance of my best thanks for the credit as well as the service you have done to your country, which I trust will make all the impression which it ought to do on the minds of all descriptions of persons in the kingdom. Nothing could be more gracious than the king's acceptance of your services, or more immediate and decisive than his approbation of creating you a viscount. Long may you enjoy that honour, and be placed, for the advantage and honour of your country, in those situations which may enable you to add to your own. London, 22d of August, 1809." To this Sir Arthur replied, by expressing the gratification he felt at the receipt of his grace's communication; his hope that he might not at any future period prove himself unworthy of it; and thanked the Duke for having suggested to his majesty to confer upon him this high reward. However courtesy demanded, or compliance with etiquette required that Sir Arthur's letter of thanks should be transmitted



to the premier, for the suggestion of this manifestation of royal favour, it was to Lord Castlereagh solely, his early, his intimate, and admiring friend, that he was indebted on this occasion. This is clearly proved by Sir Arthur's letter of the same date to his noble friend, in which he says, "I am very much obliged to you for your kind letter of the twentieth of August, as well as for the mark of the king's approbation, which *your friendship for me* has induced you to suggest to your colleagues to recommend to the king to confer upon me." Proud, but not vain of his justly merited reward, richly as he deserved to be cherished by some few rays of royal favour, he yet declined to adopt the title, or to employ the signature of nobility, until either the gazette arrived, or a special notification equivalent to it. The notification was delivered on the sixteenth of September, and the first letter he ever signed as a member of the House of Lords was addressed to Mr. Villiers, afterwards Earl of Clarendon, to which the following playful postscript was attached, "This is the first time I have signed my new name. Would the regency give me leave to have a *chasse* at Villa Viçosa?" His indefatigable exertions for the restoration of strict discipline, his parental care of every individual attached to the army, were not suspended for a moment by the acquisition of his sovereign's marked approbation. A debt of justice he remembered was due to Major Middlemore, who succeeded to the command of the forty-eighth at Talavera, after Colonel Donellan was wounded, and Lord Wellington's reasons for pressing that officer's claims, deserve to be recorded, "I cannot," he observes, "avoid again drawing the attention of the commander in chief to the claims of Major Middlemore; the forty-eighth regiment distinguished itself at Talavera, particularly when the command devolved on Major Middle-

\* He was raised to the peerage on the twenty-sixth of August, 1809, by the titles of Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera, and of Wellington in the county of Somerset. The motto of the family was "*Unica virtus necessaria*," *Virtue alone is necessary*; for which Lord Wellington substituted, "*Porro unum necessarium*," *One thing more is necessary*. This latter, however, has been laid aside for the following, "*Virtutis fortuna comes*."

more : and I hope that the claims of an officer senior to him, who is already a brevet lieutenant-colonel, and to whom this commission can be no object, *as he never joins his regiment or does any duty with this army*, will not be preferred to the substantial claims of Major Middlemore. I know nothing of Major Middlemore, *excepting as a soldier* : and I should not recommend him, if I did not believe that his promotion would give general satisfaction, and that he really deserves it."

At this particular moment the ingratitude of the junta manifested itself in a new form : chagrined at the independent and decided conduct of the British commander-in-chief, they meanly became the medium of forwarding a memorial, from the inhabitants of Puebla la Calzada, desiring that the British army might be removed from the immediate vicinity of their village. This unjust and ungenerous remonstrance, whether it ever did actually originate with the villagers, or that their names had been made use of by the junta to shield themselves beneath, was not communicated to Sir A. Wellesley directly, or in that candid mode of transacting business, of which he had so often but so vainly given an example to the Spaniards, but was sent by the local government of Estramadura to the central junta, who forwarded the disgraceful document to the British ambassador at Seville, by whom its contents were communicated to the commander in chief. The reply of Sir Arthur is amongst the few instances in which that officer was ever known to condescend to the use of sarcasm, as an argument, although he did not rest his defence upon such a basis. He reminded the local junta that at their own request he had so distributed his troops, that the country should not find it difficult to feed them, and that he should be enabled to re-assemble them, in case the movements of the enemy should render it necessary, without any loss of time : he informed them, that he had chosen La Calzada, as the most proper quarter for the three battalions which he had placed there, because there was no wood in the neighbourhood in which

\* Afterwards Major-General Middlemore, and governor of St. Helena.

the troops could find shelter, excepting olive or other fruit-trees, which he did not wish to destroy: had there been wood and water, he would have preferred hutting the men in the wood, as he had done at Talavera Real, and the vicinity of Badajoz. "It appears, however," observed Sir Arthur, "that the inhabitants of La Calzada, although *with the most patriotic sentiments, and with the utmost devotion to the cause of their country*, complain of the inconvenience they sustain, and they enumerate also the quantity of provision with which they have supplied the troops; but they have forgotten to state that they are regularly paid for every thing they give. The inhabitants of this country, and Spaniards in general, have formed a very erroneous estimate of the nature of the contest in which they are engaged, if they suppose it can be carried on without inconvenience to any individual in the country. It not only must be attended with personal inconvenience, but, unless every individual in the country shall devote himself, his property, and everything he can command, not in words and professions only, but in fact, to do what government shall order—there can be no success, and the best combined operations must fail." Having made these observations, General Wellesley informed the junta that he could not consent to their request, and that La Calzada must continue to endure the hardships of which its inhabitants so loudly complained, or the Spanish nation must suffer what the central junta would probably deem a greater evil. This contemptible application being thus disposed of by the adoption of a little irony, and by a decided refusal to accede to any portion of its objects, he felt, that as matters had assumed so calm an aspect, he might now venture to quit the camp at Badajoz for a few days, and make a visit to Lisbon, "where he wanted to look about, and decide finally upon a plan of operations, in case Portugal should be invaded in the autumn or winter." But, before this leave of absence was taken or enjoyed, very many communications, and of the utmost consequence to the commissariat of his own army, to the peculiar and delicate situation of Beresford, arising from the anomalous system of employing English officers in ther

Portuguese service, and to the position of imminent danger in which the Spanish army persisted in placing itself—occupied his time and exertions.

The movements of the Spanish army during the continuance of the British at Badajoz, and in fact until the retirement of the Marquis Wellesley from the Peninsula, have here been suspended, in order to preserve unbroken the personal narrative of Lord Wellington, his plans for the safety of Portugal, defence of Lisbon, and valuable correspondence with his noble brother. On the fifteenth of September he extended the benefit of his protection to the brave Marquis de la Romana, who, after all his sufferings and services, was apprehensive of violence from the central junta; and, to secure for that gallant soldier the advantage of at least an impartial trial, although he had never been guilty of disloyalty, he thus wrote to the British ambassador: “Your excellency is aware of the connexion between Romana and the people of England: and I am convinced that if you can prevent the junta from laying violent hands upon him, at least till they shall have convicted him upon trial, of evil intentions, you will do a good thing.”

The arrogance of the junta, or rather of the military parties acting under its orders, in obstructing the collection of food at the different villages, continuing unabated, Lord Wellington felt it necessary to inform the ambassador of his intention to remove his men, altogether, into the Portuguese territory, which would be attended with the advantage of more perfect concentration: he had, he considered, separated his force into too many divisions, and quartered them at distances too far apart, in order to comply, as far as was possible, with the wishes of his excellency and of the junta, in not withdrawing totally from the Spanish territory, but, by his proximity, extending some encouragement to the Spaniards from whom he had been obliged to disassociate himself.

About this period the Spanish head-quarters were at Truxillo, whither they had been removed from *want of provisions*. In their case, this plea was accepted; it was rejected by the junta, when offered by Lord Wellington. The conduct of the Spanish



army was so irregular, that their example alone would have been pernicious to the British; but, in addition to this evil, their audacity in obstructing the attainment of supplies from the villages, obliged his lordship to repeat his remonstrances, and revive his threats of withdrawing, still further, from so bad a neighbourhood as that of the Spanish head-quarters, and of retiring totally to the Portuguese side of the frontier. Of the inefficient, wild, and insubordinate condition, in which the Spanish force actually existed, Lord Wellington had been apprized by Colonel Roche, even previously to his junction with the army under Cuesta, but never having known a similar instance, and conceiving it impossible that any government could have been so extravagantly rash, as to oppose the countless and disciplined numbers of France, with such feeble weapons, he gave but little attention to Roche's report; he now, however, had practical proof of the truth and accuracy of that officer's statement. The insubordinate state of the allies, as well as the monstrous amount of the enemy's forces, both which facts had been carefully concealed from the ambassador, were now made known to him by the commander-in-chief, who also expressed his uncertainty as to the enemy's movements; a point then of some personal interest to him, as the precarious state of his health absolutely required rest and recreation, in neither of which he dared to indulge, until he was satisfied what were the intended operations of the French. Fever had now for a whole month continued to hang upon him, and he was desirous of visiting Lisbon for change of air, of scene, of association of ideas. The operations of Soult gave him some cause of uneasiness, as that officer continued to concentrate all the disposable forces he could control into Placencia, although that movement might have been occasioned by the advance of Romana to Ciudad Rodrigo.

A circumstance of little import, beyond that of exemplifying the caution of a man who was always proverbially wary, occurred at British head-quarters on the twentieth of September. The Marquess de Malpesina and Lord Macduff arrived at Badajoz, and being admitted to an interview with Lord



Wellington, presented a letter from General Eguia, quoting one from Don Antonio de Cornel, stating "that the British ambassador had settled, that a defensive position should be taken up on the banks of the Guadiana, and desiring his lordship to arrange the positions to be occupied by the troops in concert with them." His first reason for refusal, marks the upright, honest, great, and decided character of the man : without questioning the veracity of the individuals, or the authenticity of their pretended warrant, he replied, "I cannot enter upon such an arrangement, *because I do not conceive the position to be a good one.*" But, Lord Macduff demanding whether he declined to execute an arrangement settled by the British ambassador, he proceeded to analyze their commission, and concluded, rightly, that it was spurious. He therefore dismissed these simple emissaries, and even purposely neglected making their false mission a subject of complaint.

It may frequently have been observed, that Wellington possessed, among many other qualities that fitted him in an special manner for the command of an army, a quickness of perception as to character, and a memory tenacious in the extreme, of personal appearance, and of what may be termed local accompaniments. In some instances he had addressed despatches, containing directions for carrying into effect some general order, in a district, every feature and all the distances in which, he described with the most unerring exactness : on other occasions, he has directed a change in regimental discipline, and named the corporals and privates whom he wished to be employed, in the first instance, to lead and instruct the rest. Those that were higher in rank were more easily understood, or, at all events, afforded more frequent and palpable occasions for the development of character ; and it is found, from time to time, that the most faithful portraits of every Spanish officer, whom the sorrows and the sufferings of his country had raised to any eminence, were occasionally sketched by him with a strength that gave the most perfect idea of the originals. Cuesta's character has been often told. Lord Wellington's brief commentary on Eguia's plans, "that they were all rank

nonsense," and his declining all further correspondence with that presumptuous officer, unfold sufficiently his estimate of the amount of genius and honour in that individual: of Albuquerque, he writes to his brother—"Although he is *pronè* by many, among others by Whittingham and Frere, and is feared by the junta, you will find him out." He considered the Marquis de la Romana to be "the best he had seen among the Spaniards;" he doubted his talents at the head of an army, but looked on him as a sensible man, and one who had seen much of the world.

The correspondence that was conducted between these illustrious men develops, in the most entire manner, the folly, rashness, and presumption of the Spanish central government; and removes every doubt as to the propriety of marching the British army over the Spanish border. The people, the peasantry, the rabble-army of Spain, begun to acknowledge what they must long before have felt, that their allies had been grossly deceived by the junta, and treated most unworthily. Accustomed, in the ill-fought field, to attribute all blame to their general, by analogy of reasoning, they ascribed every failure, blunder, and act of impropriety, in matters of policy, to their executive government. From the highest pinnacle of hope and confidence, they were frequently cast into the depths of despair; they now believed that Wellington, and Wellington alone, could save their country from ruin, and it was of his services the treacherous intriguing junta had deprived them. They admired the just indignation of the hero, who had retired in pity rather than anger, and they called for vengeance on the authors of so much injury to the common cause. The walls of Badajoz were placarded daily with verses, of little pretension to the right rules of poesy, but conveying, very intelligibly, the feeling of the community towards the members of the junta. The contents of one of those placards accusing the government of treachery, is well remembered—"Peace between France and the central junta:—*Articles*—the Tagus abandoned—the English disgusted—the army lost—Badajoz sold." Their wrath, however, was not appeased; the outraged feelings of the

country were not assuaged by this anonymous mode of declaring their suspicions; it was necessary still to punish the guilty. This last project was actually undertaken, and a conspiracy formed to seize the members of the junta, and transmit them to Manilla.

Judging from the ill-treatment which the British army received from that corrupt body, the conspirators calculated upon the support of Lord Wellington, and, arguing from the declaration of Marquis Wellesley "that Spain had proved untrue to our alliance," they reckoned upon the ambassador's support also; but the same moral standard proved inapplicable to both nations, for the first of these individuals had always maintained so high a name for honour, justice, and humanity, that no one had the courage to invite him to become a conspirator; and those who had the temerity to build too certainly upon the indignant language of the ambassador, experienced his mercy, but forfeited his respect for ever. Vengeance on the part of the Estramaduran junta, who conceived themselves betrayed by the junta of Seville, and a wide-spread feeling of discontent, brought the conspiracy against the supreme council to maturity; and, when the fruit was just about to be plucked and enjoyed, a person called at the hotel of the British ambassador at Seville, and requested a private interview with his excellency. Gaining admission, he had the boldness to communicate the details of a plan, then prepared for execution, which was to consist in seizing the persons forming the supreme junta, then assembled at Seville, and in appointing a regency instead of the existing government. Lord Wellesley, understanding that the plot was to be executed that very day, detained the informant, and proceeded instantly to the office of M. de Garay, to whom he communicated the information he had just received. From De Garay's office his excellency went to the residences of those persons who had been named to him as participators in the plot, some of whom were men of the highest rank, and persuaded them to abandon a plan fraught with so injurious an example, and with such perilous consequences. His lordship did not disclose the names of the conspirators, so that the cruelty which would most

likely have been perpetrated, was thus obviated, and the junta rendered more cautious as to future measures for the government of their unhappy country. The gratitude of the junta, and perhaps of the chief conspirators, was excessive. M. de Garay expressed the sentiments of the former in language highly creditable to his associates and himself, in a letter of the third of October, addressed to Marquis Wellesley, in which he observes, "Through the medium of your excellency, the government has been informed of the desire of some persons to introduce novelties, by the use of means which are not only reprobated by the laws, but which might bring down irreparable injury on the good cause which both nations defend with so much glory. And your excellency is so deeply convinced of this truth, that when you had been informed of those projects, your communications to the government, and your individual exertions for frustrating them, have so largely contributed to that end, that the government cannot consider them with indifference, and omit giving to your excellency, in return for them, their most express thanks." This grateful language was accompanied by a desire to present to the marquis the "order of the golden fleece," which he peremptorily declined, stating "that he could not accept that high honour from an authority, whose conduct towards the interests of Spain, and of the alliance, he could not approve." The supreme junta had, on a previous occasion, offered to confer a similar honour upon his Britannic majesty, George III., but their kindness was declined in that instance also.

This narrow escape of the junta from captivity, perhaps from death, produced a serious alarm amongst the members of that body, who now sought to mitigate the hatred which their misconduct had excited, by remitting the heavy imposts which they had laid upon trading, and by the appointment of commissioners to prepare a scheme of temporary government, until a proper period for convoking the national cortes should arrive. The commissioners, who were either members of the junta, or attached to their party, suggested the formation of a supreme executive council of five persons, each member of the junta



being allowed a seat in rotation; but this scheme for recovering or acquiring popularity was a mere subterfuge, and did not include any more enlarged or liberal views than the existing form. Its fallacy was detected by Romana, who was the author of grave accusations against several individuals in the old council, charging them with undertaking army-contracts, with raising the prices of articles to be purchased by the treasury, with venality, imperiousness, and difficulty of access. He proposed, in preference, a council of regency, to consist of five persons, who were not members of the junta, and recommended the assembling of a new junta altogether; his council was to be called "The permanent Deputation of the Realm," and was a substitute for the cortes, which he expressed his anxious desire to call together with as little delay as possible. In the month of September, the Marquis Wellesley, in reply to the application of M. de Garay, also recommended the adoption of a council of regency, resembling in principle the scheme of Romana, and of which Garay professed his approbation. Although Lord Wellesley's plan was founded upon the basis of respecting privilege, and involved the ulterior idea of preserving the aristocratic system of Europe, still, as an innovation in revolutionary times, and in the centre of an excited and armed population, it awoke the caution of Wellington, who, in his letter to his brother on the subject, thus writes: "I am very uneasy respecting that part of your note to De Garay, which recommends the assembling of the cortes, because I fear they may be worse than anything we have had yet. I acknowledge that I have a great dislike to a new popular assembly. Even our own ancient one would be quite unmanageable, and, in these days, would ruin us, if the present generation had not before its eyes the example of the French revolution; and if there were not certain rules and orders for its guidance and government, the knowledge and use of which, render safe, and successfully direct its proceedings. But how will all this work in the cortes, in the state in which Spain now is?" It has been the constant object of these memoirs to demonstrate, from practical proofs, that the British hero, from



his earliest years, was possessed of certain qualifications, that fitted him in an especial manner for command, and acquired for him unbounded confidence with those who were subjected to his control. One of the most valuable amongst many was, consistence in the formation of opinions, upon grave consideration, and the maintenance of those matured views through life. It has been already shown, while he discharged the duties of a civil employment in Ireland, that he favoured universal toleration in matters of religion: the same principle he advocated and acted upon in Spain, in permitting the Catholic soldiers to attend mass, which was actually contrary to law; and it will be hereafter shown, that to the unalterable opinion of this great man, and to this solely, the British Roman Catholics are indebted for that act of parliament by which they were finally emancipated. A second amiable quality, to which the character of Wellington is clearly entitled, has been frequently alluded to, that is, his disapprobation of capital punishment, in every case where such was consistent with good government: he has suspended sentence of death in numerous instances, when a merciless tribunal had too hastily decreed it; and, ascending in the scale of appropriating punishment to crime, has, on an infinite number of occasions, insisted upon a revision of sentence by courts martial, in order to obtain, in the way most salutary to the ends of justice, a mitigation of too harsh a penalty.

Had Wellington never undertaken the high office of prime minister of England, the possession of those high qualities which he has been already shown to have possessed, would never have been denied to him, and probably no party in the empire would ever have whispered an ungrateful sentiment against his fame: but history proves that even in a private station, when the agitation of war has subsided, the greatest heroes have not been able to retain that popularity to which their eminent military services entitled them. Marlborough affords a remarkable instance in English history—the records of Greece, Rome, and Carthage are replete with others. In this view, therefore, to which all previous illustration leads, Wellington possibly consulted his own happiness by continuing a life of the most active character: he, in fact, never led a private life, and has no

private history; his years, and days, and moments have been devoted, in the most entire manner, to the service of his country; and his biography must therefore consist of an analysis of the services of a great public man, and which will unfold a sheet of light, that extends over and illumines the annals of his country for upwards of half a century. But, to return to his letter to Lord Wellesley, expressive of disapprobation at the assembling of the cortes; this remarkable composition establishes, in the most distinct manner, his love of order and subordination in the councils of a state, his dislike of change in such great assemblies, particularly when the country was agitated by any peculiar political feelings; and the extreme caution which he considered necessary in all cases of senatorial reform. It was precisely twenty-three years after, that he uttered the same unaltered sentiments in the House of Lords, on which occasion he was accused of adopting new political views from motives of partisanship; with how little truth or justice, this passage in his despatches incontestably proves. But the investigation of his conduct as a statesman belongs to a later period of Lord Wellington's life; and this point is here alluded to, as one of those links in a lengthened chain of demonstration, whereby consistence in all his public views and actions, shall be clearly established. In Wellington's deliberate judgment, and calmly formed opinion; impressed too, and naturally, with an early admiration of a mixed monarchical form of government, partial from his inborn temperament to order, discipline, justice, respect for well-regulated ancient institutes and vested rights, while he yielded moderately, to Lord Wellesley's desire to call together the cortes in such perilous times, it was still necessary to qualify his assent by expressing a preference for a Bourbon, if we could find one, for a regent, to the wild regime of the cortes. "At all events," said his lordship, "I wish you would advise the junta empowered to invoke the cortes, that they should suggest rules for their proceedings, and secure the freedom of their deliberations; as, in case of accidents, they may know that the rock upon which such a vessel was likely to split, was not unforeseen."

Once more, during the short period of Lord Wellesley's

diplomatic services in Spain, Lord Wellington felt compelled to communicate to him an instance of gross misconduct, scandalous distrust, and the meanest jealousy. Having sent several flags of truce to the French quarters, relative to the wounded officers and soldiers, General Eguia was so ill-bred as to open all Lord Wellington's letters, as well as the answers of the French general, with the exception of two that were sealed, and examine their contents. Unwilling to impede the negociation for an exchange of the wounded men, by the least expression of his disgust at the vulgar inquisitiveness and contemptible suspicion of the Spaniards, he immediately communicated the contents of the sealed letters to Eguia, and desired that, in future, he would satisfy his curiosity by breaking the seals of any communication that might pass, by flag of truce, between the head-quarters of the French and English armies. However, although the Spanish general expressed himself perfectly satisfied with Lord Wellington's conduct, he most unreasonably detained the messenger who brought General Kellerman's letter, under the pretence of waiting for Lord Wellington's reply, well knowing that none was required or intended to be returned. The Marquis of Romana, who respected national character, and had witnessed too much of human misery not to understand the blessings of liberty, felt so deeply for the honour of his country, and the treatment of the wounded captives, that he immediately communicated to Lord Wellesley the treacherous conduct of Eguia in detaining Kellerman's messenger, M. de Turenne. Apprehensive of exciting any irritation against Eguia, placed as he was, or of creating disgust for the Spanish character in England, by making this heinous offence the subject of a despatch, he prudently, and considerately addressed a private letter to the ambassador, entreating his kind offices in obtaining the unoffending messenger's release.

Now, as he prepared to visit Lisbon, Lord Wellington increased the number of his messengers, multiplied still more exceedingly his numerous despatches, upon still more varied but important subjects, nor did he suffer the smallest claim

upon his official duties, or private courtesy, to escape its share of his attention. Having received the king's commands to invest Lieut.-Gen. Sherbrooke with the order of the Bath, he lost not a moment in acquainting that officer with the honour his majesty had conferred upon him, and the pleasure he himself should derive from presenting him with the order before he left head-quarters for Lisbon; and he actually postponed his departure some days, to contribute to the gratification of that gallant soldier, who could not at an earlier moment visit head-quarters. It was at this period that he learned the intended departure of Mr. Villiers, whose sound understanding, and generosity of character, he had always ardently admired; and he thus briefly but feelingly alludes to the change that was about to take place, in a letter to Marshal Beresford: "I regret the departure of Villiers much. My brother will do everything in his power: but we shall miss Villiers often, and *particularly in our moments of difficulty*. His affection for this meritorious public servant was also shown in a despatch addressed to Mr. Villier's himself at the same time, in which he speaks emphatically of the loss Portugal must necessarily sustain from his retirement at that critical juncture.

On the seventh of October, Lord Wellington quitted head-quarters at Badajoz, and reached Lisbon on the tenth: as he passed along the road, every object, animate and inanimate, attracted his attention, and found a lasting recordance in his tenacious memory: some carts belonging to a light dragoon regiment, that were employed in drawing the luggage of one of the officers, caught his rapid observation, and became one of the first subjects of investigation on his arrival at Lisbon. A more gratifying display to the eye and the mind of one who had been "nurtured in the camp," presented itself on his entry into the city—this was, the first dragoons, which he declared to General Payne to be, perhaps, the finest regiment he had ever seen. The regiment was strong, in high order, and the horses in good condition. Many questions, both civil and military, were again submitted to the decision of the British commander-in-chief during his short stay at Lisbon, and in some

instances he interfered for the purposes of obliging the courts martial, at that garrison, to revise improperly-worded sentences which they had inadvertently passed.

By desire of the regent of Portugal, the memorial of Don Evaristo Perez de Castro, the Spanish envoy at Lisbon, on the part of the Spanish government, desiring the co-operation of the Portuguese corps, on the frontiers of Castile, with the Spanish corps under Albuquerque, was referred to the decision of Lord Wellington, through the medium of Don Miguel Forjaz, to which his lordship replied as follows:—"From the numbers and position of the enemy in Castile and Estramadura, and from the superior discipline, composition, and efficiency of the troops, compared with those of Spain, I have long been of opinion, that the operations of the war must necessarily be defensive, on the part of the allies, and that Portugal, at least, if not Spain, ought to endeavour to avail herself of the period during which the enemy was likely to leave this country in tranquillity, to organize, discipline, and equip her army. Those objects, which are most essential, cannot be accomplished, unless the troops are kept, for some time longer, in a state of tranquillity; and I conceive they are much more important to the cause, not only of Portugal, but of the allies, than success in any desultory expedition against the French troops stationed at Salamanca. But success against this corps would not be certain, even if the Portuguese troops were to co-operate in the expedition; and, at all events, if the troops of the allies should be successful, their success must be confined to the few days which might elapse before the French corps would be reinforced, when the allied troops must retire, having failed in their object, having incurred some loss of men, and, above all, having lost time, which may, and ought to be, usefully employed in equipping, and in the formation of the troops. On those grounds, I do not recommend to the government of the kingdom, to give the assistance required on the present occasion." This explanatory reply not being acceptable to the Spanish junta, they resolved not to consider it as definitive, and, a second time, directed their resident agent at Lisbon



to importune the provisional government of Portugal for the positive and final opinion of Lord Wellington. His ultimatum was accordingly delivered on the nineteenth of October, in terms to the following effect ;—"that it was unadvisable to enter upon any operation with the Portuguese troops at that precise time, and difficult to state the exact period at which an alteration of circumstances would take place. Besides this alteration of circumstances, as referable to the state of the Portuguese troops, and the position of the enemy in Castile and Estramadura, it was observable, that other objects should be accomplished, and other arrangements made, before the Portuguese troops could enter with propriety upon operations in Spain. It was, in the first place, desirable that it should have an army with which it could co-operate, on some defined plan of operation, which all parties should have the means and will to carry into execution. Secondly, it was necessary that some means should be pointed out and fixed, by which the Portuguese troops should be subsisted in Spain, so that they might not starve, as they did when they were in that country lately, or be obliged to retire from want of food. When decided answers (added his lordship) shall be given upon these points, I have no doubt I shall be enabled to tell their excellencies, the governors of the kingdom, that they have an army in a state to be sent into Spain." This reply concluded the negociation for Portuguese subsidies to Albuquerque's army, which was left, in consequence, to pursue its wild and improvident measures with Spanish resources and Spanish courage only.

It was upon the twentieth of October, 1809, and during Lord Wellington's visit to Lisbon, (ostensibly for rest, recreation, the repairing of broken health, change of scene, and of association,) that he first employed the powers of his capacious mind, applied the whole force of his great military genius, to baffle the projects of the enemy, to secure, if not the confines, the capital of Portugal, to prepare, in the possible event of being overpowered by the number of his enemies, or overtaken by misfortune, an effectual check to their advance, should the British army be again compelled to retire to their

protecting element, the sea. As retreat was the last subject he contemplated, so was it the last for which preparation was made; not that it was a matter of indifference, or unimportant, for, an orderly retreat, under pressing circumstances, is a greater test of military knowledge, than leading an attack against the enemy. Retreat dispirits, dissatisfies, and therefore disorganizes: advance inspires courage, gratifies ambition, and thereby restores discipline and combination. Looking around with the eye of the eagle, and possessed of the heart of the lion, Wellington, alone, unassisted by head or hand of friend or ally, but drawing his counsels from the vast storehouse of his own great imagination, concluded that Portugal was defensible, by securing the capital, excluding the enemy by a chain of fortified posts, and exhausting their resources by procrastination. Time would come to his assistance; famine would lend her withering aid in thinning the ranks of his opponents, and to these two wasting powers, in front of his projected lines at Torres Vedras, he trusted, for arresting the career of one hundred thousand ferocious men, for saving Portugal, and for sealing his own military renown. Having examined minutely the nature of the ground around Lisbon, with which he had long before been sufficiently familiar, and from that well-remembered acquaintance with its facilities, and peculiar fitness for a place of defence, it was, that he considered it could be rendered impregnable by a skilful line of works. These celebrated lines extended from Alhandra on the Tagus, to Torres Vedras on the ocean. It was at first intended to have occupied the plain of Castanheira, but that idea was abandoned, and the right of the lines, in consequence, thrown back to Alhandra. It is sufficient to notice in this place, the period when the glorious idea of fortifying the approaches to Lisbon, first flashed upon the mind of Lord Wellington;—to call attention to the calm, silent system of mental operations in which it originated, Colonel Fletcher of the engineers, whose assistance was indispensable, being the sole depository of the secret;—and, to observe that, seeming to forget the splendid display of military skill for which he had

just laid the foundation, he prepared to leave Lisbon, and retire to his quarters, without communicating his plans to his brother officers, or to the government of the country. In his despatch of this date, he is totally silent on the subject of Torres Vedras; and, in apologizing to the marquis Wellesley for not having attended, with his usual promptness, to that nobleman's despatches, he merely pleads in excuse, "that he had been prevented by the business he had at Lisbon," but does not allude to any unusual, new, or extraordinary cause of detention. The details of the entire plan, to which it will hereafter be requisite to revert, were communicated to Colonel Fletcher on the twentieth of October; and the arrangements for embarkation, in the event of defeat, transmitted to Vice-Admiral Berkeley six days after.

On the twenty-sixth of October, the day before his departure from Lisbon, Lord Wellington addressed a letter to Colonel Peacocke, relative to the folly and indiscretion of the young officers of the British garrison at Lisbon, who displayed a censurable thoughtlessness in their conduct in public: they interrupted the representations at the theatre, by going behind the scenes, and they walked about on the stage, during the performances. Although the complaint was urged earnestly by the manager of the theatre, and by a few officious town-councillors, the stern warrior felt, that from many of the culprits boyhood's years had not yet quite flitted; that the annoyance complained of was rather attributable to the giddy, heedless frolics of youth, than to viciousness of intention, or ignorance of the best regulations of society, and he remonstrated in consequence, more in the language of an angry father, than of an uncompromising judge. "I cannot conceive," observed his lordship, "for what reason the officers of the British army should conduct themselves at Lisbon in a manner which would not be permitted in their own country, is contrary to rule and custom in this country, and is permitted in none where there is any regulation or decency of behaviour;" then, rising from the language of remonstrance into that of irresistible authority, he adds, "The superior officers must take measures to prevent a repetition of the conduct adverted to, and the consequent complaints which

I have received, or I must take measures which will effectually prevent the character of the army, and of the British nation, from suffering by the misconduct of a few." The latter part of this communication was obviously more than sufficient, for the offence never was committed again by the individuals complained of. Having concluded his business on this occasion at Lisbon, Lord Wellington set out from that city on the twenty-seventh of October, and reached the head-quarters of the British army, which were still at Badajoz, on the twenty-ninth. At Estremoz he made a pause to rest his horses on the twenty-eighth, and from that place addressed a private letter to Lord Burghersh, mentioning, casually, that he had been at Lisbon to *settle some business there*, but does not introduce the least notice of the *reconnoissance* he made of the country in front of that place, the chief object of the correspondence being limited to an act of kindness, generosity, and humanity. Aware that he addressed an intimate friend, he unbosomed himself without reserve, and told him that "Franceschi was confined to the Alhambra, at Granada, by the Spaniards; that he wished his friend Burghersh would try to see him, and tell him that he was endeavouring to prevail on the Spanish government to consent to his exchange, but, hitherto, without success. "Give him (said Wellington) whatever money he may want, and let me know what you give him." Remaining for a few days at the head-quarters, he left again on the first of November, and reached Seville on the day following: from that city he proceeded to Cadiz, "partly to arrange money-matters with Lord Wellesley, and partly from curiosity to see that place;—"however, one good," observed his lordship, "resulted from my journey, viz. that the junta have given me an answer respecting the exchange of Franceschi\* and Turenne, and have released the officer they held in confinement at Deleytosa, so that there is now a hope of getting away some of the British officers." Leaving his noble brother at Cadiz, (from which place he embarked for England,) Lord Wellington returned to Badajoz on the evening of the thirteenth of Novem-

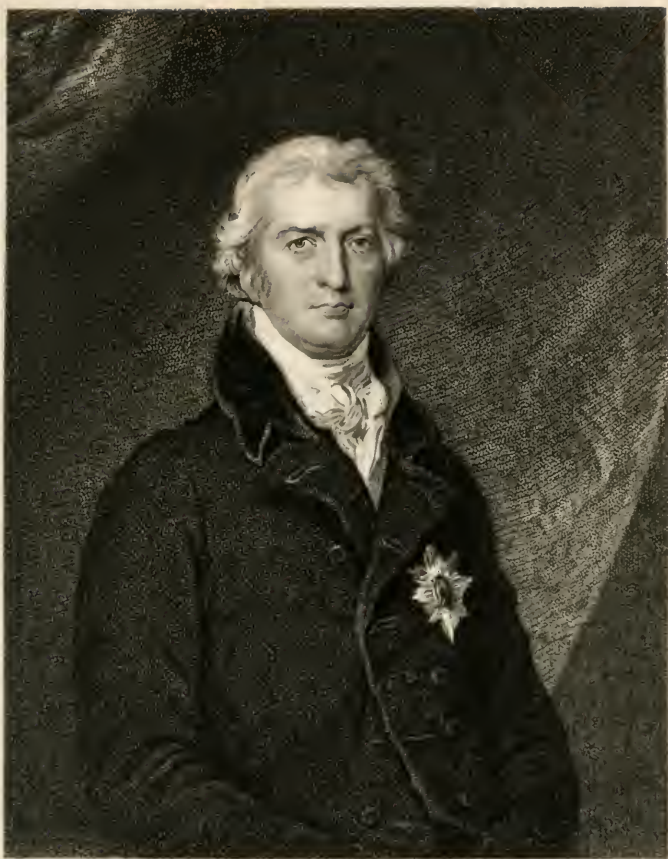
\* Vide page 112, vol. II.



ber, and, in an hour after his arrival, wrote to the Earl of Liverpool, who had succeeded Lord Castlereagh as secretary for war and colonies, inclosing cartels of exchange, which contained the names of French officers, then prisoners in England, whom he wished to be sent back to the Peninsula.

Having continued the personal narrative of Lord Wellesley's movements from the establishment of his head-quarters at Badajoz to the departure of the Marquis Wellesley from Cadiz to join the new ministry in England, it will not interrupt, but rather tend to distinguish and render clearer the simultaneous operations of the Spanish army during that period, if we return to the separation of Lord Wellington from that body, and complete the details of the Spanish campaign up to the same date. It was in the beginning of September that the British fixed their head-quarters at Badajoz, and became, in consequence, exposed to the calamitous infliction of the deadly autumn of Estramadura. The junta at first expressed the most miserable apprehensions for the fate of Spain on the retirement of the British, but, recovering their innate arrogance, and relapsing into their usual weakness, they spoke of the retreat of the enemy, of their repassing the Pyrenees, and escaping from chastisement at their hands. It was the same inordinate vanity and extravagant effrontery that prompted them to demand the co-operation of the Portuguese, which request Wellington peremptorily denied. About the middle of September, Eguia, transferring the command of ten thousand men under his orders in Estramadura, to the Duke of Albuquerque, advanced with the remainder of his army towards Venegas' head-quarters: on the thirty-first he reached La Serena, and immediately after, uniting with the fugitives whom Venegas succeeded in rallying in La Mancha, these generals found themselves at the head of fifty thousand men, of which number ten thousand were cavalry. Romana had retired from the service, and resigning the command of thirteen thousand men, whom he led from Galicia to Ciudad Rodrigo, to the Duke del Parque, he proceeded to Seville, placed himself under the protection of the Marquis Wellesley, and contributed the benefit of his





THE HON<sup>BLE</sup> ROBERT BANKS JENKINSON EARL OF LIVERPOOL R. S. J.

*Liverpool*



prudent advice to the regeneration of the national government. Trusting in numbers, Venegas ventured to make a forward movement ; but the enemy had not been inattentive to the concentration of so large a force in La Mancha, and Victor at the head of thirty thousand men advancing against him, Venegas thought it advisable to retreat into the Sierra Morena, upon which the French retired into the valley of the Tagus.

The propositions of Lord Wellesley and the Marquis de la Romana, coupled with the discovery of the plot to seize the members of the central junta, obliged that body to assume those virtues which they never possessed, and suddenly declaring their admiration of liberal institutions, and their desire to extend equal rights to all men, they attempted to lull popular apprehension by the promise of convening the cortes without delay. During the months of September and October, fresh levies continued to be raised in Andalusia and Estramadura, and equipments were supplied from the English stores that were accumulated at Seville and Cadiz. Towards the close of October, the Spanish force, under Bassecourt, in Estramadura, amounted to ten thousand men : nearly sixty thousand were employed in covering Seville by the line of La Mancha, and six thousand acted as a life-guard to the central junta. The Spanish army of the left was concentrated in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, Del Parque made a movement in the district of the Sierra de Francia, and Santocildes advancing from Lugo with two thousand men, threw himself into Astorga, and menaced the rear of Marchand's corps. A party of French, detached from the head-quarters to surprise one of the gates of Astorga, on the ninth of October, that, by acquiring possession of that place, they might release the sixth corps from a source of uneasiness, was beaten back to their cantonments with severe loss. This partial gleam of success encouraged Ballasteros to descend upon Astorga, cross the Esla, and assault Zamora, but having completely failed, he turned away towards Miranda, and, crossing the frontier into Portugal, formed a junction with Del Parque.

The Duke del Parque, a brave, loyal, and active officer, and possessing the highest admiration of the British character,

resolved to distinguish himself with the force which had lately been placed under his conduct, and undertook offensive operations against the enemy in Old Castile: sanguine in his objects, he applied to Lord Wellington, through the Spanish envoy at Lisbon, for assistance; but his lordship refused any, for reasons and upon grounds already noticed in the communications that passed between him and his noble brother, the Marquis Wellesley. In addition to these pleas for declining co-operation, there were others returned to the governor of Almeida, of equal or perhaps greater value; for instance, that "there was nothing to prevent the enemy from throwing upon the Duque del Parque's corps, aided perhaps by Beresford's, the whole of the corps of Ney, Soult, and Kellerman:" so that, had Wellington the inclination, he neither had means, nor could he come up in time sufficient to prevent the destruction of the Spaniards: co-operation of the British with Del Parque might lead to some brilliant actions, but also to some defeats, to the loss of many valuable soldiers and officers, after which the allies would be again obliged to return to their defensive position which they ought never to have quitted. Under these circumstances, Lord Wellington had determined, although he should certainly endeavour to prevent the enemy from getting possession of Ciudad Rodrigo, not to assist the Duque del Parque in maintaining the forward position which he had rashly taken up. Disappointed, but not daunted, Del Parque moved towards Ledesma to favour the junction of Balasteros, and on the sixteenth and seventeenth his advanced guard was at Villa Vieja in front of San Felices, at which place he collected his corps on the eighteenth. On the same day the enemy advanced from Salamanca, and reconnoitred his position, and being desirous of destroying him before Ballasteros could come up, immediately fell upon Del Parque's left, at Tamanes. The duke was well posted, about midway up the front of a mountain, with a force of one thousand cavalry and fifteen thousand infantry. The former soon retired before the masses of the enemy's horse, but so promptly and gallantly did Del Parque, Mendizabel, and Carera bring down both the infantry and the reserve, that the enemy were forced back, having one of their

eagles wrested from their grasp, and being obliged to leave behind one cannon and several hundred prisoners. Marchand's alarm was much increased, by the expected arrival of Ballasteros with a reinforcement; and this apprehension induced him to retire without further attempt to recover his cannon, his men, or his military renown; so that, in a state of no little disorder, he retreated to Salamanca. Del Parque did not think it prudent to pursue his victory before the twenty-first, on which day he was strengthened by Ballasteros' corps at San Felices, whither he had retired after the affair of Tamanes: advancing thence on Ledesma, he crossed the Tormes on the twenty-third, passed Salamanca during the night, and attained the heights of San Cristoval in the rear of that city, at day-break on the twenty-fourth, confident of being able to cut off Marchand's retreat. That general, however, had early information of the intentions of his enemies, and, evacuating the place, he had actually reached Tor and Zamora behind the Douro, when Del Parque was entering Salamanca on the twenty-fifth. Intelligence of the disaster at Tamanes reaching Madrid with the accustomed velocity of misfortune's messengers, Desolles was immediately directed to advance to the support of Ney's, or rather Marchand's corps, by way of the Puerto Pico, and Kellerman was ordered to assume the chief command, and advance upon Salamanca from Valladolid. Del Parque hearing of the arrival of reinforcements to the French army in Old Castile, for the purpose of marching on his position, again retired by Alba de Tormes to Bejar, at the entrance of the Puerto de Banos, where he fixed his head-quarters on the eighth of November.

It has been previously mentioned, that General Eguia, leaving ten thousand of his corps with Albuquerque in Estramadura, marched with the remainder into La Mancha, where he effected a junction with Venegas, and, taking the chief command, was immediately at the head of fifty thousand men. This forward movement of Eguia, viewed in conjunction with the offensive operations of Del Parque, induced Marshal Soult to break up from Placencia on the first of October and advance upon Oropesa, for Soult felt convinced that all these movements of the Spaniards



were connected with simultaneous operations on the part of the British: and a large corps of thirty thousand men, under Victor, marched into La Mancha at the same time. Upon these demonstrations the Spaniards retired into the Sierra Morena, and the French, having understood their real objects, again withdrew to the Tagus.

The success of Del Parque at Tamanes was sufficient not only to revive, but to intoxicate the presumptuous minds of the central junta; deaf to the warnings, regardless of the entreaties of Wellington to spare the blood of their countrymen, by continuing to act on the defensive, and patiently awaiting that period when accurate discipline, just subordination, and sufficient reinforcements should have so far strengthened their military body, that they need not dread the recoil of any blow they should strike, they seemed so giddy in their resolves, that folly and infatuation were exceeded by their plans. It was now resolved upon marching the army of Carolina directly and boldly upon Madrid, and instructions were prepared for the future administration of that great city. Romana was too sensible a man to be chosen to conduct the expedition; Albuquerque had not crouched sufficiently before this bloated monster, the junta; and caprice suggested the removal of Eguia, who had not offended any part of the provisional government, to make room for a hot and hasty youth, Areizaga, whom Blake once complimented for the possession of personal courage in the battle of Alcanitz. This volatile young man, not the first victim to presumption in the Spanish war, entered on the arduous enterprise of recovering Madrid, and driving the French over the Pyrenees, with as much confidence as his orders had been delivered to him by his employers. On the third of November, Areizaga set out upon his fatal folly from Carolina, with about 50,000 infantry, 8,000 cavalry, and sixty pieces of artillery, but without one single ingredient necessary to the character of a successful soldier, or a great man. His camp resembled a public festival, vaunting and shouts of mirth rang round the field-huts, but no recollection of misfortune once crossed the general's placid brow, there was "not a

word about Charon." The march was conducted as it at first began, in a straggling, disorderly, unmilitary manner, and the raw recruits that swelled the number of his army, committed such depredations as they went, that the peasantry fled with their few valuable effects, as if an enemy were approaching. On the 10th, Areizaga reached Dos Barrios, near to Ocana, and advanced on the same night to attack a squadron of the enemy's cavalry, drawn up in the plain between Dos Barrios and the town. Totally ignorant of Sebastiani's force, Areizaga charged briskly at first; but the French infantry, which had been concealed behind the party of horse, opening an unexpected and close fire upon the Spaniards, confidence was changed into cowardice, and having lost a number slain, two hundred prisoners, and two pieces of cannon, they regained their main body, while Sebastiani, content with his conduct, fell back upon Ocana. The French maintained their position here until three o'clock in the morning, and when daylight appeared, retired to Aranjuez, while Areizaga re-established his head-quarters at Dos Barrios. The scene of the previous day dispelled the vain illusion by which he mocked himself, rent the hitherto impervious veil of folly that enwrapped him, and broke down the unbecoming confidence with which Areizaga marched against the most victorious army in the world. He now began to reflect, as well as to look forward, and in consequence to doubt and to tremble; and he lost not a moment in communicating to the junta the result of his reflections, and in supplying them with a convincing demonstration of their insurmountable folly and corruption in the selection of such a commander for their army. He called on them to fulfil the promise of support which they had given; he endeavoured to correct the fatal error they laboured under as to the bravery and discipline of a French army, and its comparative value with reference to the irregular troops of Spain: he did not now conceive that the reconquest of Madrid was easy, nor the success of the campaign certain. It is true Areizaga first deceived himself, for he must have felt, that had he possessed even superior abilities, he was without experience in the art of war;

this, however, does not justify the junta in having held out false lights to their general, in having disregarded the honour of men, and thrown the child of their adoption into the arena of the amphitheatre, a prey to the trained but hungry lions. The junta had urged Areizaga forward, assuring him of the support of Albuquerque, Del Parque, and even of Wellington, although the latter had never heard of the wild plan, the execution of which they were committing to a heedless boy. On the receipt of Areizaga's despatches Albuquerque advanced from Bejar, in order to unite at Talavera with Del Parque's corps, which had moved into the valley of the Tagus; and on the 14th, the Spanish head-quarters were moved to Santa Cruz la Zarza, with a view to crossing the Tagus at Villa Maurique, and advancing on the capital from the east. Here the Spaniards halted till the 18th, during which time, the enemy were pouring in from all the surrounding provinces, and concentrating in such force in their neighbourhood, as must have rendered the next blow they should strike final.

As Lord Wellington had declined being a party to the rash resolves of an unprincipled government, with characteristic presumption they pretended to despise his advice; they expressed no desire to communicate any thing to him except their imprudent orders; but they were misled by that general's uniform respect for authority, into the belief that he would not disobey, when ordered by the supreme junta to co-operate with their army. Lord Wellington is one of the most remarkable examples of loyalty, honour, obedience to his government, and respect for order and discipline, that is to be found amongst the biographies of the statesmen or heroes, who have adorned the history of the world. It would not be difficult to prove that he is amongst the very few men, in universal history, who attained such an extraordinary elevation, without having ever been guilty of one abuse of power, or having manifested the remotest inclination to usurp authority, or release himself from allegiance to his sovereign and his country. It is in this respect that he is superior to the greatest conquerors of ancient times, who

enslaved their countries—and of subsequent ages, who debased themselves by degeneracy, when the blasts of war had ceased to blow. But while he set the example of that submission to discipline and good government which he exacted from his followers, in the case of enemies, or allies, he hesitated not an instant in taking all responsibility upon himself; and while he submitted the control of his conduct to the laws of his country, no foreign power was capable of guiding, restricting, or influencing the deliberate judgment of his mind, or of misleading him into an acknowledgment of any claim upon his services. It has been already noticed that Lord Wellington disapproved of offensive operations at this precise period, and, in consequence, totally declined to co-operate, or permit Beresford to unite with the Spanish army. This fact was treacherously concealed from Areizaga and the other Spanish generals, until their ruin, which the British general foresaw, had been lamentably wrought.

It was only on the eighteenth of November, the day preceding the close of these disastrous operations, that Lord Wellington was officially informed of the march upon the capital; yet, that Areizaga was weak enough to hope for his assistance, is proved by the application which he made to him on the 16th of November. To Colonel Roche's interrogatory on the subject his lordship replied, "I do not know how Areizaga could think that I was to co-operate with him: I can co-operate in nothing of which I have no knowledge, or which is not concerted with me; but not only was this plan not concerted with me, (if there was any plan at all), but the whole system on which it is founded and proceeds, is known to be directly contrary to my opinion, and the advice I have already given." The preceding letter shows not only that Lord Wellington did not purpose taking any subsequent share in the grand expedition for the recovery of Madrid; but that he had uniformly opposed that wild project, and that his advice was disregarded. Now when a diversion was proposed in favour of Areizaga, there was no great reason to suppose that the British general could be induced to associate in the plan, for his written opinion upon this movement—the junction of Albuquerque and Del Parque—was,



“that when these officers should meet at Talavera, they would be in precisely the same situation in relation to the enemy and to Areizaga, in which the combined armies under Cuesta and himself were in the beginning of August, in relation to the enemy and to Venegas; with this difference—that at that time Venegas could have crossed the Tagus by the ford of Fuentiduena, which Areizaga could not accomplish; and the Duke del Parque had not gained a victory, nor was he half so strong as the allies were. Lord Wellington now took a gloomy view of Spanish affairs; he declared them to be in a worse situation than he had ever before known them; that it was impossible for him to do anything for the relief of the two generals in the valley of the Tagus, as he had no means of crossing the river excepting at Arzobispo, and at that period of the year the road to that place was not practicable for an army; and if he were to move on Truxillo, the embarrassment thus created from want of provisions, would destroy any advantage of assistance his proximity might hold out.

While these insane projects of the junta were being executed, or, more properly, exposed to failure and derision in the weak hands of an inexperienced officer, information of the advance of the Spaniards reached the intrusive king at Madrid; and no longer leaning on the wavering counsels of Jourdan, who had been displaced, and his office of major-general conferred upon Soult, Joseph consequently acted with apparent confidence and decision, and, accompanying Soult and Victor, marched against the enemy towards Ocana. Areizaga, who had adapted his courage to an attack upon twenty thousand infantry and five thousand horse, under the able guidance of the Duke of Dalmatia, finding that the veteran had lost nothing of his impetuosity by age, or familiarity with similar scenes, and that he would most probably attack him before he was prepared, drew up his army on the plain of Ocana, on the morning of the 19th of November. The French advanced in three columns, with one of which they took possession of Ocana; they next overthrew the Spanish cavalry on the right of their position; then broke the infantry of the right wing, which was thrown into irremediable confusion, upon



which the left wing of the Spaniards took flight without firing a shot. Thus terminated the boasted expedition planned by the supreme junta, in direct opposition to the advice of Lord Wellington. The French lost one thousand seven hundred men, the Spaniards five thousand, fifty-five pieces of cannon, all the stores and clothing, the military chest, three thousand animals, thirty thousand muskets, and twenty-six thousand prisoners. At night-fall the unfortunate instrument of a treacherous and foolish government reached Temblique, with a remnant of his army; and, as the enemy did not pursue beyond Villarubia, he was permitted to reach La Carolina on the 24th. One thousand Spanish dragoons under Benaz, who had been ordered to cover the retreat of the fugitives from the field of battle, and were placed at Madrilejos for that object, learning the result of the battle of Ocana, dispersed voluntarily on the 20th; and up to the 24th only five hundred cavalry of different regiments had assembled at Manzanares, and few of the defeated army had arrived at La Carolina. The Spanish force in this battle exceeded fifty thousand, that of the enemy was only one half the number; and the disgrace and ruin of the former were completed after the discharge of only eighteen hundred cannon-shot. Totally unequal to such a crisis, Areizaga, at day-break, ascended one of the church towers of Ocana, behind the centre of his line, where he remained during the battle, neither giving orders, nor sending succours to his retreating lines; and only quitted his observatory when the enemy approached so near as to endanger his liberty. Besides the force engaged at Ocana, the Duke of Belluno had passed the Tagus, and was moving on the right of the Spanish army, and ten thousand French were posted at Talavera de la Reyna. Having placed the different divisions of his victorious army in positions pointed out by his general-in-chief, the intrusive king returned on the 20th to Madrid.

In compliance with orders received from the supreme junta, the Duke del Parque moved from Bejar on the 17th of November, and marched to Alba de Tormes, his advance posts being at Carpio and Fresno on the 21st. At the former

of these places he was attacked on the 23rd, by a large corps of cavalry and infantry from Valladolid; and, although the Spanish cavalry behaved in the most dastardly manner, the enemy suffered a repulse. After this affair the duke moved forward his head-quarters to Fresno, but returned again on the 28th in consequence of orders to that effect from the junta. The French had by this time, and while Del Parque was acting with indecision, succeeded in strengthening the army of Old Castile; and on the 27th and 28th Kellerman was enabled to bring the Spaniards to action at Alba de Tormes, where they suffered grievously. Continuing their retreat towards the mountains and Ciudad Rodrigo, when within two leagues of Tordesillas, on the 29th, the Spaniards observing thirty French dragoons in the rear, became alarmed, and dispersed. No enemy was near, however, to take advantage of the panic, and, when their fears had subsided, nearly twenty thousand of the fugitives re-assembled.

While the French were collecting their forces on the Upper Tagus to oppose Areizaga, in the beginning of November, Albuquerque had taken possession of the bridge of Arzobispo, but events in Old Castile induced the junta to direct that he should fall back with his corps upon the Guadiana, and thereby abandon the position of the Puerta de Mirabete, on the Tagus, and the Mesa d'Ibor, of so much importance to the province of Estramadura and the south of Portugal, that so long as it was held, the enemy could not cross the Tagus to any efficient purpose, between the bridge of Toledo and Villa Velha, in Portugal.

The French had succeeded, since the month of April, in destroying three Spanish armies: Blake's, Areizaga's, and Del Parque's; but the presence of the English, and the severe checks they had received from them at Oporto and Talavera, so fettered their movements, that they had been obliged to evacuate Portugal, Galicia, South Estramadura, and keep their forces concentrated in the neighbourhood of Madrid. At the close of the campaign of 1809, they had destroyed or dispersed two armies, yet had not broken the energies of the Spaniards,

nor extricated themselves from their persevering assaults. Amongst their most vindictive and successful enemies were to be numbered, at this period, the *Guerillas*,\* a species of irregular troops, who inflicted much injury on the French, while their disconnected character, and active movements secured them from an equivalent return. They consisted chiefly of peasants, who, in the ardour of patriotic zeal and religious fanaticism, having put to death such of the enemy as fell into their hands on the first retreat of the French forces, fled to the mountains, on their return, to avoid their resentment, collected in small bands, chose leaders of a daring courage and ready intelligence, and carried on a partisan warfare, without being paid, or dressed in any uniform. They appeared at one time in small numbers, at others one thousand were assembled together, frequently hanging on the outskirts of a position, picking off single soldiers, attacking small detachments, foraging parties, and couriers, and intercepting successfully French communications. "To lead these guerilla bands, the priest girded up his black robe, and stuck a pistol in his belt; the student threw aside his books, and grasped the sword; the shepherd forsook his flock; the husbandman his home." They contributed to sustain the confidence of the people in the final success of their arms, and to maintain a spirit of determined resistance. They fought up to the very capital, while it was occupied by the enemy; and every advantage gained by Spanish or English troops was proclaimed, in all quarters, by these gallant men, with telegraphic rapidity.

The first person who organised a guerilla band, was Juan Martin Diez, or John Martin, surnamed *El Empecinado*, from the darkness of his complexion. This distinguished partisan officer was a native of the district of Valladolid, where he was born in the year 1778, and the son of an humble peasant. He had early advanced himself into notice as a lover of freedom, and a man of intrepidity, by his conduct on the first invasion of his country's rights by the French; and, when Spain proclaimed war against her enemies, he entered the regular army as a private

\* *Guerilla* is a diminutive of *guerra*, the Spanish for war.

dragoon. He served in that capacity until the restoration of peace, when he returned home, married, and resumed his agricultural employments. From these peaceful occupations he was attracted in the year one thousand eight hundred, by patriotism, and a love of enterprise, and associating with him, in his plan of operations, some five or six of his neighbours, on whose courage and activity he could rely, he commenced hostilities. His first achievements consisted in killing the French couriers, by which means he obtained arms, ammunition, and horses; and, as he lost not a moment in communicating the intelligence of which his victims had been the bearers, no inquiries were instituted into the mode of his acquiring it. The atrocities perpetrated by the French at Madrid on the second of May, awoke a spirit of resentment over the land, and Diez, increasing his numbers, and extending his operations, destroyed couriers, took convoys, and harassed every small detachment of the enemy that he could come up with. In his early exploits, when his squadron did not amount to a dozen desperados, he neither gave nor expected quarter, but when he was followed by forty-eight gallant, active, well-mounted men, he no longer pursued that barbarous practice. In the month of September, 1809, while the British army, fatigued, sick, and without food, were obliged to fall back to Badajoz to refresh and procure supplies from the Portuguese, Diez rode into the district of Guadalaxara, at the head of one hundred and seventy well-mounted men, and completely terrified the enemy by his activity and mode of warfare. This systematic course recommended him to the patronage of the commander-in-chief of the second army, who, fully appreciating his undaunted bravery, made him a brigadier-general of cavalry. Such a mode of attacking and destroying the foe was contrary to the rules of war. The woods and dense forest concealing the hand of the assassin, or the darkness of night being the mask that hid him, goaded the French to madness, and urged them to try every expedient that ingenuity prompted to surprise and capture their persecutor. But he was fully competent to cope with treble his own numbers, from the strength and



vigour of his men, and he was always too accurately informed of the movements of the enemy, to be attacked unawares. On one occasion, however, he was overpowered by numbers, and would, in all probability, have been made prisoner, had he not literally flung himself over a steep precipice, and eluded pursuit. When Wellington had driven the French from Spain, and entered Madrid, like the heroes of old, in joyous triumph, the guerilla chief attended him, and, soon after, received the conqueror's order to take the command of a corps of four thousand eight hundred and fifty men, horse and foot, in the neighbourhood of Tortosa. Here the glorious, as well as gratifying, history of this brave man's career closes. Wellington saved Spain from one species of invasion of rights, only to leave it a prey to another, and perhaps the most cruel, that was the admission of Ferdinand, who resumed his reign with the most arbitrary acts, and by trampling upon every branch of the tree of liberty that he had the strength or the courage to break off. Empecinado professed an innate abhorrence of tyranny, and, even in the drivelling monarch for whose restoration he had fought, despotism was intolerable. Being proclaimed a traitor, he laid down his arms, but on the faith of a treaty, resolving to abandon an ungrateful country to the chains it had forged for itself. But he had miscalculated much in supposing that Ferdinand could be induced to respect treaties, or that he placed the least value upon plighted faith: he forgot the history of that abject monarch's early years, when he relied upon the fulfilment of any contract by him. The treaty was broken as soon as it was made: the faithful, long, and able services which Diez had rendered to his country, could not atone, in the tyrant's estimation, for the crime of his devotion to liberty, and, on the nineteenth of August, 1825, the brave guerilla chief was executed at Rueda, with circumstances of cruelty disgraceful to the reign of Ferdinand.

Diez was a man of excellent natural abilities, but quite uneducated, not being able to write anything more than his own signature: his manners were coarse, and his temper violent, but he was partial to the society of educated persons, and always



gave willing attention to their conversation and advice: with a magnanimity that characterizes intrinsic worth, he never hesitated to acknowledge his humble origin, or the limited sphere of his information.

There was another guerilla chieftain, with whose name, and estimable private character, the English nation became more familiar, than they had any opportunity of being with those of the noble, but unfortunate, founder of the partisan peasant-army. This was Don Francisco Espoz y Mina, a native of Navarre, where he was born at the village of Idozín, two miles from Pampeluna, in 1781. So much romance was interwoven with the marvellous exploits of the guerillas, that it was usual to represent them, like the maid of Orleans, like Rienzi, like Masaniello, as issuing from the lowly cottage, actuated by an impulse more than natural, and appointed by some special providence to liberate their country, and avenge their brethren slain; and Mina was described, amongst others, as born in the lowliest ranks of rural society. This, however, was not the case, his family being one of distinction in his native country, and the ancestral name associated with the early military history of Spain. During the French war, his nephew, Don Xavier Mina, then a student at the university of Saragossa, raised a guerilla corps, with which he performed several spirited exploits. Xavier being taken prisoner in March, 1810, the command of the corps devolved upon Francisco, who soon rendered his name the terror of the French. Brave, active, indefatigable, full of resources, and possessed of admirable presence of mind, he incessantly harassed and wore down the strength of the enemy, not only in Navarre, but in the neighbouring provinces of Alava and Arragon. Such was the rapidity of his movements, that nothing could escape him. The loss sustained by the French in this distressing kind of warfare was incalculable, that of the guerilla-band trifling, owing to the accuracy of their intelligence, which enabled them to separate on the approach of the enemy, and reunite again in a few hours—manœuvres which were performed by signal. It was in vain that the French poured twenty-five thousand soldiers into

Navarre, to eradicate the guerilla bands; Mina resisted the inundation, and, retaining possession of the province against the best exertions of the enemy, obtained the sobriquet of "King of Navarre." His services were acknowledged by the regency in 1811, when he was raised to the rank of colonel: in 1812 he was made a brigadier-general, and soon after a general. In the year 1813 he commanded a force of eleven thousand infantry, and two thousand five hundred cavalry, with which he co-operated in the siege of Pampeluna, and subsequently recovered Saragossa, Monzon, Tafalla, Jaca, and other places, and at the moment when the peace was concluded, he was in the act of besieging St. Jean Pied de Port. Hitherto he had fought in the cause of freedom only, but, on proceeding to Madrid, and being made acquainted with the basis of Ferdinand's government, he found that he would henceforth be expected to prop up and defend the most unqualified despotism in Europe. This was so contrary to the feeling, the honour, the true patriotism of the chief, that he at once addressed himself to his brother officers, told them of his efforts to obtain from their vicious king a free and fair constitution, and invited them to combine and extort from Ferdinand a charter of their rights, as the English barons of old had done from their monarch at Runnymede. His remonstrances would, most probably, have had the contemplated effect, and freedom would have dawned on Spain, after a long dark night of despotism, at the instance of a guerilla chieftain, had not the influence of the priesthood rendered his labours abortive.

Retiring from Madrid in disgust, he hastened to those fields where he had so gallantly struggled for the liberties of his fallen country, but found that the captain-general of Navarre had disbanded the local corps; he next proceeded to Pampeluna, and having gained over the garrison of that city, was about to proclaim the constitution there, when his plan was frustrated by the pusillanimity of some of the officers. No alternative remained for him but exile, and, retiring into

France, he sought a safe asylum in the vicinity of the royal palaces at Paris. There the Spanish envoy, Count de Casa Flores, discovered him, and persuaded a commissary of police to arrest him on behalf of the Spanish tyrant. This act of insolence and injustice was immediately resented by Louis, who insisted upon the recall of the ignorant envoy, dismissed the commissary of police, restored Mina to liberty, and conferred upon him a pension of 6,000 francs. For this act of generosity the Spaniard was not ungrateful, and, on the return of Napoleon, he declined holding any intercourse with the ex-imperial party, joined Louis at Ghent, and returned with him to Paris. Here he resided privately until the standard of freedom was unfurled in the streets of Cadiz, when, hastening back to his own country, and the king being compelled to accept the constitution, Mina consented to become captain-general of Navarre, in the year 1821.—The partisans of despotism, again abetted by the priesthood, assembled in some force in Catalonia, and, creating a formidable insurrection there, Mina was ordered to march against them. The cause alone had nerved his arm, and, attacking the traitors with his wonted impetuosity, he routed them in several encounters, and drove them over the Pyrenean frontiers into the French province of Rousillon. For this success he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general in 1823. His humanity, prudence, and patriotism acquired for him the universal esteem of the honest and wise, and he had succeeded in collecting around him a considerable force to repel the invasion of the French; but perceiving that the resistance he could offer would not be effectual, he generously absolved his comrades from their allegiance to him, submitted to Marshal Moncey on the 17th of October, and embarked for London, where he was received with every token of respect and admiration. When the revolution of 1830 excited hopes that were never to be realized amongst those that were exiled from continental Europe, Mina again unsheathed his sword in freedom's cause; but the Spanish people were not even yet ripe for the reception of indepen-

dence, nor qualified for the trust of self-government, so that Mina's last efforts were least fortunate, and despotism resumed her throne more firmly in the Peninsula. The student Xavier, the nephew of Mina, was detained a prisoner in France until 1814. He was present at Pampeluna, when his uncle made an unsuccessful attempt to proclaim the constitution, and fled with him thence to France, from which country he embarked, in 1816, and sailed for Mexico, to join the insurgents who had risen up there to shake off the yoke of the mother country: soon after his arrival, however, he fell into the hands of the Spanish authorities, and was shot as a traitor, on the eleventh of Nov. 1817.

Mina and Diez were the most distinguished of the guerilla chiefs,\* and more closely associated in operation with the allied armies than any others of their rude corps; but when the regular army of Spain were routed, flying, and beaten by the enemy, the galling fire of the guerillas disgusted the veteran soldier with the service, taught him that the spirit of freedom was not extinct in Spain, and that the cause he was engaged in was cruel, wanton, and unjust. At this period of the war, when the integrity of civilized England forbade her armies to sustain themselves by pillage, imperial France entertained no scruples as to the mode whereby her soldiers were supplied: the usurper enforced requisitions of jewels and plate from the churches, convents, and private mansions, for which the guerilla bands always kept a close watch, and intercepted no inconsiderable share of the spoils. On one occasion they fell in with a convoy near Segovia, from which they wrested no less a prize than eighty quintals of silver. So distressing had the guerilla warfare become to the French, and so unequal to its suppression were all their efforts, that they now

\* "The principal chieftains of these partidas were the two Minas and Renovales, in Navarre and Arragon; Porlier, called also the *Marquisetto*, and Longa, in the Asturias and Biscay; Juan Martin, or *El Empecinado*, in New Castile; Juan Paladea, or *El Medico*, in La Mancha; the curate Merino, in Castile; the friar Sapia, of Soria; Juan Abril, of Segovia; the doctor Rovera, in Catalonia; Julian Sanchez, near Salamanca; and others, whose names are well remembered in those districts where their bold achievements were accomplished.

had recourse to the plan of raising up a species of counter-force in the province of Navarre, which they named *Miquelets*,\* an appellation always popular amongst the Spaniards. But this abuse of the term was rather displeasing to the people, and the charm that belonged to it was dissolved when the bearer passed into the service of the usurper. The scheme therefore fell to the ground, evincing nothing beyond the incapacity and perplexity of its projectors.

Nearer still to the British head-quarters, and more immediately in the theatre of the campaign of 1809, Julian Sanchez, the guerilla chieftain, lent the powerful assistance of his partisanship. He raised a company of lancers in the vicinity of Ciudad Rodrigo, and operated so effectually against Marchand's corps, on the plains of Castile, that that officer warned the peasantry against harbouring a guerilla, on pain of death if convicted. The French general selected eight of the principal sheep-owners in the district, informed them that a guard should be placed in their houses, their persons closely watched, and, if guerilla depredations did not totally subside in eight days from that notice, the farmer himself should be held responsible. He declared, also, that alcaldes, lawyers, priests, and surgeons of every village, should answer with their lives, for the violence committed in their districts by these predatory bands, and that he would burn every house which the inhabitants had abandoned at the approach of the French. Sanchez answered this proclamation, in language that became a brave man contending, against a giant's arm, for the happiness, the homes, the honour of his countrymen, and so incontestable were the

\* These people dwelt in the Southern Pyrenees, in Catalonia, and in the French departments of the Upper and Eastern Pyrenees, on the heights of the chain of mountains which forms the boundary between France and Spain. They are principally herdsmen, huntsmen, and coal-burners, are warlike, and disposed to a predatory life. They escort travellers through the mountain-passes, and for their protection they always expect, and often receive, very liberal compensation. During the war they occasionally descended upon the French territory, and plundered the peasantry of every thing: they were active partisans, also, in the cause of Spain, and annoyed the French troops in Catalonia more successfully than the regular army of Spain.



reasons urged in support of any, of every species of warfare by which the usurper might be out-rooted, that Marchand's cause was actually weakened in the estimation of the French themselves. Sanchez was deterred neither from his military actions, nor the ground of his operations, by the impudent edict, and more unwise proceedings of Marchand, but persevered obstinately in that mode of attack which distressed the enemy to such a painful extent; and, remaining in the neighbourhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, he co-operated with Sir Robert Wilson in that desultory warfare, hanging on the enemy's rear, and harassing it continually.

While the armies of Spain were victimized to the folly of the supreme junta, while every courier that reached Seville was the messenger of disaster to the Peninsula, while the eagle of France flapped its wings over the ensanguined fields of subjugated Spain, the British rested in their cantonments at Badajoz: there they were visited by the return of renovated strength; pale disease and death vanished from their huts: food was supplied in abundance; warm clothing arrived, which was peculiarly appropriate at that season of the year; and the accustomed cheerfulness of the British soldier was once more witnessed by their general at his head-quarters.

While the weather continued tempestuous and rainy, and the hospitals were filled with sick, Lord Wellington was occupied in his bureau, in communicating with Lord Liverpool upon the prospects of Spain, the misconduct of its government, and his own plans for the defence of Portugal, which country he felt confident could be maintained against the best efforts of Napoleon. The junta also received the salutary counsels of the British warrior, urging them to act on the defensive, to abstain from arrogance, and not to meddle with self-confidence, the prerogative of the great, but the bane of the foolish. An undisciplined rabble, affecting to act under an unpopular imbecile government, are incapable of resisting the steady impulse of compact and disciplined columns; no definite proportion exists between the respective efficacy of two such armies: they differ as the process of machinery and manipulation: the one is condensed, compact, unerring in its movements, not liable to disappoint-

ment in its results, and its production is infinitely greater in quantity; the other is weakened by being spread over a boundless space, is irregular and capricious in its internal conduct, equivocal as to its results, and often attended with the most unforeseen frustration of its object. The disciplined army resembles the volume of water confined within the enclosure of the aqueduct, contributing without waste to every purpose of utility and enjoyment; the unorganized force is like the torrent that bursts from the mountains, exhausting its strength by expansion, and creating ruin, when by proper control it might have proved a blessing. The physical force of Spain wanted the hand of the military mechanist, the parts of the engine were supplied, but the jealousy of the junta prohibited their arrangement by a competent and skilful engineer, while they were themselves as unable to adapt them, as they would have been ignorant of their use when put together. When the dark hopes that hung over his prospects, like clouds in the skies, began to clear away, when, by the foolish rejection of his advice, Spain had lost her armies, when the misfortunes of the allies confirmed the wisdom of the British commander-in-chief, when Portugal begun to place unbounded confidence in his genius and fortune, when the inactivity of the enemy seemed to render his presence no longer necessary, and to admit of his adopting measures exclusively relating to the safety of his own army or the relief of Portugal, Lord Wellington then, and not before, prepared to break up from Badajoz.\*

From this period, his correspondence with Lord Liverpool, and with the British envoys, was directed to the single point of the defence of Portugal, and he laboured anxiously to prepare their minds for such an object. News arrived in the Peninsula of the establishment of peace between Napoleon and

\* "For the sake of health, and diversion of mind, Lord Wellington went out daily with his fowling-piece upon the plains. He had one day of princely sport in the royal park of Villa Vicosa, a hunting palace of the sovereigns of Portugal. Upon this occasion, one wild boar, and twenty-five head of deer, were heaped upon the sward, as the trophy of the day. He was always gay and good-humoured with those around him, inspiring others with the confidence he evidently felt himself."—*Military Memoirs*, &c.

Austria, which alarmed England and her allies; but Wellington stated his deliberate opinion, "that if in consequence of the peace the enemy's army should be largely reinforced in Spain, by which the public mind in that country would be so influenced, that persons now in hostility with France would then submit to their usurpation, and enable troops that are now employed only on the defensive, to be engaged in active operations; even in that case, he conceived, that until Spain should have been conquered, and had submitted unconditionally to the conqueror, the enemy would find it difficult, if *not impossible*, to obtain possession of Portugal, provided his Britannic majesty continued to employ an army in the defence of the country, and that the improvements in the Portuguese service continued to be carried to the extent of which they were capable." To carry out this great object, the value of which Lord Wellington alone foresaw, the means of attaining which he alone projected, and the responsibility for the result of which rested upon himself solely, he said he should require thirty thousand effective men, in aid of the whole military force of Portugal, then consisting of three thousand artillery, three thousand cavalry, thirty-six thousand infantry, three thousand caçadores and the militia. The expense of maintaining the British army in Portugal, which Great Britain herself must defray, would be £1,756,236 per annum, only £568,044 more than it would cost to keep the same army employed in Great Britain or Ireland. Lord Wellington felt that the Portuguese were the principals in the contest, and expressed himself in sanguine terms as to their resolution and honour, yet he totally despaired of their ability to resist the enemy, and seeing clearly into futurity as regarded the great military operations of Europe, recommended to the British minister—if England withdrew her confidence in his abilities and experience by ordering the evacuation of Portugal on the advance of the French—that he might be permitted to carry away such of the Portuguese officers and troops as might be desirous of emigrating, rather than sacrifice so many brave and useful men, by allowing them to continue a hopeless contest for the protection of their country. The want of con-

fidence in Wellington, which an able and popular opposition party in England created, by insisting upon mixing up his conduct and measures with those of the ministers, suggested to Lord Liverpool the expediency of proposing to his lordship four distinct questions relative to the approaching campaign. But the extraordinary prescience of that great soldier had anticipated the wishes of those who placed implicit reliance on his military genius, and the purport of the questions, viz. "the possibility of the British keeping possession of Portugal, after an augmentation of the usurper's army," had been previously communicated in Lord Wellington's official despatch, which, however, had not then reached England. But he again assured the secretary at war, that the enemy had neither the means nor the intention of attacking Portugal, in the month of November, 1809; that if they did, they would be successfully resisted; and that whenever their reinforcements should arrive, they would then also be similarly received.

About this period the Spanish junta renewed their attempts to induce the British army to return, not by honourable, open, conduct and arrangement, but by artifice, contemptible stratagem, and childish manœuvring: they before pretended to despise the counsels of Wellington, in order to convince him that the whole Peninsula did not trust in that infallibility of judgment which the British and Portuguese armies conceded to him: their next scheme was to interrupt the sale of provisions to the British commissaries attached to head-quarters at Badajoz, unless purchased under the authority of an alcalde, or some Spanish officer, from which it was to be inferred that they could supply the British army, if Wellington would only solicit them to do so. But his lordship had long before decided upon a line of conduct from which such a body as a Spanish junta could not induce or compel him to diverge, and he lost no time in undeceiving the junta of Estremadura. "I have already," observed his lordship, "had occasion to explain to you my sentiments on the subject. Spain is either unable or unwilling to furnish supplies of provisions and forage, on payment, for the armies that are defending her: and I shall not risk his majesty's army in a



country so situated, I announce to you my intention, that on the first failure of the necessary supplies, I shall remove my troops into a country where I know they will be supplied." It should also be observed, that it was for the express object of showing the slight importance they affected to attach to Wellington's military opinion, that the junta ordered Albuquerque to abandon his impregnable position near Arzobispo, which Wellington had chosen, and to fall back into an exposed and ill-chosen one at Llerena, behind the Guadiana.

That every doubt as to his veracity and determination might be removed, he addressed a letter to Mr. B. Frere, who acted as minister plenipotentiary, from the departure of the Marquis Wellesley until the arrival of his successor, the Hon. Henry Wellesley, (Lord Cowley), requesting him to assure the junta that his resolution was unalterably fixed, and that it was his undeviating maxim to say what he meant. At this moment, the losses and sufferings of the Spanish were daily augmented : Lord Wellington expressed sincere and poignant regret at the total want of principle or plan in the Spanish operations, and prophesied, distinctly, every result that followed. He accompanied his warnings and advice with expressions of the utmost concern at his inability to co-operate, or assist them in their difficulties, which were partly created by the folly of their own government ; and, with his usual foresight, he observed, that the blame would be transferred to him when the misfortunes which he saw approaching, like the tempest-cloud in the horizon, should have burst upon the obstinate, devoted Spanish army : then deliberately reconciling himself to his hard lot, he remarked, "that he was too much accustomed to receive blame for the actions of others, to feel much concern on the subject, and should only endeavour not to deserve any for his own." Such feelings he seldom expressed, and never with any real or even apparent irritation ; on the contrary, he excluded sedulously, from all his correspondence, the least disrespectful expression of those with whom he acted, and wrote uniformly in the bright language of hope, or the confident tones of victory. This habit was



instanced in a long and interesting letter addressed to an old comrade in his Indian campaign, Colonel Malcolm, describing the battle of Talavera, and the general prospects of the Peninsula in consequence of that victory. "The battle," he observed, "was certainly the hardest fought of modern days, and the most glorious in its results to our troops. Each side engaged lost a quarter of their numbers. The glory of the action is the only benefit which we have derived from it; but that is a solid and substantial good, the consequences of which we have already experienced: for, strange to say, I have continued, with the little British army, to keep everything in check since the month of August last; and if the Spaniards had not contrived by their own folly, and against my entreaties and remonstrances, to lose an army in La Mancha about a fortnight ago, I think we might have brought them through the contest. As it is, however, I do not despair, I have in hand a most difficult task, from which I may not extricate myself; but I must not shrink from it. I command an unanimous army: I draw well with all the authorities of Spain and Portugal, and I believe I have the good wishes of the whole world. In such circumstances one may fail, but it would be dishonourable to shrink from the task."

The time was at length arrived, when the long-threatened retirement of the British army was to take place; and, after a vexatious intercourse with Spain, the visitation of a pestilential malady, but the acquirement of new laurels, Lord Wellington broke up from his head-quarters at Badajoz, on the fifteenth of December, 1809, and after a march, with occasional halts, of twenty-one days, the army reached the eastern frontiers of Portugal, where three divisions of infantry, and a regiment of cavalry, were put into cantonments at Guarda, Pinhel, Celerico, and Viseu: General Hill's division of infantry was at Abrantes, and the remainder of the British cavalry, between Abrantes and Santarem, for convenience of forage and stabling. Thus the whole allied army was formed into two principal corps; one for the defence of the province south of the Tagus, which consisted of Hill's division of British infantry, two

brigades of Portuguese infantry, one brigade of British and two of Portuguese cavalry, besides artillery of both services: the other, composed of three divisions of British and all the Portuguese infantry, with the British cavalry and Portuguese artillery. The Portuguese were cantoned to the rear of the troops with which they were eventually destined to act. The Lusitanian legion was at Castel Branco, and the militia in the mountains between the Tagus and the Mondego. The advanced-guard, under General R. Craufurd, took up a position in front of Almeida, sending patrols as far as Ciudad Rodrigo. Hill's duty on the south side of the Tagus was to preserve a communication with Badajoz, and to observe the movements of the enemy on the side of Alentejo; and this precaution was the more requisite, because Mortier and Regnier, with 20,000 men, then threatened the south frontier from Merida, and any expectation of their being checked by Romana, who was at Badajoz, or by the garrison of Elvas was futile; so that if the enemy desired to approach Lisbon by that route, the Spanish army would have been no impediment to their plans.

While the bed of the Tagus was full of water, Hill's position at Abrantes was secure; he occasionally, however, occupied ground at Portalegre, and advanced even to Campo Major, whenever Romana suspected that the enemy meditated an attack upon Badajoz. In this manner Hill and Mortier displayed their experience as tacticians, advancing and receding like two champions in the arena, provoking the combat, but too cautious to strike until an unerring blow could be planted. In their new quarters, where the air was pure, the ground hilly and healthy, the army was soon restored to its buoyancy and cheerfulness, the sick recovered rapidly, and strength returned to the already convalescent. Clothes and provisions were furnished with tolerable regularity, and the policy of the British general was now more clearly understood, when the army was seen to progress towards that fine martial, manly appearance, which they exhibited on those great days of triumph, when the eagles of France took flight before them. The French army so far out-numbered the British, that offen-

sive war against so superior a force would have been the most presumptuous rashness. The Spanish regular army was almost annihilated, so that Wellington's *fabian* policy, that of giving time for the refreshing of his own troops, and the re-organization of his allies, was the wisest that could have occurred to the most experienced officer ; and although at first his inactivity was borne with ill temper by the opposition party in England, and by others, who might with more delicacy have suspended the expression of their opinion upon military matters until a more convenient season, it was ultimately the salvation of Portugal, of the Peninsula, and of Europe itself.

Intelligence of the precipitate judgment of the common-council of London now reached head-quarters at Coimbra, and made a deeper impression on the hero's feelings, than so ill-conceived and rash a step ought to have done; of this unkind treatment he thus complained to Lord Liverpool: "I see that the common-council have called for an inquiry into my conduct ; and I think it probable that the king's answer to their address will be consistent with the approbation he has already expressed of those acts which the gentlemen wish to make the subject of inquiry : in which case, they will not be pleased. I cannot expect mercy at their hands, whether I succeed or fail ; should I fail, they will not stop to inquire whether it was owing to my own incapacity, to the blameless errors to which we are all liable, to the faults or mistakes of others, to the deficiency of our means, to the serious difficulties of our situation, or to the great power and abilities of our enemy. In any of these cases, I shall become their victim : but I am not to be alarmed by this additional risk, and, whatever may be the consequence, I shall continue to do my best in this country." While he did not deny to the citizens of London the just exercise of their right to petition for the removal of real, or even imaginary, grievances, he felt that in this instance, the origin of the complaint was corrupt : want of principle, factious motives, were mediately or immediately connected with this stupid document ; and to show Lord Liverpool that he despised the abstract source

from which it sprung, he requested "that his lordship would not send out amongst the officers any that were *party* men, for that the spirit of party must be kept out of the army." A despatch, dated from Viseu, sixteenth of January, 1810, to the honourable Mr. Villiers, is amongst the most memorable of Lord Wellington's military memoranda. Having entered fully into the question of finance, in which he observes, "This discussion about money, the distress we have felt ever since my arrival here, must have convinced you that Great Britain has undertaken a heavier engagement in Portugal than she has the means of executing," he proceeds—"In its present state, I own, my army is not sufficient for the defence of Portugal: but the troops are recovering their health, reinforcements are expected from England, and, if I can bring thirty thousand effective British troops into the field, I will fight a good battle for the possession of Portugal, and see whether that country cannot be saved from the general wreck."

Although circumstances had materially altered since Lord Wellington applied to the secretary of war for reinforcements on the fourteenth of November, and those alterations originated in the total loss of the Spanish armies, still he considered that they had not fallen so far, that he could not yet defend Portugal, and restore the future fortunes of the Peninsula, by the addition of the same number of men for which he had before applied. "I conceive," said his lordship to Mr. Villiers, "that the honour and interests of the country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can; and I will neither endeavour to shift from my own shoulders, or those of the ministers, the responsibility for the failure, by calling for means which I know they cannot give; and which, perhaps, would not add materially to the facility of attaining our object: nor will I give to the ministers, who are not strong, and who must feel the delicacy of their own situations, an excuse for withdrawing the army from a position, which, in my opinion, the honour and interest of the country require they should maintain as long as possible. I think, that if the Portuguese do their duty, I shall have enough to maintain it;

if they do not, nothing that Great Britain can afford can save the country : and if from that cause I fail to save it, and am obliged to go, I shall be able to carry away the British army." From the cantonments at Viseu, Lord Wellington was occasionally absent, employed in making a reconnoissance towards Torres Vedras, and actively engaged with Colonel Fletcher, of the royal engineers, to whom he committed the execution of his celebrated design for the defence of Lisbon. In these exertions he was encouraged by the most flattering marks of distinction from the Portuguese government, who, by a royal decree, proclaimed on the twenty-third of November, 1809, and dated from Rio Janeiro, in the month of July of the same year, appointed Lord Wellington marshal-general of the Portuguese army, invited him to a seat in their chief assembly, and to a participation in all their measures, both military and financial. That affected distrust, which disgraced the Spanish authorities, and led to the disparagement of the British general, had been forgiven, their misfortunes pleaded strongly for such an indulgence, and the authority of Wellington again rose supreme in both countries ; it was in England only, and chiefly within the walls of parliament, that the language of detraction and ingratitude were applied to him.

The year 1809 closed in gloom and misfortune upon the exertions of the undisciplined ranks of Spain, and upon the imbecile counsels of their rulers, while the labours of Napoleon were crowned with victory in the central kingdoms of Europe, which now bowed down beneath the yoke of France. Less occupied with the active duties of the general, he bestowed increased attention on his imperial cares ; and, amongst the first occasions of his displeasure was the inactivity of Joseph, who had permitted Wellington to refresh his exhausted troops, to recover the confidence of England, of which the opposition party in parliament indiscreetly attempted to deprive him ; to strengthen, clothe, arm, and discipline the Portuguese army ; to obtain reinforcements from England ; and to take up that impregnable defensive position in which he ultimately established his military renown. Vacillating in every project, Joseph directed the fourth corps to advance upon Valencia, but almost



immediately recalled it, on learning that an insurrection had occurred in Navarre, headed by Mina and Renovalles; but this faint light being soon extinguished by the clouds of troops that descended on the disturbed province under Suchet, and being made certain that the British army were cantoned quietly, and at rest, in the valley of the Mondego, Joseph resolved upon a serious invasion of Andalusia. Perhaps it was not the weakest inducement, amongst others, to the invasion of this province, that it held out "more immediate prospect of pecuniary relief," of which the intrusive government then stood in absolute need. Joseph's troops has not received any pay for twelve months; his attendants and functionaries were all unsalaried; and under such circumstances, the invasion of Portugal promised nought but glory; that of Andalusia, something of payment. Unequal in conduct as in courage, the energy which did honour to the Spanish name after the dark day of Medellin, slumbered too long after the rout at Ocana; all high-raised hope had ebbed away, and despair was diffused through the whole Andalusian population: the junta did not now venture to call upon that spirit which pervaded the people of Catalonia and Arragon, which gave an immortality to the histories of Saragossa and Gerona, and which shed a redeeming lustre on the meritorious exertions of the Peninsular armies. Mean subterfuge for awhile sustained their tottering power: they caused their gazettes to teem with exaggerated accounts of the successes that uniformly attended guerilla warfare; the triumph of Tamames was magnified into a signal destruction of the French, even after the successful army had in turn been routed at Alba de Tormes. The promise of a speedy convocation of the cortes was attended by a short-lived calm; during which, addresses were presented from their own creatures, congratulating them upon the returning vigour of the national councils, and the wisdom of those measures by which such a happy renovation had been effected. A pompous proclamation replied to the congratulations of their adherents, calculated to inspire confidence; but its artifice was unequal to encounter the vigilance, suspicion, and knowledge of the junta's enemies,

or to obtain credence in the assurances that Areizaga would check the advance of the enemy beyond the Sierra Morena; that Del Parque and Albuquerque would fall on their flank, and that the glory of Baylen would be surpassed. This mendacious manifesto was given to the people at the moment when the members of the junta were actually transferring their valuables to Cadiz, and passing a resolution "that the Isle of Leon was the most convenient place for holding their future meetings," and passing a formal decree that the junta should assemble there on the first of February, 1810, for the despatch of business. Until that period should arrive, there was danger to be apprehended, not only from the enemy, but from their abused and discontented countrymen, who now saw, with disgust, cowardice added to presumption and incapacity. To meet the dreadful consequences, a show of preparation to resist, or to receive the enemy, was made, by ordering a levy of one hundred thousand men, and decreeing a loan of half the actual property of the Andalusians. Humbled to the lowest state of degradation, they now solicited the patronage, the friendship of Romana, who had so recently exposed their duplicity, proclaimed their imbecility, and bearded them in their council-hall; but this able soldier peremptorily refused to accept a trust, fraught with danger only, from masters who, it was not improbable, were wicked enough to hope for his utter ruin, even at the sacrifice of a whole army. They next recalled Blake, the best general in the Spanish service, from Catalonia, because fortune for a while had ceased to smile upon him, and transferred his command to O'Donnell, who was beloved by the army. About the same period it was that the Conde de Noronha being displaced from the command in Galicia, laid open the intrigues of the junta, exposed their neglect of the army, and advised the formation of a local government, accessible to every man, and with better feeling for their wants.

Before their departure to the new seat of government, the junta thought proper to consummate their career of baseness by imprisoning Montijo and Francisco Palafox: and they dis-

played some tact in removing the ablest statesman of their body, Padre Gil, by sending him on a mission to Sicily. Some there are who persist in attributing the conduct of the junta to treasonable motives, and ascribing the non-completion of such a project to the want of a favourable occasion for the execution of their plans: but the causes already so frequently assigned seem sufficient to explain the effects, and in the desperate state of the affairs of Spain, and when the power of the enemy seemed irresistible, but one individual was found in the junta base enough to meditate the desertion of his country; this was the infamous Conde de Tilly. It was not this wretched man's design to sell his country, he only projected a scheme of plunder, with which he meant to escape to Cadiz, there take shipping with his associates, and, forcing his way through the British squadron that lay off the harbour, sail for Mexico, and abandon his country for ever. Having communicated his project to an officer of Castanos' corps, it was immediately made known to the general, then at Algeziras, who caused the adventurer to be arrested, and thrown into a dungeon in one of the castles at Cadiz, where he soon after closed his disgraceful career in an unlamented death.

In addition to the levy that was ordered, the tax that was imposed, the confiscation of funds that had been appropriated to pious uses, and the sale of all vacant *encomiendas*, the junta ordered one thousand poniards to be distributed, giving the sanction of a national government to the crime and the calling of an assassin. A system of deception was followed to the last: the people were told to confide in Areizaga's strength, his army being organized and reinforced, and strongly posted in the Morena: and the junta pointed, dishonestly, to the army under Albuquerque as a powerful auxiliary, although his force was divided, one part being at Don Beneto, a second division at Truxillo, and a third on the Tagus, and the general rendered totally incapable of affording any assistance to the main army, from the confused and contradictory orders which were hourly transmitted to him by the affrighted junta.

Andalusia is protected from the hostile irruption of neigh-

bouring states by natural barriers; mountains hang over it on three sides, and the Mediterranean forms its southern boundary: the French could approach it from the north only, and then, necessarily, through the defiles in the Sierra Morena, where a few resolute men might impede the march of thousands. Many mountain-roads facilitate the approach of travellers to the towns of Andalusia through the Sierra Morena, of these but three are practicable for carriages; and, by one of them, that which passes by Santa Cruz de Mudela, La Carolina, and Baylen, to Andujar, and called the Despenas Perros, was not only the strongest position, but also the royal road from Madrid to Cadiz. All the attention of the Andalusians, and all their military skill, were demanded and put forth on the occasion; and, strengthening the defiles of Puerto del Rey and Despenas Perros by a variety of useless field-works, Areizaga, dispirited, conscious of his inability, and without any confidence in the uncontrollable rabble that followed him, was ordered to place himself there, while Echeveria with eight thousand men took up a position a little in his rear. There have been instances in history of a great army being checked in its progress by the intrepidity of a few, posted in an impregnable position, but the defenders in these cases are found to have been the best disciplined, most gallant and devoted men, that their country then could boast of. Such passes as the Despenas Perros, Puerto Banos, and the bridge of Arzobispo, are the keys of valuable acquisitions, and should never be entrusted to nerveless hands or timid hearts: strength of position is often deceitful, for numbers, as occurred at Somosierra, will at length prevail against the most valiant resistance, by turning the flanks, or continuing the sanguinary contest until the defenders are brought into a position of equality. During the first days of the opening year, the French forces continued to assemble at the foot of the Sierra Morena, until they numbered sixty thousand fighting men: the intrusive king was the nominal, but Soult the virtual commander of the expedition, and on the eighteenth of January Joseph appeared at head-quarters, at Santo Cruz de Mudela;

Mortier established himself close to the very entrance of the Despenas Perros,—Sebastiani occupied Villa Nueva de los Infantes, with a view to moving upon Jaen; and Victor was at Almaden, watching Albuquerque. Thus Albuquerque's retreat from Estramadura, and Areizaga's line of defence, were at once menaced. The twentieth of January was fixed on for a simultaneous advance along the whole line, and, putting themselves in motion, Sebastiani carried the entrenchments one after another, with some opposition. Desolles made himself master of the Puerto del Rey at a single charge; and without firing a shot, the Spanish troops retreated with precipitation on Navas de Tolosa, where their ancestors triumphed over the Moors some six hundred years before: thus concluded the defence of the Morena, thus vanished the boasted preparations for its protection: such was the demonstration Areizaga afforded of his ability for command, and such the confirmation of Romana's prudence in declining to become his successor.

The road being thrown open, Mortier poured through the narrow pass with his cannon, his cavalry, and the main body of the army, and reached La Carolina in the evening, where he was joined by Desolles, who had advanced by the Puerto del Rey. As the army moved along, the following day, to take possession of Andujar, they passed over the field of Baylen, where Dupont's corps had disgracefully laid down their arms, and surrendered to the Spaniards, a stain at length gallantly obliterated by the triumphant invaders of Andalusia, who fixed their head-quarters at Andujar, one of the largest cities of this ancient kingdom, on the second day of the invasion. The successes of Sebastiani were followed up, after his seizing La Venta Nueva and Venta Quemada, by his driving the enemy from a new position which they had taken on the Guadalén, moving on Ubeda, and descending into the vale of the Guadalquivir. When Albuquerque understood his danger he became alarmed, on account of the presence of the French patrols at Ilinojosa and Benalcazar, so near to his communication with Seville, which effectually checked his advance. The time had therefore arrived for Victor to push forward, and,



following a mountain road by Adamuz, he reached Montoro, preserving also a communication with Mortier and Sebastiani. Delay, the maxim of the undecided and the timid soldier, was one of Joseph's besetting sins, and, contrary to the pressing solicitations of Soult, he insisted upon despatching Sebastiani with a strong force, to disperse effectually the powerless rabble that claimed Arcizaga for their general, and, from apprehension of that force rallying and falling on his rear, he peremptorily refused to advance from Andujar, until he was assured that the ruin of the Spaniards was accomplished. It was true that Arcizaga had rallied his men at Jaen, and again presented a front to the enemy; but in vain—Sebastiani drove him back upon Alcala Real, and took Jaen while forty-six pieces of ordnance stood loaded on the walls. Once more Arcizaga led his timid columns to the attack, calling upon them to remember the glorious ages of their history, when on that very spot the eleventh Alonzo, of their ancient kingdom, chastised the haughty foe: deaf to the arts of persuasion, and broken-spirited by successive visitations of misfortune, their last resistance was less manly than their first, for upwards of five thousand men threw away their arms upon the first charge of the enemy, and pursued a rapid flight until they reached Gibraltar. Their unhappy general, with a mere escort of cavalry, made his escape into Murcia, and there consigned to the more able hands of Blake, an office, to the duties of which he had proved himself so unequal. Perceiving that no impediment was likely to arise in his march, Sabastiani advanced to Grenada, which he reached on the twenty-eighth of January; and, whether it arose from a vindictive feeling towards the superseded government, or a sincere disgust for future domestic legislation, or possibly a desire to conciliate the conquerors, his army was received with demonstrations of joy by the citizens. Soult halted until he was satisfied that king Joseph's fears were removed by the dispersion of Arcizaga's army, and then advanced to Cordova, which he entered on the twenty-seventh, while detachments from Victor's corps were pushed on with a view to the occupation of Seville. The invasion of Andalusia had fully succeeded;

in a few days the Spanish boasts and Spanish forces were dissipated, parties of the enemy's horse scoured the plains, while detachments of infantry held the mountain-passes; and the capitals of two ancient kingdoms were, without resistance, and after a few days' march from the mountain-barrier of Andalusia, in the possession of an usurper.

The junta were now astounded by the intelligence that the pass of Almadan had been forced; and communicating this fact to those whom they had so long deceived as to their real situation, the result may readily be conceived. The humbler classes rose *en masse*, called aloud for arms, demanded that the town should be put in a state of defence, and the government deposed for prevarication and abandonment of duty. Assembling in the square of St. Francisco, in front of the Alcazar, patrols were formed, and sent into different quarters of the city: as the *grandees* and others of rank had secretly escaped to Cadiz, the mob forbade all persons henceforth to leave their homes; numbers flocked in from the country, to assist in the defence of the capital, so that upwards of one hundred thousand men were assembled within the walls, ready to be led to any enterprise, and wanting only a leader. It was, however, resolved that the central junta, as a political body, must die; and the junta of Seville were therefore called on to assume the reins of government: Montijo and Palifox were set free, and Francisco Saavedra was solicited to undertake the temporary direction of public affairs. This venerable man, it was supposed, had well nigh fallen a victim to the atrocity of Godoy, who caused poison to be administered to him, mixed up with his food, and from the effects of which he had with difficulty been recovered: but whether, like another Brutus, he concealed bright faculties beneath the disguise of mental infirmity, that his life might be spared for the salvation of his country, or whether unbounded respect for the person and character of the man produced the effect, his elevation to the chief place was instantly followed by the cessation of anarchy in the city. The provincial junta being assembled, a proclamation was issued, inviting all to support a sincere government, and exhorting all to be tranquil under their

difficulties, as the only mode of a successful extrication. Montijo, so lately restored to liberty, employed its first moments in collecting the troops that were scattered over the province, and that faithful public servant, Romana, was restored to the command of the army from which the junta had removed him, and which they transferred to Del Parque. These popular measures were calculated to inspire the fullest confidence, and did succeed so far as to calm the agitation of the people, who all looked to Romana for the preservation of the city: too good a soldier to excite hopes that could not possibly be realized, that nobleman escaped from Seville, and made for Badajoz, to resume the command, and secure the fortress in that city, having extricated himself, not without some danger, from the hands of the populace, who had stopped his horses at the gates of Seville, to prevent his leaving the city. Hope took wing as Romana passed through the portal of Seville; despair sat on every countenance, despondence prevailed in every heart: the promises and vaunts that the Sevillian should rank in military fame with the heroes of Saragossa and Gerona, were given to the wind. The quays were at one moment occupied by the equipages of the members of the junta, and of the public officers, with the necessary documents and moveables which the government required at Cadiz; in the next, all was silent as the tomb: the waters of the Guadalquivir bore away the cowardly rulers of Andalusia on their smooth-flowing surface, and it only remained for the betrayed to surrender to an enemy, who perhaps would be found less cruel than on other occasions, since vengeance for obstinate resistance had not in this instance sharpened their sabres. This consideration strengthened the hopes of the traitors within the walls, who now became so numerous, that Saavedra, and five individuals of the provisional government, who remained faithful to Spain, were obliged to separate themselves from their worthless associates, and, taking the road to Cadiz, abandoned Seville to its approaching fate. Although there were seven thousand armed men in the city, and the populace were eager to defend their liberties, still was there no concert amongst the higher classes, no master-mind could be found to

which they could look for encouragement and direction, no man of influence remained, in whom they could confide, on whom their affections could rest, or who was equal to the exigencies of the period. Treason for this time was rewarded by blind fortune, and the partisans of the usurper admitted his army within the gates of Seville on the twenty-first of January, in a manner that precisely resembled the disgraceful surrender of Madrid. Although it had been frequently urged upon the attention of the junta, that all military stores in Seville should be rendered useless on the approach of the enemy in force, the precaution was neglected, and the spacious cannon-foundry, with the most extensive arsenal in the kingdom, containing three hundred pieces of brass ordnance, fell an easy prey to the enemy. On the first of February the degradation of this ancient city was consummated, and on the second king Joseph entered it in triumph.

The love of liberty still survived amongst the rural population, and was less exposed, at all times, to the insidious arts of corruption and intrigue, and near to the little town of Alhama, the intruder met a severe check from the armed bands of patriots: without any defences better than the old ruined Moorish walls that encircled their humble homes, they could not of course afford a lengthened resistance to an army equipped for every case that occurs in a varied campaign; so that Sebastiani stormed, and ultimately took the place. His advance, however, was still threatened; but as he had been ordered to establish himself on the coast of Granada, with the ulterior object of communicating with Valencia, where Joseph counted upon the co-operation of secret agents, he was under the necessity of encountering every opposition. The citizens of Malaga formed the laudable design of marching against the invading army, and engaging them in the open field, rather than await their assault in the midst of their houses and families; and first having deposed and imprisoned their local junta, then selecting a bold Capuchin friar for their leader, they advanced to Antequera. Here every thing that undisciplined valour could do, was attempted; but the steady resistance of Milhaud,

with the advanced guard of Sebastiani, broke down their ranks and their spirits, and, flying towards Malaga, they were pursued so closely, that the French and Spaniards entered Malaga, *pêle-mêle*, on the fifth of February. In this affair, highly honourable to the humbler part of the inhabitants, however equivocal the conduct of their superiors, five hundred patriots were slain; and the enemy found in Malaga, one hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, besides valuable stores; and several cellars, filled with the celebrated wine of the district, were yielded to the military purveyors of the usurper.

In one fortnight the French overran all Andalusia, the Isle of Leon and Cadiz excepted; and it formed part of Soult's plan of operations to push forward, and obtain possession of that important place; and there is no doubt, that if a single event, one bold, masterly, decisive blow, could have materially influenced, at that moment, the fate of the Peninsula, that event was the occupation of Cadiz by the French army. This is not the first instance in which an apathy and indolence have been observed in Soult's military character; for to him belongs the whole responsibility of the invasion of Andalusia, as he was not only the chief in command, but the adviser of king Joseph in all matters both of war and polity. Cadiz should have been, and there is no reason to imagine it was not, the main object of the expedition; and to its possession, therefore, all minor considerations and conquests should have been secondary. It will be remembered that Albuquerque had garrisoned Badajoz, contrary to the express commands of the central junta, and placed Romana in that fortress, by which the plans of the enemy, and the operations of the fifth corps, against Estramadura, were completely frustrated. On the twenty-fourth, the cavalry of Albuquerque were at Ecija, while Victor's corps had also advanced, and acting with extreme caution for the purpose of deceiving the enemy, and drawing him into the supposition that his main object was to cover Seville; but as the French approached, he fell back to Carmona, in order to keep open a retreat upon Cadiz or Seville. Albuquerque was acquainted with the fall of the



latter place, perceived that on the preservation of Cadiz rested the last hope of continuing the war in the south of Spain, and saw that the enemy's cavalry had taken the road through Moron to Utrera, which was shorter than that which he occupied, through Carmona, to the same place, with the view of surprising Cadiz. A moment's hesitation, an hour's delay, and Spain was lost: redoubling their wonted energies, his brave band pushed along the Carmona-road, and reached Utrera just as the enemy were drawing near, whence he marched, day and night, with the utmost expedition, by Las Cabezas to Lebrija, across a marsh that was deemed impracticable at that season of the year, through Xeres, and, entering Cadiz on the third of February, after a forced march of two hundred and sixty miles, he immediately broke down the bridge of Zuazo, which spans the canal of Santa Petri, the separation of the Isle of Leon from the mainland. At Utrera the enemy's light cavalry came up with the duke's rear, and some skirmishing took place, in which the French produced little effect, beyond the cutting down a few foot-sore stragglers; but, from that point the enemy turning towards Seville, the scouting parties were called in, and the pursuit given up. The error was quickly perceived by Soult, but too late to be repaired; yet, confiding in his numbers, military equipments, discipline, genius, and fortune, he pushed forward his object, the reduction of Cadiz, with unabated certainty of success, although interrupted by a brief delay. Victor was sent in pursuit of Albuquerque, and reached Chiclana on the fifth, but time had been lost at Montoro, Andujar, and Seville, and, during ten days, the French had marched but one hundred miles; so that when Victor arrived at Cadiz, Albuquerque and his eight thousand men were in possession of the citadel.

The fate of Europe hung upon the energy of a single man: had the French outstripped the Spaniards in the race, Cadiz was lost, the Spanish government dissolved, the war in the Peninsula terminated, and little prospect of Wellington's being able to maintain himself behind his glorious lines, with a handful of valiant British, against the combined armies

of two such men as Massena and Soult, with the resources of imperial France to support them. Cadiz was saved by the abilities of Albuquerque, but its possession might easily have been wrested from him by the enemy, if the infatuation of their Andalusian tactics had not spell-bound Victor; for the duke's corps was insignificant, ill-provided, exhausted with fatigue, when the enemy appeared in force on the opposite bank of the canal; the municipal authorities were apathetic, the political absorbed in intrigue and dissensions; so that it would hardly have been possible, if attacked with spirit, for Albuquerque's corps to have defended a line of ten miles in length against twenty thousand enemies.

The members of the old junta straggled into Cadiz from Seville, and, now used to command, attempted to resume their functions; but so completely had they been stripped of all ensigns of authority, that the magistracy could recognize them only as so many private individuals, and some of no high repute for loyalty. Venegas, the governor of Cadiz, to check the expected assumption of power by this defunct assembly, had formed, before their arrival, a municipal junta, elected by ballot, whereby the occurrence of an interregnum was obviated. This civic board arrogated authority unwisely, and would most probably have involved the province in intestine broils, by their hostility to any other constituted government, had not the persuasion of Jovellanos induced them to submit. The salvation of the country rendered the establishment of a regular government essential, and the central junta had expired under circumstances of ignominy: to their revival the whole kingdom was opposed, and the president and three others of its members had been seized at Xeres, and thrown into a dungeon, as the only stratagem by which their lives could be saved, whence they were removed to the Isle of Leon by Castanos. With the brand of culprits, liberated, but without trial, they could not hope to be again employed in such high offices, and at the advice of Jovellanos and Mr. B. Frere, (acting as British envoy until the arrival of Mr. H. Wellesley,) the old junta were constrained to consent to the appointment

of a regency, to be composed of individuals not included in the late central junta. The municipal council was also persuaded to lay down their authority for the peace of their city, the better government of the country, and to co-operate with the regency for the successful prosecution of the war. These concessions being obtained, chiefly through the perseverance of Mr. Frere, the following individuals were chosen of the council of regency, on the twenty-ninth of January, the Bishop of Orense, General Castanos, Don F. de Saavedra, Don A. de Escano, and D. Estevan Fernandez de Leon, to rule with supreme power until the assemblage of the cortes, to whom the question was to be submitted of the best form of provisional government. It should be observed, that accident, intrigue, or terror, had no share in the selection of the members of the regency; they were all persons of the highest honour, largest share of popularity, and deservedly extensive influence. One, indeed, was not pleasing to the citizens of Cadiz, Fernandez de Leon, but he was a man of too high feeling to accept the honour against the people's will, and, pleading ill-health, his place was filled by Miguel de Lardizabal, a native of Tlaxcalla, in New Spain.

As to Albuquerque, he was hailed as the deliverer of his country, and became the idol of the people: unaccustomed to the display of so much ability in their leaders, they flocked to his standard with alacrity, and obeyed his orders with cheerfulness. In the fulness of their gratitude and affection, Albuquerque was declared governor of Cadiz, and, assisted by the municipal junta, he proceeded to place the Isle of Leon in a sufficient state of defence. He was soon joined by numbers from outside the walls, and his garrison was quickly augmented to sixteen thousand men.

From one species of despotism unhappy Spain was now transferred to another, more powerful, more vindictive. The council of Castile now resolved upon impeaching the members of the late central junta, declaring that that body had usurped the power which they had exercised with so much violence, that the country never had consented to their employment of it, and that ambition, selfishness, and cupidity were their pre-

vailing passions. This unnecessary, even if well-grounded attack, was sanctioned by the regency, who immediately seized all the papers of the late assembly, and registered their effects. Amongst the victims to cabal on this occasion, none excited or received more public sympathy than the amiable Jovellanos. He seemed all his life to have been the victim of villains; but although his frame was emaciated by seven years' imprisonment, at the pleasure of the infamous Godoy, he deemed such suffering light compared with that to which he was now to be subjected.

With an inexplicable degree of ingratitude, the regency suffered this pure patriot, this man of the most unsullied honour, to be driven from public life, restricted to the confines of his native province, and placed under the surveillance of the *alcaldes*. There are some drafts so mingled with bitterness, that the boldest and most philosophic are unable to quaff them without sorrow: such was the cup presented to the lips of their benefactor by the members of the regency—it was a hard necessity; he accepted it from their hands, but it tinged his few remaining years with acerbity. Other unfortunate members of this devoted body, as innocent as Jovellanos, went into voluntary exile, selecting the Canary Isles as their future home, while De Calvo and his wife were arrested, and thrown into an unwholesome dungeon, without a bed to rest on, or a change of clothing. This work of wickedness, as disgraceful to the pusillanimity of the regency, as to the reputation of the junta of Castile, was consummated before the first meeting of the cortes, to whom De Calvo appealed, and, having obtained a trial, was set at liberty.

The Isle of Leon is of a triangular shape, and separated from the mainland by the canal of Santa Petri, ten miles in length, three hundred yards broad, and deep enough to float a seventy-four-gun ship. The bridge of Zuazo, a Roman structure, and which was destroyed by Albuquerque's army, was flanked by strong, batteries. Nearly in the centre of the isle stands the town of Leon, with a population of forty thousand souls, and a little to the north of this is the town of St. Carlos. Cadiz is built upon a tongue of

land seven miles in length, and half a mile medium breadth, one side of which is washed by the sea, the bay of Cadiz flanks the other. Cadiz is only approachable from the land by passing along this narrow isthmus; and the expensive works thrown up to command that pass, when England was the foe, and Essex the field-marshal, reminded the Spaniard that he had been taught the art of war equally by the aggression of both nations. The Spanish admiral, Alava, reluctantly consented to remove the fleet into the lower harbour, and it was by Mr. B. Frere's unceasing exertions, that the hulks, with the French prisoners, were also moored lower down, under the control of the English and Spanish ships of war. The ground on the land quarter was now cleared of every obstruction, and by the indefatigable exertions of Albuquerque, who superintended the works, the defences were completed, and the citizens began to resume their lost confidence. At this period it was that Victor, ignorant of the state of security in which the isle had been placed, sent one of his verbose notices to the garrison, summoning them to surrender: he reminded them of the safe policy pursued by the inhabitants of Jaen, Seville, and Cordova, who received their king with loyalty and gladness; and he cautioned them against any abuse of the arsenals and fleet, which were the property of his master and theirs. This vapouring message was promptly replied to, by stating, that Ferdinand VII. was the rightful sovereign of Spain; that the insinuations of Soult against the honour of the English were false, and unbecoming on his part towards a generous enemy; that England was a brave and sensible nation, whose only object was the establishment of free institutions, and the destruction of tyranny wherever it was to be found. In proof of which, the aid received at Cadiz, from the British, had been solicited by the citizens, who now felt no apprehension from the presence of an enemy one hundred thousand strong. The reinforcement here alluded to, as received from the British, and from which they seemed to have acquired much increased confidence, had been sent from Lisbon by Lord Wellington on the fifth of February, upon the earnest application of Mr.



B. Frere, dated the thirty-first of January ; it consisted of the seventy-ninth, ninety-fourth, and second battalion of the eighty-seventh regiments, with two companies of artillery, being all the disposable troops then at Lisbon. These were placed under the command of Major-General the Honourable W. Stewart, and directed to proceed to Cadiz. To these forces the regency of Portugal added the twentieth Portuguese regiment, which, with one thousand more that joined them from Gibraltar, made an auxiliary force of four thousand men ; so that, including the Anglo-Portuguese troops, the garrison of Cadiz on the seventeenth of February was upwards of eighteen thousand strong, the British portion of which was ultimately placed under the command of Sir Thomas Graham. The municipal junta at Cadiz, of which Albuquerque was president, were unaccustomed to the possession of military power, and wholly ignorant of its management or application : they compelled Albuquerque to be their president, upon the pretence of gratitude, but it was from vanity, and a desire to strengthen themselves against the regency, that the compliment originated. This spirited soldier was conscious of his inability to serve two masters, and by his leaning towards the superior council of the nation excited the anger and jealousy of his commercial rulers. His indefatigable labours continuing, the vengeance of the city authorities against the man who saved Spain from the enemy, was suspended, the *cortadura* was fortified, and *chevaux de frise* placed on the beach, to obstruct any attempt to pass at low water.

While the British were actively employed in forwarding the defences, the unemployed part of the population came down, and stood gazing earnestly upon them. Albuquerque, impressed with the maxim that no employment is more mischievous than idleness, advised, that all useless hands should be either put to the works, or formed into a militia, for mounting guard at some of the points of importance ; this rational suggestion, however, was not agreeable to the city authorities. He next applied for pay and clothing for his gallant corps, to which the city of Cadiz, he conceived, never could discharge the debt of grati-

tude it owed; but, with seven hundred pieces of cloth in their possession, they refused to grant a single suit of clothing. This shameful abandonment of their brave countrymen, and gross ingratitude to their general, is explained by the fact of the municipal body being desirous that the order for clothing should emanate from the regency, to whom they then might be enabled to sell this very cloth, and derive considerable profit upon it, in the shape of commission for their trouble. Albuquerque petitioned the regency, but was only answered by their advice to publish the memorial, and excite, by those means, the compassion of the wealthier citizens. He followed this fatal advice, published his petition, and obtained liberal contributions, but kindled a flame of contention amidst the exasperated municipal authorities, that was only extinguished by his own ruin. From this moment, the fortunes of Albuquerque began to ebb, and, while life continued, he was doomed to suffer from an aching heart. The civic junta accused him of betraying, unnecessarily, the wants and the weakness of the Spanish army; and they had the baseness to reproach him with having made too precipitate a retreat on Cadiz, whereby he was unable to carry barley for the horses along with him: they asserted, that such a march as he had performed, and contrary to the orders of the supreme junta, was not required, and was, in fact, deserving of punishment. The indignation and disappointment of Albuquerque became insupportable; he turned in agony from the monsters with whom such false and ungrateful charges originated; he threw away his robes of office, as degrading to an honest man, with the melancholy exclamation—"And is this the patriotism of the junta of Cadiz!" Devoted to his country too sincerely to be the author of internal dissensions at such a moment, he resolved upon bearing his sorrows with resignation, for the sake of Spain, and postponing reparation for his injured honour until a period less perilous to the issue of the greater contest. The regency showed him every demonstration of respect, regard, and confidence; but he declined resolutely to continue longer at the head of the army, and being, at his own request,

appointed ambassador to England, he left Cadiz immediately for London. Reaching his destination, he selected a retired residence at Paddington, where he soon after died of a broken heart.

Leaving the siege of Cadiz to drag its slow length along—and resting the British army at Viseu—Mortier at Madrid, having been frustrated in his attempt to surprise Badajoz—a brief summary of the operations in Navarre, Arragon, and Catalonia will unfold before the reader the precise situation of the war in every part of the Peninsula, at the moment when Lord Wellington, having triumphed over his secret enemies, and the powerful efforts of political faction at home,—when having defeated the foolish measures of the City of London to degrade, insult, vilify him, (measures bearing a strong analogy to those of the municipal body of Cadiz to the brave Albuquerque,) at length obtained the unqualified confidence of the generous nation he represented abroad, whose interests he understood better than the most lauded of his contemporaries, and whose honour he defended in a way that multiplied his own.—The guerilla chief, Mina the student, kept up the harassing system of his companions, and gave a new character to the war in Navarre. The French were goaded into a frenzied state by the activity of the guerillas, and endeavoured to surround and annihilate this little band; but they saved themselves by their fleetness, and the rugged rocks of the Pyrenees, and their pine-clad summits, gave them a safe asylum. Suchet, who had been the object of Mina's admiration as well as hostility, wearied with such an inglorious species of warfare, committed the future pursuit of the guerilla bands to General Regnier, and withdrew himself to Saragossa, which he proposed making his head-quarters during his meditated hostilities against the province of Arragon.

His successes at Alcaniz and Monzon had so much intoxicated the mind of Blake, that he now projected the visionary scheme of recovering Saragossa from the enemy. Advancing towards that renowned city with a genius of no mean character, yet unequal to that of his subtle adversary, his designs

were anticipated, his progress checked, and, instead of being in time to attack, he was obliged to place himself in a posture of defence. Defeat, dispersion, and loss, were the only results of the encounter between Suchet and Blake. The Spaniards gave way, abandoned their standards and artillery, and fled with precipitation. Possessing an advantage over contemporary Spanish officers, in possessing the confidence of his men, Blake succeeded in rallying his irregular forces on the following day, and having harangued them upon the necessity of obliterating the disgrace of their recent flight, he presented once more a front of battle to the enemy. Never was more courage, energy, or devotion displayed by a general, than the gallant Blake exhibited on the ill-omened day of Belchite; he was seen wherever a hope of resistance was presented, encouraging the timid, honouring the brave: but the disease that now corroded the vital principle of Spanish warfare, had penetrated too deeply into the constitution of his army, and he was again destined to behold his corps panic-struck, flying before the enemy, and leaving to the name of Spaniard the unenviable notoriety of being courageous in the character of the assassin only. With little success, Suchet made an interruption into Valencia, and reached the suburbs of the capital; but he did not consider his army equal to the assault, and treason was as yet unknown within the walls; and Villa Campa advancing with a considerable force, Suchet retired from Valencia to his quarters at Saragossa.

Saragossa is a name that will long endure, and every loyal Spaniard will teach his infants to lisp the sound amongst the narrow stores of incipient language; and when the hour approaches that all worldly considerations shall determine, himself will pronounce it amongst the tones that die away upon his faltering lips. The name is written in characters of blood, but it claims a veneration, like the letters that were traced by the unseen hand; and whenever the hostile trumpet shall sound on the frontiers of their country, whenever the French eagle shall be seen flapping his dark wings above the snows of the Pyrenees, every faint heart will turn towards Saragossa, and

drink in courage with the prospect, and the sword will be new steelled in the grasp of him who truly loves his country, and has read her eventful history. Turn we now from Arragon, and Valencia, and Andalusia, where fortune smiled, but falsely, upon Spain, to the strongholds of Catalonia, and there a second Saragossa will be found in the ancient city of Gerona. A garrison of less than four thousand men was here placed under the command of Mariano Alvarez, a man advanced in years, and of high descent. Twice the enemy sat down before the walls, without being able to make the slightest impression, either on the obstinacy of the garrison or defences of the place; but when they again appeared, it was resolved that the prize was never to be relinquished, the game was to be pursued to death; neither personal hardships, nor length of time, were to oppose the reduction of this fortress; in fact, Gerona must fall. Great men are created by circumstances, and it is said that Hannibal taught Scipio; Scylla studied under Marius; Pompey and Cæsar are known as rivals; and it was the ambition of Napoleon that called for the exercise of Wellington's great talents. The French in Spain had given the Spaniards a lesson in the endurance of privations, the encountering of perils, and the pursuit of glory; they taught them how to conquer, and gave them also an example how to die. That Spain profited by the melancholy precedent, Saragossa proclaimed to mankind; and the defence of Gerona is fully entitled to be recorded amongst those great and brilliant events in which the conquered sometimes outshine the conqueror. Taking the emblem of Christianity for their banner, the garrison and citizens assembled around it, and, dividing their whole number into eight companies, assumed the sacred title of crusaders. As at Saragossa, the women also enrolled themselves in an association, for the purpose of tending the sick and relieving the wounded, which was denominated the Company of St. Barbara. These proceedings, which the enemy looked upon as so many proofs of weakness, as common-place testimonies of Spanish bigotry and fanaticism, have always been found effectual in Spain, where that ancient feeling that bound the



defenders of the cross with such unfailing tenacity in earlier ages, still prevails in all its efficacy and freshness. In France it is otherwise; revolution has so frequently broken in upon the sacred institutions of that country, that, while it put fanaticism to flight, it unluckily drove some portion of true sanctity away with it. Romish superstition was assuredly associated with the measures of defence adopted by the Geronans, and one quarter of the city was actually entrusted to the protection of St. Naxis, the patron saint, to whom the inhabitants credulously ascribed the former repulse of the French from their walls; and the joy and enthusiasm with which the citizens directed themselves to the third defence of their homes, only proves the indescribable tie that binds weak mortals to the hopes of a future world.

It was on the sixth of May that the French appeared in force before Gerona, with a view to a blockade, had the prudent advice of St. Cyr been adopted; but this was changed into a regular siege by the orders of Augereau. A flag of truce being sent to the besieged, exhorting them not to persevere in so rash a project, where, however long delayed, misery and destruction must be the inevitable consequence of their perverseness—Alvarez replied, that “he had left it to his artillery to speak for him.” The bombardment accordingly commenced on the thirteenth of July, and, along with it the sufferings of the inhabitants, which probably were never exceeded upon any similar occasion in the history of modern war. Now the *generale* was beat, which summoned the aged, the infirm, the young, the helpless, to the cold damp vaults, in which they imagined that security was to be found; and as they passed into their gloomy cells, the company of St. Barbara, amidst the falling shells, were seen proceeding to their melancholy duties. Every day, and every night, added new victims to the heap of slain, or increased the number of the wounded in the hospitals, yet none dared to talk of capitulation: distress of mind, damp beds, and obstructed circulation of air, induced a destructive dysentery, and to imbitter sorrow with still greater suffering, a bilious fever visited the town in the month of July, and attacked

not only the healthy, but even the sick and wounded in the hospitals. The details of the siege of Gerona exceed in heroism even those of Saragossa. In the month of July the progress of the besieging army extended to the destruction of the redoubts which covered the front of Monjoui castle, and to the establishment of three batteries of heavy ordnance that were then brought to play with tremendous effect upon as many sides of the little fortress.

During the unabated fire of the artillery, the Spanish flag fell from its rest down into a ditch ; upon which Montoro, a Spanish officer, caused himself to be lowered by ropes in the midst of a tempest of balls, and, recovering, replanted it upon an angle of one of the towers. A breach being made practicable for forty men abreast, an assault was commenced ; but the gallant party who ventured to enter it, found, too late, that the previous silence of the enemy's guns was in order to save their ammunition, and reserve their energies, to give them the more fatal reception ; and, at the close of the day, one thousand six hundred French soldiers were numbered with the slain. Convinced that while a round of ammunition, a day's provision, or one stone upon another, remained, the Geronans would not surrender, the enemy continued to play with their artillery upon Monjoui, stationed very many sharp-shooters in guarded positions to pick down the Spanish sentinels, and, after another month's indefatigable efforts, the guns of Monjoui were silenced, and the governor was compelled to retire into Gerona. The heroism of the Geronans had not escaped the sympathy of their countrymen, and Blake gallantly undertook to relieve the place : his plan consisted in making a diversion in their favour, by a false demonstration of battle on the side opposite to that at which the convoy was to attempt an entrance. In these bold manœuvres he so far succeeded, that the Spaniards, breaking through the enemy's guard, set fire to their tents, and threw into the town a reinforcement of three thousand men. Alvarez, with the noblest candour, informed his new associates of the true and desperate situation of affairs ; warned every man who feared to look calmly upon

death, against his continuance in the town, as he had resolved that none should remain who declined to swear, that they were prepared to bury themselves in the ruins of the works, rather than surrender to their merciless enemies. As many as it would have been prudent to detain, readily took the oath of fidelity; and Garcia Conde effected his retreat with the remainder, with firmness and honour. The battery of Los Angeles facilitated ingress and egress, and was therefore as valuable to one party as it was obnoxious to the other; against this, therefore, the combined exertions of the French were directed, and, after a bloody conflict, the place was carried, and the garrison inhumanly put to the sword. The French justify their cruelty in this instance on the plea, that Llander, the Spanish commandant of the battery, fired upon the officer who had been sent to summon the place; and besides, some vengeance, they conceived, remained unappeased for the fate of their sick and wounded, whom the Catalan guerillas had put to death. The chief object of their wrath on this occasion, however, Llander, escaped from a death that would have been accompanied with torture, by leaping from one of the convent windows down into the plain, and flying to Gerona. The siege still continued with unmitigated resolution on both sides; each hour was marked by some event of cruelty, of gallantry, of misery, and the hatred between the opponents was heightened into frenzy. The French general began to abandon all hopes of reducing the place by force of arms, or military operations, and intended to leave his cause in the merciless hands of famine. The citizens, although on half-rations for some time, relied on Blake's activity, courage, and abilities, for relief, and kept an anxious look to that quarter whence succours were expected. At length the watchmen on the towers descried the approaching convoy, and past sufferings mingled in present joy, which knew no bounds when they beheld O'Donnell with eight thousand men advancing steadily against the dense mass of the enemy, bursting through them like a torrent, firing the tents that stood behind, and pushing on to the city-gate with one hundred and sixty laden beasts. This,

however, was the only succour that arrived: in vain the watchmen strained their eye-balls to discover the approach of further assistance; time told the tale, no other convoy ever came. The French rallied, opposed, and overthrew the second division of the convoying force, and the Italian band, who gave no quarter, put three thousand of their number to death after the action. At this period, St. Cyr, who had never shared the imperial smile, requested permission to resign, upon which the future conduct of the siege was entrusted to Augereau. The vigilance and experience of this officer proved unequal to the enterprise of O'Donnell, who, having brought supplies into the town, favoured by the darkness of night, crept safely out again with his thousand men, and, making his way past five and twenty posts of the enemy, several of which he forced with sword and bayonet, rejoined the main body of his own army. O'Donnell's escape was an object of admiration and disappointment to Augereau, who, much strengthened by reinforcements and supplies from France, detached a party against Hostalrich, where magazines had been collected by Blake for the relief of Gerona: the Spaniards at that place behaved with gallantry, but were totally incapable of making a successful resistance; so that Pino, having obtained possession of everything, set the town on fire, and returned to Gerona.

The fall of Gerona was now approaching, the energies of the citizens were almost exhausted, and famine, more sharp than the sword of the enemy's legions, began now to thin the numbers of the besieged. The loss of the magazines at Hostalrich could not be remedied, the hopes that its existence engendered were henceforth dissipated: food had not only decreased in quantity, but its quality was so much deteriorated, that the health of the besieged was now alarmingly affected. Still, capitulation was not mentioned; the oath of fidelity was nobly observed; and when the city surgeon expressed his sorrow at the mournful aspect of the bills of health, the governor merely observed, "This document then will record our sorrows, if none shall survive to recount them." For seven months the thunder of artillery had rolled around their walls; the sight, the hearing,

the health of the inhabitants were injured by its continuance ; and within the space of a few weeks five hundred of the garrison died in the hospital. At this time desertions began to take place ; and information of want of ammunition reaching the enemy, their exertions to mount the different breaches were repeated, and post after post fell into their possession. The constant distress of mind under which Alvarez laboured for so many months, now terminating in delirium, he was pronounced no longer capable of directing the efforts of his faithful fellow-citizens, and the command was entrusted to Julian de Bolivar. The master-spirit was now wanting, the magnanimous hero of Gerona was now a pitied lunatic : the burden of their sorrows became intolerable, and the word "capitulation" at last was faintly uttered. The gallantry and devotion of the Geronans acquired for them the admiration of their resolute foes, who in the sunken eye and pallid cheek read the story of their sufferings, and the true power that subdued them. No atrocities, no outrages, none of those refinements in wickedness that disgraced the name of France at Saragossa and Medellin, were repeated here. The brave respected the brave, and the conqueror shared his rations with the captive. Alvarez recovered his reason sufficiently to learn his misfortunes, and was removed under an escort to Figueras, where death speedily released him from captivity.\*

Thus ended the campaign of 1809. Gleanings of glory shone occasionally upon the cause of liberty, but clouds still hung thick and dark in the political horizon : Spain had lost her armies ; her chief towns were occupied by the enemy ; peace in the north had released the veterans of Gaul from service there, and the emperor had ordered large drafts to be made from their ranks, to reinforce the wearied troops in the Peninsula. Cadiz was garrisoned, and fortified, English troops

\* It was believed in Catalonia, that Napoleon had sent orders for the execution of Alvarez, in the Plaza of Gerona, but that the French feared the consequences of the outrage. His death might naturally have been attributed to mental agony for such a length of time, and the decay of bodily health which followed, but for the public execution of Santiago Sassi and Hofer, and the private catastrophe of Captain Wright and General Picbegru.—*Southey*.



had been cheerfully admitted, but Victor sat down before it threatening to repeat one of those deplorable scenes, a protracted siege, which had been too often enacted on the theatre of the Peninsular war. From Portugal the French had been expelled, and their efforts on its frontier paralyzed by the able measures of Lord Wellington, who had adorned his victorious brow with additional laurels in the memorable actions at Oporto and Talavera. Whatever had been effected during the campaign for the cause of the Peninsula, the sword of Wellington accomplished; it was the British lion whose strength and indomitable courage the French apprehended, and before which the frightened eagles drooped. Cadiz was held, on hopes that arose from the frontier of Portugal, and on the faith of Wellington's promised relief: and Lisbon placed her people, her armies, her treasures, her feelings, at the disposal and command of the British hero.

When the Marquis Wellesley retired from Spain, discontent was so widely diffused through England, that a change in the administration was inevitable: the calmest politician of that day perfectly comprehended the value of Lord Wellington's services, relied on him solely for the preservation of Portugal, and, as he had communicated both officially and confidentially with his brother, by personal interviews, and through the medium of special couriers, and had disclosed his able plans for the continuance of the war, it was considered in the highest degree prudent and necessary, if practicable, to associate the Marquis Wellesley with the re-constructed administration; his lordship accepted the invitation; and one of the first demonstrations he made of his splendid oratorical powers after his adherence, was in defence of the military plans, with which he had become acquainted while in Spain, in repelling the most ungenerous, ungrateful, and mistaken attack ever made by an opposition in that house upon a public servant, at all events upon an absent officer, absent because at the head of an army engaged in an active campaign.

At the close of the year 1809, the political parties were so equally balanced, that any unpopular measure, any untoward

event in our foreign relations, would at once destroy the equipoise, and throw the ministers over. The incapacity of the administration, not of its individual members, was publicly denounced by the country, and tacitly acknowledged by themselves ; and Mr. Canning so seriously disapproved of the conduct of Lord Castlereagh generally, that he secretly represented his inaptitude to the Duke of Portland, obtained from that venerable man a promise that he should be removed, yet acted with his incapable associate as if no such sentiment had existed. The conduct of Mr. Canning admits of no justification, it is one amongst the few dark spots upon a splendid career, and it is not improbable that this hasty and indiscreet step laid the foundation of an immitigable political hostility, which pursued his every future measure, exhaled its noxious breath upon his benevolent efforts for the happiness of his country, and ceased only when his relentless persecutors were empowered to say "he is dead—so is our enmity."

Lord Castlereagh was a man of the most insatiable ambition, extravagant political views, heedless of national embarrassments, unalterably devoted to a party, and ready to sustain the bubble reputation with his life. Perhaps his most lasting claim to the gratitude of his country will be found in his steady affection for the friend of his youth, in whose sterling worth he had such an implicit confidence, that he considered him a safe depository of the highest trust his sovereign could consent to repose in any subject. His vanity, and exorbitant ideas of English power, induced the secretary at war to equip and send out an expedition to Holland, as a diversion in favour of the reigning powers of Europe ; and, although it has been argued that this, the greatest armament that England ever despatched from her shores, was destined to accomplish a wise and valuable object, yet its failure would be naturally more deeply felt in proportion to its unaccustomed magnitude. And this great, costly, ambitious expedition, Mr. Canning permitted his colleague to project, and carry into effect, without one expression of doubt, or one word of remonstrance. This remark applies here to Mr. Canning solely, personally, because, Lord

Castlereagh had been warned against the risk of such an experiment by Sir Arthur Wellesley, who did not think it possible that Lord Chatham could effect anything more than the destruction of a few ships and marine stores; and, in a private letter to the Duke of Richmond, he observed, "that Lord Chatham could not make any head on the continent against one army collecting in his front and another in his rear." The result of the expedition justified, apparently, the wisdom of Mr. Canning's secret counsels, and he now, in consequence, called on the premier to perform his duty to the country, and redeem the pledge he had given to him of removing Lord Castlereagh from the administration. Such uncandid treatment was met by Lord Castlereagh as might have been expected; he denounced his colleague "as a man who had violated every principle of good faith"—and a challenge and duel were the unavoidable results. This violent proceeding was followed by the dissolution of the administration, and the imposition of his majesty's commands upon Mr. Perceval and Lord Liverpool, to form a new government. Amongst those who were invited into the service of his majesty were Earl Grey and Lord Grenville, whose marked disapprobation of Lord Wellington's military measures, and whose light estimate of that genius, which even then all Europe acknowledged, soon after appeared in their opposition to the grant of a public annuity, in their anguish at his elevation to the peerage, and their condemnation of his gigantic plans for the preservation of Portugal. Neither of these noblemen, however, could be reconciled to the principles upon which the new government was based, and Mr. Perceval turned, in consequence, towards the Marquis Wellesley, who was just returned from the seat of war, and succeeded in obtaining his adherence to the ministry. But scarcely were the new ministers installed in office, when that memorable attack upon Lord Wellington commenced, memorable for the celebrity of the individuals engaged in it, for the ingratitude it displayed, and for the party virulence and factious zeal with which it was sustained. "The opposition members," says Colonel Napier, "assailed the general, personally, and with an acrimony

not to be justified. His merits, they said, were nought, his actions silly, presumptuous, rash; his campaigns deserving not of reward, but punishment. Yet he had delivered Portugal, cleared Galicia and Estramadura, and obliged one hundred thousand French veterans to abandon the offensive, and concentrate about Madrid. Lord Grey, opposing his own crude military notions to the practised skill of Sir Arthur, petulantly censured the latter's dispositions at Talavera; that battle, so sternly fought, so hardly won, he would have set aside with respect to the commander, as not warranting admission to a peerage, always open to venal orators, and the passage of the Douro, so promptly, so daringly, so skilfully, so successfully executed, that it seemed rather the result of inspiration than of natural judgment, he would have cast away as a thing of no worth!"

The new session of parliament was opened by commission; and the royal speech, amongst the numerous subjects which it recapitulated, referred to the "expulsion of the French from Portugal by his majesty's forces, under Lieutenant-General Viscount Wellington, and to the glorious victory obtained by him at Talavera, which contributed to check the progress of the French arms in the Peninsula during the late campaign." This notice of Lord Wellington's services, if unaccompanied by the imprudent congratulations upon the unfortunate expedition to Walcheren, might probably have escaped the assaults of a violent, able, and determined opposition party; but this calamitous affair gave the inexorable opponents of Lord Castlereagh's administration, too strong a position, and furnished them with weapons that could not fail to inflict the severest blows. The venerable Earl of St. Vincent, whose heroism had introduced him into the highest assembly in the realm, appealed to their lordships in a speech full of the boldest and bitterest reproaches. "When I addressed your lordships," said the gallant old sailor, "in the last session, I thought my age and infirmities would preclude me from ever again presenting myself to your consideration. But such have been the untoward and calamitous events which have occurred since

that period, that I am once more induced, if my strength will admit, to trouble you with my sentiments on this occasion. Indeed, we have wonderful, extraordinary men in these days, who have ingenuity enough to blazon with the finest colours, to sound with the trumpet and the drum; in fact, to varnish over the greatest calamities of the country, and endeavour to prove that our greatest misfortunes ought to be considered as our greatest blessings. Such was their course of proceeding after the disastrous convention of Cintra.\* And now, in his majesty's speech, they have converted another disaster into a new triumph. They talk of the glorious victory of Talavera, a victory which led to no advantage, and had all the consequences of a defeat. The enemy took prisoners the sick and wounded, and our own troops were finally obliged to retreat. I do not mean to condemn the conduct of the officers employed either in Spain or in Walcheren; I believe they did their duty. There is no occasion to wonder at the awful events which have occurred: they are caused by the weakness, infatuation, and stupidity of ministers; we owe all our disasters and disgraces to the ignorance and incapacity of his majesty's present administration. But what could the nation expect from men who came into office under the mask of vile hypocrisy, and have maintained their places by imposture and delusion? The first instance of their pernicious influence was their treatment of a country (Denmark) at peace with us; in a state of profound peace, they attacked her unprepared, and brought her into a state of inveterate and open hostility. This was a foul act; and the day may come when repentance will be too late. Their next achievement was to send one of the ablest men who ever commanded an army into the centre of Spain, unprovided with every requisite for such a dangerous march. By his transcendent judgment, Sir John Moore made one of the ablest retreats ever recorded in the page of

\* Sir Arthur Wellesley disapproved of the convention of Cintra, and would have driven the French out of Portugal, or taken the whole army, had he been retained in the command of the army. At Talavera he was attacked by the enemy, and beat them in defending himself.



history; and while he saved the remnant of his valiant troops, his own life was sacrificed in the cause of his country. After this abortive enterprise, another general (Wellington) was sent with troops into the heart of the Peninsula, under similar circumstances: and the glorious victory alluded to in the speech from the throne, was purchased by the useless expenditure of our best blood and treasure." In his extravagant zeal, not even tempered by accumulated years, to impeach the political reputation of ministers, and sustain the party with which he had too plainly identified himself, the brave admiral passed over the battles of Roleia, Vimeira, and the celebrated passage of the Douro, which shed an everlasting light upon those pages wherein posterity shall register the bright annals of our age, and dwelt upon those calamities alone with which a wise Providence, for unknown reasons, had visited our country. Lord St. Vincent's address, when his firm uncompromising character in the front of danger, and his great experience of public life, are considered, assists in showing the strong hold of partisanship upon the bravest and best of men, and presents to posterity a salutary caution. The severe censure of the gallant admiral was followed by a luminous speech from Lord Grenville, who ranged through the wide political field, in which all Europe may be said to have been then included.

He declared that his heart was full, and he could no longer refuse to give vent to his feelings. He thought the day must soon arrive when ministers would have to render an account of the treasure they had wasted, and the lives they had sacrificed in useless and unprofitable expeditions. An expedition sailed to Copenhagen, in order to burn a few ships, destroy the docks, and accomplish some selfish national object: the dey of Algiers once said, when an English fleet threatened to bombard the town, that if they would give him half the cost of the bombs, he would burn the town himself; and Buonaparte, no doubt, would have delivered up the ships which we sought to destroy, for half the sum our expedition cost us. The expedition to Walcheren, however, of which Sir Arthur Wellesley had, from the very origin of the idea, totally

disapproved, formed the chief object of his lordship's eloquent impeachment; and he entreated the leading members of the House to separate themselves from the misconduct of ministers. Lord Grenville instituted a very just and true comparison between the circumstances in which Moore and Wellington were placed in Spain. With respect to the force sent into Spain, said his lordship, ministers seemed resolutely determined not to profit by experience; precisely the same errors, the same faults, were committed, as in the expedition under Sir John Moore. The want of concert with the Spanish government in Sir John Moore's expedition, was equally apparent in Wellington's. A more glaring instance of analogous errors exists in the fact, that after the public despatches of Sir David Baird, stating the inconvenience attending the want of money, the armies of Lord Wellington on the Peninsula, and Lord Chatham at Walcheren, were both deficient in this necessary article of military supply. The same errors pervaded their view in the fond expectation of a valuable and extended co-operation of the armed peasantry of Spain. The despatches of Sir John Moore point out how cruelly he was disappointed in the expectation held out to him of an active and efficient assistance from the Spanish forces: precisely the same fatal blunders formed a part of the plan of the expedition under Lord Wellington, whose despatches inform us that one Spanish officer had abandoned a post he promised to defend, and that another Spanish officer had deserted the sick, the wounded, the position he had undertaken to maintain, and precipitately followed the English. The absurdity therefore of ministers' expectations was manifest even before the fallacy was proved, and all prospect of such co-operation had been distinctly shown by experience to be nugatory. This was the delusion to which Moore was sacrificed, but which, to the moment of his expiring in the arms of victory, was never realized; and yet the lesson taught by the fatal catastrophe was so lost upon ministers, that they threw Wellington into the same arena, and exposed him to the fangs of the same heartless monster. History, said his lordship, is pregnant with proof, that an armed population cannot be con-

sidered as a disciplined army: it is not enough that men should be attached to the cause they are to defend, but disciplined, steady, and obedient to command: having skilful officers, able to execute the commands they receive, and capable of judging what commands to give, and at the same time fit to be trusted. Why then, said his lordship, send out expeditions, to meet the same failures, and suffer the same losses, leaving no monuments to their country, but those which are calculated to excite a just indignation—a deep and un-availing regret? Having pursued his analysis of ministerial errors to a considerable length, relatively to the Walcheren expedition, he concluded by moving an inquiry into the conduct of his majesty's ministers.—Lord Harrowby defended the expedition to Flushing and Antwerp, on the ground that no object could have been of greater importance than the destruction of the maritime force of Napoleon; and, when that object was first contemplated by ministers, the fairest imaginable prospects appeared of our being able to effect that purpose. Unforeseen and uncontrollable obstacles arose, to prevent the full and final consummation of the great design; but the demolition of the harbour and arsenal, of which the ruler of France vaunted so loudly, had been successfully completed. As to the expedition under Lord Wellington, his strictures upon that subject were so unfounded, as to require but a brief reply: the achievements of that expedition consisted in rescuing Portugal from the French, in covering the British arms and character with glory, and in sustaining the efforts of the Spaniards; in securing Estramadura and La Mancha, delivering Gallicia, and saving the ships at Ferrol—objects affording sufficient grounds of triumph and congratulation. Lord Moira, (Marquis of Hastings.) then a member of the opposition, lent the support of his personal, popular influence, to crush the administration: with his observations, which partisanship alone appear to have dictated, the present subject is unconnected; it will be sufficient, therefore, to allude to his professional remarks upon the expedition to Spain and Portugal: and in these he certainly displayed a clear view of the affairs of the Peninsula, and

uttered a prophetic judgment upon the war then carrying on under Lord Wellington. "His lordship gave it as his opinion, that the case of Spain afforded the best opportunity of terminating the war with glory, and of shaking, if not overturning, the power of Buonaparte. Enthusiasm unquestionably did exist in Spain, and that enthusiasm made Spain a lever, by which the power of France might be removed from its foundation, an engine that might be put in action with the greatest force and effect against her." This opinion was, in effect, identical with the views of Lord Wellington, and every idea it contains was verified by the events that actually occurred in rapid succession, until the final abdication of Napoleon. If the nation have reason to respect the opinion of Lord Moira, as evincing the deepest penetration into future events, it will on that account withhold its approbation from Earl Grey, whose short-sightedness on the same occasion is, if possible, more remarkable. His lordship said, "he never had been so much surprised in his life, as he was at the tone assumed in the speech from the throne, in alluding to what were stated to be successes achieved at Flushing and in *Spain*! When he considered that for what was called success in Spain, similar honours had been conferred on Lord Wellington to those bestowed upon the Duke of Marlborough, he could not help feeling, at such *unfounded assertions*, that indignation in which he was convinced every English heart would participate. He saw much to blame in the conduct of Lord Wellington, *in a military point of view*. With regard to the battle of Talavera, he condemned that uncandid calculation, which represented it as a victory gained over an enemy double our force, for, when the Spanish army was taken into the account, the superiority was greatly on our side."—The progress of events, and the subsequent history of Europe, so fully demonstrate the rashness of the preceding assertions, that it does not appear necessary to dwell upon them, but the position which their noble propounder held amongst British statesmen is excuse sufficient for still adverting to a few remarkable facts. As to the consequences of the battle of Talavera, compared with those of the victories

of Marlborough, even according to Lord Grey's estimate of the former, no advantage can be claimed for the hero of Blenheim "the results of the victories in Queen Anne's reign being rather specious than useful:"—"the nation had been intoxicated with a childish idea of military glory, and panted for triumphs, of which they neither saw nor *felt the benefit* :—"the pleasure of *talking* of their distant conquests, and extolling the bravery of their friends, was all the return they were likely to receive from a diminished people and an exhausted exchequer. The English nation begun to lose its relish for triumphs, in which itself had no real concern."\* Lord Grey's condemnation of Wellington's conduct, in a military point of view, finds its just censure in the following passage of Mr. Windham's speech on the affairs of Portugal, and its contradiction in the life of the British hero. "Confident judgment on professional subjects from persons not professional, was always objectionable;"† besides, his lordship's rejection of the report of the numbers engaged, being founded upon insufficient information as to the conduct of the Spaniards, possesses now no value, and should not, at that period, have been urged in argument. Lord Grenville's amendment of censure upon ministers, which the term inquiry virtually implied, was lost by a majority of fifty-two, and the address consequently carried.

On the same day, in the Commons, the formality of moving an address to the throne occasioned an animated debate upon the fallen state of Austria, the deplorable result of the Walcheren expedition, and the events in Spain: but it is only with the last of these subjects that the character and measures of Lord Wellington are immediately connected, however his opinion might have been asked, or his advice adopted, in the others.—Mr. Peel who seconded the address, took occasion to allude to the contest in Spain, in language gratifying to the brave men engaged in that hazardous contest, and evincing a clear understanding of the peculiar difficulties by which Lord Wellington must necessarily be surrounded in that unhappy, distracted

\* Vide Histories of England, Biog. Britt., &c. &c.

† Vide p. 21. Vol. II.



country, and confirming, in the most entire manner, the conclusions at which Wellington had long before arrived, relative to the political state of the Peninsula, conclusions then disbelieved in England, but subsequently corroborated by the flow of events. If, said Mr. Peel, entire success has not attended all the operations in Spain, it was *solely attributable to the physical deficiencies of the country*. There were evils in the constitution of that country which made its energies feeble: but the British name had come pure out of the trials. The army of the empire supported the character of superiority which they had always upheld in the battles of their country. On the twenty-second of April Lord Wellington took the command of the British army: in May he drove Soult before him, rescued Portugal, and advanced into Spain. His advance was met by the force of France, under the immediate command of the person who called himself the king of Spain. In a bloody and unequal contest, he established, by one more brilliant evidence, the comparative bravery of the British soldier, and earned for his troops the just and well-merited praise which we have been accustomed to give our armies when they meet the enemy: that army retreated from the scene of its triumphs, but there was no shame in a retreat like theirs. We were still a civilized people; we had not learnt to discard our humanity: we had not yet reconciled ourselves to throwing off the burden of human feelings, that we might go on light and dexterous to the work of human misery. We could not adopt the summary expedients of modern war: we could not involve the wretched peasant in the calamities from which our own privations may spare him. We could not bring ourselves to force its bread from the lip of poverty: we could not feed upon requisition, and calculate our revenue upon plunder. Our army will not subsist—where the troops of the enemy will riot. A British force could not glut upon the wretchedness of a suffering people: a British army could not, upon entering a plundered town, strip the miserable inhabitants of the scanty remnant which rapacity itself had left them. Whatever might be said of the British army in Spain, or of its

commanders, it had afforded to that people a glorious example, which he hoped in future days would be equalled, but could never be excelled.”—Lord Gower, who moved an amendment to the address, acknowledged the bravery of our troops, and the abilities of the generals Moore and Wellington who commanded our armies in the Peninsula, but characterized the conduct of ministers as placing a blind confidence in Spanish co-operation, to which he ascribed the failure of both campaigns in Spain. He designated Lord Wellesley’s mission as a pompous, abortive embassy, that promised so much, and performed so little; and the retirement from Talavera on Jaraicejo, he misrepresented as an inevitable and disastrous retreat.—Mr. Bathurst in defending ministers and supporting the address, described the battle of Talavera as “placing the valour of our troops on a height on which it never formerly stood,” which excited the indignation of Mr. Ponsonby so much, that he declared “that engagement to have arisen *from the rashness and presumption of the general*, which induced him to risk a contest that he was not called to hazard: that the British under Wellington amounted to thirty-eight thousand men, yet that disasters and disgraces were the sole consequences of the campaign of 1809, no matter to whom the errors in which they originated were attributable.”—Lord Castlereagh replied to this very impassioned speech, by stating, that it was an error to designate the late campaign as connected with Spain, while in fact it pertained to the defence of Portugal. That a discretionary power had been entrusted to Lord Wellington, which he conceived had been most judiciously exercised. Had he not advanced to Talavera, he must have inevitably disgraced himself and the British arms. It was incorrect to assert that he had thirty-eight thousand British in that field of battle, as it exceeded the true number by eighteen thousand. It was a subject of regret, in his opinion, that the military character of the country should be sacrificed to party politics, and he pointed to the pernicious tendency of such mis-statements.

Amongst the uncompromising foes, not to the government merely, but to the rising greatness of Wellington, must be

mentioned General Tarleton: his opinion of the battles of Roleia and Vimeira had already become matter of history; he now eagerly seized on the occasion presented by this discussion, to record a second expression of his condemnation of that officer's military genius. This gallant member declared that Portugal could not be defended; that the march to Talavera was most imprudent; that it would have been wiser policy to have sent thirty thousand men into Italy, under the command of Sir John Stuart, to prevent the army of Eugene Napoleon (Beauharnais) from joining Buonaparte; but perhaps, added the general, "this might not have been agreeable to the Wellesleys."—This ebullition of personality was followed by one of Mr. Canning's happiest appeals to parliament, in which, after defending the motives of ministers in sending the expedition to Flushing under Lord Chatham, he thus spoke of the Spanish campaign, and the brave soldier who conducted it. "If there was a country in which it was perfectly just to interfere, Spain was that country. There the torch of insurrection was everywhere lighted, and everywhere burning, and therefore we exposed the people of that country to no additional danger by giving them our assistance. We did not pretend to commit ourselves to the same extent that Spain was committed, it was always understood that the British army was lent, as a trust to be restored, not as a loan to be expended. No such question presented itself, as to this country raising any general confederacy against France; under existing circumstances, that would be an idle speculation. But if any country was resolved to make an effort to break its chains, that country became our ally. It had been said that we should endeavour, primarily, to effect an internal change in the Spanish people and government; but, before you confer a benefit, you cannot go, with the koran in one hand and a sword in the other, to change the habits and religion of those you would aid. Such conduct would excite jealousy not easily allayed. He was not scrupulous as to the means he would employ to thwart the views of Buonaparte; he would gladly press a combination of all nations, and all religions, into a phalanx to oppose him. He

would unite with the Turk, without requiring him to lay aside his turban, and take the field with the poor bigoted Spaniard, without first insisting upon his divesting himself of his superstition. Spain, with all her faults, deserved assistance of England, and any inquiry which would throw blame upon the Spaniards for want of co-operation, would be injurious to our future connection with Spain. He did not wish to speak against Lord Wellington, when he said the march to Talavera was his own act. *He approved of it*, and of the honours bestowed upon that officer. We ought not to undervalue the hero's laurels, even though they were barren. Had valour so long been admired, and at last lost its value? had we on a sudden become so enlightened that we could contemplate it with philosophical apathy? He knew that moralists might shudder at the shedding of human blood; he knew "that reason frowns at war's unequal game—where thousands bleed to raise a single name." Yet still was Lord Wellington entitled to the gratitude of the country, and the glories of Talavera he could not think purchased so dearly as to be for ever deplored.—The classic eloquence of Canning was insufficient to protect the fame of Wellington from the vituperation of the opposition, or prevent Mr. Whitbread from giving utterance to those jejune views of the Peninsular war, which the genius of the general refuted. This able supporter of the popular party in parliament, declared "that, with all his respect for Lord Wellington, he could not approve of the battle of Talavera; it had no good end, it only tended to establish what was never questioned, the superior valour of our troops. Our victories were held up as monuments of eternal glory; he beheld them as so many gladiatorial exhibitions. Alas! exclaimed the orator, how shall we dry up the tears of the orphan, or reimburse the exhausted means of the beggared citizen? The battle of Vimeira, followed by a disgraceful convention, had better never have taken place; and Talavera, at best, was but an exhibition of rash confidence and victorious temerity. The ministers had conferred honours upon Sir Arthur Wellesley, *for whom, and for the country, it would have been much more honourable had*

*he never changed his name.* His conduct in Spain seemed the result of infatuation." Mr. Whitbread concluded his invective against ministers, by asserting "the utter impossibility of defending Portugal with a force of thirty thousand men," and, in fact, by declaring that to be impracticable and false, which the lines of Torres Vedras will for ever testify to be practicable and true.—This lengthened debate, ostensibly upon the affairs of Spain, in which Lord Wellington and his noble brother acted such conspicuous parts, but, virtually, upon the incapacity of the ministry, was closed by Mr. Spencer Perceval, in a speech characterised by mildness and discretion. Having spoken to the principal points of impeachment against his colleagues and himself, he concluded nearly as follows: "I cannot avoid expressing my regret at the manner in which Lord Wellington has been attacked in his absence: if such practice were persisted in, it would damp the ardour and check the spirit of our officers, for they would go out to fight the battles of their country, with the melancholy conviction that, however great their exertions might be, their political adversaries would, in their absence, seize eagerly upon every little event that could be construed into a disaster, for the purpose of wounding their feelings, depreciating their services, and attacking their characters. With respect to the late campaign, it entailed no disgrace upon our arms; on the contrary, as the movements of Sir J. Moore, in 1808, and the battle of Corunna, had saved the north of Spain that year, so he felt convinced the expulsion of Soult from Portugal, and the victory of Talavera, had saved the southern provinces in the year following."

Thus ended the first angry debate upon the battle of Talavera, in which, perhaps, more injustice was done to the character and services of Wellington, than in any that had preceded, or ever afterwards took place. So entirely did the foreign policy of the nation engross the attention of both houses of parliament, that the investigation of the failure of an expedition to the Scheldt absorbed three successive months: the debates upon the battle of Talavera, although prior in time, treated the Spanish question rather as a source of



annoyance to ministers, than as calling loudly for legislative interference. The debate on the address having closed with the defeat of the opposition, that party took occasion to renew their attack, in the Lords, on the twenty-fifth, that was, after an interval of only two days. Proceedings were now commenced by Earl Grey, who considered it essential, previous to entering upon a discussion as to a vote of thanks to Lord Wellington, that it should be shown, by documents produced to their lordships, whether the advance of Lord Wellington into Spain was in the exercise of his own discretion, or the result of ministerial instructions. Several noble lords followed Lord Grey's example, in calling for the production of the correspondence between the commander-in-chief of our army and the secretary at war, although some, with whom was Lord Erskine, confessed that they considered Lord Wellington "an able and accomplished officer," and Earl Grosvenor acknowledged that such valour should be rewarded, but not without an inquiry into the consequences of the late battle. Ministers refused to produce the papers demanded, and defended their conduct by reference to precedent. Sir J. Stuart received the thanks of the house for his gallantry at Maida, although that victory might be termed a barren laurel, and no question arose as to the vote of thanks to the officers commanding at Corunna, although the campaign had been disastrous, and demanded inquiry.—These arguments were not sufficient to convince the judgment of Lord Grey, who declared "that it was doubtful whether the battle of Talavera ended in victory or defeat," and, in consequence, persevered in his motion, which was put, but negatived, without a division.

The appearance of Lord Bernard at the bar of the House of Commons, with a report of the address in answer to his majesty's speech, was the signal for the discharge of renewed peals of invective upon ministers and their measures, in which severe animadversions, upon the conduct of the British hero, were mingled, wantonly, needlessly, foolishly.—Sir F. Burdett designated the Spanish campaign as a total failure, but did not accompany his opinion with uncandid or ungenerous remarks upon the

brave men who were employed in the distressing events of the Peninsula—Mr. Yorke replied to the previous speaker, as well as to General Tarleton, an uncompromising detractor from the fame of Wellington, by regretting that he should continue to withhold that defence from a brother officer in his absence, which it would so well become a brother officer to make: he approved of the advance to Talavera, and thought there was no part of the illustrious commander's proceedings, that was not worthy of his exalted reputation. If there was anything that might admit of the nice investigation of military criticism, to which so few in that House could have any just pretensions, he would select two points, the one, his seemingly too great reliance on the Spaniards; and the other, his not securing the pass of Banos, which Sir R. Wilson subsequently held for nine hours against a force ten times his number. These he considered to be the only points upon which there could be any doubt.—Sir John Sebright thought the ministers incapable of guiding the helm of state in the storm that then assailed the ship; and, therefore, condemned every act and result that emanated from their councils. As to the glorious victory of Talavera, as he ironically called that battle, there was a glory of the soldier, and a glory of the general. The glory of the soldier was patience under privation and fatigue—discipline and courage. This glory had, indeed, been displayed in all its lustre at Talavera; but although he admired the great talents of Lord Wellington, he did not think that he had acted, in the advance into Spain, the part of a wise general. He *beat the French* certainly, but he was compelled to retreat, as if he had been beaten.—The debate closed with an explanation from General Tarleton, whose parliamentary conduct had been pointedly alluded to. The gallant member stated, that the reason of his having made his former animadversions on the conduct of the officer commanding our armies in Spain, was because ministers had declared that the advance of our army into Spain was purely his own act; and secondly, *because ministers uniformly opposed inquiry*. He considered that England always showed

a generous gratitude to her heroes, as in the case of Marlborough; but the merit of Wellington was still equivocal. He formerly blamed Lord Wellington for the convention of Cintra, for to him he entirely attributed that disgraceful measure: and he now blamed him for his rash advance into Spain. He admitted that the army had gained great glory at Talavera. Never was there a greater display of intrepidity, fortitude, patience, and everything which constituted the excellence of an army. But the conduct of the general was a totally distinct consideration; and that alone he blamed. General Tarleton also censured the conduct of Lord Wellington in the battles of Roleia and Vimeira; and in fact, up to the decisive victory of Talavera, no act of the British hero had ever received the meed of his approbation.

Scarcely had twenty-four hours elapsed, when the question of Lord Wellington's military genius again became the subject of a stormy debate: on the twenty-sixth of January, Lord Liverpool rose, to propose a vote of thanks to Viscount Wellington for the skill and ability displayed by him in the battle of the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth of July, 1809, at Talavera. Instructed by the opposition already given to propositions originating with the ministerial benches, he had separated, in the framing of his motion, the conduct of the army, and of the officer commanding it, from every other subject connected with the campaign; and confined the vote of thanks simply to the battle of Talavera. The battle of Maida was alluded to on a former night; and, perhaps, it afforded a parallel, as far as being barren of useful results; but in that instance, the thanks of both houses were cheerfully accorded to General Stuart for his gallantry in the hour of trial. Lord Liverpool wished to direct attention, in this case also, to that action which terminated in a brilliant victory, to the conduct of the officer, and the army under him. His opinion led him to the conclusion, that the march of Lord Wellington into Spain was an undertaking wisely planned, and deliberately executed. No greater prudence could be manifested than in the admirable choice of his position at Talavera; a fact

acknowledged by the French generals. About twenty thousand British successfully resisted, and ultimately defeated fifty thousand French; of whom ten thousand were slain upon the field of battle: twenty pieces of artillery and four standards were the trophies of the triumph of the British arms on that day. This decisive action arrested the progress of the enemy, was remarkable for the military skill displayed throughout, was maintained in a manner conspicuous for tactical arrangement, characteristic energy of the general, and pre-eminent valour of the troops. "I would impress upon your minds," said his lordship, "that it is of the last importance, that such victories as that of Talavera should be rewarded by every tribute of honour and praise this House can bestow. If we refuse to reward the gallant deeds of our army, by every approbation we can bestow, we take from them every incitement to valour; we deprive them of those laurels which constitute the soldier's honour and his fame: which he thirsts after, not only for himself, but, because he knows they will be handed down with derivative value to his descendants. It is for this that he devotes his life to his country's good: and if you refuse such a tribute to the transcendent merit of the survivors, and the glorious memory of the slain, you will act unjustly to the army, and disrespectfully to the devotion of those who are dead. Spain considered the victory of Talavera of the highest importance to her cause, and conferred such honours on the victor as have seldom been bestowed for any services. It filled the breasts of that people with unlimited admiration of the British general."—The Earl of Suffolk gave his opinion as a professional man, that Lord Wellington had acted imprudently at Talavera and Vimeira; and, therefore, while he would grant the tribute of applause demanded for the soldiers, he would refuse that reward to their general on this occasion.—Lord Grosvenor disapproved of too frequent acknowledgments of military services by the senate of the country: he had an objection, also, to grant peerages for naval or military successes; and therefore disapproved of other honours, which had, in so conspicuous a



manner, been lavished upon Lord Wellington. He was ready to allow that such heroes as Nelson or Marlborough were entitled to the highest honours and estates; but the battle of Talavera he did not think entitled to any such reward."—Earl Grey next proceeded to state the grounds of his opposition to any vote of thanks to the commander-in-chief at the battle of Talavera: he commenced by repeating his doubt whether the battle of Talavera was a victory or not; proceeded to prove that a victory implied an action, the result of which was the accomplishment of some object connected with the fighting of the battle, and that as the object of advancing on Madrid, or of totally dispersing, or making the enemy prisoners, had not been attained, the conflict of Talavera could not be said to have ended in victory. He denied that Lord Wellington had displayed any great skill in the dispositions which he made during the battle; he thought the position on the left had not been sufficiently secured, and the charge of the cavalry injudicious; he blamed the conduct of Lord Wellington with respect to the Spanish troops; he censured him for trusting to information received from Spaniards solely; he insinuated that the British army might have been well fed, and comfortably clothed, by an allusion to the conduct of the French at Austerlitz and elsewhere, "who were better provided in hostile countries than the armies of those countries themselves, by seizing on the enemy's magazines, and collecting provisions from the peasantry." Notwithstanding this total and unqualified disapproval of every measure of the British general, in connection with the late campaign, and upon which deductions he formed his determination to oppose any vote of thanks to him, Lord Grey concluded his observations by expressing the reluctance he felt in resisting a motion of this sort, *believing, as he did, that Lord Wellington was an able, skilful, active, and enterprising officer.*

Lord Grey's impassioned appeal to the House was replied to, in a speech of much elegance and feeling, by the Marquis Wellesley. He complimented his noble antagonist upon his fearless discharge of his public duty, notwithstanding the



painful circumstances which attended it; he readily acceded to the character Lord Grey had acquired for a generous nature and liberal sentiments; and congratulated him upon his descent from a person highly distinguished for military talents and services. But he, too, had a duty, painful in performance, to vindicate the character and conduct of so near and dear a relation as a brother—of an officer whose eminent qualities he had such frequent opportunities of observing, qualities which were attested by the universal voice of the officers and soldiers of the armies he had commanded, and of those countries in whose defence they had been exerted—of Portugal, where he was almost adored, and where he was invested with power little less than royal—and of Spain, where he was equally beloved by the people and the government. The noble marquis demanded a trial of his illustrious brother's merits, upon public grounds, he endeavoured to disengage himself from personal feeling, and proceeded to analyze and correct numerous errors into which Lord Grey had fallen, with respect to the motives and actions of Lord Wellington. He took a complete review of the campaign of 1809, and set to rest for ever the unfair, and invidious comparison, that had been so often attempted between the services and situations of Sir J. Moore and Lord Wellington, in the Peninsula, by showing, that no points of resemblance existed between their cases, and that the two campaigns were essentially different. With regard to the single, the isolated event, the battle of Talavera, his lordship contended that that victory had materially contributed to the main objects of the campaign, by saving the south of Spain from absolute destruction. It afforded Portugal time to organize her army, and strengthen her military posts, it enabled the British army to take up a position where they might derive supplies from Spain at the same time that they drew near to their own magazines; it compelled the French army to abandon offensive operations against our allies; and now Portugal was placed in such a state of defence, by the breathing-time which the success of Talavera had obtained for her, that she was enabled effectually to assist and co-operate with the British

troops. These were some of the ends attained—and were not such achievements essential to the object of the expedition? and all these advantages were fairly to be ascribed to the skill, the courage, and the activity which directed the exertions of Lord Wellington and his army. The Marquis Wellesley's luminous narrative of the campaign, and of the share his brother had in its successes, satisfied the majority of the House; and the vote of thanks, both to Lord Wellington, and to the inferior officers, was carried without a division.

On the first of February, Mr. Spencer Perceval brought forward a motion, in the House of Commons, for a similar vote to Lord Wellington and the army, for their services at Talavera. He pursued the same line of argument laid down for his imitation in the other house, namely, endeavouring to separate the question of the victory of Talavera from the general management of the campaign, in order to relieve it from its ministerial associations.—His motion although prefaced by no remarks calculated to excite the anger of the opposition, was immediately followed by an amendment from Lord Milton, calculated to defeat its object. His lordship entertained a high opinion of the gallantry of Lord Wellington, but could not disconnect the battle of Talavera from the general policy and conduct of the campaign. To him Lord Wellington appeared like an admiral who first ran his fleet amongst rocks and shoals, and then evinced great skill and ability in getting his ships off: he had brought his army into a critical position, and was obliged to fight his way out of it: they had voted the thanks of the house to the hero of Vimeira; but were that vote to be given again, as explained and illustrated by the battle of Talavera, he should pause before he gave it in the same way: he could not consent to a vote of thanks merely for bravery displayed in the day of battle. His lordship believed the ambition of Lord Wellington to have been conspicuous on both occasions; he seemed to have fought for a peerage, certainly more with such a view than was consistent with the conduct of a good and prudent commander.—The voice of Mr. Vernon, in a maiden speech of considerable

eloquence, was next raised in support of the opposition; he lauded the talents and character of Lord Wellington, admitted that the country was already indebted to that noble and gallant soldier for many great and signal services, and that it might justly look up to him for the performance of still more eminent achievements hereafter; but he must for ever condemn the temerity which had exposed a British army to the dreadful alternative of a conflict against a superior force, or absolute destruction in a precipitate and disastrous retreat. The exhausted comparison, between Moore and Wellington, was also pressed into the service of the opposition by Mr. Vernon, who, although ignorant of the facts in the case of the latter, represented the situation of Sir J. Moore with clearness, accuracy, and feeling. "Lord Wellington might have learned," said the orator, "more discretion from Sir John Moore's incursion into Spain: he might have derived salutary information from the recorded opinions of that great and justly lamented general: he ought to have been prevented from a precipitate advance into Spain with another British army, by the example of the disastrous consequences and unfortunate circumstances of the retreat to Corunna. Lord Wellington had not the same excuse, nor the same excitement to penetrate into Spain, because he was invested with large limits of discretion, and had no officious or impertinent interference to encounter; he was not goaded on to the certain hazard, and probable sacrifice of his army, by the intemperate representations of a political agent, nor insulted in his own camp by the presence of a suspicious Frenchman, impudently authorized to control him in the command and disposal of his army: he had not to contend against the arrogant dictates of a rash and presumptuous diplomatist, of blind but obtrusive zeal, seeking, by a display of devotion to the cause of the junta, to establish a claim to a Spanish marquisate. The campaign of Sir J. Moore was a melancholy warning of what was to be expected from penetrating into the heart of Spain. He never had looked on the situation of Spanish affairs with any very sanguine hopes; and when, against the great superiority which

France possessed in armies, and in able and experienced officers, the resources of Spain were stated to consist in her loyalty and religion, he feared for her fate. There were some systems of religion, such as those which inculcate predestination, that inspire an extraordinary contempt of danger: but he did not know that such was the character of that sort of religion to which the Spaniards were bigoted. Neither did he calculate much upon their loyalty to such a sovereign as Ferdinand VII., who had voluntarily thrown himself into the hands of the enemy, and might be said to have resigned his crown. If he saw the crown and the altar surrounded with equal laws, and if he saw the spirit of liberty the animating principle and bond of union among Spaniards, then he should not despair of that country. He believed that was the principle which dictated the heroic resistance of Gerona and Saragossa. The exertions which the patriots of Saragossa made was not without its reward. As long as the Ebro should traverse the province of Arragon, so long would the immortal fame of the heroes of Saragossa adorn the history of the country. He was not, however, an advocate for deserting the Spaniards altogether; he would wish to send them everything we could assist them with except a British army." This promising display of senatorial eloquence was replied to by Mr. Montague, who acknowledged the powers of the speaker, but did not think they had been happily employed. Wellington must have made an experiment of the honour, the courage, the resources of the Spaniards by a co-operation, and he had adopted such plans as were likely to be attended with ultimate success. If a failure had taken place, in consequence of the want of energy and unanimity in the Spaniards, such a circumstance ought not to detract from the glory of Wellington's achievements, nor dim that lustre which the brilliancy of his actions had reflected on his military character. The gallant soldier was not answerable for such failures; he could only rely on his own skill; he set a noble example to our allies, and endeavoured to instil into their hearts that spirit which could alone enable them to resist the despotism of a tyrant.



In the field of Talavera he had performed wonders ; surrounded by every difficulty, he fought and conquered a French force of twice the magnitude of his own, and placed the character of the British arms on a basis of superiority unequalled by all the world.

This just eulogy upon the abilities of Wellington inflamed the established enmity of General Tarleton into the most vehement indignation. He rose with a loud complaint of having been attacked with the foulest obloquy by both sides of that house, for the part he had taken with respect to the vote of thanks for the battle of Vimcira, which, he repeated, was founded on a sense of duty, and a love of his profession. He next proceeded to detract from the character of his absent brother officer, by an exaggerated mis-statement of the battle of Talavera, attributing the successful issue of that contest to the conduct of the Spaniards, and contended that, on the whole, it was to be considered "a repulse, but not a defeat of the enemy."

He next came to the account of the action, contained in the despatches of Lord Wellington, which he designated as vain-glorious, partial, and incorrect. Vain-glorious, because the praise given in them to the Spaniards was not adequate to their services ; and incorrect, because every line contained a statement, which the circumstances of the case did not bear out. Talavera had been compared to Agincourt, but there was no analogy ; for a crown was won by the one, but lost by the other. He could not permit any comparison to be made between Wellington and Marlborough ; and, placing his hand upon his heart, he declared that he could not conscientiously vote that the thanks of that house should be given to Lord Wellington.—Lord Castlereagh took a review of the whole campaign, in order to justify the conduct of the ministers with whom it originated, and the operations of the general to whom its conduct had been committed ; and concluded a very luminous account of the victories of our army, by adverting to the measureless abuse of the commander-in-chief by General Tarleton. The honourable general had said, that "Welling-



ton fought for a peerage at Talavera." "I assert," said the minister, "that he fought for it all over the world: it was not at Talavera alone his fame was established, he had fought in all quarters, generally opposed by greater numbers, but uniformly victorious. He did not know how honours could be more usefully bestowed, than upon such men and such services; and so long as the principle upon which he was advanced was acted upon, there was no likelihood of the peerage being disgraced. It was true, and fortunate for the country, that honours were frequently bestowed, during the late and present wars, for military excellence, but that was rather a proof of the talents and bravery of the country, than of any debasement of its honours. While the country lamented the losses inevitable in war, let the advantages that were derived be also remembered. Let them remember that the army, with its acquired experience, was worth tenfold what it was before; and that if it had failed in some particular object, in no instance had it been disgraced or defeated. England now appeared before Europe, not merely as a naval power, but as a military one also, and recognized as such by an enemy who had experienced our might in our victories, and often when, with inferior numbers, we beat the best and most experienced of their troops." The splenetic attack of General Tarleton was disapproved by every member of the House; but there were not wanting honest, conscientious, and excellent men, who were unable to appreciate the merits of the British hero, who saw but dimly into futurity, and wrecked their fame upon the question of his perfect knowledge of the position of affairs in Europe at the close of the year 1809.—Amongst such persons was Mr. Whitbread, who, in a lugubrious strain, "could not withhold a tear when he thought of the fate of so many brave soldiers, and the quantity of British blood that had been spilt in a sacrifice to incapacity and folly." It had been stated, that the principle object of the expedition was the defence of Portugal, Mr. Whitbread believed the contrary to be the fact; he had listened to comparisons between the British and French commanders, but they were not assembled to try Soult, they were

to try Lord Wellington with respect to his claim upon the thanks of that house. There were, he confessed, prodigies of valour displayed by the British ; but even in the famous charge of the twenty-third regiment of dragoons, he thought that the general was much to blame. There was almost a gulf between them and the enemy, when they made the charge, and many were lost in consequence. Lord Wellington had bravery, had skill upon other occasions ; but that he should be thanked as a skilful commander for his conduct on that day, he would deny. He would not agree to give a premium to rashness. The Spanish cause had become more hopeless than ever. Neither could he agree that the army had become stronger since than before its losses ; and he regarded our late continental efforts as calculated to sink the military character of the country, though they had raised that of the soldiery, whose gallantry was indisputable.”—Generals Craufurd and Stewart rose with haste, to vindicate the character of our hero from unmerited obloquy ; and the latter thus concluded the expression of his professional judgment. “As to Lord Wellington’s personal conduct at Talavera, he could only say, that he was everywhere during the fight, and *always in the hottest part of the action* ; and in contributing his approbation of the motion, he only expressed the general feeling of the army.” The penetration of Mr. Windham was too acute to permit him to be involved, by either party, in giving an opinion upon the merits of a man whose rising greatness he had long foreseen, and whose consummate military skill he had valued more highly than he deemed it prudent to express in parliament ; he felt convinced that the fame of Wellington would make its course to the pinnacle of the temple, as his army would cut their brilliant way to the highest degree of military renown. It had been substantiated, he conceived, that the battle of Talavera was a victory ; and why should they prevent it from operating on their minds as such ? There was no advantage derived from the battle of Corunna, except that the army were able to save themselves ; and, even had Lord Wellington acted imprudently before the battle, it ought not to retract

or withdraw the weight of a feather from the victory he had obtained.

France had generals of great skill, yet they had seldom secured a battle, that the breaking of a thread might have prevented them from achieving: the unproductive consequences were not to be put in competition with the military glory we had obtained. If it were asked, would a victory that only acquired military glory prove advantageous to the country? He would answer, yes, if military valour was necessary for national strength: and he conceived it much more serviceable to the nation at large than the taking of a sugar island, or a ship at sea. Some fifteen years before, it was thought on the continent, that we could do something at sea, but our army was set down at nought. Our achievements in Egypt first entitled us to the name of a military power: the battle of Maida confirmed it: and he would not resign the glories of Vimeira, Corunna, and Talavera for a whole archipelago of sugar islands. There never was a battle fought, perhaps, that was not open to military criticism; but who could tell what credit was to be given, what confidence placed in the critics. Mr. Windham regretted that Lord Wellington spoke rather disparagingly of the Spaniards on the day of the battle at Talavera: their general conduct subjected them deservedly to the indignation of the British army, and the contempt of the British hero, whose great exertions were contributed to rescue them from an iniquitous usurpation: still he was sorry Lord Wellington had spoken so truly, perhaps, of their share in the battle, because, however insignificant it was, they were present, and that presence alone must necessarily have been beneficial. As in a sea engagement, it could not be contended that the hull of the vessel had nothing to do with the guns that gained the victory: or like a spear inflicting a wound, could it be said that the staff was of no service? so, with the Spanish army, he considered they had done all that was required of them—they kept their position. If the victory was of no other, it was at least of this advantage, it showed the allies that a British army was invincible: in his opinion, the battle of Talavera was a glorious

victory, and the commander on that perilous occasion was entitled to every grateful acknowledgment his country could make him.—Mr. Ponsonby insisted upon recording his disapprobation of the conduct, his unqualified denial of the genius, of Wellington, and to entreat the government to recall an officer so incapable of opposing the legions of France; he declared that he knew the British were unable to maintain their ground at Talavera: he thought the victories in Egypt and at Maida ought to have been sufficient to establish our military fame, without sending Lord Wellington to hazard the treasure of the country, and risk the valuable lives of the soldiers, where no possible good could result from it. Lord Wellington had not been careful of the duties of a general; and while he acknowledged the bravery of the soldiers, and was ready to accord them the approbation of that House, he considered the commander undeserving of any praise. Mr. Ponsonby was an eminent lawyer, an able financier, and at one time held the great seals in Ireland—how gladly he would have recalled this inadvertent commentary upon the most illustrious hero in British history, and have blotted out this record of partisanship, or even injustice, will readily be conceived by those who were acquainted with his talents. Had passion for a moment blinded the distinct perception of an able politician, who had so inconsiderately slighted the genius of his great countryman, Mr. Canning's brief but beautiful eulogy on his services must have painfully awoke him to a sense of error. "Is this House" said the orator, "about to call the noble exalter of his country's honour, the wanton waster of her blood? He lamented the loss that had taken place in the battle of Talavera as much as any man, but war is a game that cannot be played without risk and losses. It had been urged that the parliament had been too prodigal of their approbation in recent times. We lived in an age so full of splendid achievements, that it was feared the spring of honour might be dried up. This was indeed a source of high exultation, and one in which he trusted the country would long have to indulge." Notwithstanding the virulence of party, and the

ability with which this factious conduct was supported, the majority of the House refused to lend themselves to a measure of injustice and ingratitude of such magnitude, so that the thanks were voted to Lord Wellington without even the clamour of calling for a division.\*

On the eighth of February his majesty sent a message to the House of Commons, recommending the members of that assembly to make provision for securing to Lord Wellington, and his two next-succeeding heirs, an annuity of £2000 per annum; and on the ninth, the Earl of Liverpool moved the order of the day for taking into consideration his majesty's message to the lords, recommending their concurrence in the grant, to which an address, promising a ready obedience, was voted, on the understanding, that when the bill came up from the other House it was to encounter the most determined opposition of Earl Grey, who not only then voted against the address, and declared his hostility to the grant, but reminded the House that "he had entered his opinions on their journals on the subject of Lord Wellington's services." The question being left, in the first instance, to the decision of the House of Commons, from which all such bills of necessity emanate, became a second time the signal for one of the most animated, angry, and unworthy debates that ever occupied the members of our senate. Notwithstanding that the arguments were precisely analogous to those employed in detracting from Lord Wellington's services and abilities, when the thanks of the House were proposed, still the opposition adhered, tenaciously, to their personalities, although the ministers that employed him, not the soldier that served, was the real object of their assault: they thirsted for the places and the power held by the former,

\* At the same time the thanks of the House were given to General Sir John Cope Sherbrooke, K.B., Lieutenant-Generals William Payne: Sir Stapleton Cotton Bart, and Rowland Hill; Major-General Christopher Tilson; Brigadier-Generals Alexander Campbell, Honourable Frederick Campbell, Robert Stewart, Honourable Charles Stewart, Alan Cameron, Henry Fane, George Anson, Edward Howorth and the other officers; for their distinguished exertions on the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth of July, 1809, in the memorable battle of Talavera, which terminated in the signal defeat of the forces of the enemy.



while they, in all probability, were but little ambitious of succeeding to the duties of Lord Wellington: yet they had the illiberality to scandalize the individual whose duties they were both unwilling and incapable to perform, for the sake of self-aggrandisement, and accession to political power. The opposition which the previous motion met with, necessitated the chancellor of the exchequer to case himself in a panoply of defensive argument, and to produce an incontrovertible and full register of the services of the British hero: "In estimating," said the minister, "the claims of Lord Wellington to the distinction conferred upon him, and the provision proposed to accompany it, they should consider his past conduct, and derive, from his former distinguished services, strong accessory grounds of claim for his present honours and rewards. He presented himself to his majesty as the soldier who had extended the glory of the British arms over India—he presented himself as the conqueror of Soult, the general who had expelled the French from Portugal, and rescued the inheritance of our ancient ally from the grasp of the enemy. In short, he presented himself with such an accumulation of merits—such an aggregate of eminent services—such an unwearied career of victory and triumph, as obtained for him his sovereign's favour, his country's gratitude. The minister deprecated idle comparisons, although he did not fear them: and as to the amount of the pension, £2000 per annum, it was the same as that granted to the gallant Lords Lake, Hutchinson, Duncan, Collingwood, and to Sir Ralph Abercromby; and it was on the strength of these precedents he rested his defence of the proportion of the proposed pension.—Notwithstanding the express declaration of the chancellor of the exchequer, that he purposely abstained from the invidious occupation of personal comparisons, Mr. Calcraft rushed into that unpopular and ungracious line of argument, and undertook to establish the inferiority of Wellington, by the absurd and puerile interrogatory system, "Did the right honourable gentlemen mean to compare Lord Wellington with Nelson, and a catalogue of other illustrious heroes who adorn our annals? He protested against calling any of Well-

ton's battles victories, ascribed his elevation to the peerage, and proposal of granting an annuity, to "ministerial foppery, and the desire of obtaining the Marquis Wellesley's support in propping up their administration."—Mr. Calcraft confessed that he was totally ignorant of Lord Wellington's services in India, which, however, he was sure, rewarded themselves, *but he could not discover any merit in his services in Europe*; he was sorry a title had been conferred upon him, and wished the House to consider that he had been rewarded beyond his deserts, in the bestowal of that honour. If ministers wished to provide for Lord Wellington, they ought to have given him some lucrative military government, for he felt convinced that in one month's time, when the fruits of Lord Wellington's campaign would develop themselves, public opinion would no longer be with the ministers. Would to God, he exclaimed, the army were at that moment in England! for he had been alarmed by the intelligence that Lord Wellington had promised to defend Portugal with thirty thousand men: if such rash attempt were permitted, the country would have to deplore some such ruinous and bloody victories as that of Talavera, and to reconcile themselves to the loss of Portugal, and perhaps of the whole British army in addition. This singularly false prophecy, false in all save a single sentence, which was, that "Lord Wellington might in time become an excellent officer," was followed by a mild and eloquent recommendation of that soldier's claims to the gratitude of his country, by Mr. Robinson, who reminded the opposition, "that Lord Wellington, though young in years, was old in military glory. When posterity, said he, should peruse the page of history, brightened with the names of Assaye, Argaum, Roleia, Vimeira, Douro, and Talavera, they must look for their reward in the honours bestowed on the hero who led Britons to glorious victory on so many splendid occasions: he repudiated the idea that honours were heaped on Wellington to buy over the parliamentary support of the Marquis Wellesley: if there was an individual connected with the aristocracy who was more anxious than another to confer honours upon the hero, it was Lord Castlereagh, and the

observations did not then apply to him: he, Mr. Robinson, considered Lord Wellington an honour to his country, as he knew that he was the boast of his contemporaries. Lord Wellington was honoured because he deserved honour, and he might say of him, as was feelingly said of Sir Ralph Abercromby by Lord Hutchinson, "His name is an honour to his country—it will meet the applause of his contemporaries, and be embalmed in the recollections of a grateful posterity."—The various misrepresentations of Wellington's operations, made by the opposition members, were very clearly corrected by General Craufurd, who, however, indulged in a strain of panegyric that did credit to his excellence of heart, but was not required on the occasion, for those who intentionally undervalued the services of Wellington, would not be convinced by any reasoning, and those who were really ignorant would attach but little importance to the fervid language of friendship. He declared, however, "that Lord Wellington had foreseen and provided for every thing that happened during that arduous campaign; that he was adored in every country which had been the seat of war—and was it only in his own that he should be refused a reward? If the question of his great merits were put to the army, they would, in support of them, almost fall down and enthusiastically worship him." It was urged by several members, in the course of this protracted opposition, that the battle of Talavera was as valuable in its consequences, as any other that had been fought during the war, and that, as to the retreat of the British subsequently, in that respect it was analogous to two of the most memorable victories in our history, Agincourt and Dettingen.—Entirely convinced of the splendid talents of Wellington, General Loftus declined any vindication of his conduct in the late campaign, but came forward to add the tribute of his admiration of his private character: "he believed that Lord Wellington was not rich; he knew that he had always been one of the most liberal men in existence, and from which he concluded, that the peerage, with totally inadequate resources, would be a mere mockery on the part of his country."





WILLIAM MITCHELL, ESQ.

*William Mitchell*



Sir Francis Burdett confined his opposition almost exclusively to an attack upon ministers, and, evincing as little foresight into coming events as the least able of his coadjutors, regretted that Lord Wellington had not been made governor of Portsmouth, or pushed into some other situation, as the tellership of the exchequer, the salary of which would be an equivalent for his past services.—The opposition of Mr. Whitbread on this occasion was less candid, fair, and liberal than usual: he recapitulated every argument that had been advanced, however futile or groundless, against the grant; he almost contradicted the very opinions he so frequently expressed on former occasions, of the military skill of Lord Wellington. He denied that the gallant officer was a persecuted man; on the contrary, he had been loaded with honours, and *was beloved by the army*; but as he had an opportunity of accumulating wealth in India, it would be a scandalous profusion and waste of public money to grant him a pension of £2,000 per annum.—Mr. Wellesley Pole felt called upon to set the House right as to Lord Wellington's circumstances, and, in so doing, took occasion to mention, that so far from his gallant brother "having fought for a peerage," that the honour was altogether unexpected, and never solicited; and that when the king was advised to raise him to the peerage, the awkward task of choosing a title, without the least idea of his brother's wishes on the subject, devolved on him; with respect to property, Lord Wellington was possessed of £20,000\* precisely.

The cause of the absent general found amongst its supporters the meek and amiable Wilberforce, who gave the powerful aid of his clear reasoning powers, unalloyed by the evil spirit of party, to its defence. He asked the House,

\* The manner in which he acquired this sum was as follows:—At the taking of Seringapatam, a grant of £5,000; after the Mahratta war, £25,000.; £4,000 as Civil Commissioner in the Mysore; and £2,000 arrears of pay. These sums, with interest, made £43,000, which he brought from India. Of these sums he had expended £3,000 at this period, and had settled £20,000, together with £6,000, her own fortune, on the Viscountess Wellington.

whether if Lord Wellington had devoted the great talents which it was confessed belonged to him, to the profession of the bar, or to any other liberal pursuit in society, he would not have rendered them infinitely more productive than it appeared he had done by actively employing them in the service of his country? Would the country be reconciled to that House, he demanded, if it acted illiberally towards such a man? Illiberality in the then state of Europe, would not only be unjust but impolitic. He had chosen a profession pregnant with risk, and which led alone to danger and to fame. That fame he had secured; but would his country leave him to the enjoyment of that fame, accompanied by want? Would an example so degrading to national character, injurious to national interests, calculated to damp the spirit of that army upon which the country relied for the recovery of peace, be now presented? He (Mr. Wilberforce) had been informed by persons who were competent judges, that there was not living a more perfect soldier than Lord Wellington. That gallant officer was as forward to share the fatigues, as he was the dangers, of the troops under his command. His comprehensive mind embraced every department of the army; he was truly the soldier's friend. He attended to their comforts, he provided for their necessities, and gained their confidence without forfeiting the esteem of the officers.—It was the opinion of Mr. Windham, who was equally independent in that House as the strenuous advocate for justice, humanity, and truth, who preceded him, that no one could seriously doubt the merits of Lord Wellington, or his just claims to the honour that had been conferred upon him by the king; and those who wished to detract from them had nothing to oppose but uncertain demerit. He did not, however, see the necessity for granting him a pension. Ungenerous comparisons had been instituted between the services of Nelson and Wellington; he would not follow that improper course, because he did not look upon comparisons as the true mode of rewarding valorous deeds, but he had always been of opinion that Nelson had not been sufficiently rewarded by his country.—Mr. Canning agreed

with the last speaker, that Nelson deserved a higher honour for the victory of the Nile; but he would not degrade the honours of Wellington, to meet the scanty portion which the noble and brave admiral had obtained. Should the flag of France, which for years had not been able to look that of England in the face, by any hazard obtain a partial victory, or even offer a successful resistance, would Napoleon be blamed for exalting the admiral who should acquire it to a dukedom, a principality, or any other transcendent dignity? Only two years before, it had been said within the walls of parliament, that we could never meet France in the field with an army. The victories of Wellington had disproved this imputation on our valour and spirit, re-established our military character, and retrieved the honour of the country, which was before in disgrace. If the system of bestowing peerages was to be changed, and the House of Lords peopled only by the successors to hereditary honours, Lord Wellington certainly would not be found there: but he would not do that noble body the injustice to suppose that it was a mere stagnant lake of collected honours, but that it was occasionally to be refreshed by the admission of *fresh* streams. It was the prerogative of the crown to confer the honour of a peerage—it should be the duty of that House to give to honour independence. “If the war was to be prosecuted,” said Mr. Canning, “we have a proud assurance, in the talents and services of Lord Wellington, and the bravery of our armies, that we are competent to contend with the enemy on his own element. If peace is to be established, we shall come out of the war with the consciousness of having obtained, not a partial triumph, but complete and unqualified glory.” With these observations the struggle concluded; the House divided, and the motion was carried by a majority of one hundred and seven.

England, Lord Wellington observed, from her insular position, was not a military nation; and, incapable of looking to the cool, cautious, prosecution of a ten-years’ war, they considered that the arm of victory was only properly applied when the beaten enemy were pursued, and either taken or destroyed.

They had not patience under the continuance of a series of manœuvres, the ultimate end of which was known to its authors solely, and to them the retirement of an army was synonymous with defeat. When first the British army landed in Portugal, the people of England looked for nothing but disgrace; they estimated too highly the character of the French troops, and they were conscious of the inexperience of their own; but when the victories of Wellington had made them acquainted with success, defeat was no longer tolerable, and despair was succeeded by confident assurance. The convention of Cintra disappointed the hopes of the nation. The failure of the Walcheren expedition was an awful public calamity: the skilful retreat of Sir J. Moore, a brave, experienced, and popular officer, although the army was saved, did not satisfy, because it was a retreat; and from the retirement of the army after the battle of Talavera, they now argued that a victory could not have been obtained. In this illogical reasoning they were injudiciously confirmed by the conduct of one of the most violent oppositions that ever resisted the movements of our government: and so deeply was the venom of their virulence diffused through the capital, already discontented at the extinction of all hopes of a speedy close to the contest, that the common-council of the city of London, carried along with the current, which a party in the House of parliament had directed against Lord Wellington and his plans for the defence of Portugal, in the first instance drew up a petition to the crown, praying for an inquiry into the circumstances of the late campaign in the Peninsula, and subsequently entreated the Commons House of Parliament not to grant, to the gallant defender of his country, a pension which his majesty had recommended. To those who are familiar with the history of many nations, it will excite no surprise to find that Wellington's path to fame was much and frequently obstructed, that injustice and ingratitude had often been his portion in return for eminent services, and that those very acts of his life which drew down upon him the heaviest censures he ever received, are those by which he has immortalized his name,

and saved his country. Of this truth a sufficient demonstration will be afforded by his own able vindication of his lengthened halt in the vicinity of Badajoz, and of his apparent dilatoriness previous to his retirement behind the lines of Torres Vedras. At this period, however, the outcry of party was loud against his conduct: his former services were forgotten, he was taunted with every species of mental infirmity, treason excepted, in the midst of which, both the violent attacks of domestic enemies, and faithful and zealous support of his former friends, he displayed that firmness and magnanimity which never forsook him, and saw that the clouds of folly would quickly evaporate, and the calm light of reason return, and that he, too, in his turn, would one day win over the uncertain people to his party. The address of the City to the king being carried up to St. James's on the fourteenth of December, 1809, experienced a fate which will be found disclosed in a second petition, which the sheriffs of London presented at the bar of the House of Commons on the twenty-sixth of February, 1810, against Lord Wellington's annuity bill.\* The first address has not been preserved

\* A petition of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons of the city of London, in common-council assembled, setting forth "That they have observed, with grief and sorrow, that a bill has been ordered to be brought into the House for granting a pension of two thousand pounds per annum, for the term of three lives, to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Wellington; and they beg to represent to the House, that a measure so extraordinary, in the present situation of the country, under all the afflicting circumstances attending our army in Spain and Portugal, under the command of that officer, cannot but prove highly injurious in its consequences, and no less grievous than irritating to the nation at large; and that on making these representations to the House, the petitioners are urged, not more from motives of economy and vigilance in the present period of difficulty and distress, than from an anxious desire that when such marks of national gratitude are bestowed upon any of the gallant defenders of their country, they shall be given in concurrence with the general sentiments of the nation, and in strict conformity to the claims of the individual; and that, entertaining those sentiments, it is their painful duty to state to the House, that, admitting to the utmost extent the valour of Lord Wellington, the petitioners do not recognize in his military conduct any claims to this national remuneration; and that, in the short period of his services in Europe, not amounting to two years, they have seen his gallant efforts in Portugal lead only to the disgraceful and scandalous convention of Cintra, a transaction, the sound of which must be ever hateful to British ears, and which



in any of the parliamentary papers, because it was never received by his majesty, but is to be found in the public journals of that date; it stated, that, "admitting the valour of Lord

has fixed an indelible stain on the character and honour of the country; and that in Spain the petitioners have seen the valour he displayed in repulsing the French at Talavera, with immense loss of lives, produce no other consequence than his almost immediate and rapid retreat, under the mortifying and disastrous circumstances of being compelled to leave his sick and wounded to the care of his enemy: and that, as yet, the petitioners have witnessed no inquiry into either of those campaigns; and they conceive it to be due to the nation, before its resources shall be thus applied, that the most rigid inquiry should be made why the valour of its army had been thus so uselessly and unprofitably displayed: and that, in addition to the reasons the petitioners have stated against this lavish grant of the public money to Lord Wellington, they beg leave to remind the House, that this officer was employed in India for several years, in a variety of services, by far the most profitable that can fall to the lot of a British officer: and that himself and family possessed for a long period of time, in that quarter of the world, the most ample means of securing to themselves the most abundant fortunes: and that since their return to Europe, the family has been in constant possession of the most lucrative offices and emoluments of the state: and the petitioners have seen Lord Wellington himself enjoy the singular advantage of holding one of the greatest civil offices of the government, whilst he was in the exercise of his military command in Portugal: and they beg to state to the House, that the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery of London did agree to petition the king for a rigid, impartial, and general inquiry into the plans upon which the expeditions to Spain and Portugal were undertaken, as well as of that to Holland, and into the conduct of the commanders to whom they were entrusted: and that in direct violation of these established rights, the Lord Mayor (Thomas Smyth) and sheriffs, when they attended to deliver the said petition to the king at levee, were denied a personal audience of his majesty; that they beg to impress it on the House that such right was never before questioned or denied, and they were thereby prevented from laying their just complaints and grievances before their sovereign: and they conceive it to be a high aggravation of the misconduct of his majesty's *unprincipled* and incapable advisers, that they have not only placed a barrier between the king and the people, but on the very face of these complaints, and in contempt and defiance of public opinion, advised his majesty to recommend to parliament the said grant to Lord Wellington; and that when the petitioners take all these circumstances into consideration, when they reflect, too, that the unanimous and grateful feelings of this country have never been appealed to for any similar remuneration to the family of the ever-to-be-lamented Sir J. Moore, who, after a long career of military glory, in the constant performance of his military duties, and receiving only his ordinary pay, after having shed his blood in almost every battle in which he was engaged, at length, to the unspeakable loss of his afflicted country, he sacrificed his life in

Wellington, the petitioners can see no reason why any recompense should be bestowed on him for his military conduct. Profiting by no lessons of experience, regardless of the inference to be drawn from the disgraceful convention of Cintra, and calamitous retreat of Sir J. Moore, a third army, well equipped, under the orders of Sir A. Wellesley, was precipitated into the interior of Spain, with the same ignorance of the force and movements of the enemy. After an useless display of British valour, and a frightful carnage, that army, like the preceding one, was compelled to seek its safety in a precipitate flight before an enemy, whom, we were told, had been conquered, abandoning many thousands of our wounded countrymen into the hands of the French. That calamity, like the others, has passed without inquiry, and, as if their long experienced impunity had put the servants of the crown above the reach of justice, ministers have actually gone the length of advising your majesty to confer honourable distinc-

its defence: considering all these circumstances, the petitioners submit to the House, that there can be neither reason nor justice in making the proposed grant to Lord Wellington, and therefore pray that the bill for effecting that purpose may not pass into a law."—This petition, which was substantially false, was, however, so far respected as to be ordered to lie on the table of the House, and was supported by Mr. Whitbread, who considered "that the objections to the grant were put in so plain, clear, full, and satisfactory a manner, as could not fail of making a serious impression upon the mind of every unprejudiced man."—Sir John Newport thought it "would have been well if ministers had rewarded the services of Lord Wellington by the sinecure place of tellership of the exchequer, instead of burdening the country with an additional weight; while Sir W. Curtis, an alderman of the city of London, expressed his unqualified disapprobation of the petition, and voted for the grant."—The petition to the king for inquiry, and that still more ungracious one to the Commons, to suspend their bounty, appeared to have originated with a Mr. Favell, who commented with the utmost severity upon the conduct of ministers, with whom he was resolved to identify Lord Wellington. It was, however, strongly supported by the Lord Mayor (Smyth), Alderman Combe, Messrs. Waithman, Quin, Jones, and Mr. Sheriff Wood; while Sir W. Curtis, Sir J. Shaw, and Mr. Sheriff Atkins, who opposed the petition, were unable to obtain a hearing. On the twenty-third of February, at a court of common-council, Mr. Waithman moved that the petition be presented; but, notwithstanding the clamour and violence of his party, the motion was carried by a majority of seven only.

tions on a general, who has thus exhibited, with equal rashness and ostentation, nothing but an useless valour." This indiscreet document, in which the British soldiers are not styled his majesty's subjects, but the petitioners' countrymen, although rejected with indignation, was inconsiderately given to the public papers, from which it was transcribed into the columns of the *Moniteur* journal, "where it now remains among many other documents which their authors would willingly consign to oblivion, but which history, looking to the encouragement of strenuous virtue under unmerited obloquy, in future times, deems it its first duty to bring prominently to light."

Ungenerous and impolitic as were these attacks upon the conduct of the general officer at the head of our best disciplined army, even their personalities failed to produce an effect upon his mind injurious to the discharge of his duty: when made acquainted with the character of the debate upon the king's message respecting himself, and the motions for inquiring into the expedition to the Scheldt, he thus addressed Lord Liverpool: "With respect to home politics, I acknowledge I do not like them; and I am convinced the government cannot last. What has passed in parliament respecting me, has not given me one moment's concern, as far as I am personally involved; and, indeed, I rejoice at it, as it has given my friends an opportunity of setting the public right upon some points on which they had not been informed, and on others on which the misrepresentations had driven the truth from their memories. But I regret that men like Lord —, and others, should carry the spirit of party so far, as to attack an officer in his absence, should take the ground of their attack from Cobbett and the *Moniteur*, and should at once blame him for circumstances and events over which he could have had no control; and faults which, if they were committed at all, were not committed by him." Strictly attentive to etiquette in all public matters, as he has always been cautious in private correspondence, Lord Wellington, on the sixth of March, acknowledged the receipt of the speaker's letter, communicating to him the vote of thanks which had passed the

House, on the first of February, but, being couched in language so cold and formal, that it rather indicated something of wounded feeling.

The British army still continued to acquire strength in their fixed quarters, and, with the approach of spring, felt thankful for the renewed health, which the milder season, more wholesome food, and necessary rest, had brought them; the works for the defence of Lisbon rapidly progressed; the commander-in-chief distributed on all sides his salutary counsels, and repeated his solicitations to his sovereign for succours, for money, for continued confidence. His requests had never been denied, if the power actually accompanied the prerogative, but he had still to endure the mortification of hearing that his plans were analyzed by the incompetent and bigoted, and motives imputed to him by the prejudiced and factious. Meanwhile operations before Cadiz proceeded with an unaccountable languor, and the apathy of the enemy gave the junta time sufficient to send for that obstinate, but loyal, old public servant, Cuesta, and request the assistance of his experience both in the cabinet, and the operations of defence. But the idea was absurd; Cuesta was in the winter of his years, he had enjoyed but little of life's summer's sun; the misfortunes of his country had embittered his existence, and so clouded his farewell hours, that acerbity and moroseness characterized those years that should have been marked with resignation and tranquillity. The point to which Cuesta directed his perverted talents, during his residence at Cadiz, was a coarse vilification of the dismembered junta, who replied with much truth and more spirit, yet were unable to rescue their reputation from the folly, ingratitude, and injustice of having suspected Albuquerque, and deprived Romana of his well-earned command at Badajoz. Sullen and silent suffering was sustained by the besieged, but so inconsiderable compared to the privations of the Saragossans, and to those of the gallant garrison of Gerona, that even their own historians have not chronicled the events. In February, however, a tempest drove some Spanish ships on shore, when the enemy making a rapid descent, took con-

siderable booty, and not a few prisoners, but the Spaniards succeeded in setting fire to the vessels that could not be got off. With this event alone, of any moment, the month of February passed away. March came, and with it an English envoy, Mr. H. Wellesley, with ample powers, and a British general, Sir Thomas Graham, of acknowledged abilities. The works that had been constructed appeared to those functionaries totally inadequate, and it was proposed that the British engineers should proceed to reconstruct, and secure the defences, on proper principles. There was a little fortalice called Matajorda, mounting only seven guns, but so situated that its fire continually galled the enemy in their labours, and from which they had once before been driven. To retake this building was a point of honour, and an object of necessity. About fifty pieces of heavy ordnance were concentrated upon Matajorda, and its feeble masonry was seen to tremble, and stone by stone to fall away, leaving the brave little garrison of one hundred and fifty men exposed to the tempest of balls, and the sheet of flame that issued from the fiery mouths of a whole battery of guns. When sixty brave men had been sacrificed to no purpose, when thirty hours had rolled over the heads of the survivors in the scorching atmosphere of flame and fire, General Graham\* carried away the remnant of the garrison, and ordered the bastion to be blown up. This burst of devotion to their king was succeeded by the same inactivity that previously characterized the siege: the French cavalry foraged in the vicinity of Gibraltar, but Sir Colin Campbell, governor of the rock, sent a detachment to Tarifa, which succeeded in driving them away. A just providence now restored fifteen hundred men to that liberty of which they were dishonestly deprived by the Spaniards: these unhappy victims were amongst the surrenderers at Baylen, and grounded their arms on the security of Spanish faith, that they should be permitted to return to France; but to the eternal disgrace of the Spanish government, their plighted word was not

\* Afterwards Lord Lynedoch, G.C.B. whom Lord Wellington considered to be "a most able and active officer," vide, Vol. I. p. 277.



observed, and the prisoners were committed to the hulks at Cadiz. Here they continued to pine in hopeless misery until the siege of Cadiz was some months old, when, some of them, more adventurous than the rest, cut the cables, and let the hulks drift, with a heavy gale then blowing, to the opposite side of the harbour: the whole fleet pointed their guns against the flotilla, and boats were manned, and sent to obstruct their object; but in vain, the sea was too rough for a boat to live in, and the tempest that blew was so swift and so strong, that the hulks soon grounded, and the captives were set free. In this state of fluctuating fortune affairs continued, and were likely to continue; the number of the English garrison, the quality of the troops, and the ability of the commander, forming a combination too potent for the best efforts of Victor's army.

The designs of the enemy in the central and northern parts of Spain had been seen through by Lord Wellington, who endeavoured to frustrate them by defensive measures, but exhibited no desire to advance. His army seemed waiting anxiously around his tent, until he should have concluded the necessary duties of the bureau, to follow wherever his cautious and matured plans should direct their steps. To mar the plots laid for the reduction of Ciudad Rodrigo had all along been a favourite object of the commander-in-chief, knowing that it was the key to Portugal at that point, would intercept communication with the north, control Castile, and prove fatal to the Almeidans: his future movements therefore, previous to the retirement of the British behind the celebrated lines, were all made relatively to the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida.

The invasion of Andalusia was but a part of the grand design of over-running and subduing the Peninsula, with numerous corps under experienced generals, and simultaneously. Of those operations that are more immediately connected with our objects, perhaps the attack upon Astorga is the most important. In the month of September, Loison had been repulsed from that place, with much disgrace, by Santocildes the governor, who immediately after commenced the restoration of the massive old works that surrounded the town, and his hopes of future

resistance were still further strengthened when he perceived the value of those modern works, that had been added during the retreat of Sir John Moore upon Corunna. Junot had calculated upon the reduction of this little indefensible post, and, assembling in front of its infirm walls a force of twelve thousand men, and sixty or seventy heavy guns, commenced systematic operations. The activity of Santocildes impeded for upwards, of a month, the formation of batteries, but, at day-break on the twentieth of April, they opened with so much effect, that a breach was soon made on the north side of the town: this, however, was instantly filled up again by the walls of an old house, which the besieged threw down into the opening, by which they were enabled to resume their fire, and to continue it without any interruption during the night. Junot on the following day summoned Santocildes to surrender, promising humane treatment to the inhabitants, and the most honourable terms of capitulation; but the governor remained unmoved, and the batteries were opened once more. The shells that were thrown into the town did irremediable mischief, breaking in the house-tops, and setting fire to the cathedral: in the midst of the confusion an assault was ordered; the storming party rushed up into the breach, which they found stockaded, and resolutely defended; but, continuing their desperate attack under a close fire from both flanks, and from the houses in front, three hundred men were shot in the breach, before either advance or retreat could be effected: at this critical moment, when the destruction of the whole party seemed inevitable, an opening was found into the ruins, where the party made a lodgment, and the ammunition of the townsmen being exhausted, the governor considered further resistance vain. His conduct however, entitled him to the most honourable treatment, and such was the respect in which he was held by Marshall Junot, for the defence he had made, that he desired his sword should be returned, adding, "So brave a man should not be without one," and granted the towns-people security of person and property. Astorga fell, but the Spaniards lost no glory in its fall, the enemy having two thousand five hundred men killed

during the short siege, and they would, most likely, have failed in its reduction but for the want of ammunition in the town. Content with his conquest Junot marched away into Old Castile, where the corps of Ney, Kellerman, Regnier, and Loisson had assembled, and where the campaign had actually begun; and movements commenced on the Portuguese frontiers. The advanced posts of the French army, in the early part of the month of March, were on the Agueda, and the main body on the Tormes: the British advanced posts were also on the Agueda, under the command of Brigadier-General R. Craufurd, who was to observe the enemy's movements between that river and the Coa, while Lord Wellington was at Viseu. On the night of the nineteenth of March direct hostilities between the French and English were resumed, for the first time since the memorable day of Talavera, by an attack on the British post at Barba del Puerco, which was occupied by four companies of the ninety-fifth, or rifle brigade, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Beekwith.\* Opposite the Barba is the village of San Felices, and the bridge, that opens a communication between these places, is the only one upon the river Agueda below Ciudad Rodrigo: recent heavy falls of rain had swoln the stream so much that it was now nowhere fordable. The enemy had collected a brigade of infantry in San Felices, and, under cover of the darkness, six hundred men advanced to the bridge, made the sentinels prisoners, and were pushing forward, when a picquet posted amongst the rocks, fired upon them so closely, that they were repulsed with the loss of two officers, seven men killed, six pioneers and thirty firelockstaken: Lieutenant Mason and three privates were killed on the side of the British; and the conduct of Beekwith, and of the companies under his command, highly applauded by the commander-in-chief. This slight affair was magnified by the French into an action of importance, "in which the English had been routed at the point of the bayonet." It may not be unnecessary to recapitulate here

\* Afterwards Lieutenant-General Sir Sydney Beekwith, K.C.B. He was subsequently appointed to the chief command of the forces at Bombay, and died on that station.

something of the positions occupied by the British after the fall of Astorga, the junction of the French corps, the affair of posts at Barba del Puercio, and the advance of the enemy upon Ciudad Rodrigo. It will be remembered that General Hill was placed at Abrantes and Portalegre, to direct a moveable position, and observe the enemy to the south of the Tagus: Picton was at Pinhel; divisions were also posted at Celerico, and Guarda, and Viseu; and Thomar was occupied by Beresford and the Portuguese: Almeida, Elvas, and Algarve were garrisoned by the Portuguese, and militia of that nation were stationed in the strong places of Estramadura: the main body of the British formed the centre of this disposition, while the allies, now well disciplined, were in the wings, and the whole force could be concentrated on the centre in a few hours' time. Pontoon bridges, at Abrantes and Zezere, facilitated the operations of Hill's division, and communication was maintained with Castel Branco by means of a flying bridge at Villa Velha. The British force under Lord Wellington, before the opposition party in England became conscious of their foolish, and ungenerous, representation of his conduct and services, did not exceed twenty-five thousand men, and the organized Portuguese under Beresford amounted to just thirty thousand. To oppose which, the enemy had upwards of one hundred thousand effective men, within a few hours' march of his position, and were actually commencing the invasion of Portugal with seventy thousand veteran soldiers.

Rumours were afloat, that so vast a force, so many marshals of the empire, and a prize of so much worth as the throne of Portugal, were honours too great to be conferred on other than imperial rank, and that Napoleon was actually hastening from the subjugation of central Europe, to conquer and enslave the Peninsula. The jealousies that had so long existed amongst the French generals gave, to this report, the character of probability at least, and those who felt that their own chance of promotion was uncertain, envied the great lot to all others, and secretly wished for the emperor's presence. Whether Napoleon ever really entertained the thought, whether his recent mar-

riage and cares of his empire diverted him from this object, is uncertain, but the selection of a commander-in-chief for the invasion of Portugal strongly proved the opinion he had formed of the difficulty of the enterprise. His choice now fell upon Massena, whom he had created Duke of Eslingen, in gratitude for his saving the French army at Aspern—whom he had raised to a rank above the other marshals of the empire, and whom he fondly called “the favourite child of victory.” In this general were united the military governments of Santander, Asturias, Valladolid, and Salamanca; three corps d’armée were placed under his command, and, in the inflated military phraseology of the imperial school, this force was called “the army of Portugal.” It is not improbable, and cautious historians have suggested the idea, that Napoleon intended to have rewarded the long, able, and faithful services of his favourite general with the throne of the House of Braganza, and, to ensure the conquest of that kingdom, had provided him with an army that would seem to have been invincible from their numbers, discipline, and valour. It is not extraordinary that the emperor should have calculated with so much confidence on success, when he reflected upon the vast power he had placed in the skilful hands of Massena, and saw the limited amount of British, incorporated with the legions of Portugal, whose prowess he set at nought: besides, whatever laurels the British general had won, his own countrymen, publicly, attempted to tear from his brow, whatever fame he had earned for British arms, his fellow-citizens declared to have been the result of rashness rather than reason—a sentiment which the French journals gladly embraced, and published abroad to the world.

This combination of circumstances, leading apparently to the inevitable conquest of Portugal, involving the destruction, or the final expulsion, of the British from that kingdom, increased the fears of the timid in England, and seemed to justify the wanton attacks of the opposition upon Wellington’s military judgment. In the early part of the year, Lord Wellington had applied for reinforcements to the secretary at war, and, sustained as he was at that period by ministers, his majesty did not hesitate to send



a message to the Commons on the sixteenth day of February, stating his intention of continuing the war in Portugal, and demanding pecuniary assistance from the House for that purpose. This message was taken into consideration in the House of Lords, on the twenty-second of February, at the instance of the Marquis Wellesley. His lordship stated that the arrangements recommended proceeded on the general principles of the policy which had uniformly guided the conduct of this country towards Portugal, as well as on that particular policy which induced England to succour Spain, on the plan of making the defence of Portugal auxiliary to that of Spain. In the early part of those transactions which menaced the independence of Portugal, it was proposed to take ten thousand Portuguese troops into the pay of England, to be commanded by British officers; at a subsequent period it was judged expedient to add ten thousand more to that number; and finally his majesty thought it prudent to increase the whole amount to thirty thousand; the charge for which was estimated at £930,000 per annum. Such was the general principle, and such the actual conduct of this country to Portugal. Now, if it appeared, said Lord Wellesley, that in proportion to the improvement in their discipline the resistance of the Portuguese should become more successful; if their courage and perseverance became more resolutely displayed; if, true to herself, and confident in her own means, Portugal should show no disposition to crouch to the enemy, or rely entirely for deliverance on foreign aid, on the principle of our ancient alliance with that country, England should be prepared to afford her every aid and encouragement that could contribute to animate her exertions and uphold her resolution. Recent occurrences illustrated this policy, and manifested the propriety of observing its principles. When Napoleon first issued a declaration threatening the invasion of Portugal, French influence was predominant in Spain: Portugal possessed no adequate means of resistance, and it was feared that the designs of the enemy would be secretly favoured by the connivance of the Spanish government. Yet under these discour-

aging circumstances, Great Britain not only promised her every aid, but prepared a powerful army to co-operate in her resistance to the enemy: and this policy was supported by Mr. Fox, a man of transcendent abilities, and by Mr. Windham, whose talents were perhaps little inferior. There was no reason to regret the adherence of this country to the policy originally laid down towards our allies. The defence of Portugal was now beneficial to Spain, and Portugal was also the most advantageous military position that could be occupied for that purpose, whence it followed that the occupation of Portugal by British troops was essential to any aid England could hope to afford to Spain. If England had not changed her foreign policy, and resolved upon deserting both Spain and Portugal in this crisis of their fate, the parliament would not be justified in refusing the motion then submitted to them. Great disasters had recently befallen the Spanish cause, and England heard of them with deep concern: still it was neither politic nor just to manifest our intentions of abandoning Portugal. To withdraw our troops from Portugal, at that moment, would dispirit the country, and induce her to relax her efforts for her own defence: it would cast over the councils of England, and the hopes of Portugal and Spain, the hue and complexion of despair: would tell them that the hour of their fate was arrived, that all attempts to inspire or assist were now of no avail, that they must bow the neck, and submit to the yoke of a merciless invader. This would be to strew the conqueror's path with flowers; to prepare the way for his triumphal march to the throne of the two kingdoms.

It was the deliberate opinion of Lord Wellesley that the calamities and disasters which had befallen Spain were not imputable to the people, but to the vices of their government: and that it was the imbecility or treachery of that vile and wretched government, that first opened the breach through which the enemy entered into the heart of Spain: that delivered into hostile hands all the strong fortresses of the country, and betrayed her people, defenceless and unarmed, into the power of a perfidious foe. If England should pre-

maturely withdraw her troops from Portugal, or retrace the grounds upon which she had previously assisted her, such conduct would justify Portugal in relaxing her exertions, and Spain in considering her cause as hopeless. His lordship declared his conviction "that every motive and principle of good faith, justice, honour, and policy would concur in pointing out, to the members of that House, the propriety of continuing to maintain a British army in the Peninsula.

Lord Grenville replied to the eloquent reasonings of Lord Wellesley in a speech of inordinate length and lugubrious character. He called attention to those predictions which had been despised, but nevertheless were all too fatally fulfilled: his object, he said, was not a mere barren censure of past errors, but, from the consideration of those errors, to conjure them to rescue the country from similar calamities, to pay some regard to the valuable lives of their fellow-citizens, and to ask their lordships whether they were disposed to sit in that House, day after day, and year after year, spectators of the wasteful expenditure, and the useless effusion of so much of the best blood of the country in hopeless, calamitous and disgraceful efforts. He was persuaded there was not one who heard him, who, in his conscience, believed, that, *even the sacrifice of the whole of that brave British army would secure the kingdom of Portugal: and if he received from any person an answer in affirmation of that opinion, he should be able to judge by that answer of the capacity of such a person for the government of this country, or even for the transaction of public business in a deliberative assembly.* His lordship considered the enterprise to be utterly impossible; and he should be ashamed, he protested, to waste the time of that House, by dwelling upon the arguments advanced by Lord Wellesley, for the continuance of our military support to the cause of the Portuguese. That Portugal could be defended by the force under Lord Wellington was a thing absolutely impossible; and therefore it was that Lord Grenville perceived with regret, that a measure of such, not only questionable, but defective policy, should have been the first official act of the

Marquis Wellesley. He was aware it might be said, that Portugal, considered with respect to its geographical advantages, was capable of being effectually defended: he was not afraid, however, to assert, that against a power possessing the whole means of Spain, as he supposed the French to do at that moment, Portugal, so far from being the most defensible, was the least so of any country in Europe. He could not suppose that a country so circumstanced, with a population without spirit, and a *foreign general* exercising little short of arbitrary power within it, was capable of effectual defence; and he looked not to the experience of the last seventeen years, the melancholy events of the last month would show how inefficient the barrier of a rising ground proves to an invading enemy, in the improved system of warfare. He had no objection to afford Portugal pecuniary relief, but he could never consent to the continuance of the British army in Portugal, because he was confident, that by so doing it would become exposed to the same fate as that under Sir John Moore, or Lord Chatham, and that in the prosecution of an object in which no man could possibly expect success.—Lord Liverpool answered this prophet of evil, by designating his opposition as “a dangerous and impolitic appeal to the passions of the people, displaying to them, in aggravated colours, the losses, the burdens, they were called on to support.” To the outcry that was raised, of what has been done for Spain? he replied, “The British had gained the hearts and affections of the whole population of Spain and Portugal: an acquisition of which no triumphs, no successes of the enemy could deprive them. In Portugal there was not a want of British soldiers left unsupplied: in Spain, such was the deference and perfect confidence reposed in our minister, that their fleet was placed under the orders of the British admiral, effects which a cold, cautious, phlegmatic policy would never have produced—strong and signal proofs of affection, to which indifference would never have entitled us. So that whatever might be the issue of the Peninsular war, England would always enjoy the proud satisfaction of having done her duty to her allies.”—The Earl of Moira (Marquis of Hastings) censured,

with much severity, the conduct of his majesty's ministers, particularly their foreign policy which he designated as betraying want of judgment, foresight, and vigour; and their resolution to defend Portugal, the climax of error, the plan of defence being impracticable. "Nothing," he contended, "could be gained, from the attempt, whilst the danger was certain. We should be allowed to retain Portugal, under our present system, just so long as Buonaparte thought proper."—Lord Erskine declared, that as to the retention of Portugal, there seemed to him a sort of predestination in the case, that whenever the French take any country or any prisoners, they shall have some of our money also."—It was the opinion of Lord Holland, that to save Portugal, "*a great plan was necessary*; nothing neutral or narrow, nothing minute, nothing temporary could enter into the principle of such a plan, but, for this, qualities were requisite, which no man looked for in the ministry:" his lordship forgot to direct his investigation to the vicinity of Torres Vedras, where a master-mind was then engaged in designing the "great plan," and in prosecuting those very means by which results were soon to be obtained, which his lordship's party called impracticable and impossible. The address, however, was carried without a division, as Lord Grenville's amendment to neutralize its effect had been lost by a majority of thirty.

The opposition had displayed their strength, talents, and desire of place, the last to a discreditable length, in the debates upon the campaign of 1809; they now determined to illustrate the extent to which general delusion may prevail upon the most important events in history, and to show the difficulties which Lord Wellington had to encounter abroad, accompanied by the most heartless and ungrateful discouragement at home. It was a propitious circumstance, for the future destinies of Europe, that ministers placed such perfect confidence in the genius, the mental resources of Wellington, and possessed a full conviction of the wisdom of his vast projects for the restoration of that balance of power amongst the kingdoms of Europe, which the great military talents of Napoleon had destroyed; for, this conviction alone could have supported them, under



such continued vilification by the public press, and such painful impeachment for incapacity, imbecility, and want of every feeling of humanity, by an able and popular opposition in parliament. The debate upon the campaign, past and future, was resumed on the ninth of March, with all the pertinacity that characterized it at the beginning, upon Mr. Spencer Perceval's moving the order of the day for the House going into a committee of supply, "in order that he might submit a proposition for granting £980,000, to be applied in providing for the defence of Portugal:" traversing the oft-beaten ground of argument in favour of continuing to fight the French on the soil of Spain, rather than on the shores of England or Ireland, he contended, that "as long as there should remain a hope of success in Spain, it was obviously the best policy of this country to keep up the spirit of resistance to the French usurpation in the Spanish nation." By continuing our subsidiary force there, the French would be necessitated to keep one hundred thousand men ready to act against the allies; by withdrawing, they would be enabled to overrun all Portugal with ten thousand men, and be at liberty to direct the difference between those amounts to conquest elsewhere. As long as Great Britain did not separate herself from Spain, France would find it extremely difficult to establish a tranquil dominion in the Peninsula: her power there would be limited by the number of her military posts, and it would require as large an army to hold these as to make a conquest of Spain.—The sinister forebodings of Sir John Newport were next injudiciously promulged. He considered that the Spaniards had not been true to themselves, that Spain was virtually conquered, Cadiz alone remaining in the possession of the provisional government: and, if England should persevere in the rash project of training thirty thousand Portuguese troops, he doubted not that a few months would see the whole of that body annexed to the military force of Napoleon.—Mr. Leslie Foster took an able review of the state of the Peninsula, touched upon the national character of the Spaniard, and drew largely from history in support of his matured opinions. He thought, that the difficulties,

in which the extraordinary circumstances of Spain had involved her people, rendered a decision upon their character a matter of hesitation. To him the affairs of the Peninsula appeared nothing less than an enigma. which it was no reflection on any ministry not to have understood: a revolution bursting out at a period the least expected, exhibiting events in its progress the most singularly contradictory, and pregnant with results which no man could foresee. While Englishmen boast that they inherit and exhibit the spirit of their ancestors who fought under our Henrys and Edwards, it should be remembered that the forefathers of the present Spaniards were engaged in a contest which is without a parallel in the history of the world: the expulsion of the Moors, which took place so late as the reign of our Seventh Henry, was the fruits of seven centuries of uninterrupted fighting, and of 3,600 battles, in most of which the Spaniards had been defeated. In the beaten but persevering Spaniards of these days, Mr. Foster thought we might venture to trace the descendants of those peculiar warriors, as easily as we recognize the sons of the conquerors of Cressy and of Agincourt in the English who fought at Talavera. We might trace the same individual fortitude and patience, the same enthusiastic superstition, the same persevering insensibility of failure, and even the same absolute indifference as to liberty, constitution, or cortes, that distinguished the conquerors of the Moors. He defended the unequal courage of the Spaniards by reference to the national character through centuries past, as well as by allusion to the prevalence of bad government, priestcraft, ignorance, and superstition, but denied, and ingeniously supported his opinions, that our laurels in Spain were barren. By our diversion in favour of central Europe, which Lord Wellington's victories effected, the French have lost in battle, in various countries, two hundred thousand men, and it would require three hundred thousand still, to continue the war, and retain their position in the Peninsula: Brazil and the western possessions of our allies were securely and lastingly separated from the enemy: the fleets of the Peninsula had been rescued from their grasp, and the honour and military

genius of England had been vindicated. Whenever the British nation should declare "*Funditus occidimus, neque habet Fortuna regressum*," he would acknowledge that the limit had been reached, and self-preservation called on us to discontinue the contest. But our beaten allies did not yet despair, then why should the victorious English? It would be disgraceful to the honoured name of Britain, that deserted Portugal should be able to say, at a future day, "Whence these chains? If you had stood firm a little longer, if you had not so soon fainted, we should not this day be in the power of our enemies." This gentleman's opinions, clothed in the language of a scholar, and bearing the impress of an accomplished statesman, were heard with fixed attention, and are believed to have confirmed many that hesitated, but they failed in deterring the devoted partisans of the opposition from accusing the ministers of incapacity, or from still further recording their own want of judgment, of impartiality, or candour. Few, however, were so unlucky in their prophecies as Mr. Banks, who said "it appeared to him quite romantic to expect that a British army of twenty-five thousand men, even with whatever co-operation Portugal could give, would be able to maintain a war on the Peninsula, as principals, against France." Had his evil genius directed him, he could not have more accurately described as visionary, romantic, and impossible, the glorious achievements which Wellington subsequently proved to Europe were possible to such a mind as his, although inconceivable by faculties that were more limited. With some little explanation of the misstatements that were imputed to him, in the department of finance, as regarded the supply of our military chests in Portugal, Mr. Huskisson supported the motion, which was carried without a division, the amendment having been rejected by a large majority.

Thus ended the unwise attempt of the opposition in the lower House, in the peculiar circumstances of Europe, to discourage the gallant efforts of the only man, to whom, by common consent, all the enemies of ambitious France looked for assistance. It is vain to defend the conduct of the opposi-

tion on the ground that the administration was imbecile, or corrupt; the extraordinary difficulties in which the genius of Napoleon had involved this country, did not admit of this mode of assailing the government: the imputed misconduct of ministers should not have been mixed up with the brave, and decidedly successful, achievements of our army: the victories of our troops should not have been undervalued; on the contrary, it would have become both sides of the House to have learned from the French government, "*fas est ab hoste doceri*," at least not to detract from the praise that is so hardly earned by the soldier in the field of battle, by designating the well-fought field of Talavera as "a doubtful contest, or a barren victory". Such men as Lords Grey and Grenville should have paused, before they lent the sanction of their names, the aid of their abilities, and the weight of their popularity, to cry down the glory of our arms, to discolour the verdure of our laurels, and, by their public resistance to further grants for the maintenance of the troops abroad, expose to the enemy the real paucity of our numbers. Fortunately, however, the mischievous consequences of their incautious declamation were obviated by the incredulity and suspicion of the emperor of the French, who falsely imagined that these patriotic noblemen would never have been guilty of betraying to the enemy the weakness of their country's arms: he therefore looked on it as an artifice practised for the purpose of delusion, a snare laid for the deception and the capture of his Peninsular army. A few days' respite being allowed to ministers by the opposition, the contest was resumed in the House of Lords by Lord Grenville on the thirtieth of March, in the same unfair and injurious spirit: unfair as regarded Lord Wellington, whose plans were unknown to his political opponents; injurious, as exposing to the enemy the weakness of the British army, and our want of confidence in both the Spanish and Portuguese. The most remarkable circumstance connected with Lord Grenville's attack on this occasion was its inconsistency; the whole tenor of a lengthened address being a crimination of ministers, for having given publicity to the despatches from



our envoys in Spain, while every act of the party, with which he was identified, contributed, in a more mischievous manner, to the same effect.—The Marquis Wellesley seized on the advantage which this injudicious attack afforded : he regretted the publication of documents bearing personal allusion to the Spanish generals then engaged in the service of their country ; but the distrust and the clamour of the opposition compelled ministers to produce them to the House ; the publication, therefore, was caused by those who subsequently made their contents the subject of debate : it was immaterial what reflections were cast upon the central junta by the papers before the House, as that body no longer existed ; whatever inconvenience or evil therefore might follow the publication of these despatches, the opposition alone were responsible for ; and one advantage would undoubtedly attend it, which was, the removal of an accumulation of error from the minds of the people of England, as to the real cause of our victories in the Peninsula being apparently barren.—Earl Grey followed in the same strain of sarcasm, with which he had taunted and pursued ministers from the commencement of the session, imputing, however, a larger share of blame, personally, to Lord Wellington, than any other member had the boldness to do : he insinuated that the gallant commander at Talavera was completely mistaken in attributing Venegas' movements to the secret instructions of the junta ; the real explanation of his conduct being referable to his knowledge of the scarcity of provisions in the French army. His lordship concluded by declaring that the ministers “ had been guilty of a great crime in producing the despatches in question, and that Lord Wellesley had, in consequence, shown himself totally insufficient to discharge the duties of the situation he then filled.” It was only on the sixth day from the utterance of this sentiment, that the same nobleman, in his place in parliament, called upon the same minister for the production not only of those papers received from Spain *since* his accession to office, but those transmitted to his *predecessor* also.

In this untoward manner the government of England pro-



ceeded in its measures of foreign policy : every plan proposed by ministers, in the Upper House, encountered the opposition of Lords Grey and Grenville, to whose custody the popular party had confided their cause : in the Commons, the opposition was more decided, probably, if talent alone were taken into account ; and, without the walls of parliament, the city of London contributed the weight of their declaration, as representatives of the greatest commercial city in the world, to echo the sentiments of the opposition. This heavy discouragement merely tested the worth of the great man, whose splendid views of military glory seemed to acquire greater firmness by pressure, as solid, and substantial bodies are accustomed to do : his zeal continued unabated ; he raised his hand in a monitory, not a menacing manner, against his countrymen : he only prayed a patient hearing, a favourable construction of his motives : he pitied their folly, their fatuity ; he felt an inward ability to surmount all obstacles ; he saw the rays of hope shine clearly through the dark veil of ills that overshadowed Portugal : he hailed the omen, like the emperor of the East, and fell prostrate before his destiny, but rose to conquer. Field operations were suspended by the British, but mental activity prevailed : Wellington, Hill, and Beresford exercised the most vigilant watchfulness, but caution, and prudence, and wisdom could accomplish no more than these gallant officers had already performed. They could not resist the vast wave that was accumulating, and rolling on its majestic volume over the petty armies of Spain, overwhelming them irresistibly and for ever : they could not rise against the thunderbolt, and brave its mighty shock ; the insignificance of their physical strength rendered opposition as vain as that of finite to infinite : it only remained for them to retire before the approaching deluge into a secure haven, and allow the surges to expend their fury upon every object that impeded them : it was the better part of valour to escape into the mountain-cave, and abide the wrath of the heavens. The British continued to display a species of passive courage by keeping within their entrenchments, while the “*enfant gâté de la victoire*,” led on the chosen bands of the imperial





MAJ. GENL. SIR HENRY TORRENS, K.C.B. &c.

*Torrens*

army to the invasion of Portugal and expulsion of the British from the Peninsula, which Massena pledged himself to accomplish within the limit of three brief months. The first point of attack to which the new commander-in-chief directed his efforts was Ciudad Rodrigo, the ancient Lancia, or Mirobrigia, one of the old frontier, fortified towns, at which the Spanish army formerly rendezvoused, when the two Peninsular kingdoms were at war. Upon this point Lord Wellington had looked with deep, but silent anxiety, for a length of time, as of the utmost consequence in retarding the progress of the enemy, and valuable in consuming their strength by every species of petty warfare and obstruction. The separation of the immense French army, which the scarcity of provisions rendered necessary, was observed by Wellington, who augured well to his defensive measures from that inevitable event; and, although he preserved the most rigid silence upon this subject, on the actual theatre of war, he disclosed his sentiments fully in the following despatch addressed to Sir Henry Torrens, then military secretary to the commander-in-chief. "The French threaten us on all points, and are most desirous to get rid of us. But they threaten upon too many points at a time, to give me much uneasiness respecting any one in particular, and they shall not induce me to disconnect my army. I am in a situation in which no mischief can be done to the army, or to any part of it; I am prepared for all events: and if I am in a scrape, as appears to be the general belief in England, although certainly not my own, I'll get out of it."

Ciudad Rodrigo, or the city of Roderick, was built by Ferdinand II. as a rampart against Portugal, from the frontiers of which it is distant about eight miles: when the French approached in 1810, the works were weak, the ramparts old, and flanked merely by a few towers mounting light guns: many points in the vicinity commanded the town; there were no bomb-proofs; and the governor was obliged to employ the church as a powder magazine: four convents and numerous gardens in the suburbs favoured the operations of a besieging army; the population at this period did not exceed five thousand, and the garri-

son did not even amount to this number. The enemy appeared before this *bicoque*, as Lord Wellington designates it in a letter to his brother, on the twenty-sixth of April, and six thousand men encamped on a height called Pedro Toro; a second division arrived on the thirtieth, and on the eleventh of June the investment was complete; on the fifteenth the enemy broke ground before the walls, and opened their fire against them on the twenty-fourth of June. The perseverance of the British in maintaining their position so immediately in the vicinity, frustrated the designs concocted between Joseph and Massena, and compelled the latter to assemble fifty-six thousand effective men, before the ruined ramparts of an almost dispeopled city, and to place at their head Generals Ney, Junôt, and Montbrun. At the commencement of 1810 Lord Wellington entertained some doubt of the fidelity of the governor, who was, at his desire, removed, and Don Andrea Perez de Herrasti, the friend and companion of Mariano Alvarez, appointed to succeed him. This brave patriot was "a veteran of fifty years' service, whose silver hairs, dignified countenance, and courteous manner excited respect, and whose courage, talents, and honour were worthy of his venerable appearance." While the investment was proceeding, the French suffered serious annoyance from the operations of a guerilla-band of about one hundred lancers, led on by Julian Sanchez. The sword of this desperate man was sharpened by the atrocities of his enemies, who, having entered the cottage where he was born, butchered, without remorse, his father, mother, and sister: just as the murderous act was accomplished, Sanchez arrived, slew the French colonel who had ordered his parents to be assassinated, and, raising the bloody weapon towards the heavens, pronounced a vow that it should never again be sheathed until Spain was free. The guns on the town-wall did some execution, and Ney now found it necessary to shelter his men more carefully than he had done at first: this was accomplished by digging a number of holes, in which sharpshooters were placed, to pick down the gunners and sentinels. Upon the arrival of Massena, who quickly perceived that Ney's mode



of assault was faulty, the town was summoned to surrender by a proclamation, in words nearly as follows: "This last summons is by order of the Prince of Essling, whose honour and humanity are well known, but who, if the defence be vainly prolonged, will be compelled to treat the besieged with all the rigour authorized by the laws of war. If they ever entertained any hope of succour from the English, they might now dismiss it altogether, for Wellington would not have permitted them to be reduced to their then deplorable state, had he the remotest intention of advancing to their relief. It only remained for them, therefore, to choose between an honourable capitulation and the vengeance of a victorious army.

To this pompous notice, the venerable Herrasti replied as became so brave a man and loyal soldier: "After forty-nine years' service, I could not be ignorant of the laws of war and my own military duties: whenever the fortress is reduced to such a state as to render capitulation necessary, I will apply for terms, first securing my honour, which is dearer to me than life." This noble answer was the signal for the renewal of the cannonade, which was continued, without one hour's cessation, until the first of July, when the mode of attack was changed, and the parallels pushed forward to the lesser Tesson. This step was succeeded by the capture of the nunnery of Santa Cruz, after a most desperate resistance, by the blowing up of the counterscarp, and finally by breaching the walls for an extent of thirty feet at least. The patience with which the aged governor endured the privations and sufferings of the siege, reconciled the citizens to their lot, and the example of Sanchez excited the emulation of the young. Begirt by such a force, with so small a garrison, his ammunition and provisions being nearly exhausted, and the town laid open by a practicable breach in the walls, Herrasti felt that the hour had arrived at which capitulation became his duty. Before, however, the reluctant surrender of his power, he called the brave Sanchez before him, told him his country would yet require his services, and desired him to take his little troop of lancers, and escape into the open plains. The guerilla-

chief submitted to the fortune of his country, and, assembling his followers in the Plaza, he ordered them to prepare for the expedition. At midnight they sallied from the gate, and, with a chivalrous spirit, charging a cavalry post, they routed the party, and took eight prisoners, "Two women who rode behind their husbands, were armed with pistols; and one of them, Marta Fraile, saved her husband, by shooting a French dragoon who rode up to attack him."

The town was now almost burned down, defence was hopeless, and the enemy pressed on the siege with more activity and greater sacrifice of lives, every hour. At this crisis in the siege, three French soldiers, with a degree of enthusiasm superior still to courage, rushed from the ranks, ascended the breach, looked over the smoking ruins of the town, and, in the broad light of day returned to their companions without injury. A general assault would have succeeded this extravagant act of bravery, and every soul in Ciudad Rodrigo would, in a few moments, have been required to appease the fury of a merciless multitude, had not the gallant Herrasti hung out the white flag at the very moment that Ney was commencing the assault. The officer who carried the terms of capitulation first presented them to Ney, who declined to receive them, adding, "it was now too late." He next addressed Massena, who commanded him to tell the governor that he granted all that he required. After the surrender, however, the Marshal disgraced his high rank by violating his pledge. Herrasti and the junta were first imprisoned, and then sent to Salamanca; the clergy were arrested, and confined in the church of St. Juan; a heavy contribution was levied on the town's-people, who were compelled to labour incessantly at the complete erasure of the fortifications; it evinced a littleness of mind, to which it might reasonably have been concluded that the Prince of Essling was superior, to vaunt so loudly and so long over the fall of this contemptible fortress; yet it is certain, that, in his despatches, he magnified the exploit into one, that valour, and skill, and fortune such as his, alone could accomplish, and incorporating, artfully, the meanest falsehoods relative to Wellington's conduct, he endeavoured to exasperate the Spaniards

against their allies. "The English," said Massena, "deceitfully promised to succour Ciudad Rodrigo, yet saw it fall before them; by which they excited the indignation of the garrison, and the contempt of all Spain." The *Moniteur* journal lent the assistance of its mercenary voice, to swell the unfounded clamour, stating, in its turgid tones; "that the cries of the inhabitants of Ciudad Rodrigo reached the camp of Wellington, who, like the crafty Ithacan, found means to close all ears against them." In England, too, there was a *Moniteur*-party, who denied the genius of their illustrious countryman, talked of his mysterious conduct in quietly permitting the French to take the important fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo, and, when its fall was known, they adopted the arguments and language of our enemies. Upon this declamation of the French marshal, upon the *Moniteur* journal, and its admirers in England, the following extract from Lord Wellington's letter to Lord Liverpool, in July, 1810, is the best commentary that can be produced "Adverting to the nature and position of the place, the deficiency and defects of its works, the advantages the enemy had in their attack upon it, and the numbers and formidable equipment by which it was attacked, I consider the defence to have been most honourable to the governor and the garrison, and equally creditable to the arms of Spain, with the celebrated defence of other places, by which the nation has been illustrated during the existing contest for its independence." Nothing could exceed the anxious desire of the British general to aid the inhabitants of Ciudad Rodrigo; and the thunder of the Spanish guns that rolled over the camp of the allies, bore along with it an evidence of the loyalty, courage, and high claims of the garrison upon the generosity of the English; but Wellington did not require such awful reminiscents; he did not deserve the bitter taunts of his countrymen at home, or the reproaches of the Spaniards of Castille. He had, during the siege, transferred his head-quarters to Alverca, a village between Celerico and Almeida, not with any real hope of succouring the city, but in order to oblige the enemy to collect in greater force, to gain time, to take advantage of any false

movement of the enemy, watch any large detachment, or seize any favourable opportunity that the chances of war might create to strike a sure and a sudden blow. He never intended to risk the relief of the garrison, "being prevented by the certainty that the attempt must fail, and that the fall of the place would involve the irrevocable ruin of the allies." No incident in his public life marks more strongly the inflexibility of this great man's character, and under circumstances of no ordinary degree of perplexity, than his resolute refusal to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo. He had heard the cries of Herrasti and his gallant companions unmoved; he paid no regard to the murmurs of the British, or clamours of the Portuguese army: Romana came from Badajoz, having succeeded Del Parque in the command, to press upon Wellington the humanity of co-operating with him in some plan for the carrying off the garrison; but all his importunities, backed as they were by the personal respect of Lord Wellington for that gallant officer, were abortive. Massena perfectly comprehended the sullen obstinacy of the British commander, who could be overcome neither by the supplications of friends nor insults of enemies, although he did not hesitate to make a trial of the latter mode: he taunted him with cowardice, and exclaimed, "that the sails were flapping, and the ships were waiting to bear the heartless British to their island-home." While he employed this silly artifice to tempt and to test the decision of the stern warrior, he exercised his best military talents to decoy him into an advance movement. But the same deliberate coolness, and absolute self-possession, which enabled him to endure the sight and the sounds of the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, with a motionless arm, contributed to the maintenance of the most watchful caution, as to the stratagems of the enemy. In any attempt to relieve this place, the operations should necessarily be carried on in a country highly advantageous to the French, owing to their great superiority in cavalry—the British had a duty to discharge to the Portuguese nation, the exertion of their best energies in obstructing the invasion of that country by the French, and it was on Wellington's own responsibility



that he had advanced into Spain, fought the battle of Talavera, and enabled the Spaniards to re-organize their shattered forces; his able views, and more able execution of them, did not screen the ministry, who favoured them, from the bitterest taunts of their parliamentary opponents, and actually drew down upon himself the disapprobation of a large, influential and wealthy portion of the British public; were the question now, therefore, to be reduced "to the relief of the Spanish fortress at the risk of the cause of Portugal," scarcely an option remained to the British general, the claims of duty and loyalty must of necessity precede even those of humanity; nor can a shadow of doubt exist as to the result of so rash an effort. Wellington commanded one of the finest armies that was ever marshalled on the plains of the Peninsula, those plains that have been for ages famed in battle-story: their worth, discipline, physical power, and loyalty, had all been tested, and successfully, against the veteran legions that stormed Ciudad Rodrigo, and there was no reason, even at that period, to rank Wellington after Massena, in the scale of illustrious military men, whom the calamitous age of Napoleon may be said to have raised up. Under these circumstances, therefore, it may be asked, why the British preserved their ground so fixedly during the siege of a place which their general acknowledged to be of the highest importance to the general cause, and the fall of which "he always thought would prove a most unfortunate circumstance, and highly injurious to the allies." The answer is found in the following facts: "the enemy had collected for the siege the sixth and eighth corps of the army in Spain; the former consisting of 31,611 effectives, including four thousand eight hundred and fifty-six cavalry: the latter, consisting of twenty-five thousand nine hundred and fifty-six effectives, including four thousand seven hundred and sixteen cavalry, according to returns of those corps, of a very late period, which had been interrupted and communicated to Lord Wellington. "Under these circumstances" observes, his lordship, however much I have been interested in the fate of this place, not only on account of its military and political im-



portance, but on account of its brave governor and garrison, and inhabitants, I have considered it my duty to refrain from an operation which it is probable would be attended with the most disastrous consequences." Lord Wellington had also obtained possession of a document showing the "*emplacement*" of the French army in Spain, on the first of June, 1810, from which it appeared, that their force amounted to two hundred and forty thousand men, exclusive of gendarmes, sappers, &c. To oppose Massena at the head of sixty thousand chosen men, Wellington could spare but twenty-five thousand, part of whom were Portuguese, untried and raw, for he had placed twelve thousand with Hill, and eight thousand Portuguese at Thomar; and his whole disposable force in the Peninsula did not exceed fifty-six thousand men. With such a disparity of strength, and on disadvantageous ground, he would have invited destruction, had he attempted to check the operations of the besieging army; content, therefore, to await the reward of sound judgment and calm precautions, upon which his far-seeing eye enabled him to calculate with prophetic certainty, he decided that the time had not arrived when he was to pluck the laurel from the brow of "the spoiled child of victory." The historian of the Peninsular war fully comprehended the difficulty of Wellington's political and military position at this crisis, and candidly and ably defends the wisdom of his conduct: "It was not," he observes, "a single campaign, he had undertaken a terrible war. If he lost but five thousand men, his own government would abandon the contest; if he lost fifteen thousand, he must abandon it himself."

Proof can be readily, adduced, from the Wellington correspondence in the early part of 1810, that the British hero viewed the French political plans for the subjugation of Spain as visionary and unsound, and this opinion had reference to measures that must have emanated from the emperor himself. On the eleventh of June, in a letter which has been already quoted, he thus writes, "There is something discordant in all the French arrangements for Spain: Joseph divides the kingdom into *vrefectures*, while Napoleon parcels it out into *governments* :

Joseph makes a great military expedition into the South of Spain, and undertakes the siege of Cadiz; while Napoleon places all the troops, and half the kingdom, under the command of Massena, and calls it "the army of Portugal." It is impossible that these measures can be adopted in concert; and I should suspect that the impatience of Napoleon's temper will not bear the *delay* of the completion of the conquest of Spain; and that he is desirous of making one great effort to remove us, by the means of Massena." From this passage the general principle on which Wellington acted, in his resistance to the arms of France, may be collected, and his conduct in the instance of the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, is only a particular case of the more general rule "delay," which he employed throughout the campaign of 1810, and for the adoption of which he frequently assigned his reason. Wellington was of opinion that the enemy had extended themselves over too great a length and breadth to be able to make rapid progress in the final subjugation of the Peninsula, and that they never could hope to accomplish that object until they should either have defeated the British or obliged them to evacuate Portugal. He did not believe they could carry on the siege of Cadiz in the south, that of Tarragona or of Tortosa in the east, and that, until the British were removed, the whole machine of French military operations would be brought to a stand. The determination and judgment of Wellington, in declining to peril the possession of Portugal upon the hazard of a most unequal contest, has been fully justified by subsequent events, and approved of by the ablest military men of the age he lived in: the Spaniards alone could never be convinced of the expediency, humanity, or wisdom of looking silently on while the French artillery swept the ramparts of a frontier town, and made a brave garrison and heroic officer their prisoners. From the moment when Ciudad Rodrigo fell, the Spaniards withdrew all their confidence and respect from the British, declined further co-operation, or even correspondence, and seemed wavering as to the disposal of their future allegiance, between Joseph and the Junta. This feeling was so deeply impressed upon the Castilians, that Lord Wellington

suspected it rested upon a foundation too deep to be observed at first sight." "I never expected" said his lordship, "that this event would have made so deep an impression on the inhabitants of Castile, as it appears to have made; and I am, therefore, apprehensive that the majority of them, with their usual blind confidence in walls, and in their own prowess, have lodged their moveable property in the place, and that the whole is lost. In no other way can I account for the sullen silence which they have adopted towards us since the place fell. We have not received a letter from Spain, or the least intelligence for the last ten days; and the officers who are out on the flanks of the army tell me, that not only they can get no intelligence, but can scarcely get any one to carry their letters." This anti-British feeling was probably still further extended by the prudence of Massena, who exchanged the rigorous system which the French adopted towards the inhabitants, for one of a milder and more conciliating description.

The district between the Coa and the Azava, had been held with a degree of obstinate courage, for upwards of three months, by General R. Craufurd, as it was desirable to keep open the communication with Almeida, and with the right of the Coa, as long as possible; but it was not intended by Lord Wellington that any risk should be encountered or any loss sustained to retain it. His lordship suspected that the enemy would make an attack on Pieton, Craufurd, or both, and had directed the latter, in such case, to fall back to Vendada, between Freixadas and Caralhal, by moonlight on the night of the twenty-fifth of July, and still further, if he should find that the enemy were really in great strength. The gallantry, discipline, and fine condition of the light division under Craufurd, and the ability displayed by the commander, in skilful maneuvering for three months in presence of the enemy, had excited the approbation of his brother soldiers, and the admiration even of his enemies. Flattered by the distinction which he deservedly attained, he resolved upon performing something worthy of his newly acquired reputation. To deceive, decoy, and perhaps cut off a division of the enemy, Craufurd drew out his troops in rank—

entire, on a rising ground, and sending a party of horse to the rear to raise a dust, and render a distinct view unattainable, he marched his infantry at a slow pace within view of the French, to make them imagine that the whole British army was advancing to the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo. The spectacle was not lost upon the French general, who immediately ordered a recognizance to be made, which brought on the combat of the Coa, an affair that reflects much credit on Craufurd's enterprise and bravery, but nothing on his caution or his judgment. On the fourth of July, the enemy having collected in force at Marialva, crossed the Agueda by a ford below the bridge, galloped towards Gallegos, and, after much skirmishing, obliged the British to fall back upon Almeida. This latter movement was performed in the most orderly and beautiful manner, under cover of a troop of German and British hussars with two pieces of artillery. Occupying the crown of an eminence that commanded a rivulet by which the Almeida road was crossed, the covering party watched the movements of the pursuers; in a few moments, a column of dragoons was perceived advancing at a charging pace, and diminishing in frontal breadth as it neared the bridge, this necessary weakening of the foremost ranks was observed, with the most extraordinary rapidity, by Captain Krauchenberg of the hussars, who rode, with his gallant Germans, with such impetuosity against the enemy, that the leaders were hewn down, their successors effectually checked, and the whole column driven back. The conduct of this bold officer was much applauded by Lord Wellington in this affair, as well as that of Cornet Cordeman and of Lieutenant-Colonel Elder, at the head of the third battalion of the Portuguese caçadores, who gave solid proof on this occasion of the admirable system of military discipline introduced into that service by the brave, judicious, and indefatigable Beresford. The enemy, however, were too numerous to be ultimately resisted by the gallant little band opposed to them, and, effecting the passage of the stream at several other points, pushed their advance towards Almeida, in front of which Craufurd's division was posted, having Fort Concepcion between him and the



enemy. The actions in which Craufurd's division was engaged, were each brilliant, hazardous, and exemplary, but betrayed too high-reaching an ambition; they were like so many vivid flashes, but shed no steady light upon the object. Finding that the enemy sent marauding parties for three successive nights into the neighbouring villages of Barquilla, Cesmiro and Villa de Puerco, he resolved by a *coup de main* to take the whole party prisoners. Forming an ambuscade in a wood on the banks of the Dos Casas, at sunrise on the eleventh of July, he advanced, not so much to the right as he had at first intended, but, as rapidity of movement was so important, by a shorter route. This, however, proved the more tedious from the inequality of the ground, and ultimately brought the party upon a body of infantry, which, in consequence of a rising ground, and a field of standing corn, was not perceived until the British were close to them. Krauchenberg immediately attacked them, but they had formed into a square, and stood firmly, so that finding he could not penetrate the little phalanx, of three hundred men, he passed on, leaving them to his left. At this moment some French dragoons were observed coming out of Barquilla, followed, as it was supposed, by a squadron of their cavalry, and another squadron appeared advancing on Barquilla. Mistaking these bodies for the enemy, the attention of Krauchenberg, and of the sixteenth, was diverted from the infantry, and they set off, at a charging pace, against the cavalry, who proved to be all either German or British: however, the whole party of French dragoons was taken prisoners. Before these unfortunate blunders were discovered, the fourteenth had come out of the defile, and Colonel Talbot, charging the square of infantry without effect, was killed upon the spot, and Major Hervey with the other squadrons, was directed, by Colonel Arenstehildt to move to the left, and oppose the cavalry near Barquilla, which also had been mistaken. By this accident Craufurd failed in taking the square of infantry, who nobly earned the freedom they retained, and which they fearlessly employed in marching in perfect order into Cesmiro. In this affair Craufurd took two officers and twenty-nine dragoons,



while he had two officers and seven rank and file killed. Captain Gouache who commanded the French infantry, and who made such a gallant resistance to our cavalry, was rewarded with the cross of the Legion of Honour for his brave conduct on this occasion

The temerity of General Craufurd would have excited the apprehensions of any other commander-in-chief, but Wellington, confiding in his own watchful care of every part of his army, seemed rather disposed to sustain the gallant efforts of the individual, as a valuable example to his brother soldiers : scarcely an hour elapsed, from the eleventh to the twenty-fifth, without some despatch of a formal character, or memorandum of an useful one, from his lordship to General Craufurd. He ordered two battalions to support Craufurd's flanks at the same time that he said, "he was not desirous of engaging in an affair beyond the Coa," and requests that he may let him know how his division was situated as soon as possible, and that he would reply to his queries by the *parte* to morrow, or earlier. Reports had been industriously and invidiously circulated, relative to the conduct of the sixteenth light dragoons in the brilliant affair of the eleventh, under Craufurd's command : his lordship, with the assistance, of General Cotton, traced those calumnies to their ungenerous source, and at once checked the mischief. His lordship was determined to abide by Craufurd's report of the conduct of the regiment, and declared, that he believed the ambuscade would have been signally successful, but for the occurrence of accidents which could not have been anticipated. His lordship's comments upon the conduct of the idle and malicious authors of the calumny, were accompanied by language the most encouraging, and expressions the most gratifying, to all the brave fellows engaged in the sharp skirmishes of the eleventh. To caution Craufurd, however, in a manner at once delicate and decided, Lord Wellington addressed him in a despatch, on the twenty-fourth, to the following effect, "I believe I omitted to tell you that I had lately got the *emplacement* of the whole French army, on the first of June, from which it appears that their force in Spain is

not less than two hundred and fifty thousand men. But I do not believe they have the means of reinforcing it much further. This document, together with the returns which I have of the French corps in our front, gives me a knowledge of the names of all the principal officers employed with their corps : and any paper which may fall into your hands, such as a requisition upon a Village, signed by an officer or commissary, would be of use to me, as it would serve in some degree to show their disposition, and would aid other information. I have observed that the French are singularly accurate in preserving the different *corps d'armee* in the order in which they are first arranged in line of battle. The corps of Ney, Soult, Mortier, Victor, and Sebastiani, are at this moment in the same situation, in respect to each other, that they held before the battle of Talavera, and Junot's corps has come in and been placed on the right of the whole. Knowing the names of the officers, the numbers of the regiments and battalions, and the names of the commissaries attached to each corp, and the general order in which they stand in the line, the name of any person making a requisition in any place, must aid me in forming an opinion of the disposition of the army. Hill is at Atalaya, but I have no letter from him this morning. The fourth and sixth caçadores will be at Valverde and Aldea Nueva to-morrow, at your disposition." This letter was written on the twenty-fourth of July, and although it breathed not the name of timidity or terror, or even extreme caution, reminded Craufurd of the monstrous number of his enemies, of their exact discipline, and showed him clearly that he was himself not above taking a lesson of prudence and accuracy from his enemies, whenever they presented one. In still further proof of his extraordinary foresight and anxious desire to avoid an action on the Coa, between Craufurd and the enemy, on the same day, at three-quarters before three, P. M. he again wrote, saying, "I think you had better retire upon Carvalhal, holding Valverde and the heights upon the Coa only by your piquets, and communicate with the left of the Pinhel with General Picton. So deeply seated was Craufurd's love of distinction or glory, or so far had ambition clouded his judgment,

that he could not reconcile himself either to accept the advice, or even to obey the orders of his superior in command. Hitherto he had safely affronted a greater power, but forgetting that his stay beyond the Coa, was a matter of sufferance, not of real strength, with headstrong ambition he resolved in defiance of reason, and of the reiterated orders of his general, to fight on the right bank. The advance of the enemy obliged the British to blow up fort Concepcion on the twenty-first, and retire towards Almeida. This Fort had been destroyed by the French in the campaign of 1808, and repaired afterwards by Lord Wellington's directions, it was now again left in the situation in which his lordship found it. On the morning of the twenty-fourth Craufurd's division was formed in a position badly chosen, in front of the Coa, having one line of retreat alone open, namely, by a narrow bridge across the river, about a mile in his rear. As the rising sun chased away the mists, of the morning, it withdrew the cloud that concealed the embattled hosts of France, and dispelled the illusion with which the British general deceived himself: twenty-four thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry with thirty heavy guns, were disclosed in silent progress towards the Turones, a rivulet running nearly parallel with the Coa. Still the British might have retired and the lives of some of the most gallant fellows in the Peninsular army been spared, for a better purpose than the useless affair of the Coa: but Craufurd's destiny prevailed, and he withstood the impetuous attack of Ney's close and disciplined columns. The events of this day have been variously related by the partisans of both armies, and the jealous and malicious amongst his own companions: the official despatch addressed to the commander-in-chief by the officer who conducted the engagement, shall be followed here in preference to any other: it has obtained the sanction of Wellington's name, first by being addressed to him, and subsequently by his adoption of its content after the severest scrutiny. "On the first appearance of the heads of the enemies columns, the cavalry and brigade of artillery attached to the division, advanced to support the piquets, and Captain Ross with four guns was for some time engaged

with those attached to the enemies cavalry, which were of much larger calibre. As the immense superiority of the enemies force displayed itself, ours fell back gradually towards the fortress, upon the right of which the infantry of the division was posted, having its left in some enclosures near the windmill, about eight hundred yards from the place, and its right to the Coa in a very broken and extensive position, which it was absolutely necessary to occupy, in order to cover the passage of the cavalry and artillery through the long defile leading to the bridge: after this was effected the infantry returned by degrees, and in as good order as it is possible in ground so extremely intricate: a position close in front of the bridge was maintained with the greatest gallantry, though, I am sorry to say with considerable loss by the forty-third and part of the ninety-fifth regiments. Towards the evening the firing ceased, and after it was dark I withdrew the troops from the Coa, and retired to this place." This brief, modest, and clear statement, dated from Carvalhal, twenty-fifth of July, 1810, details the condition of Craufurd's daring experiment upon the enemies patience, and the opening of the approaching campaign between the French and English. The gallantry and the service of the British artillery, in defending the bridge, were never exceeded by any division of either army during the campaign. Upon the first effort to pass the bridge the enemy were permitted to accomplish about two-thirds of the length, when the whole section was cut down as a single man, and the dead and the dying falling together filled up the causeway as high as the top of the parapet: shouts of triumph from the British rent the skies, but produced no faint heartedness amongst the enemy on whose ears they fell, for a second column, more numerous than the first, was in a moment in motion towards the fatal bridge, impelled by the addition of implacable revenge to their native courage; but the unerring aim of our trained artillery again swept the plateau, and the dreadful scene of carnage was repeated with circumstances much more appalling than before: a few of the enemy, who had by a providential interference reached the other side of the river, would, of necessity have fallen into the hands of the



British whenever the action terminated, to rescue these brave fellows, the enemy deemed a point of honour, and for this chivalrous object, attempted the passage of the bridge for the third time; but the stern loyalty of the British soldiers was immovable; again the dread artillery flashed, and the line of death was traced to a considerable distance beyond the fatal defile. At this awful moment, a powder magazine blew up in the French lines, which created some confusion; one of their heavy guns was dismantled; and, about four o'clock in the afternoon, a shower of rain descending, the combatants sullenly retired from the contest. The French loss on this day is estimated at one thousand rank and file killed, while on the side of the British, only eighty-six were killed, one hundred and ninety-nine wounded, and eighty-nine missing.

Notwithstanding the deplorable slaughter of the enemy, made by the British artillery at the Bridge, Massena, after his great master's manner, had the presumption to claim a victory, and, in his despatches, returned two pieces of artillery as amongst the spoils of that day. The French general had reason to retain a lasting recollection of the British artillery in the affair of the Coa, but that indelible impression was made by the well-served artillery, which thrice overthrew his brave columns in their attempts on the bridge, not by the two light pieces which he captured, as they were not British, nor had they been employed in the action: these guns belonged to the garrison of Almeida, and the governor had promised to mount them, either on the tower of the windmill, or on the walls of an unfinished building, from whence the enemy's cavalry would have been annoyed: this promise he neglected to perform, and it is probable that his indolence was a fortunate circumstance, for such was the confusion, such the mixture of friends and enemies during the whole affair, that had guns been discharged from the windmill the shot must have killed both parties indiscriminately. The affair of the Coa should not be closed without some allusion to the conduct of General Picton, who had been desired to support Craufurd, but refused; this refusal might have been attended with the most ruinous results, had



Massena thrown his reserve upon Craufurd's right flank, by the bridge of Castle Bom. Picton rode up from Pinhel during the action, and must, therefore, have perceived the perilous situation of Craufurd's division, and, that it was not utterly destroyed by such a manœuvre as is here alluded to, was the effect of accident and the chances of war. Colonel Napier insinuates that Picton's refusal to co-operate, probably originated in some personal difference of old standing, or of recent occurrence, with his brave companion in arms. "Picton and Craufurd were not formed by nature to act cordially together. The stern countenance, robust frame, saturnine complexion, caustic speech, and austere demeanour of the first, promised little sympathy with the short thick figure, dark flashing eyes, quick movements, and fiery temper of the second: nor, indeed, did they often meet without a quarrel. Nevertheless, they had many points of resemblance in their characters and fortunes. Both were inclined to harshness, and rigid in command; both prone to disobedience, yet exacting entire submission from inferiors, and they were alike ambitious and craving of glory. They both possessed decided military talents, were enterprising and intrepid, yet neither were remarkable for skill in handling troops under fire. This also they had in common, that both, after distinguished services, perished in arms, fighting gallantly, and being celebrated as generals of divisions while living, have since their death, been injudiciously spoken of, as rivalling their great leader in war. That they were officers of rank and pretension is unquestionable, and Craufurd more so than Picton, because the latter never had a separate command, and his opportunities were necessarily more circumscribed; but to compare either to the Duke of Wellington, displays ignorance of the men, and of the art they professed. If they had even comprehended the profound military and political combinations he was conducting: the one would have carefully avoided fighting on the Coa, and the other, far from refusing, would have eagerly proffered his support."

The result of the affair of the Coa, in some degree changed

the circumstances of the British in that quarter. Lord Wellington, in his despatches of the twenty-seventh of July, thus writes to General Hill:—"The loss which we sustained in the affair at Almeida, the fatigue which the troops, who were engaged, had undergone, and the badness of the weather, rendered it impossible, and indeed, it would have been useless to endeavour to maintain the bridge of Almeida; and the loss of the high ground on this side, necessarily occasioned the loss of our position at Pinhel. I therefore withdrew the troops to this neighbourhood yesterday, and Craufurd's advanced guard to Freixedas, keeping only his cavalry posts of observation in front." The other paragraphs of his letter direct General Hill to maintain his position at Atalaya, till Cole should have retired from Guarda, and to keep Le Cor's force upon his left. His Lordship, conceiving it useless, even if practicable, to prevent the enemy from investing Almeida, abandoned the idea of securing that place, and the manœuvres of Massena were not sufficiently intelligible to the British general to enable him to conclude whether Almeida was, or was not, the real object of Massena's designs in that quarter. In fact, Lord Wellington thought that there was not the smallest appearance of the enemy's intention to attack Almeida, on the twenty-seventh of July, but concluded, that as soon as the French should have got together their forces, they would make a dash at him, and endeavour to make his retreat as difficult as possible, and in consequence, his Lordship made his dispositions accordingly.

At the moment when Wellington was collecting his strength for the combat, and looking towards the barriers of Portugal before which the fame of Massena was destined to perish, while he was calculating upon the surest means of retarding those operations of the enemy which he was not strong enough to obstruct, while in short, his clear judgment, and sound military and political views, told him of the tottering fabric of Gallic supremacy, he had to encounter the most painful interruptions from his allies, from his own countrymen, his professed friends, the very ministers who had hitherto sustained

him in his illustrious career; for now indeed all Europe thought the doom of the Peninsula was sealed, its fate irrevocable; and that the genius of no one man in Europe, even with the powerful means that Wellington possessed, was equal to oppose the countless numbers of France, led on by the "Child of Victory" the favourite Marshal of Napoleon. The disgraceful and ungrateful feeling of distrust, the mean apprehension of rapidly approaching danger, which appeared in Oporto at this moment, was excited by letters written by British officers, who were with the army at Celerico. "Persons who had but little information or means of forming a judgment on the real situation of affairs." Of this base conduct his Lordship complained, in a remonstrance addressed to Brigadier-General Trant, in which he stated, that the inhabitants of Oporto had no ground for the alarm which they had taken from two foolish letters: and their conduct in creating a want of confidence amongst the troops on the frontier, might have had the most disastrous effects on their own interests and the general cause of the allies. He recommended the citizens to place their valuable property in security, although he had no reason to believe that they were in any degree exposed to the rapacity of the enemy. He requested General Trant to communicate these his sentiments to the principal citizens, adding "I am as unwilling to deceive them, and that they should incur any loss by a blind confidence in me which they could avoid by early precaution, as I am desirous they should not injure their own property and the general cause of the allies, by premature and unfounded alarm." The fears of the Portugeuse, although nearest to the source of danger, were more easily allayed, than those of the despondents in England, who had opposed the policy of Wellington so uninterruptedly from the commencement, and at every step of the campaigns; so that, from the eternal repetition of censure ministers begun at length to believe that there must be some solid foundation for these arguments, and almost distrusting their own views of Foreign policy, hesitated as to the limit of that confidence, which they would, in future, repose in the hero of Vimeira. Every des-

patch, either to the secretary of state, or to any individual in high place or political power, whom his lordship had occasion to address, was replete with fresh arguments to demonstrate the fact of the difficulties of the enemy, which were then invisible to all other eyes, unintelligible to all other minds, and to prove the numerous chances in favour of the success of his own colossal plans for the ultimate confusion of the great enemy of Europe. On the nineteenth of August, his lordship wrote to the Earl of Liverpool as follows:—"His majesty's government will see, in the enclosed copies of intercepted letters, a description of the difficulties under which the enemy labour, in consequence of the operations of the guerillas, notwithstanding the large force, which, there is no doubt whatever, is employed in Spain: and the whole of the information before them will probably convince them, as it has me, that the enemy cannot conquer Spain without employing a force still larger, and that they cannot increase their forces in the Peninsula, even admitting that they possess the military means, without increasing their pecuniary and other difficulties and distresses. I beg, also, to call the attention of his majesty's government to the opinions delivered by those excellent authorities, of the value of Portugal to the allies, of the mischiefs done to them by its continuance in our possession, and of the benefit which they expect to derive from depriving us of this possession. There are other evidences from those same authorities in those papers, of the great interests involved in the continuance of the contest of the Peninsula, which equally deserve the attention of his majesty's government: but I wish to draw their attention to those parts of the correspondence which relate to the British army and to this country, *as confirming every opinion that I have ever given them upon this part of the subject.* It will be unfortunate, if Great Britain should not possess the means of securing still further the position of his majesty's troops in Portugal, so as to ensure the continuance of the contest in the Peninsula, which it is evident to me must end favourably for his majesty's interests, if his army can be maintained in the field of Portugal."

A severe examination of the state of parties in England, will unfold the cause of Wellington's inactivity more completely than any general reasoning upon the strength or position of the combatants, the indiscipline of the allies, or the genius and fortunes of Massena. That such an analysis would lead to the conclusion predicted, may, without entering upon it, be inferred from Lord Wellington's despatch, at this period, to the Earl of Liverpool. "The importunity with which I press the war in this country upon the attention of his majesty's ministers, will, I hope, plead my excuse for troubling you for a few moments with my own *private feelings* upon this subject. Nothing can be more irksome to me than the operations which have been carried on for the last year; and it is very obvious that a continuance of the same cautious system, will lose the little reputation I have acquired, and the good opinion of the people of this country. Nothing, therefore, could be more desirable to me personally, than that either the contest should be given up at once, or that it should be continued with a force, so sufficient, as to render all opposition hopeless. In either case, the obloquy heaped on me by the ignorant of our own country, as well as of this, and by those of this whom I am obliged to force to exertion, and who, after all, will be but imperfectly protected in their persons and property, would fall upon the government. But seeing, as I do, more than a chance of final success, if we can maintain our position in this country, although, probably, none of a departure from our cautious defensive system, I should not do my duty by the government, if I did not inform them of the real situation of affairs, and urge them with importunity even to greater exertion. I acknowledge that it has appeared to me, till very lately, that the government themselves felt no confidence in the measures which they were adopting in this country; and not an officer has come from England, who has not told me that it was generally expected that he would, on his arrival, find the army embarking; and even some have told me, that this expectation was entertained by some of the king's ministers. These sentiments are not encouraging; and



I acknowledge that I have been induced to attribute the little exertion lately made in the cause, to the want of confidence of the members of the government in the result of the contest."

When the Spaniards, in the flow of years, had returned to their calmer reason, their own historian, the Conde de Torreno, justified and applauded the system of delay and passive co-operation which Wellington adopted at this time—and, for his resolute adherence to which, ministers were vilified, and his military knowledge and judgment impeached. "Wellington acted as a prudent soldier on that occasion, (the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo,) says Torreno, since to raise the siege, a battle should have been risked, his forces were not superior to those of Massena, and the Portuguese not sufficiently disciplined to manœuvre efficiently in presence of such a foe, or enter with confidence the field of battle against such an enemy. Had the battle been won, it would only have saved Ciudad Rodrigo; had it been lost, the British would have been destroyed, and the cause of Spain struck down." But never did a campaign present a more instructive or interesting lesson in the art of war, than that of Lord Wellington, from the moment when he permitted the investment of Almeida by the French, to the hour when he first occupied the heights of Torres Vedras. His army, inferior in numbers and composition, could only hope for success from the cautious measures, able guidance, wisdom, and genius of their commander. And it is now fully ascertained, that while the English nation was convulsed with terror at the appalling picture painted by ignorant and mischievous politicians, the confidence of the troops in their general was hourly increasing. The feeling between Wellington and his army was nicely balanced, the reliance was mutual, for as anxiety, arising from indecision, was never depicted in his countenance, whoever turned to it, whatever might have been the circumstances of the moment, saw safety there, and felt that all would be right. Even in the retreat to the lines of Lisbon, when the British ministers were alarmed, and almost harassed into despair by the worrying attacks

of the opposition, and when even some of the superior officers at head-quarters had, it was said, caught the unworthy infection, there was an assurance to the soldier, in every act of Wellington, that bespoke and imparted a confidence in the result:\* “and it was on the heights of Arruda that one of the bravest officers in the army, who too soon paid the debt of his gallantry, and did not live to verify his vision, was heard to exclaim, ‘I see the Pyrenees!’—but it was realized to his surviving comrades: and the British army carried its standard and its discipline into the heart of France.”\*

\* Observations on the General Orders of the Duke of Wellington, &c. page 39; Wellington's Despatches, August, 1810; and the Conde de Torreno's History of the Spanish War.

## CHAP. V.

INVESTMENT AND FALL OF ALMEIDA—THE ALLIES RETIRE INTO THE VALLEY OF THE MONDEGO—THE FRENCH FORCES CONCENTRATED AT VISEU—BATTLE OF BUSACO, AND ATTEMPT OF MASSENA TO TURN THE RIGHT OF THE ALLIES—WELLINGTON CONTINUES TO FALL BACK TOWARDS LISBON—THE INHABITANTS DESERT THEIR HOMES, AND ACCOMPANY THE TROOPS—WELLINGTON RETIRES BEHIND THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS, AND MASSENA HALTS BEFORE THEM—DESCRIPTION OF THE LINES—THE FRENCH HOSPITALS AT COIMBRA TAKEN BY COLONEL TRANT—MASSENA FALLS BACK ON SANTAREM, AND THE BRITISH ADVANCE—ASSEMBLY OF THE SPANISH CORTEZ—DEATH OF ROMANA—MASSENA EVACUATES PORTUGAL, AND IS PERSUED BY WELLINGTON, WHO PLANTS THE BRITISH STANDARD ONCE MORE ON THE PORTUGUESE FRONTIERS—1810—1811.

At the close of July and during the first days of August, in the year 1810, the aspect of the Peninsular war was extraordinary. Powerful but unnatural efforts were made by the opposition party, in both houses of Parliament, to depreciate the talents, and deprecate the military measures of Wellington: while Massena was aided by all the resources of imperial France; by the flattering encouragement of the greatest warrior and statesman that perhaps has ever appeared; and by the prospect of succession to a throne, in some part of Europe, for his services. But the calm philosophic temperament of the British soldier qualified him for the endurance of disappointment and adversity, with the same equanimity which he ever after exhibited, when he in turn became the military idol of re-conquered Europe; while the resistance of the British, so much more gallant and decisive than Massena had anticipated, so surprised and disheartened that general, that his conduct was marked by languor and apathy, which can only be referable to personal feelings. Having left Almeida to its fate, after the affair of the Coa, Lord Wellington withdrew his posts on that river, on the morning of the twenty-sixth; finding, on the next day, that the advanced guard of Regnier's corps had come through the Puerto Perales, as far as Navas Frias, and that the enemy had it in their power to throw their whole force upon both flanks of the allied army, and compel

them to a general action, or to press them in their retreat, Lord Wellington withdrew the infantry another march to the rear behind Celerico, in the valley of the Mondego, except the fourth division, under Major-General Cole, which he left at Guarda: the whole of the British cavalry was placed at Freixadas in front, observing the movements of the enemy upon the Coa. This was the disposition of the British force on the twenty-eighth, with the exception of the division under General Hill. The command intrusted to this officer was one that required an union of discretion and courage. In the beginning of the year, the second corps had been concentrated on the Tagus, and the fourth, under Mortier, had returned across the Sierra Morena, after the submission of Andalusia. Hill was placed at the head of a corps of fourteen thousand men, in Alentejo, the first duty of which was, to observe the movements of Regnier in Estramadura, on whom the command of the second corps had devolved, when Mortier returned to Andalusia. As the hour of invading Portugal approached, Regnier moved, simultaneously with the forces under the immediate command of Massena, towards the frontiers of that kingdom which was to be made the theatre of war, and on the tenth of July breaking up from Merida, where he left a few men to keep possession in the name of the intrusive king, marched on Truxillo and Caceres; then advancing rapidly towards the Tagus, he crossed that river at Almaraz and Alconeta, and, reaching Coria, took up a position which was the left of the grand army of Portugal. Regnier's activity is entitled to the highest praise: informed of the strength, and convinced of the gallantry of Hill's corps, which was on the eve of forming a junction with that of Romana, he succeeded, by a well-timed movement, in escaping from the watchful attention of the British, and from exposure to certain destruction. The resolution of his enemy was not to be shaken by any remediable event, so that, when Regnier's escape was ascertained, Hill's corps was put in motion, and, by a rapid parallel march, arrived at Castel Branco on the twenty-first of July, having accomplished the passage of the Tagus at Villa Velha;

meanwhile, a reinforcement of Portuguese cavalry arrived, commanded by General Fane, so that Hill, when encamped at Sarzedas, found himself at the head of sixteen thousand effective men, with eighteen pieces of ordnance. He kept an advanced guard at Castel Branco, and posted a Portuguese brigade at Fundao, under Le Cor, which commanded the Estrella line of road, and preserved his communication with Guarda. While Hill was occupied in taking up this judicious position, the commander-in-chief had continued, by the most splendid display of military acumen, to second every movement. Fane's troop was not the only aid which he furnished; he placed, in addition, a reserve consisting of two thousand British just arrived at Lisbon, and eight thousand Portuguese hutted at Thomar, under the command of General Leith, whose instructions were, either to support Hill, or move towards the main body of the army, as circumstances should require: but their position was well chosen, even for passive co-operation, as it secured the line of the Zezere effectually. At first, Regnier made demonstrations towards Salvaterra, but sustained a decided check from the cavalry of the Portuguese: this repulse seemed for awhile to confound his projects, a circumstance which contributed, also, to increase the uncertainty of the English general as to his plans, for he now divided his force, placing one body at Penamacor, a second at Zarza Major, and a third on the Tagus, at the embouchure of the Rio del Monte, rendering it difficult to conjecture whether he meant to effect a junction with Massena, to attack the British encampment at Sarzedas, or to retire across the Tagus. But Regnier had no other object in view, than to cross the Tagus; and having communicated the intelligence to Massena, that general immediately ordered Ney to cross the Agueda with the sixth corps: and it was this movement which occasioned the affair of the Coa, already noticed. After this severe action, it was ascertained that Loisson had his advanced guard at Pinhel, Regnier's remaining in the position already described; so that it was impossible to conclude, with any degree of certainty, whether Massena awaited the junction of Regnier's corps, or purposed marching on the



district of Coria with all his force, to support him. In any case, Massena's intended line of march could not possibly have been discovered by the British. It was while events were thus balancing, that Lord Wellington took up the position before described, ready to advance to the relief of Almeida, should a real investment afford an opportunity, or to retreat in such order, and on such positions, as would maintain discipline, and spare his men.

The judgment of Massena seemed to oscillate, either from an apprehension of the master-mind to which he was so immediately opposed; or from ignorance of the topography of that district of Portugal and Spain; or possibly his indecision might have arisen from inconsistent or impracticable instructions from one or both of his illustrious masters, the Emperor of the French, or the intrusive King of Spain; whatever may have been the cause, his vacillation was extraordinary, his dispositions scattered, and his conduct apparently negligent. As Massena possessed the power to strike, it became Wellington's cautious duty to act as the weaker party, to evade the falling weight, and, whenever the strength of the giant should be expended, or any vital part of his huge body exposed, to take advantage of each occasion, and inflict a fatal wound. Yielding to necessity, the British allowed Massena the choice of routes, and the adoption of manœuvres, merely keeping an intent observation on all his movements, and making correspondent ones, until he should exhibit some decided policy. The labours of the bureau were once again resumed by the British general, during the comparative inactivity of the enemy; and the extent of his information, the variety of his knowledge, and his extraordinary versatility, were never more conspicuously displayed, than during the interval that elapsed between the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and investment of Almeida. Every species of military, political, financial, and even private topic, that arose amongst his army, the Portuguese government, or the ministers and the despondents in England, was touched upon at length, and in a style sufficiently luminous to reflect credit upon the ablest statesmen in those distracted lands.

Having understood that government had sent out Mr. Drummond from England, on a mission to Lisbon and Cadiz, relative to raising money; as Lord Wellington had paid the same attention to this as to every other part of the duty of commander of a great army, he ridiculed the government measure, assuring Colonel Gordon, whom he addressed on that occasion, "that Drummond could do no good, but might do a great deal of mischief; that he attributed his mission to a belief, prevalent at the treasury, that we had not done our best to procure money; in which, he might depend on it, they were mistaken." His lordship, at the same time, promised to give Drummond all the assistance and information which he could, until he should find his mediation mischievous, when, notwithstanding the threats and taunts of the despondents, he declared that he "*should have no scruple in sending him to the place whence he came.*" "It was a notion of Villiers," observed Lord Wellington, "that more money might be had, at both Cadiz and Lisbon, by increased exertion; but my answer to that was, that we were neither pickpockets nor coiners—that we could only get the sums it was convenient, or for the interest of individuals to transmit to England, and that I did not see how any increase of exertion could be followed by an addition to these sums. However, Villiers has been more successful with the ministers at home than he was with me, and it is to him we owe Mr. Drummond's arrival." Such rapid records of his thoughts were thus being daily registered, for the benefit of his own country, and the resuscitation of prostrate Europe, subject to occasional interruptions from aides-de-camp, who entered his hut at intervals, to announce the contents of each telegraphic communication, that passed between the advanced posts of the cavalry at Freixadas, and Brigadier-General Cox, the governor of Almeida.

On the second of August, his lordship addressed to Lord Liverpool a lengthened statement of the situation of both armies, the hopes and prospects of the Peninsular cause, and the certainty, which he alone perceived and understood, of a successful issue to the contest with France, in a manner so condensed, perspicuous, and bold, that, had the noble secretary

before hesitated as to the ability of the individual to execute his gigantic designs, this explanation must have removed his doubts, and inspired him with solid confidence. Leisure was found on the same date to put Mr. Charles Stuart in possession of his opinions, which were decided and unalterable, with respect to the intriguing factions in Portugal, and at the court of Brazil, and the inconsistencies which their conduct introduced. "My opinion," says his lordship, "has been invariably the same,—that government alone can rule Portugal, which the prince regent has named. I recommend, therefore, that the Conde de Redondo, and the principal Souza, and the Dr. Raymondo Nogueira, should now be called to the regency, for the same reasons that I before recommended that Redondo should not, without the prince's authority. In respect to yourself, you can no more accept the office of regent without the king's consent, than I could that of commander-in-chief, or marshal-general, without the king's authority." This salutary advice, and clear exposition of the true nature of allegiance and loyalty, were followed, on the next day, by a pointed and powerful dissertation upon the causes of the unsound policy which pervaded the Portuguese councils. His lordship, on this occasion, thus writes: "I am not in communication with the secretary of state for foreign affairs, and I do not interfere in the political concerns of the government; but I should recommend to you to draw Lord Wellesley's attention to the arrangement for the government of Portugal lately made in the Brazils, and to the principles upon which it has been made. It is extraordinary, that during the time you and I have been working here, to give strength and stability to the government, and principally to support Don Miguel Forjaz, as being the best instrument to co-operate with us to carry on the war, the king's minister in the Brazils should have promoted a new arrangement of the government, purposely calculated to destroy the very influence which we had supported. Then the admission of Don Raymondo Nogueira into the regency, and the reasons for this admission, are truly ludicrous. He is said to aid in the destruction of the influence

of the Secretariat, which we had laboured to establish and support; and his appointment is to be agreeable to the lower orders, from amongst whom he is selected! It is unfortunate for the people of the Peninsula, that we in England have always thought proper to give a democratical character to their proceedings; whereas nothing was ever farther from their intentions. The principle of all the actions of the good people of these countries is anti-gallican, and that alone: all that they desire is, that they should be saved from the grasp of the French, and it is a matter of indifference to them by what persons, or by what class of persons, their salvation is effected. In the abstract, I believe that they would prefer to be governed by the higher classes, from a feeling that those belonging to the higher classes have turned their minds more to the business of government, have more experience and capacity in the transaction of public business, and are more deserving of their confidence, as being more likely to save them from the French. If indeed the Doctor had ever shown any talents as a political character, there might be some reason for his appointment; but as it is, it is absurd and mischievous. That which we want in Portugal is, that government should be supported in all its measures in the Brazils; and that it should acquire strength and confidence in its own measures, in consequence of that support. The king's minister in the Brazils might be highly useful by using his influence for that object. We also require that there should be some permanence in the authority of the persons employed to govern this country, and that men's minds should be diverted from an expectation of change by every vessel which arrives from the Brazils. Here also the king's minister in the Brazils can be highly useful to us; but I must observe, that it is by the adoption of a line of conduct directly the reverse of that which he has followed lately. I hope that my letter to the Prince Regent, written in April, had not arrived in the Brazils before this arrangement was made, as nothing can be more inconsistent with the principles and practice recommended in that letter, than what is contained in the papers which you transmitted to me."

Having called the attention of Mr. Charles Stuart to the gross inconsistencies, to the constant abandonment of principle, on the part of the advisers of the prince regent, his lordship turned round readily, and addressed himself to evils that existed in the government of the British army, particularly in reference to the promotion of officers. The privilege assumed by Napoleon, of raising brave men from the ranks to elevated command on the field of battle, was the most potent incentive, the most powerful stimulant to deeds of heroism, that any conqueror could desire or exert; and, that Wellington felt acutely the inferiority of his situation in that respect, is sufficiently clear, notwithstanding the delicacy with which he touches on the precise point, from the following despatch, of the fourth of August, to Lieutenant-Colonel Torrens,\* in which the closeness and clearness of the reasoning will tend to prove how little his mental energies were influenced, how calm and tranquil, and even at leisure, the great man felt himself, notwithstanding the proximity of seventy thousand enemies, led on by the best generals of France. This official communication commences by refreshing the memory of the military secretary, as to the promotion of Captain the Hon. H. Pakenham, who had been recommended by the lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and had received a wound at Obidos; and also by a reference to Captain Lloyd, whose claims were exactly similar: his lordship then proceeds, "I have never been able to understand the principle on which the claims of gentlemen of family, fortune, and influence in the country, to promotion in the army, *founded on their military conduct, and character, and services*, should be rejected, while the claims of others, not better founded on military pretensions, were invariably attended to. It would be desirable, certainly, that the only claim to promotion should be military merit; but this is a degree of perfection to which the disposal of military patronage has never been, and cannot be, I believe, brought, in any military establishment. The commander-in-chief must have friends, officers on the staff attached

\* Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, and afterwards Major-General Sir Henry Torrens, K C.B., K C.T.S., Adjutant-General to the Forces.



to him, who will press him to promote their friends and relations, all doubtless very meritorious, and no man can at all times resist these applications ; but if there is to be any influence in the disposal of military patronage, in aid of military merit, can there be any in our army, so legitimate as that of family connexion, fortune, and influence in the country ? I acknowledge, therefore, that I have been astonished at seeing Lloyd,\* with every claim that an officer can have to promotion, still a captain ; and others connected with the officers of the staff, promoted as soon as their time of service had expired. While writing on this subject, I am also tempted to communicate to you my opinion upon another branch of it, namely, the disposal of the patronage of the troops employed in foreign service. In all services, excepting that of Great Britain, and in former times in that of Great Britain, the commander-in-chief of an army employed against the enemy in the field, had the power of promoting officers, at least to vacancies occasioned by the service, in the troops under his own command ; and in foreign services, the principle is carried so far, as that no person can venture to recommend an officer for promotion, belonging to an army employed against the enemy in the field, excepting the commander of that army. It was pretty nearly the case formerly in our own service ; and I believe the greater number of the general officers of the higher ranks of the present day, were made lieutenant-colonels by Sir W. Howe, Sir H. Clinton, Lord Cornwallis, General Burgoyne, and Lord Dorchester. But how is it now ? The form remains still in some degree the same ; that is to say, my secretary keeps the register of the applications, memorials, and regimental recommendations—a trouble which, by the bye, might as well be saved ; but the substance is entirely altered, and I, who command the largest British army that has been employed against the enemy for many years, and who have upon my hands certainly the most extensive and difficult concern that was ever imposed upon any British officer, *have not*

\* He was afterwards lieutenant-colonel of the ninety-fourth, and killed at the passage of the Nivelle, on the eighteenth of November, 1813. Lord Wellington thus speaks of him in his despatch on that occasion : “ An officer who had frequently distinguished himself, and was of great promise.”

*the power of making even a corporal!!!* It is impossible that this system can last. It will do very well for trifling expeditions and short services, but those who are to superintend the discipline and to excite and regulate the exertions of the officers of the army, during a long-continued service, must have the power of rewarding them by the only mode in which they can be rewarded, that is, by promotion. It is not known to the army, and to strangers, and I am almost ashamed of acknowledging the small degree (I ought to say nullity) of power of reward which belongs to my situation; and it is really extraordinary that I have got on so well hitherto without it: but the day must come, when this system must be altered. I do not entertain these opinions, and communicate them to you, because there are any officers attached to me in the service, for whom I desire promotion. All my aides-de-camp, respecting whom I do feel an interest, have been promoted in their turn, in their regiments, or are to be promoted for carrying home the accounts of victories. The only individual respecting whose promotion I ever interested myself personally, was that of Colin Campbell, which the Duke of York had promised him, in consequence of his having brought home the accounts of two victories at the same time: and the difficulty which I experienced in obtaining his promotion, notwithstanding that promise, is a strong practical proof of the effects of the system to which I have adverted. The consequence of the change of the system in regard to me, would be only to give me the power of rewarding the services of those who have exerted, or should exert themselves zealously in the service, and thus to stimulate others to similar exertions. Even admitting that the system of promotion by seniority, exploded in other armies, is the best for that of Great Britain, it would still be an advantage that those who become entitled to it should receive it immediately, and from the hand of the person who is obliged to expose them to danger, to enforce discipline, and to call for their exertions. I would also observe, that this practice would be entirely consistent with the unvaried usage of the British navy. I admit that it may be urged with truth, that a larger view may be taken of the interests of the public, in

the mode of promoting officers of the army, than I am capable of taking; and this view may have suggested the expediency of adopting and adhering to the mode now in use: at the same time I must say, that the public can have no greater interest than in the conduct and discipline of an army employed against the enemy in the field; and I am thoroughly convinced, that whatever may be the result in my hands, a British army cannot be kept in the field for any length of time, unless the officers composing it have some hope that their exertions will *certainly* be rewarded with promotion; and that to be abroad on service, and to do their duty with zeal and intelligence, afford prospects of promotion, not afforded by the mere presence of an officer with his regiment, and his bearing the king's commission for a certain number of years. I have been induced to communicate these opinions to you, from the consideration of the claims of those officers to which I have drawn your attention at the commencement of this letter, from a strong conviction of their truth, and not, I assure you, from any personal interest I feel in the result. I would not give one pin to have the disposal of every commission in the army."

In this argumentative letter, his lordship marks indirectly, yet clearly, the great difference between an officer in the service of a republic, and in that of a mixed or absolute monarchy; he exhibits, in the most intelligible manner, the amazing inferiority of his military situation to that of the marshals of France in 1810, and to that of Buonaparte in his early campaigns, as regarded the distribution of rewards and infliction of punishment upon the officers acting under the eye of the commander-in-chief in the field; and his reasoning should have convinced the government he acted under, of the expediency of relaxing antiquated forms suited to a peace establishment only, in such an eventful period as the age of Napoleon and Wellington. While he pleaded the cause of this meritorious officer before the highest authorities, and called for the bestowal of immediate rewards upon the brave and the exemplary, he was employed with equal activity in punishing

those disreputable characters who were hourly acquiring for the British name the disgust and hatred of the Portuguese. Already had he chid the pusillanimity of some, who, with a most un-English feeling, trembled at the approach of Massena, and told too loudly the terrors of their breasts: he was now under the necessity of cautioning the Germans in our service against indiscipline and a propensity to plunder, which they occasionally manifested. Frequent complaints having been made to Lord Wellington of the violence and dishonesty of the Germans in the British army, who were represented as being equally cruel and ferocious with their countrymen in the service of Napoleon, his lordship informed Sir Stapleton Cotton of the fact, adding, "it has gone so far, that the Ordenanzas inquire whether they may kill the Germans in our service, as well as in the service of the French, when urged to resist the enterprises of the latter." The cause of the hatred towards the Germans in the French service arose from the fact, that those soldiers were amongst the foremost, in the imperial army, to refuse quarter to the Ordenanzas whom they took in battle, unless they happened to be dressed in regular military costume, which, in the impoverished state of Portugal, could not be accomplished, and the laws obliged them to defend their country in every case of invasion. No situation, therefore, could be more difficult and distressing than that of the soldiers in the Portuguese militia; no conduct more indefensible and merciless, than the general orders of Massena to treat all Ordenanzas taken in coloured clothes, as guerillas, and give them no quarter. That the French, their declared enemies, should adopt such sanguinary measures, neither appalled nor surprised the invaded, but that the mercenary Germans, with whom no national difference existed, whose fellow-countrymen fought on the side of liberty, and who were, perhaps, themselves constrained to appear under the shelter of the imperial eagle's wings, should have stained their hands with cold-blooded assassination, excited the highest indignation against the national character, and rendered it still more advisable that the hussars, in the British army, should use circumspection in



their intercourse with the people. Regardless of any such necessity, they behaved so ill as to exasperate the peasantry, and make Lord Wellington apprehensive of their being cut off in detail by the offended natives ; he hastened in consequence to request, that General Cotton would speak seriously with Arentschildt on the subject, and point out how unfortunate it would be, if this conduct, which could be of advantage to nobody, should deprive his regiment of the reputation they had acquired. There is," observed his lordship, "no excuse for a soldier in the service of Great Britain plundering."

This infinite quantity and endless variety of vexatious questions, seeming to require the immediate application of powerful remedies, did not disturb the calm, gentle, flow of the great warrior's thoughts: on the contrary, scarcely had he closed this most peremptory letter relative to the plundering hussars, when he resumed the labours of the bureau in the cause of mercy. It was on the eighth of August, and on the eve of great and important events, that the case of poor Franceschi, who had been made prisoner by a guerilla party, again occupied Lord Wellington's most earnest attention. He had remitted money to him, and received the promises of the Spanish junta, that he should be exchanged ; but, from a letter which he now received from the wife of the captive, whose melancholy fate has been previously noticed, he learned that the general was still a prisoner, in the Alhambra at Granada, and that the money had never been transmitted to him. Lord Wellington, on the receipt of Madame Franceschi's letter, wrote to Mr. Henry Wellesley, urging him anxiously, earnestly, and in a manner that betrayed the most humane and benevolent feelings, to give the captive the enclosed letter from his wife, together with one hundred dollars, which he added from his private purse, and desired that he would press the regency incessantly, to allow him to be exchanged. The capture, captivity, and story of Franceschi and his young wife, possess a remarkable interest, and their sufferings and their sorrows entitle them to some brief notice, even in the eventful and crowded narrative of the Peninsular wars ; but in this memoir, their little history



is of infinite value, in admitting a beautiful gleam of heavenly light to fall upon the portrait of the illustrious hero, and, by shining partially, it may perhaps eclipse some dark spot on the canvass. How many acts of harsh, stern, uncompromising justice, which the censuring world have hastily and heedlessly condemned, should not his persevering humanity towards these unhappy lovers have extenuated or obliterated !

Turning from works of mercy, in which few conquerors seemed to have felt equal pleasure, he next applied himself to the question of a free trade with the Brazils. Finance, trade, and political economy had obtained a large share of his attention from his early years ; but his innate modesty, his total dislike to make himself or his acquirements the subject of his conversation or despatches, to the prejudice of the public business in which he was employed, in addition to his being incessantly engaged in military services alone, sufficiently account for the public ignorance of his real character, and their full confession of his fitness for the duties of the cabinet, at that period when the country demanded and obtained his services as a statesman.

The inactivity of the foe now left his lordship at leisure to indulge in the pursuit of one of his favourite studies, and, in a letter, of the tenth of August, to his brother Henry, he challenges and invites a correspondence on the colonial trade of Portugal : his views of the question are highly interesting, and prove the amazing activity of his mind : " I hope," says Lord Wellington, " the regency will have firmness to resist the demands of a free trade with the colonies ; it might answer in some degree, and might be connected with measures of finance which would probably give them a very large revenue : but we have no right, and it is the grossest impolicy in us to demand it. Great Britain has ruined Portugal by her free trade with the Brazils : not only the customs of Portugal, to the amount of a million sterling per annum, are lost, but the fortunes of numerous individuals, who lived by this trade, are ruined ; and Cadiz will suffer in a similar manner, if this demand is agreed to. Portugal would now be in a very

different situation as an ally, if our trade with the Brazils was still carried on through Lisbon; and I would only ask, is it wise, or liberal, or just, to destroy the power and resources, and absolutely to ruin our allies, in order to put into the pockets of our merchants the money which before went into their treasuries, and would be now employed in the maintenance of military establishments against the common enemy?" The subjects of Lord Wellington's correspondence noticed here, are selections from a multitude that poured with an amazing rapidity from his pen, and made rather with a view to illustrate individual character, than from their being the most serious or valuable questions, in the discussion of which his lordship was then engaged. The British ministers have not been noticed, their distrustful communications, nor the quiet remonstrances of the chieftain endeavouring to win them over to his aspiring views. The British envoys in Portugal also contributed to test his lordship's facility in composition, by their numerous, doleful, and lengthened correspondence relative to the best means of embarking the troops, as soon as the British army should be compelled by Massena to evacuate Portugal. To all these, some painful, others ludicrous, some public and necessary, others private and undertaken through benignant feelings, he replied with ease, punctuality, perfect calmness, and composure: in few, very few instances, and then in the most delicate and well-chosen language, he exhibited a high degree of political courage, by rejecting altogether the counsels of the minister at war, disapproving of his measures, or threatening, as in the instance of Mr. Drummond, to undo what the government had done.

While indecision continued to retard the movements of the enemy, Lord Wellington was obliged to wait upon the initial operations of Massena, who had a force exceeding one hundred thousand men, under his command. Some skirmishing occurred in the vicinity of Almeida, but it did not obstruct the communication with the garrison: Regnier's cavalry also sustained a check from the Portuguese troops at Fundao, on which occasion he lost fifty men: intelligence arrived at the head-quarters of successes gained by Silveira,

over a detachment from Kellerman's corps. Serras had advanced as far as Monteray, to order provisions for ten thousand men, and Silveira, learning the true amount of his party, moved on Puebla del Senabria, encountered, and defeated it: advancing on the following day against a Swiss regiment in the imperial service, which had the boldness to molest a Spanish post at Barba de Sanatrice, and succeeded in putting the Spaniards to flight, he shut up the enemy in the little town of Senabria for three days, after which they were glad to capitulate, on condition of being allowed to return to their own country, promising that they would not serve again in the Peninsular war. This meritorious effort, by which five hundred men were deducted from the actual numbers of the enemy in the field, without the loss of one man on the side of the Portuguese, and with the gratifying reflection of having borne away an eagle amongst the trophies, was attended with the happiest consequences, giving the Ordenanzas new courage in the conflict, and confirming their respect for that discipline, with the value of which they were unacquainted before the appointment of Marshal Beresford. Silveira was so elated with his good fortune, that his ambition would immediately have taken a higher flight, and he did actually meditate a descent upon the division under Serras, when the warning voice of Beresford recalled him from a temptation, which would have led him into inevitable destruction.

Fortune exhibits more fickleness in war than in any other of the great games that mortals meddle in; and the loud shouts of triumph were suddenly checked by the melancholy tidings of the losses sustained by the Spaniards in Estramadura: there Romana, who had been cautioned repeatedly by the British commander not to risk a battle, never to engage such an enemy as he had to front, unless at an obvious advantage; had been informed that the separation of Hill had so weakened the allied main body, that he must not calculate on reinforcements—had Campo Mayor granted to him as a place of arms, and Portugal left open to him as a safe retreat—still could not be induced to follow Wellington's advice, nor even his earnest entreaties. Partaking of the sulky sentiments which the fall

of Ciudad Rodrigo engendered amongst his countrymen towards the British, he united his forces with those of Ballasteros, and, meeting the enemy at Benvenida, he would have been obliged to make a total surrender, but for the providential arrival of Carrera with a large reinforcement of cavalry, who rescued him from his embarrassment; not, however, until he had lost above four hundred killed or taken prisoners.—Lord Wellington, anticipating his folly, yet desirous to save him from its consequences, had detached General Madden's brigade, previously attached to General Leith, to strengthen Romana; but before the arrival of Madden, the collision happened, and the temerity of the Spaniard was chastised by the enemy. An accident contributed also to save Romana from further loss; that was, the sudden approach of eight thousand men, who had effected a landing near Cadiz, and were advancing under Lascy against Mortier: the operations of this force made a diversion salutary to Romana, who was finally enabled to occupy Zafra, the enemy falling back on the Morena.

One month expired from the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, and about half that time since the affair of the Coa, without any disclosure being made, or any clue obtained, as to the plans of Massena: the timid imagined that it was the magnitude of the design, for their more certain ruin, that occasioned the delay; the brave man acquired renewed confidence from an impression that the enemy was unable or unwilling to begin the contest. "But we were headed," observes Lord Londonderry, "by one who was not behind Massena, either in clearness of foresight or multiplicity of resources, and we well knew that he would direct no movement which the circumstances of the case might not demand." It is justly due to the character of Wellington, to mention here, that, while he was waiting upon the movements of Massena, under the circumstances previously explained, he was also encumbered by every species of political difficulty that grew out of the serious events of the times: to him belonged the care and the conduct of the British garrison in Cadiz, eight thousand strong; and, although they rendered him no assistance, they were uniformly



enumerated as part of his force; reinforcements had been promised from Halifax and Sicily: of these, but one regiment arrived, while sickness and desertion, those necessary results of inactivity in an army, thinned his ranks daily: the instructions received from ministers left it altogether to the general's discretion as to his future operations, yet cautioned him continually as to the preservation of the army intrusted to his care; the fears of the ministers were imparted to their despatches and instructions, and, if the alarmists at home were not in reality apprehensive, their conduct was only the more flagrant and injurious. To relieve himself from the burden of the Portuguese minister's advice and co-operation, Lord Wellington literally took the government of that kingdom upon himself, associating with him in the duty, the British minister: this completely suppressed the petty intrigues of that court, but multiplied his lordship's avocations: and finding, from experience, the valuable results of having placed Marshal Beresford over the Portuguese army, he concluded, by analogy, that the fleet of the allies would be better disciplined, and more serviceable, if under the control of a British admiral; and in consequence, Admiral Berkeley was advanced to that high command.

When Ciudad Rodrigo fell, Massena hoped that the frontier of Portugal was rendered practicable for an invading army, and too hastily concluded that he had struck such an universal terror to the hearts of the Portuguese, by his masterly conquest, that the inhabitants would hasten to grasp his victorious hand, if extended with the least semblance of friendship or of peace: thus impressed, he issued one of his verbose proclamations\* from

\* *Proclamation of Marshal Massena, issued from Ciudad Rodrigo, (from Southey's History of the Peninsula War.)* "Inhabitants of Portugal—The Emperor of the French has put under my orders an army of one hundred and ten thousand men, to take possession of this country, and to expel the English, your pretended friends. Against you he has no enmity: on the contrary, it is his highest wish to promote your happiness; and the first step towards securing it, is to dismiss from the country those locusts who consume your property, blight your harvests, and paralyze your efforts. In opposing the emperor, you oppose your true friend: a friend who has it in his power to render you the happiest people in the world.



the fallen city, inviting the conquered to submit to their fortunes, and accept a ruler appointed by France. Upon the fourth of August, Lord Wellington deemed it his duty also to address the people of Portugal in a public manifesto, to guard them against the eloquence of the French marshal, and point out to them their safest, wisest, best line of conduct. Originally proclaimed in the Portuguese language, all copies hitherto published were but translations from a translation; but the draft, of his lordship's own dictation, having been discovered, the following is taken from that document in the last edition of his despatches.

*Proclamation to the People of Portugal, by Lord Viscount Wellington, Marshal General, &c.* :—"The time which has elapsed during which the enemy has remained upon the frontiers of Portugal, has fortunately afforded, to the Portuguese nation, experience of what they are to expect from the French. The people had remained in some villages, trusting to the enemy's promises, and vainly believing that by treating the enemies of their country in a friendly manner, they should

Were it not for the insidious counsels of England, you might now have enjoyed peace and tranquillity, and have been put in possession of that happiness; you have blindly rejected offers calculated only to promote your benefit, and have accepted proposals which will long be the curse of Portugal. His majesty has commissioned me to conjure you that you would awake to your true interests: that you would awake to those prospects, which, with your consent, may be quickly realized: awake so as to distinguish between friends and enemies. The king of England is actuated by selfish and narrow views: the emperor of the French is governed by universal philanthropy. The English have put arms into your hands, arms which you know not how to use: I will instruct you. They are to be the instruments of annihilation to your foes—and who those foes are, I have already shown. Use them as you ought, and they will become your salvation! Use them as you ought not, and they will prove your destruction! Resistance is vain. Can the feeble army of the British general expect to oppose the victorious legions of the emperor? Already a force is collected sufficient to overwhelm your country. Snatch the moment that virtue and generosity offer! As friends you may respect us, and be respected in return: as foes, you must dread us, and in the conflict be subdued. The choice is your own, either to meet the horrors of a sanguinary war, and see your country desolated, your villages in flames, your cities plundered; or to accept an honourable and happy peace, which will obtain for you every blessing, which by resistance you would resign for ever."

conciliate their forbearance, and that their properties would be respected, their women would be saved from violation, and that their lives would be spared. Vain hopes! The people of these devoted villages have suffered every evil which a cruel enemy could inflict. Their property has been plundered, their houses and furniture burnt, their women have been abused, and the unfortunate inhabitants, whose age or sex did not tempt the brutal violence of the soldiers, have fallen the victims of the imprudent confidence they reposed in promises which were made only to be violated. The Portuguese now see that they have no remedy for the evils with which they are threatened, but determined resistance. Resistance, and the determination to render the enemy's advance into their country as difficult as possible, by removing out of his way everything that is valuable, or that can contribute to his subsistence, or frustrate his progress, are the only and the certain remedies for the evils with which they are threatened. The army under my command will protect as large a portion of the country as will be in their power: but it is obvious that the people can save themselves only by resistance to the enemy, and their properties only by removing them. The duty, however, which I owe to his royal highness, the prince regent, and to the Portuguese nation, will oblige me to use the power and authority in my hands to force the weak and the indolent to make an exertion to themselves from the danger which awaits them, and to save their country: and I hereby declare, that all magistrates, or persons in authority, who remain in the towns or villages, after receiving orders from any of the military officers to retire from them; and all persons of whatever description, who hold any communication with the enemy, and aid or assist them in any manner, will be considered traitors to the state, and shall be tried and punished accordingly." (Signed,) Wellington.

This able document called forth the following public notice from the Prince of Essling:—

*Proclamation of Massena subsequent to the 4th of August.*—"The armies of the great Napoleon are on your frontiers, and going to enter your territory as friends,

Although few foresaw the solid foundation which this instrument laid, for the elevation of British prosperity in the approaching protracted wars, or the convulsive shake which it gave, and the deep wound it inflicted, upon the French power in the Peninsula; yet its consequences were more fatal to the

not as conquerors. They do not come to make war against you, but to contend against those who have compelled you to make it. Portuguese! open your eyes to your interests. What has England done for you, that you should suffer the presence of her soldiers upon your soil? She has destroyed your manufactures, ruined your commerce, and paralyzed your industry, with the sole hope of introducing into your country articles made in her manufactories, and to render you her tributaries. What does she do now, that you should embrace that unjust cause which has raised all the powers of the continent against her? She deceives you as to the results of a campaign, in which she will not risk anything; she makes a rampart of your battalions, as if your blood was to be valued at nought; she is ready to abandon you whenever it suits her interests: must not the result, therefore, be injurious to you, both by multiplying your sufferings, and their insatiable ambition? She sends her ships into your ports to bring away to her colonies, those of your children who may have escaped the dangers to which she continues to expose them on the continent. Has not the conduct of her army before Ciudad Rodrigo sufficiently proved to you what you are to expect from such allies? Did they not excite the garrison, and the unfortunate inhabitants of that place, by deceptive promises, and have they fired a single gun to assist them? and lately again they have thrown some of their own forces into Almeida—where a governor was instructed to engage you in a defence as badly seconded as that of Ciudad Rodrigo? and have they not insulted you by thus placing in the balance a single Englishman against six thousand of your nation? Portuguese! do not let yourselves be deceived any longer; the generous sovereign, whose power, laws, and genius so many people bless, wishes to secure your prosperity. Place yourselves under his protection, receive his soldiers as friends, and you will obtain safety for your persons and your property. The evils which result from the state of war are already known to you: you know that they threaten you as to everything that you hold most dear, your children, your parents, your friends, your fortunes, your political and private existence. Adopt then a proposition which offers you all the advantages of peace. *Remain quiet in your dwellings, devote yourselves to your domestic works, and only look upon those as enemies who advise you to a war, in which all the chances are contrary to the happiness of your country.*—The Marshal Prince d'Essling, commander-in-chief of the army of Portugal. MASSENA."

[Such was the counter-proclamation which the French general caused to be published, to militate against the designs of Wellington; but happily for Portugal, Spain, and England, these were too deeply laid, too securely treasured in the hearts of a few, very few, brave and loyal men, to be either seen through or frustrated by any efforts of the enemy.]

legions of Napoleon, and to his Peninsular projects, than many defeats in battle would have proved. Here are embodied those principles upon which Wellington based his plans, the fulcrum on which he rested a political lever, which was to eradicate and overthrow that tree, miscalled of liberty, which the imperial ruler of the French now sought to plant in the Peninsula. Affairs now began to draw to a crisis; the great plot seemed rapidly to thicken; inactivity was no longer possible, as disease and famine began to remind the French commander. On the thirteenth, Wellington, ever wary, wrote to Hill, informing him that he agreed then completely with Fane's opinion and his, "that the enemy were about to recross the Tagus. Regnier's movement to this side," said his lordship, "although ordered by Napoleon himself, was certainly a false one; and the sooner a remedy is applied by recrossing, the better for the enemy. But if they cross the river, you must cross likewise, and resume your old position at Portalegre, and replace Le Cor in his: leaving, however, until you hear further from me, two regiments of Portuguese cavalry on this side the Tagus, as I have sent Madden's brigade to the Marquess de la Romana." He proceeds then to supply General Hill with a most specific and minute statement of the number and description of the troops under the command of Regnier, noticing the precise days on which they joined that officer, and the quarters whence they marched, and exhibiting such a display of well-arranged particulars as proved the possession of a mind so truly military, that early promotion in the king's service must of necessity have been the lot of such a man. This interesting document, which the young soldier will peruse with astonishment, was followed by an admonition to Hill, in whom he reposed the most implicit confidence, "not to permit Fane to engage in any affair, unless he had an evident superiority of numbers."

Before the complete investment of Almeida, Lord Wellington had still one day to devote to the public affairs of Portugal, and this was principally occupied in remonstrating with the government upon their very improper mode of promoting officers in the Portuguese service. Their system was to



submit a list of names to the prince regent, in the Brazils, for his sign manual, and then transmit that list to Marshal Beresford for his adoption. Lord Wellington, in his official language, which is always free from personality or offence, desired that the publication of the promotions, forwarded from the Brazils, should be either suppressed or suspended, first, because it was expressly stipulated, when Beresford undertook the drudgery of disciplining the rude levies of Portugal, that he should be vested with the sole, unshackled power of conferring rewards and punishments; therefore the list was a direct violation of the stipulation entered into with that officer. Secondly, he conceived that it would be prejudicial to the interests of Portugal to suffer officers to acquire promotion through private influence and court intrigue, in preference to those who were entitled to rewards by solid substantial services and real merit. For these reasons his lordship forbade the promotions in the list to be completed, and wrote to the prince regent justifying his conduct in having done so.

General Beresford was at the head of the army of Portugal, and earned the admiration and respect of that nation; but there was such an interval between the British hero and his many brave officers, in the opinion of the countries of Europe, in the acknowledgment of the eminent men themselves who served under him, that they forgot to feel his superiority, as much as he neglected to press it into notice; and on every occasion of difficulty, in all their pride of power, and dignity of office, they submitted their grievances to the commander-in-chief, asked his assistance to lighten the burden, alleviate suffering, or throw over them the shelter of his warrior shield. The protection of Beresford's just rights, his vested powers, he considered a portion of that parental care, which the humblest soldier in the ranks received from him, and in this instance it was but the carrying out of that just and wise principle of military legislation, which he previously impressed upon the commander-in-chief of the army of Great Britain. It was an object of the utmost moment to the great plans of Wellington, by which he calculated upon one day destroying the dynasty of Napoleon, to educate, train, officer, and discipline



the Portuguese forces in a manner the most perfect, and under circumstances the most secret. The army of England could never cope with the multitudinous arrays of France ; on this the French securely reckoned ; and as to the resistance of the native Peninsular troops, that never was admitted as an item in the great account of the expenditure of lives which the conquest of Spain and Portugal would require. But Wellington resolved to convert the *canaille* of Portugal into well-trained bands, and, by his system of *cunctation*, afford them opportunities of measuring swords with the foe they feared before, until, instead of insubordinate Ordenanzas, the army of Portugal should be able to present and maintain a front in the field of battle, which the Gallic host might assault in vain. This transmutation was going silently on, under the judicious care of Beresford ; he was the skilful alchemist, who was to give to the body a new constitution, to the features a more beautiful arrangement. In the process, the Portuguese were unconscious of the share they had ; the enemy were in total ignorance of the change ; and the English nation, who were acquainted with the ceremony, misunderstood its object, and attributed the dilatoriness of their general to incapacity, timidity, to everything and anything except the true cause, which was to gain sufficient time to discipline twenty-five thousand brave Portuguese, so that, when the French army was beginning to sink under the hardships of a protracted war in the heart of an enemy's country, the allies might fall upon them with nearly equal numbers, and not inferior in discipline.

When Massena had ascertained with perfect accuracy the movements of Mortier, he resumed operations in the vicinity of Almeida ; and it appears that on the same day on which Mortier occupied Zafra, the sixth corps completed the investment of Almeida, an event which dissipated the doubts that hung over Massena's measures, and developed his future plans. This decisive step, after so long a pause, alarmed the inhabitants, now placed in a lamentable dilemma by the proclamations of the French and English generals ; and on the fifteenth the country presented an extraordinary spectacle. "The inhabitants in general had quitted their villages, and the enemy had

begun to experience some difficulty in procuring subsistence, they were obliged to send to a considerable distance, so that their detachments for foraging and other purposes, as well as their patrols, sustained much annoyance from the Ordenanza, and from the light detachments of the army. The French at length broke ground before Almeida on the fifteenth, but exhibited so little activity, that not a single battery was constructed before the twenty-eighth. The first batteries were erected at a considerable distance, beyond the range of battering cannon; but the approaches were pushed to the very foot of the glacis in one place, owing to the faulty construction of the fortification at that point.

Almeida had long been regarded by the Portuguese as a warrior-pile, that might bid defiance to a host of enemies, and disregard the thunder and the ravage of a thousand guns, and in strength it was inferior to Elvas alone, in Portugal. An old foundation of the Moors, it is celebrated as having been won from them by the Cid, for Ferrando the Great. By the aid of the Almoravides, this fortress was retaken, but recovered again by Sancho I. of Portugal, in 1190. At the siege of Talmayda, as it was anciently called, Payo Guterres distinguished himself so much, that he obtained the title of O'Almaydam, or The Almayda, and transmitted to his descendants the surname of Almayda. This ancient name is written with honour, in the histories of Portugal and India, down to the date here referred to, when its possessor brought disgrace upon his ancient house, by traitorously serving against his country in the army of the invader. After successive wars had deteriorated the strength of this venerable place, important to Portugal as a frontier fortress, king Diniz rebuilt the city, and raised the stately castle here, which the proud Emanuel subsequently repaired.

As soon as the investment of Almeida was seriously commenced, the British general immediately crossed the Mondego, and commenced concentrating the allied armies, placing them nearly in the same position which they had occupied before the retrogression. The same combination of circumstances continuing to operate here as at Ciudad Rodrigo, the policy of his

lordship being sound, it must now necessarily have been analogous, and, unwilling to suffer the enemy to carry on the siege with the sixth corps only, he brought up the Portuguese, and returned to his first position at Almeida. This manœuvre obliged Massena to collect a large force at Almeida, which greatly increased the difficulty of subsistence, allowed greater scope for the operations of the guerillas, and better opportunities of resistance to the Castilians. The Portuguese were now posted in the rear at Trancoso, Govea, Melho, and Celerico, the British occupying Pinhel, Freixadas, and Guarda. Delay, wasting delay, the chief object of Lord Wellington in the summer of 1810, was accomplishing, by its passive powers, the ruin of the enemy: Almeida was a place of strength, having a garrison of one regular and two militia regiments, a corps of artillery, and a squadron of cavalry, in all above four thousand men, under the command of a loyal and resolute British governor, Brigadier-General Cox. If this place should only hold out until the rainy season, the situation of the French army must then be desperate, as all the avenues which Wellington opened to let in ruin upon them, were now fast filling with the elements of destruction. "The people of Portugal," observed his lordship, in writing to Mr. Henry Wellesley, "are doing that which the Spaniards ought to have done. They are removing their women and properties out of the enemy's way, and taking arms in their own defence. The country is made a desert, and behind almost every stone-wall the French will meet an enemy. To this add, that they have the English and Portuguese armies immediately in their front, ready to take advantage of any fault or weakness. If we cannot relieve Almeida, it will, I hope, make a stout defence: the governor is an obstinate fellow, and talks of a siege of ninety days. From the folly of the French, in being a month before the place making preparations to attack it, the garrison, which was not a very good one, has become accustomed to the sight of them, and have confidence in themselves, and are in good spirits. The garrison are supplied for at least as long a time as they talk of holding out, and *every day that they hold out is an advantage to the cause.*" Here once more the principle upon

which the military policy of Wellington then was based, is distinctly and unequivocally stated—"delay," on which he mainly relied as his best, most faithful, and efficient ally, one that would ultimately reduce the strength of the enemy to an equality with that of the British, in which case the courage of the men and the genius of the general would accomplish the rest. From the preceding letter it also appears that Lord Wellington placed much reliance upon the strength of Almeida and the loyalty of its defenders—in which it will be seen he was grievously disappointed; illustrating once more the truth of his lordship's assertion, that he could not be considered as possessing that inestimable element in the character of a hero, "fortune;" almost every success which he obtained, being the result of correct calculation, superior and secure plans, advantageous positions, and such other adjuncts as rendered success almost morally certain. Thrice was he unfortunate at the opening of a new campaign: when delay was his chief object, and he hoped the resistance of Ciudad Rodrigo would occasion it, that frontier fortress fell: he had cautioned, nay, entreated Craufurd not to risk an action with the enemy; yet that brave soldier could not resist the temptation when the foe appeared, and the untoward affair of the Coa was the consequence: this latter disappointment occasioned an alteration in Lord Wellington's arrangements for the conduct of the approaching campaign: the fall of Almeida was a still greater defeat of expectation, as being so contrary to probability, and so amazingly sudden; but Wellington was not a spoiled child of victory, he had been disciplined by fortitude, and knew how to endure and understand the frowns of fortune.

On Saturday night, or early on Sunday morning, the 26th of August, the enemy opened their fire upon Almeida, and the batteries played at a long range: some damage was done to the houses, but the fire was loudly and briskly answered from the walls until night-fall, when it slackened on both sides: but scarcely had the thunder of the artillery rolled away, when the ground on which the city stood, trembled as in an earthquake; the old square keep, in the centre of the town,



with the adjoining buildings, burst into fragments from which a pillar of smoke ascended to an immense height, and then slowly descended upon the ruined city and its desolated ways. The ancient donjon, being the only bomb-proof in Alneida, was therefore made the chief powder-magazine, but sufficient caution had not been observed in securing the doors, and adapting the entrance for the purpose to which the castle was now to be employed : just as a supply of ammunition had been carried out, and placed in a waggon for transport to the walls, a shell exploded at the open door, and the loose powder having ignited, the fire communicated to the contents of the magazine, and an awful explosion was the result. Until the occurrence of this tremendous accident, the garrison had sustained no loss, was in the best order and spirits, had no thoughts of surrender, but expected to hold out for two months at least, as they had upwards of three-hundred and fifty thousand rations of bread.

The loss in ammunition, by this accident, must necessarily have destroyed all hopes of continuing the defence, as the garrison now possessed only a very small supply of powder stored in the magazines on the ramparts, with a few made-up cartridges, and eighty-nine barrels of powder which remained in the laboratory ; but the destruction of life was still more to be deplored by a man of such feelings as the governor, and the ruin of the ramparts left the survivors exposed to the cruelty of the enemy. The explosion destroyed the whole town, breached the ramparts, blew all the guns, with the exception of three, into the ditch, killed or wounded the greater part of the artillerymen, besides five hundred of the inhabitants, and the fragments of the buildings that were thrown out by the fiery eruption, killed fifty of the besiegers in the trenches. The survivors stood aghast, dismay and pallid fear alike pervaded the troops and the towns-people ; they were so paralyzed with the suddenness, and the sound, and the sight of destruction, that they became incapable of investigating the cause of the calamity, and they threw themselves down in anger with Providence, resolved to take no further thought for their lives or liberties. But there was one stout heart, which



throbbed as equably as we read that the pulses of those royal victims did, whom the people's rage, both in France and England, sacrificed on the public scaffold to the goddess of their idolatry—Liberty. Colonel Cox, an English officer, holding the rank of brigadier-general in the Portuguese service, had been entrusted with the governorship of Almeida, from experience of his resolute temperament: apprehensive of an assault, the moment the enemy should have ascertained the nature and extent of the calamity, he ordered the *rappel* to be beaten, rallied as many as had recovered from the stunning effects of the explosion, and, rushing to the ramparts, kept up a rapid fire with the three guns that were left upon the walls. The enemy, ignorant of the state of the works, continued to throw in shells as thickly as before, during the night; but, when the return of light enabled them to perceive the magnitude of the mischief, two officers were sent to the gates with proposals from the Prince of Essling.

That the mode in which the ruin of Almeida was wrought was purely accidental, no doubt can be entertained, but that it would soon have fallen by the villany of traitors, few can disbelieve who read its story. Cox still resolved on gaining time; no matter what its length, he knew its value to the cause of Spain; and being deprived of obtaining a respite of two months, he reconciled himself to the brief measure of so many days. Calling the garrison around him, he remonstrated with them upon their pusillanimity, reminded them that the loss they had sustained was not inflicted by the enemy, and should be borne with manly resignation; that it was still practicable to hold out for a few days, before which time it was probable Wellington would come to their relief, or, by some skilful movement, alarm the enemy, and oblige them to grant more favourable terms of capitulation; and should all fail, it was his intention then to cut his way through the enemy's lines, and join the allies. But this meritorious display of steadfastness, like the Lydian stone, only tested the purity of the coin, which was unluckily found to be base and worthless. Treason had existed in Almeida from the commencement of the siege, and the

French emperor often conquered by corruption, in preference to risking the chances of a battle : the desertion of Portugal by the royal family, and the imbecility of the Spanish king, weakened the bonds of fealty, gave a tinge of popularity to the intrusion of France, and rendered many dastards venal. Bernardo Costa, the Tenente Rey of Almeida, before the batteries opened on the place, appeared to be a faithful servant of the state ; but, when the shells began to burst around, he concealed himself in one of the bomb-proofs : when the explosion had thrown all persons into the utmost consternation, this coward crept from his retreat, and, assuming a new character, declared “ that the place being no longer tenable, it was the duty of the governor and the garrison to surrender ; and, that if Cox persisted in rejecting the mild terms offered by the French general, he would himself hoist the white flag.” A supporter of these arguments presented himself in the person of Jose Bareiros, chief of the artillery ; a villain who had long held secret correspondence with the enemy. Governor Cox, finding that a mutiny actually existed, directed the major of artillery to proceed to the French quarters, and settle the terms of capitulation ; but that traitor informed the enemy of the exact state of the place after the explosion, and never returned ! Massena in consequence rejected the terms proposed by the governor, but consented to permit the militia to return to their homes, while the regulars remained prisoners of war. Entering the town, the first part of the treaty was artfully executed, having first exacted a promise that the individuals then set free should not again take up arms against the French : but the manner in which Massena fulfilled the second condition, reflects disgrace upon the general, and dishonour upon the service that retained a man so devoid of principle in a situation of so much power. He addressed the Portuguese soldiers in the language of flattery, conciliation, corruption, and promised to those men whom he was instructing in treason, the favour of his imperial master, if they would pass over to his banners. This disreputable transaction is thus noticed by Lord Wellington, “ I am sorry to add, that the whole of the twenty-fourth

regiment, with the exception of the major, and of the English officers, have gone into the French service. It is said their object is to evade captivity, and that as soon as they can find an opportunity, they mean to desert: this may be well enough for private soldiers, but it is highly disgraceful to the character of the officers." His lordship's indignation at the scandal brought upon the profession of arms by such degeneracy of morals, was in unison with the sentiments of every officer under his command. Lord Londonderry expresses the same feeling upon this occasion, in language creditable to a brave and generous soldier. "It is hardly necessary to observe that no one could ever think of placing reliance on men who could thus set all honourable feeling at defiance. For my own part, I looked upon the *ci-devant* garrison of Almeida as a band of contemptible cowards, or barefaced traitors; and I believe that the sentiments which I entertained towards them were, without a single exception, those of every man and officer in the British army." Marshal Beresford also protested against the meanness of Massena, and the moral delinquency of the Portuguese officers, whom he declared he would never receive again into the service of their prince, unless some mitigating circumstances were found to aid in their restoration. After the lapse of a few days, the majority of these poor ignorant beings deserted from the French, and attached themselves to the first party of their own countrymen they came up with: their destitute condition, their jaded appearance, their mental agonies, and their solemn asseverations that they had never taken any oath of fidelity to the cause of France, pleaded not in vain with their excellent commander, who felt for the ignorance, as well as for the sufferings they had already undergone, and suspended the punishment he had intended to inflict.

Amongst the arguments adopted to induce the Almeidaans to surrender, was one that was artful, but disreputable to the originators: the officers who were sent to summon the town had instructions to invite the garrison to pass over to the French army, and to enjoy that treatment and those advantages which a number of their countrymen were then receiving in that

service. In support of this specious fraud, the Marquis D'Alorna was brought forward, whose protestations were vehement in seconding the invitation of Massena. But it should be stated, that no Portuguese troops had ever deserted in a body to the standard of France; the few that were in that service had been hurried out of their country by Junot, and were forcibly detained in France by the emperor. As to D'Alorna, he was a Portuguese, and a man of much talent, but little principle: he conceived that his family had always been treated with severity by the royal family of Portugal, and, prompted solely by a vindictive feeling, he embraced the opportunity of Junot's invasion of Portugal to become a traitor to his country, not only without personal risk, but even with expectation of reward for his infamy. Having once committed himself as an enemy to his father-land, he became a determined and uncompromising partisan of the French; and it was in his power to aid their designs, and to direct the operations of Junot, being at that period in the situation of governor of Beira, and having a perfect knowledge of the different parties that then rent the kingdom by their intrigues, and of all the secret springs by which they were severally put in motion. His services, therefore, were highly acceptable to Napoleon, who looked on his hatred of the reigning family as a security for his fidelity to himself, and, immediately appointing him a general of division, he sent him with Massena into Portugal.

The cruelty with which the French had treated the non-resisting villages on the frontier of Beira, had shown the Almeidans how little faith could be reposed in the proclamations of Massena, or the promises of his envoys, and D'Alorna was known as a traitor to the whole army, so that negociation proved futile; but, after the destruction of the works by the accidental explosion, necessity, and the hope of escaping imprisonment for life in a distant country, influenced the minds of the garrison to consent to the terms offered by the enemy. The militia, according to the stipulations of the treaty, were to have been spared the humiliation of carrying arms against their country and their kindred; but perfidy was one of Mas-

sena's infirmities, and when he found that there was not an individual in the three militia regiments of Arganil, Trancosco, and Guarda, who could be induced to violate his allegiance, he directed that two hundred men and seven officers of each regiment should be detained, and formed into a corps of pioneers. Besides this flagrant breach of the articles, the French were also guilty of the most barbarous inhumanity, by continuing to fire upon the defenceless town the whole of the night after it had surrendered: and, although it had all the appearance of a pitiful punishment, which they sought to inflict upon the garrison for their refusal to enter the imperial service, yet French historians assert that it was attributable to an error in the transmission of orders. Of the renegades who aided in the fall of Almeida, one alone was reserved for justice, this was the cowardly De Costa, who was subsequently brought to trial, and shot as a traitor. One curious fact relative to the fate of this fortress may be added, as the close of its eventful history. The occurrence of the dreadful catastrophe, by which all hopes of defending the place were dissipated, was not officially communicated at British head-quarters, until many hours after the surrender of the place, but Lord Wellington was, nevertheless, in possession of the fact: his lordship was employed constantly with his glass, observing the movements of the enemy and the progress of the siege, from the summit of a hill at Marçal de Chao, and finding that there was a cessation from hostilities, from one p. m. till nine on Monday night, when the firing recommenced, and lasted till near two, and an explosion having been heard at the British advanced posts, he again proceeded to make a personal reconnoissance, when he discovered, on the Monday, that the steeple was destroyed, and the houses almost all unroofed: it was not until after he was sufficiently satisfied of its fate, that official intelligence of its fall reached him.

The surrender of Almeida was as unexpected as it was unwelcome to the allies: it afforded fresh food to the morbid appetites of the alarmists in England, it added fresh fuel to the flame of discontent, and disloyalty was occasionally observed bursting



through the thin veil that covered it: changes had taken place in the Portuguese government, which consisted in dismissing troublesome political intriguers, to make way for furious and revengeful monsters; proscriptions, deaths, and confiscations were the occurrences of every hour in the capital; and the despots, grown familiar with power, and encouraged by the paragraphs of the despondent English press, had the folly and presumption to demand an explanation, and to express their desire that the *quick* and great successes of the army might soon be able to obliterate the depression caused by the fall of Almeida. Lord Wellington's reply to this impudent document evinced his ability to struggle with difficulties, his peculiar fitness for the possession and administration of power, his firmness, decision, and political courage. "I have already made known," he observed, "to the government of the kingdom, that the fall of Almeida was unexpected by me, and that I deplored its loss, and that of my hopes, considering it likely to depress and afflict the people of the kingdom. It was by no means my intention, however, in that letter, to state whether it had, or had not, been my intention to have succoured the place: and I now request the permission of the governors of the kingdom to say that, much as I wish to remove the impression which this misfortune has justly made on the public, *I do not propose to alter the system and plan of operations* which have been determined on, after the most serious deliberation, as most adequate to further the general cause of the allies, and consequently of Portugal. I request the government to believe that I am not insensible of the value of their confidence, as well as of that of the public: as also, that I am highly interested in removing the anxiety of the public upon the late misfortune: but I should forget my duty to my sovereign, to the prince regent, and to the cause in general, *if I should permit public clamour or panic to induce me to change in the smallest degree the system and plan of operations which I have adopted, after mature consideration, and which daily experience shows to be the only one likely to produce a good end.*" This reply, replete with confidence, was an answer

also to the despondents at home ; it showed clearly that his lordship did not hesitate to take the whole responsibility of his confident conduct upon himself, that he shrunk from no inquiry, but would not disclose what it was not necessary, perhaps not safe, that the public should be informed of. Fully aware of the contemptible character of the new government, he lost not a moment in compelling them to retract the faint insinuation that the British generals were at least privy to the proscriptions that were going forward ; and he further, through Mr. Charles Stuart, informed them, that if, by their miserable intrigues, they interfered in any manner with the appointments of Marshal Beresford's staff, or with the operations of the army, he would advise his majesty to withdraw the assistance which he was then affording to the Portuguese nation.

His lordship's determination to resist the machinations of this wretched cabinet was warmly and decidedly expressed in the same despatch, and he thus declares his resolution as to their total co-operation, on pain of forfeiting the aid of England in the war. " I purpose," added his lordship, " to report to his majesty's government, and refer to their consideration, what steps ought to be taken, if the Portuguese government refuse, or delay to adopt, the civil and political arrangements recommended by me, and corresponding with the military operations I am carrying on. The preparatory measures for the destruction of, or rather rendering useless the mills, were suggested by me long ago : and Marshal Beresford did not write to government upon them, till I had reminded him a second time of my wishes on the subject. I now beg leave to recommend that these preparatory measures may be adopted, not only in the country between the Tagus and the Mondego, north of Torres Vedras, as originally proposed, but that they shall be forthwith adopted in all parts of Portugal ; and that the magistrates and others may be directed to render useless the mills, upon receiving orders to do so from the military officers. I have already adopted this measure with success in this part of the country, and it *must* be adopted in others in which it is probable the enemy may

endeavour to penetrate: and it must be obvious to any person who will reflect upon the subject, that it is only consistent with all the other measures, which for the last twelve months I have recommended to the government, to impede and render difficult, and, if possible, to prevent the advance into, and establishment of the enemy's forces in this country. But it appears that the government have lately discovered that we are all wrong; they have become impatient for the defeat of the enemy, and, in imitation of the central junta, call out for a battle and early success. If I had had the power, I would have prevented the Spanish armies from attending to this call, and the cause would now have been safe: but now, having the power in my hands, *I will not lose the only chance which remains of saving the cause*, by paying the smallest attention to the senseless suggestions of the Portuguese government. I acknowledge that I am much hurt at this change of conduct in the regency, and as I must attribute it to the persons recently introduced into the government, it affords additional reason with me for disapproving of their nomination, and I shall write upon the subject to the prince regent, if I should hear any more of this conduct."

Lord Wellington's plans for the ultimate confusion of the enemies of peace were wholly beyond the limits of the regency's faculties, and, with few exceptions, very imperfectly comprehended by the leading debaters in the British senate. Lord Moira, at one period, caught a glimpse of the great scheme of the British hero, but it mocked him like a phantom, and, when called on again to deliver a military opinion upon the Peninsular campaign, the vision had totally fled away. To Lord Holland it appeared requisite "that some great man should arise, capable of inventing and executing some great plan, if Portugal were to be saved from French domination;" but his lordship did not allude either to Wellington or his *Fabian* plans; on the contrary, he put this case as an impossible, or, at all events, an improbable one—while the saviour of Portugal was actually at the head of the British army, and had been twelve months engaged in carrying into operation

this vast design, by which Europe was to be wrested from the powerful hand of Napoleon. It was absolutely incumbent upon Lord Wellington to compel the Portuguese to help themselves, although, in this instance, his plans for their relief were certainly most unpalatable. It was a hard necessity which compelled the poor cottager to forsake his humble home, and fly for shelter where he might be left in want of food: it was a cruel fate, that obliged the proprietor first to destroy and then abandon his mill and works, in obedience to military command: but the pages of history will be consulted in vain for an instance of more consummate judgment, a military enterprise of more deep or daring character, than that which Wellington so deliberately planned, and so resolutely executed—for the final expulsion of the French army remains completely without a parallel. The system of destroying by delay is not novel in the art of war, but with such fearful odds against him, as the French army in the Peninsula, compared to the little British force that followed Wellington, no other general would ever have meditated seriously upon any plan of resistance. The French habitually taunted the British with their marine association; but it was to the proximity of the sea that Wellington felt indebted for his supply of provisions after he had caused the country to be wasted: when the regency hesitated to destroy the mills or break the embankments of the water-courses, they forgot that the stream of the ocean would bring corn to Lisbon, while the enemy were perishing by famine in the fields. Lord Wellington's remonstrance upon this point is one of his most severe and sarcastic public letters, but the time and the circumstances called for that energy, promptness, and finality.

With the fall of Almeida, all advantage of Wellington's continuance in that vicinity was superseded; he, therefore, fell back to his former position, placing the infantry behind Celerico, his cavalry at that place, their outposts being at Alverca, and establishing posts of observation at Guarda and Trancoso. While these movements were in progress, a similar accident to that which destroyed Almeida happened at Albu-

querque, where the magazine, being struck with lightning, blew up, and killed above four hundred persons. The enemy begun now to be stirring in every direction: on the thirtieth of August they made two attacks on the British pickets, but were repulsed in both instances; however, in the afternoon of the same day they obliged Sir Stapleton Cotton to draw his posts within Freixadas. In these slight affrays, Captain Lygon and two privates of the royal dragoons were wounded. Regnier, who continued to make demonstrations in the direction of Castello Branco, sent out frequent patrols, one of which falling in with a troop of the thirteenth British, and another of the fourth Portuguese, belonging to Hill's corps, but under the command of Captain White, was surprised, and the whole made prisoners, with the exception of their commander and one man who were killed. Soon after this affair, Regnier arrived at Sabugal, upon which Lord Wellington instructed Hill to observe his further movements, and in case he should march towards Belmonte, and cross the Zezere, so as to place himself between that river and the Alva, or, if he should move upon Guarda, in either case Hill was to move on Thomar by Villa del Rey, where he would find fresh orders awaiting him; but Regnier hastily turning his line of march upon Zaza Mayor, arrived at Alcantara, and threw a bridge over the river at that place.

The conduct of Regnier was calculated to continue that mystery in which the plans of Massena were involved, and to confuse the British as to the line by which the enemy intended to advance into Portugal. The inactivity of Massena was known to his imperial master, who thus remarked in an intercepted letter of his to that marshal, "Wellington has only eighteen thousand men, Hill only six thousand; and it would be ridiculous to suppose that twenty-five thousand English can balance sixty thousand French, if the latter do not trifle, but fall boldly on, after having well observed where the blow may be struck. You have twelve thousand cavalry, and four times as much artillery as is necessary for Portugal. Leave six thousand cavalry, and a proportion of guns, between Ciudad Rodrigo, Alcantara, and Salamanca, and with the rest com-



mence operations. The emperor is too distant, and the positions of the enemy change too often, to direct how you should attack; but it is certain that the utmost force the English can muster, including the troops at Cadiz, will be twenty-eight thousand men." This letter is said to have been dictated by Napoleon, but it does not possess any of the character of his mind or his style; and it is not impossible but it might have been "a weak invention of the enemy," as the French marshal had commenced active operations before the letter was intercepted. If Napoleon was the author of this weak and useless letter of instructions, he displayed total ignorance of every circumstance connected with the designs of the British; he never hints at the possibility of provisions failing, makes no allusion to Beresford and his vigorous young army, and is totally silent as to Torres Vedras. His knowledge of Wellington's plans for the recovery of Portugal was not more accurate than that of the secretary of war in England, one of whose despatches of the same date as Napoleon's instructions commences with these words, "As it is probable the army will embark in September," &c.

The British retired still farther, to Gouvea, where headquarters were fixed, keeping a watch upon the road from Sabugal, and preventing any alarm from being created to Hill by turning his position on the Zezere; but this movement proved ultimately useless, the enemy suddenly drawing off their whole force to the British left. Massena had been instructed to make Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo places of arms, and to enter Portugal by both banks of the Tagus; but he confined his operations to the north bank only, and limited his views to three lines of march, namely, by Viseu, Celerico, and Belmonte. So far decided in his plans, Regnier was called in, and stationed at Guarda: Ney, at Macal de Chao: Junot, at Pinhel, threatening the selected Lines, and betraying Massena's real object, which was to concentrate all his forces on Viseu, which the traitor Alorna had represented as the most practicable route, and, pouring down thence into the valley of the Mondego, reach Coimbra before Hill could possibly have joined the main body of the allies. But

Wellington perceived that the invasion of Portugal was virtually begun, and, as soon as he ascertained that it was Regnier's corps that occupied Guarda, he recalled Hill and Leith to the main body. It is due to the discernment and activity of General Hill, who had been entrusted with a separate command, and enjoyed the entire confidence of Lord Wellington, to state, that knowing his commander-in-chief's wishes and views, he had judiciously anticipated his final orders, and was on his march to join the main body when the order to that effect reached him. Wellington now retired behind the Alva, leaving the light division and the cavalry at Mortagoa; Hill had come up on the twenty-first, and although the enemy had actually reached the Criz at the same time, they found themselves completely baffled, Pack having destroyed all the bridges. The badness of the roads occasioned much delay to the French, and the artillery had not reached the deserted town of Viseu on the nineteenth. Colonel Trant having surprised a patrolle, learned from them that the military chest and reserve artillery were at hand, followed by Montbrun's cavalry, and immediately resolved to make an attack upon the convoy. This bold action was brilliantly performed, nor were the collected forces of the enemy able to drive Trant away from Tojal until he had secured about one hundred prisoners. The check occasioned a delay of two days more to the advance of the enemy—a circumstance of vital value to the allies. As long as the enemy remained at Viseu, so long Spencer continued to guard the road to Oporto with a strong force at Milheada, but, when Ney repaired the bridges, and crossed over the Criz, Spencer was called in, the allied force concentrated, and Wellington resolved upon receiving the enemy in a position of his own selection on the Sierra de Busaco. There were those in the allied army who expressed their fears that Massena would not attack such a formidable position; to which the British chief replied, "Well, but if he does, I shall beat him:" and there were others in the French army, who assured Massena that the British at last were resolved to give him battle; to which he answered, "I cannot persuade myself that Wellington will risk the loss of his reputation, but if he does—I have him!"

To-morrow we shall effect the conquest of Portugal, and in a few days I shall drown the leopard !”

Wellington possessed no such extraordinary and unjustifiable ambition as that of encountering sixty or seventy thousand veterans led by Marshal Massena, with a force only two-thirds of that amount, and of that force one-half untried men : but the folly and impatience of the Portuguese, and the fears of the government in England, and the discontent of the Spaniards at the loss of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and the resistance to the execution of his orders to abandon their homes, which the regency gave, determined him upon making such a display of military genius and physical force, as would restore the courage of the Spaniards and Portuguese, and strike terror into the followers of Massena. With this determination the warrior took up the impregnable position of Busaco, where he knew he could give the enemy a fatal reception without much risk, and deceive the alarmists by appearing to be at length prepared to bring the tedious contest to a close. More perfect policy, more consummate skill, were never exhibited by any general, than Wellington displayed in the objects and the conduct of the defence at the Sierra de Busaco. It was singular enough that Lord Wellington's secret plans were so faithfully concealed by those to whom he had committed them, that both friends and foes were equally ignorant of his objects, and both, nearly at the same moment, exclaimed against his policy. While the alcaldes resisted his authority to destroy the mills, and drive the people towards the capital, Massena echoed their sentiments, and assured the inhabitants that their lives and properties would be more secure upon his honour than upon that of the English general, while he most inhumanly caused all the Ordenanzas that were taken to be shot as traitors, unless they were clothed in military uniform. On the twenty-fourth of September, Lord Wellington addressed a remonstrance to the French marshal, on this painful subject, which must have increased that general's respect for his antagonist, however uncomfortable to his feelings the communication itself might have proved. His lordship observed,

“ You call these men peasants without any uniform, assassins, highwaymen: I have the honour to assure you that they are the Ordenanzas of this kingdom, military corps, commanded by officers paid and appointed by military laws. You appear to insist that those alone are entitled to the rights of war who are clad in military costume, yet forget that you yourself have added to the lustre of the French army at the head of soldiers who were not dressed in any uniform. Is a country invaded by a formidable foe, justified in defending itself by every possible means? if so, Portugal is entitled to put its Ordenanza in requisition, a body recognized and organized by the ancient laws of the country. You complain of the treatment of Colonel Pavetti, a prisoner—your complaint is unfounded, while you permitted a militia captain’s house to be burned, and his companions shot, because he discharged his duty to his country. I am sorry that the desertion of their houses by the Portuguese has occasioned you so much personal inconvenience; but it is my duty to oblige those to retire who are not able to defend themselves, and my orders are the result of necessity. Those who remember the invasion of Portugal in 1807, and the usurpation of their government in time of peace, when there was not an English soldier in the country, can scarcely believe your declaration that it is with the English alone you are at war; and they are unable to reconcile the conduct of the French soldiers towards their property, their women, themselves, with the promises of your excellency. It is not, therefore, surprising that they should voluntarily abandon their homes, having first burnt or destroyed what they could not remove; and I have no regret to express for the encouragement I have given to commit these acts, except for the personal inconvenience which it has caused your excellency. You are misinformed with respect to the militia that formed part of the garrison of Almeida; before you complain of the infraction of the capitulation of that place, you should recollect that you violated the conditions as soon as they were signed: you promised that the officers and privates of the militia should be at liberty to return home, yet,

notwithstanding that solemn engagement, you detained a certain number from each regiment, to form a corps of pioneers; the capitulation of Almeida, therefore, is void, and I have a right to act as I please with respect to it; but I assure you, at the same time, that there is not one militiaman of the late Almeida garrison, in my service at this moment." This interesting letter has been overlooked, by those especially who admire the policy of France at that period; but it possesses an important value to history, as proving a fact which some have pretended to doubt—the dishonour of Massena, and his flagrant violation of the terms which he granted, on his princely faith, to the brave governor and garrison of Almeida; and, in fact, the truth of Pelet's statement is completely shaken by the contents of the preceding document.

No uncertainty now existed as to Massena's objects, and Wellington was prepared to answer every movement of the enemy, and counteract their ablest designs and operations; the marshal desired to pass through Coimbra to the capital, in order to obtain supplies on the route for his army; the British general determined upon preventing him from collecting provisions, upon arresting his progress towards Lisbon, and upon giving him a foretaste of British courage and discipline, as a salutary admonition in his meditated advance. It was also in the highest degree necessary to obtain some delay from pursuit, for the old, the infirm, the young, the gentle sex, that were pushing along the narrow rugged way towards Lisbon, and to inspire the Portuguese nation with renewed confidence in the British, for the weight of their sorrow obliterated the recollection of former achievements. Busaco, a name now famed in history, was the rocky citadel chosen for the consummation of these ends by the gallant leader of the allies. "The position of Busaco was secure against artillery, and inaccessible to cavalry. Here, from the lofty ridge of one of their native sierras, Wellington first showed to the Portuguese levies the formidable array of their invaders, and here he allotted to them the easy task of repulsing, by the side of British soldiers, one of those



desperate and hopeless assaults, which his knowledge of the French character encouraged him to expect. By this master-stroke of military skill and sound policy, the Portuguese were inspired with a confidence in him and in themselves, that never afterwards forsook them."

The Sierra de Alcoba, or Busaco, possesses other claims to recollection than those which the military judgment of Wellington have conferred upon it by selecting its rugged front as a field of battle. It is a precipitous ridge, extending from the Mondego about eight miles in a northern direction, and subsiding gently on the west and south into a rich, cultivated populous country, adorned with villages, monasteries, churches, and marked with the sinuosities of the rapid Mondego. This picturesque river insinuates itself between the precipices that terminate the sierras of Murcella and Busaco, presenting the boldest and most romantic scenery in the province, and continuing to possess equal beauty of forms, productions, and colour, up to the very fountain of the Alva in the range of the Estrella. The Busaco chain is also continued in a northerly direction to the Sierra Carramula, which extending north-east, separates the valley of the Mondego from that of the Douro. As all the roads to Coimbra from the east lead across this mountain-range, which presents a savage aspect towards the Mondego, they are necessarily inconvenient for the passage of an army, and advantageous as a point of resistance.

On the loftiest point of the sierra is a table-land, occupied by a spacious conventual establishment for Barefooted Carmelites, called a *desert*, where the advantages of the eremite and discipline of the cœnobite life, are at once enjoyed. The principal building is surrounded by a dense forest, the whole domain occupying a crater-formed hollow, about four miles in circumference. Within the enclosure are chapels and devotional stations, and on the most elevated and conspicuous point a colossal cross has been erected, the pedestal of which alone consumed three thousand carts-load of stone. The cells of the reverend brethren were constructed around the great church, not at regular intervals, but on the most sheltered and conve-

nient sites; and, to protect the occupant from the effects of the damp climate, each cell was lined with cork, and that material adopted instead of wood wherever it could be introduced. The only recreation in which the ascetics of Busaco indulged themselves, was the cultivation of the small gardens attached to their narrow cells, and in one of which the first cedar-trees that grew in Portugal were raised. This was an earthly paradise which man had converted into a purgatory, and superstition seemed to sanctify his work. Here the British hero fixed his head-quarters, "and the solitude and the silence of Busaco were now broken by events, in which its hermits, dead as they were to the world, might be permitted to participate in all the agitations of hope and fear." An eye-witness thus describes the prospect from the convent of Busaco, while Lord Wellington was the guest of the brethren, immediately before the battle." My regiment had no sooner piled arms, than I walked to the verge of the mountain on which we lay, in the hope that I might discover something of the enemy. Little, however, was I prepared for the magnificent scene which burst on my astonished sight. Far as the eye could stretch, the glittering of steel, and clouds of dust raised by cavalry and artillery, proclaimed the march of a countless army; while immediately below me, at the foot of the precipitous heights on which I stood, their pickets were already posted: thousands of them were already halted in their bivouacks, and column after column arriving in quick succession, reposed upon the ground allotted to them, and swelled the black and enormous masses. The numbers of the enemy were, at the lowest calculation, seventy-five thousand, and this host formed in three distinct and heavy columns; while to the rear of their left, at a more considerable distance, you might see a large encampment of their cavalry, and the whole country behind them seemed covered with their train, their ambulance, and their commissariat. This then was the French army: here lay before me the men who had once, for nearly two years, kept the whole coast of England in alarm: who had conquered Italy, overrun Austria, shouted victory on

the plains of Austerlitz, and humbled in one day the power, the pride, and the martial renown of Prussia, on the field of Jena." The British and Portuguese occupied a line of eight miles in length, but the great extent of the position at Busaco rendered it inconvenient as fighting ground, less than sixty thousand men being insufficient to occupy it fully, so that any attempt to turn the British left, by Milheada, must ultimately have succeeded. This Massena neglected, and, impressed with the conviction that Wellington would not stand his ground, he led his columns against the British posts, which proved to be as immoveable as the rocks they stood on.

On the twenty-third, the British cavalry being obliged to retire from the campaign country to the height behind Mortagoa, one division being retained there, the remainder were ordered to cross the sierra and descend to Milheada, whence Spencer was recalled, while Picton's division took up a position at Antonio de Cantara, and the fourth was placed at the convent. The advanced guard of the enemy crossed the Criz on the twenty-fifth, took possession of Santa Combadao, and pushed on to Mortagoa, where Craufurd was strongly posted. Lord Wellington had issued peremptory orders against any partial action, or any affair of advanced guards, but Ney and Regnier's corps followed so hotly, that the cavalry skirmishers were actually exchanging shots, and Craufurd was not likely to endure this insolence of the enemy much longer; at this critical moment Lord Wellington suddenly arrived, and, taking the personal direction, covered the retreat with the fifty-second and ninety-fifth, the cavalry and horse artillery, and brought off the division without any loss of importance. In this affair fell Lieutenant Hoey, an officer of much promise, aide-de-camp to Lord Londonderry, at whose side he was killed by a cannon-shot: and in this manner, by a series of rapid and beautiful movements, by a sharp cannonade, and an hour's march, the accident was rectified, mischief prevented, and the division brought into its position on the heights.

During the rescue of the division from the risk of ruin, to which Craufurd's impetuosity had exposed it, Regnier turned

his route to the left, and took up a position in front of San Antonio de Cantara, opposite to General Picton's division. This rock was the key to the pass, and became in consequence the principal object of Massena's attack, as it was evidently his intention, in the first instance, to have forced, in preference to turning the British position. At this moment Ney would have rushed upon the allies, whose disposition was not yet complete, and while he was yet beyond the Alva; but Massena was at Mondego, and, in reply to Ney's aide-de-camps who brought intelligence of the weakness and confusion of the allies, desired "that the honour of drowning the leopard might be reserved for himself upon the morrow." But before that morrow shone forth, the confusion of the allies had subsided, and a perfect and beautiful chain of positions was formed on the heights of Busaco; too distant from each other to render their ground impregnable, but this defect was unavoidable, and remedied to a certain extent, by the full command which each embattled eminence possessed over the intervening ravines, by which alone the enemy could advance, as well as by the indomitable courage of the troops that maintained them. Another circumstance materially altered the situation of the contending armies, when Massena did arrive to carry his foolish vaunt into execution, that was, the junction of Hill's corps, which Lord Wellington moved from its position on the Alva across the Mondego, on the morning of the twenty-sixth, leaving Le Cor with a Portuguese brigade on the Sierra da Murcella, to guard the passage of the Alva, while Brigadier-General Fane, with the thirteenth light dragoons, and a squadron of Portuguese cavalry, was stationed in front of that river, to check the cavalry of the enemy in any attempt from the direction of Mortagoa.

The line of battle was drawn out, the reserved posts occupied, and the arrangements for an obstinate resistance complete on the twenty-seventh; the allied army being thus disposed—the second division, under General Hill, formed the extreme right, flanked by the Mondego, guarding the ground that sloped gently towards the bank of that river, and formed across the Pena Cova road: the eminence on Hill's left was



occupied by General Leith, commanding the fifth division, and having the Lusitanian legion in reserve: on Leith's left was the third division, afterwards so distinguished for its intrepidity, under the command of one of the bravest officers in the service, General Picton, and placed decidedly in the post of honour at Busaco, for it was expected that the enemy would direct their chief attempts, and employ their entire strength, to force the passage of San Antonio de Cantara, which Picton was appointed to defend. About one mile to the left of Picton, and between the third division and the convent, the first division under General Sir Brent Spencer was placed, occupying the highest point of the ridge: Craufurd's light division continued the line to the extreme left, where General L. Cole, with the fourth division, terminated the line, their flank being protected by an almost perpendicular declivity. The British cavalry, commanded by General Sir Stapleton Cotton, were posted in the flat country, behind the fourth division, where there was sufficient space for them to act, and where they effectually checked all attempts on Coimbra by that route. General Pack's brigade was formed in advance of the first division; and about fifty salient points, along the front of the line and of the mountain, were occupied by as many pieces of artillery; while skirmishers were thrown out along the entire front.

On the arrival of Massena with the eighth corps, which took place on the twenty-sixth at noon, that bold general expressed his determination to force his way through the enemy; but Ney perceiving the increased strength of the position which Wellington occupied since the arrival of Hill, endeavoured to dissuade him from such a vain attempt; the prince, however, trusting in the superiority of his numbers, the quality of his veterans, and his own fortune, resolved upon carrying the position. During the stillly silence of night, on the twenty-sixth, while the British, wrapped in their watch-cloaks, "with the strong surface of the mountain for their bed, and the sky for their canopy, slept or thought away the time," a rustling noise was heard proceeding from the thick woods that darkened the dells in front, upon which, about two hours





1804 ST. PETER, COTTON, VASSANT BARON COMBERMERE

*Combermere.*



before daybreak, the whole allied army was under arms, and in battle-array.

Whilst the mists yet hung upon the mountain, and concealed the combatants from each other's view, the impetuous foe was forming in five dense, dark columns, which were occasionally discerned from the heights of Busaco, as the light clouds of morn went and came. To the gallant Ney three columns were intrusted, with orders to attack the heights in front of the convent; while Regnier, with the remaining two, should fall on the line of the allies about three miles to the left at San Antonio de Cantara. The latter being the real object of Massena, the attempt was committed to an *elite* corps, consisting of three of the most distinguished regiments in the imperial service, and commanded by General Merle, who had earned a high reputation in the field of Austerlitz. These brave fellows rushed to the attack with a courage that merited a happier fate, had they been engaged in a more honourable cause than the enslaving of all Europe. The pass was defended by the seventy-fourth regiment, two Portuguese battalions, and twelve pieces of artillery; and although a column of the enemy long persisted, with gallantry and noble perseverance, they were never able to gain an inch of ground, and were ultimately compelled to abandon the attempt in great confusion. During this success, however, a heavy column penetrated on the left of Picton's position, close to the hill of Busaco, and, amidst a storm of grape, round shot, and musketry, actually gained the summit of the hill, and instantly formed with most beautiful precision: had they been supported, they would have made a resistance both long and sanguinary; but the gallantry of the French only excited the emulation of the allies, and the forty-fifth British, with the eighth Portuguese, opposed the hardy veterans with such resolution, as to check any further advance, until the eighty-eighth came up to their assistance. The French had obtained possession of a strong rocky point in the middle of Picton's line, while that general was engaged in directing the defence of the pass; but, upon being satisfied that the enemy could

not effect their object in that place, he rode hastily towards the rock, where he saw his right driven in, and the enemy gaining ground. The presence of Picton, seconded by his great example of the boldest daring, was attended with immediate success; heading a Portuguese battalion that Lord Wellington had that moment sent to his assistance, he rallied his men, returned to the attack with bayonets levelled, and, charging at a trot, drove the enemy over the cliffs into the ravine below, with frighful havoc, presenting one of the most awful spectacles that was exhibited during the campaign. When the enemy became panic-stricken by the fierce bearing of the muscular Britons with pointed bayonets, they attempted to fly with the wildest precipitation; but owing to the irregularity of the ground, numbers were thrown down and transfixed by their foes, "and many literally picked out of the holes in the rocks by the bayonets of the soldiers." Another attempt was made by Merle's division to ascend the hill, but this was easily and bravely repulsed by General Leith, who came up, at the precise moment, with the first, ninth, ninety-eighth regiments, and, in an hour after, Hill arrived at this part of the line with a force which would have rendered all further attempts fatal to the enemy: after this, Massena abandoned the rash idea of forcing the pass of San Antonio de Cantara. The attack on Picton's division was made in error, Massena conceiving that point to have been the extreme right of the allied line; and it was not until his veterans had reached the summit of the rocky ridge, on which they fully thought that victory sat enthroned, that they discovered the dark columns, which Hill and Leith now led on to overwhelm, and to complete their destruction. It was immediately after this decisive repulse that Lord Wellington visited the spot, and, riding up to Hill, who waited in some expectation of being attacked, said, "If they attempt this point again, you will give them a volley, and charge bayonets; but don't let your people follow them too far down the hill." "I was particularly struck," says an officer in General Hill's division, "with the style of this order—so decided, so manly, and breathing *no doubt* as to the repulse of any attack: it

confirmed confidence. Lord Wellington's simplicity of manner in the delivery of orders, and in command, is quite that of an able man. He had nothing of the truncheon about him: nothing full-mouthed, important, or fussy; his orders on the field are all short, quick, clear, and to the purpose."\*

After General Picton had made the necessary dispositions for the reception of the enemy on the night of the 26th, and personally visited every post, he retired to a convenient spot, wrapped himself in his cloak, pulled on a coloured night-cap, of a description which he always wore, and lay down to rest, having given orders to the proper officers that he should be called upon the least alarm. Overcome by fatigue, and possessing that command over the senses which is the prerogative of strong minds, he instantly fell asleep. Scarcely had two hours elapsed, when he was awoke by the firing of musketry, and, springing from his grassy bed, he put on his hat, leaped into his saddle, and the next moment was defending the pass of San Antonio. From this place he hastened to the rocky eminence where his right was turned, and, having succeeded in rallying his men, placed Major Smith at their head, where that officer he was instantly struck down; turning round to the Portuguese battalion, that was advancing in the most perfect martial order, as if glorying in the display of discipline which the once despised *canaille* were now enabled, by the genius and perseverance of Beresford, to present, he encountered the full flash of every eye, in the steady line, now silently, but earnestly appealing to him, whether they were not at length deserving of such a general? He was not long in appreciating the feeling, of which a soldier only perhaps is susceptible, and without a moment's hesitation, putting spurs to his charger, he dashed forward to the head of the column, and taking off his hat, with which he pointed to the enemy, called aloud, "Forward, brave Portuguese." This was the origin of the electric fire that instantly ran through the heart of every man in the battalion, and a loud burst of hurrahs rent the air: this alone must have proved startling to the enemy,

\* Recollections of the Peninsula.



but when the sky instantly after rang with still louder peals of laughter at the brave general, (who, when uncovering, exhibited his coloured night-cap,) an effect still more terrific followed; then yielding to the pressure, and the courage, and the high-wrought enthusiasm of the fresh troops that rushed against them, the enemy replied to the tones of laughter only by the expiring groans of those who were borne over the steep.\*

Simultaneously with the attack on Picton's division, Ney advanced with two columns, the one under Loisson, the other under Mermot, against the centre and left of the allied line. There the ascent was much more difficult, and Craufurd had taken every advantage of his position, which circumstances permitted. In front of the convent was a hollow, large enough to receive and conceal the forty-third and fifty-second regiments drawn up in line; and at the distance of a quarter of a mile behind, on an eminence above the hollow, and close to the convent walls, the German infantry were placed, appearing to the enemy to be the only force posted in that part of the line, while in front of the crater which contained the two regiments, arose a group of rocks, affording an admirable position for a battery, and where Craufurd planted his artillery. To impede still earlier the approach of the enemy, the face of the hill was thickly planted with skirmishers, selected from the Portuguese caçadores and the British rifle corps.

Against this impregnable position the enemy advanced with the most gallant daring, and in perfect order, Marchand taking the main road, Loisson rushing up against the face of the mountain, while a reserve division remained at the foot of the sierra. General Simon led on his brigade with the most dauntless courage, unchecked by a tempest of bullets from the light troops, or by the more ruinous storm of heavy shot from the guns, and, apparently, without the slightest slackening of pace, or derangement of their line, except what was occasioned by the fire of the allies, the French reached the crest of the hill in compact array; then a pause took place, followed by

\* Robinson's Life of Sir Thomas Picton, from which also the account here given of the defence of the pass of San Antonio de Cantara is taken.

a shout of *vive l'empereur*, and then a rapid advance upon the British battery; at this moment, Craufurd, who, during the whole time of the enemy's bold attempt stood upon a detached, projecting rock, to observe their movements, and analyze the designs of the commander of the division, was heard to scream aloud, in a sharp shrill tone, the loudest and highest on his voice, "Charge!" In an instant the two regiments that were concealed in the hollow rushed out from their retreat, and falling on the breathless Frenchmen, offered many hundred lives as a melancholy sacrifice to the ambition of the hero whose title of usurpation they so fondly followed. The reserved regiments kept close in their cover until Simon's brigade approached within one hundred yards of their concealment, when, pouring in a close, well-aimed, and unanswered volley, then raising a shout both loud and long, and presenting, up to the very beards of the enemy, thirteen hundred naked bayonets, they produced an effect from which the foe could not recover, and which was followed by a scene of havoc such as the veterans of Austerlitz had never witnessed before. "The French, unable to retreat and afraid to resist, were rolled down the steep like a torrent of hailstones driven before a powerful wind; and not the bayonets only, but the very hands of some of our brave fellows became in an instant red with the blood of the fugitives."

The main body of the allies remained in position, the wings discharging repeated volleys upon the flying, or rather falling, fugitives, and many companies would have continued the chase and the carnage, had not Ney brought forward the reserve division, and opened a few heavy guns, from an eminence, to cover the retreating brigades, which effectually checked pursuit. It was the wish of Ney to withdraw totally from the contest, but the wounded feelings of Marchand and Loisson would not permit them to abandon the ground, while the least glimpse of hope existed that their lost honour might possibly be recovered. For sometime, therefore, they maintained a wild and desultory contest in the hollows at the mountain-foot, but the courage, prudence, and pride of Pack and Spencer were equal to those of

their adversaries, and fortune now bestowed her smiles upon the efforts of British bravery. The disappointment which the French army sustained was general, extending its influence injuriously to the junior officers. Although Massena had drawn off his army, a captain with his company, who occupied a village close under the brow of the hill, laboured under such a paroxysm of chagrin as to have completely lost his judgment, and totally neglected the orders of his commanding officer. Continuing foolishly to stand his ground, General Craufurd sent an officer to advise him "that it should be his wish, as it was his duty, to follow his flying countrymen while circumstances yet permitted, and that humanity alone was the source of his interference." The irritated soldier desired the messenger to return, and tell his general, "that he had been intrusted with the maintenance of that post, and meant to die in the defence of it." This gasconade was replied to by a discharge of twelve pieces of artillery, which General Craufurd ordered to play upon the enemy for half an hour, after which a company of the forty-third entering the village soon dislodged the too daring occupants.

This may be called the expiring struggle of the French at Busaco: if an attack on the strong position of Wellington was justifiable at any period, it must have been before the junction of Hill and Leith; but, after that event, it was a rash, extravagant idea, despised by Wellington, and disapproved of by Ney; founded in presumption it terminated in results as injurious to the author, as advantageous to his adversaries. By the resistance which the allies made on this memorable occasion, the French were confirmed in the belief that the British soldiers were madly brave, and discovered at the same instant, that they had so disciplined the allies, that, whether they were habited in military costume, or otherwise, they were no longer exposed to the epithet of *canaille*, but entitled to be ranked with the bravest and best soldiers in the Peninsula. Many of the allies, exhausted by the prolongation of hope and by the momentary expectation of being led against the foe, gave way to unworthy suspicions, but Busaco lulled

all apprehensions as to the clear views of the general, and increased the growing confidence in Portuguese co-operation. While Beresford lauded the conduct of his men in the field of battle, and compared their bravery to the brightest periods of Portuguese history, Wellington added the valuable testimony of his approval, not only of the troops, but of the marshal himself, to whom the nation was largely indebted for the introduction of that military discipline, which contributed in an essential manner to the recovery of the Peninsula: his praise was not confined to the area of the battle-field, or addressed to the brave men who had so gloriously profited by his lessons of subordination, but, with his accustomed magnanimity, he represented the services of Beresford, to the secretary at war, with an unexampled generosity. "I should not," said his lordship, "do justice to the service, or to my own feelings, if I did not take this opportunity of drawing your lordship's attention to the merits of Marshal Beresford. To him, exclusively, under the Portuguese government, is due the merit of having raised, formed, disciplined, and equipped the Portuguese army, which has now shown itself capable of engaging and defeating the enemy." The meritorious exertions of Beresford were at once acknowledged by his sovereign, who conferred on him the order of knighthood of the Bath, in consideration of the discipline exhibited by the troops under his command at the battle of Busaco. The prodigies of valour performed by the veteran troops of Gaul, led only to their greater destruction and more decided overthrow. General Graind'orge, and eight thousand men were slain: Generals Foy, Merle, Maucune, and Loisson wounded, while General Simon\*

\* Simon being brought to England, was permitted to reside at Odiham, on his parole, but, violating his honour, he concealed himself in London, in the hope of being able to effect his escape. Totally forgetting the high estimate which a Briton entertains of the profession of arms, he condescended to intrigue with other French prisoners, who were also on their parole, for the purpose of releasing all those that were base enough to participate in such a conspiracy. His conduct being made known to government, a strict search was immediately ordered, and Simon and his accomplices being discovered, in the kitchen of a house in Pratt-street, Camden Town, part were placed in Bride-

was made prisoner by the fifty-second regiment, along with three colonels, thirty-three officers, and two hundred and fifty men, making a total, put *hors de combat*, of about five thousand: the allies sustained a loss under one thousand three hundred, which included five hundred and seventy-eight of the Portuguese corps.\* When the din of battle had subsided, Massena sent a flag of truce, requesting permission to bury the slain; but his request was refused by the victors, who performed that melancholy duty themselves. Numbers of the wounded, whom the enemy abandoned in the field, fell into the hands of the peasantry, who inflicted upon them the most shocking and inhuman tortures; some were rescued from their merciless grasp by General Craufurd, and lodged in the great convent of Busaco; but numbers are believed to have perished in the most infamous manner by the infuriated peasantry, who had been deprived of every thing but life in this unjust war of aggression. The despatches of Lord Wellington particularize those officers of the British army, that were pre-eminently conspicuous for courage and ability on the day of Busaco, amongst whom the following were, perhaps, the most frequently mentioned:—Picton, Craufurd, Leith, Pack, Mackinnon, and Mac Bean, but these are not selected here from an impression that they displayed a more gallant bearing in the hour of danger, than those whose names are of necessity omitted.\* To fill up the vacancies created by the loss of so many excellent officers, ten ensigns' commissions were sent to the commander-in-chief, to be presented by him to an equal number of non-commissioned officers who had entitled themselves, in the resolute repulse of the enemy, to his approbation. This was the principle upon which Lord Wellington had recommended, to the government in England, that rewards

well, and others were sent to the hulks at Chatham, while Simon and a surgeon, who was particularly active in the plot, were committed to the Castle of Dunbarton.

\* Amongst the killed were Major Smyth of the forty-fifth, Captain Urquhart, and Lieutenant Ousely; Ensign Williams of the seventy-fourth; Lieutenant Henry Johnston of the eighty-eighth. The total number of officers killed was eleven, wounded sixty-two, one only was taken prisoner.



should be conferred, promotion granted, in our army: it had been acted upon by Napoleon, without any reference to the minister at war in Paris, and was only too long postponed by the British commander-in-chief at London. This well-timed concession, and prudent deference to his sound military judgment, completely appeased the indignation of Wellington at the imprudent and unfair distribution of patronage in our army; and, on the fourth of October he addressed Lieutenant-Colonel Torrens in language that indicated content, if not entire satisfaction: "Let us drop the subject of army promotion altogether, for I assure you I feel no interest in it, excepting with a view to the public good, in which I may be mistaken; and I should be sorry that you believed that I disapproved of anything you have done in your office. My opinions went against the system, not the mode of carrying it on."

The assault upon the British position at Busaco, being made by Massena's orders, and under his own personal direction, occasioned the more severe disappointment and chagrin: he feared to try the perilous chance again, and failing in force, he resolved to make trial of stratagem: less haughty than before his failure, he called a council of war, at which Ney, Regnier, Junot, and Freirion were present, and communicated to these experienced generals his intention of abandoning all further attempt on the position of the allies: the Portuguese traitors, D'Alorna and others, were next consulted as to the nature of the country beyond the heights, and the most practicable line of march, whereby the French might be enabled to turn the position which they had failed to force. These contemptible apostates declared their total ignorance of the topography of that district, upon which Massena ordered Montbrun, St. Croix, and Lamotte, to take strong detachments, and, going in different directions, explore the vicinity perfectly. One of the exploring parties succeeded in making prisoners two peasants, from whom, in vain, they endeavoured to obtain the required information, but, upon being brought before Massena, and threatened with torture, they reluctantly told that there

was a path across the Sierra de Caramula, leading by Boyalva to Sardao, a village on the great road between Coimbra and Oporto. As it was impossible to have turned the position of the allies by the Mondego, since they could cross that river much sooner than the enemy, and as Massena had already experienced the difficulty, and the uncertainty, of breaking through the pass of Antonio de Cantara, one course alone remained, which was to turn the left of the allies by the Mortagoa road. To cover these meditated movements, the enemy set fire to the woods in the hollows, and renewed the skirmishing with the British light troops with such energy, that a general engagement was expected. But the prospect from the lofty summit of Busaco is most extensive, and from its sudden elevation above the valley of the Mondego, the occupants of the ground around the convent could perceive, distinctly, that the movements in the enemy's camp indicated a new design.\*

\* “ From the ridge in front of our present ground, we could see them far better than the evening before; arms, appointments, uniforms, were all distinguishable. The view of the enemy's camp by night, far exceeded, in grandeur, its imposing aspect by day. Innumerable and brilliant fires illuminated all the country spread below us: while they yet flamed brightly, the shadowy figures of men and horses, and the glittering files of arms, were all visible. Here and there indeed the view was interrupted by a few dark patches of black fir, which, by a gloomy contrast, heightened the effect of the picture; but, long after the flames expired, the red embers still emitted the most rich and glowing rays, and seemed, like stars, to gem the dark bosom of the earth, conveying the sublime idea of a firmament spread beneath our feet. It was long before I could tear myself from the contemplation of this scene. Earnestly did I gaze on it: deeply did it impress me: and my professional life may never, perhaps, again present to me any military spectacle more truly magnificent. Every one was fully persuaded that the morning would bring with it a general and bloody engagement. Our line was in a constant state of preparation: the men lay with their accoutrements on, in a regular column of companies, front and rear-ranks head to head, and every man's firelock by his side. As early as three o'clock we were roused, and stood to arms at our posts,—at half past four the pickets sent word, that the enemy was getting under arms. The pickets were immediately and silently withdrawn, one staff-officer remaining on the look-out. About five he came quickly up, and, as he passed the commander of our line, Hill said, “be prepared, they are certainly coming on: a very heavy column has just advanced to the foot of the position, and you may expect an attack every moment.”—The sun shone forth, but not on a field of blood. The French columns returned to their ground, and appeared

In the afternoon of the 28th, the masses of the enemy in front being sensibly diminished, by a large body of infantry and cavalry from the left of his centre being moved to the rear, they were discerned filing off along the Mortagoa road over the mountains towards Oporto. Lord Wellington was prepared for this movement, and had previously sent orders, from the Ponte de Murcella to Colonel Trant, to march with his division of the Portuguese militia, on Sardao, in order to pre-occupy the mountain pass. Unfortunately, that officer being desired by Bacellar, then commanding in the north, to take the circuitous road by Oporto, that he might avoid S. Pedro de Sul, which was occupied by a detachment of the enemy, he did not reach Sardao until the afternoon of the twenty-eighth, at which time the advanced guard of the enemy was in possession of the place. Although Lord Wellington attached some importance to Trant's timely arrival at Sardao, that could only have been his impression on the afternoon of the twenty-eighth, for, subsequent events demonstrated the total inability of that officer, with only fifteen hundred militia, to offer even a shadow of resistance to the enemy. The activity and gallantry of Colonel Trant cannot be too highly applauded. Having obeyed the orders of Bacellar, by which his services were neutralized, he nevertheless made such gigantic strides, marching one hundred and ninety miles in nine successive days, and through a difficult country, in order to reach the field of battle in time sufficient to participate in its glory, that he arrived at his destination on the day appointed, and too late only by a few hours. Perceiving the altered circumstances of the contending armies, Trant hastened to the head-quarters at Busaco, explained his own conduct, and satisfied Lord Wellington of his ardent zeal, indefatigable exertions, and spirited efforts: then gallantly volunteered to retrace part of his march, and with his little band throw himself into the village of Boyalva, and defend to the last the pass of the Sierra de Caramula. This gallant proposal Wellington

throughout the day to busy themselves in hutting; towards evening some of them were seen moving, and at midnight, it was ascertained that they were all in motion to turn our left."—*Recollections of the Peninsula.*

could not accept; such a sacrifice would have been useless; and Trant, therefore, returned to his division, but in attempting to retire behind the Vouga, he lost one of his patrols, which was cut off by La Croix at the head of a column of horse. It has been attributed as a serious error to Massena, his neglecting to dissipate or destroy Trant's little force, so as to secure himself from being harassed on his rear, but its insignificance saved it from his power or cruelty, and the marshal was intent upon a single object, the occupation of Lisbon, which he confidently expected to enter while the British were embarking for their native shores. The enemy having evacuated the valley of the Mondego for the purpose, and with the design of turning the left of the allies, Hill recrossed the Mondego retiring by Espinal upon Thomar, while the centre and left of the allies defiled during the night of the twenty-ninth, by Decentecio, Botao, Eiros, upon Milheada; the guns were conveyed down the convent road, escorted by Craufurd's light division as far as Fornos, whence the cavalry, which had been stationed in the open country conveyed them. Thus on the thirtieth the whole army under the command of Lord Wellington, with the exception of the advanced guard, was on the left of the Mondego, by which Massena's objects "of cutting him off from Coimbra, or of forcing him to a general action on less favourable ground," were completely frustrated.

In detailing the series of operations by which he succeeded in resisting the attacks of the enemy, and obviating their designs, Lord Wellington expressed regret at the failure of the movement which Trant was expected to have accomplished; but he still assured the secretary-at-war, that although every operation had not been happily performed, little injury would result to the general issue of the contest in consequence; and if there were unfortunate events, so were there also compensations. Writing upon the affair of Busaco, he observed, "This movement has afforded me a favourable opportunity of showing the enemy the description of troops of which this army is composed; it has brought the Portuguese levies

into action with the enemy, for the first time, in an advantageous situation; and they have proved that the trouble which has been taken with them, has not been thrown away, and that they are worthy of contending in the same ranks with British troops, in this interesting cause, which they afford the best hopes of serving." The secretary at war received yet greater consolation, a more valuable relief from apprehension, in the assurance that, "all operations had been carried on with ease; the soldiers had suffered no privations, had undergone no unnecessary fatigue, there had been no loss of stores, and the army was in the highest spirits."\* The tone of the preceding despatch was calculated to raise the spirits of the minister, and place the despondents in a situation of perplexity, which would have been further increased, had they been able to peruse the contents of the self-assuring letters which Wellington addressed, at the same period, to the envoys and agents in the Peninsula. So much strengthened had he been by the conduct of the Portuguese at Busaco, that he thus wrote from Coimbra, on the thirtieth, to Mr. Charles Stuart, "*I am quite certain* the French will not get Portugal this winter, unless they receive a very large reinforcement indeed; and it is probable that they will not succeed even in that case." Again, on the third of October, he assures his brother Henry, "we shall make our retreat to the positions in front of Lisbon without much difficulty, or any loss. My opinion is, that the French are in a scrape; they are not a sufficient army for their purpose, particularly since their late loss, and that the Portuguese army have behaved so well; and they will find their retreat from this country a most difficult and dangerous operation." There is yet one brief extract, which must, from its prophetic character, be added to those confident assurances of ultimate success, which the defender of Portugal did not hesitate to advance, even while he was retreating before an army of seventy thousand veterans: "We make our retreat," observed Lord Wellington, "with great ease. This day (the fourth of October) we all halt:

\* Wellington Despatches, Vol. vi. p. 475.



and I have every thing now so clear, that I shall go no further until I see their movements."

The allies, occupying the shorter line to Coimbra, were therefore in a situation to perform all movements, and to effect a safe retreat, with the same order and regularity which had characterized their retiring on Busaco. Reaching Coimbra therefore without molestation, the infantry crossed the river at that place on the thirtieth, while the cavalry were posted in front of Fornos, to cover the retreat; here they were attacked by a large body of the enemy's horse, and driven through the village in some confusion, but, entering the great plain, they instantly rallied, drew up in line, and, with six guns of the horse artillery, awaited the enemy, who did not exhibit any further intention of attacking them. The rear-guard, after this affair, withdrew to Coimbra, and crossed the river. The enemy followed, but made no attempt to harass them until the passage had been completely effected, when they pushed into the river, as if with the object of pursuit and engagement, but they were repulsed with loss by a squadron of the sixteenth dragoons, after which, discharging their carbines across the water, they discontinued further pursuit, and returned to Coimbra, which was now left completely to their mercy. What that mercy was may be conjectured from the flight and the fears of the miserable citizens. On the fourth of August Lord Wellington had issued his celebrated proclamation, one of the political engines by which he calculated upon working the ruin of the enemy.\* The conditions were difficult to be complied with, from their absolute severity, as well as because their object was not perfectly understood; and the opposition which the new ministry in Portugal gave to Lord Wellington, contributed not only to frustrate his great designs, but to increase considerably the sufferings of the people. The jealous junta, and the intriguing characters that had been introduced into the government, would not second the orders of the British general, although his Portuguese rank entitled him to their obedience and co-operation; on the contrary, they

\* Vide page 376, Vol. ii.

talked of submission to a foreign dictator, and of the inhumanity of the orders which he would impose upon the people of Portugal; and, notwithstanding the penalties which Lord Wellington annexed to disobedience of his orders, they prohibited the inhabitants of the country, behind the Mondego, from abandoning their homes or usual occupations; thus obeying the proclamation of Massena, in preference to that of the Marshal-General of Portugal. The richest, the wisest, the least factious, and the most grateful, reposing a just confidence in the genius and ability of the British chieftain, had implicitly conformed to the rigid rules laid down for their preservation, although they could not understand how that compliance was to be made subservient to the end.

As soon as it was ascertained that the allies, although victorious, were still retiring, that the proclamation of Wellington had not originated in timidity, vanity, or ignorance, but formed part of a great design which he steadfastly pursued to its consummation, the miserable inhabitants of this splendid city, and of the glorious plains that encircle it, submitted to their fate, consented to burst the strongest ties, to abandon the dearest associations, to leave the scenes of their youth, and to bid farewell to the homes of their fathers: judging from impending events, no hope remained that they were ever again to return to the enjoyment of those feelings and possessions of which they were by a hard necessity deprived. The wealthy had fled, but those who could not imagine that their ancient allies would fulfil to the letter the stern decree of the commander, or that the invading army would be permitted to penetrate to the walls of their city, still clung fondly to their homes.

But a cry arose that the French were coming, and had actually entered their streets; then a scene of confusion—distraction—terror, was exhibited, incapable of description, although never to be forgotten by those who underwent the pain of witnessing it. The whole population rushed *en masse* along the steep and crooked ways towards the bridge, the only egress now left open to them, and there, from the contracted dimen-

sions of the causeway, not half their number being able to pass in time, those that were disappointed leaped into the shallow stream, and followed the route of the allies; "when the approach of the enemy left no choice but to fly, or to risk the punishment of death and infamy announced in the proclamation, so direful a scene ensued, that the most hardened of men could not behold it without emotion. Mothers with children of all ages, the sick, the old, the bedridden, and even lunatics, went or were carried forth, the most part with little hope and less help, to journey for days in company with contending armies. Fortunately for this unhappy multitude, the weather was fine, (for their flight was in the vintage season,) and the roads were firm, or the greatest number must have perished in the most deplorable manner."<sup>\*</sup> As the fugitives passed the water-gate, which was the city prison, the horror of the scene was increased by the screams of the prisoners, who, breaking the windows, stretched forth their bleeding arms through the grating, beseeching their countrymen to execute punishment with their own hands upon those whose crimes had merited the indignation of their country, rather than leave them to the barbarity which they expected to experience from such inveterate enemies as were then advancing. The jailor had fled, and, in the confusion, carried away the keys of the prison-house; but British officers have always been foremost, in every war, in deeds of valour as well as examples of humanity, and Captain William Campbell, an officer of the gallant Craufurd's staff, unable to endure the heart-rending cries of the wretched culprits from their prison-bars, burst open the doors, and set them all at liberty.<sup>†</sup> The road beyond the bridge passed between two precipitous hills at so short a distance from each other, that the interval was altogether insufficient for the passage of a wide column of men; into this narrow defile the fugitives passed, and closed so entirely upon the flanks of the moving

\* History of the Peninsular War.

† Dr. Southey says that the screams of the prisoners were heard by Lord Wellington, who sent his aide-de-camp, Lord March, (Duke of Richmond) to set them free, but Campbell had anticipated his benevolent intentions.



THE DUKE OF RICHMOND CHARLES LENNOX DUKE OF RICHMOND K.G.

*Richmond*





column, that the soldiers were wedged up in the hollow, the artillery impeded in its advance, and the whole became exposed to imminent danger: fortunately the enemy had no desire to make a serious attack, their only object seemed to be pushing on the British, at a leisurely pace, towards the shores of the ocean. With much difficulty, and some little violence, a passage was at length opened, and the rear-guard, with a cloud of fugitives, reached Condeixa at night-fall, a distance of only eight miles, but which they occupied the day in performing. The allies passed on through Redinha and Pombal to Leyria, which they reached on the third; during the fourth, the advanced post arrived at Pombal. Some depredations having been committed by the troops in passing through Coimbra, Condeixa, and Leyria, Lord Wellington resolved on punishing the offenders, for the sake of example, and the ends of justice: at Leyria three men, taken in the act of pillage, were hanged upon the spot, and whole regiments were forbidden to enter the villages on the route, in consequence of reports of their irregularity. In his Indian campaign Wellington observed the same respect for the property of the natives, in every district through which he led his victorious army; and whenever a rage for plunder seized a corps, he sent forward a detachment, with orders to halt in front of each village on the line, and shoot all who attempted to force an entrance until the army had marched by.\* From this just and merciful system he never departed during his splendid military life; and now he wrote from Leyria to Sir Stapleton Cotton, just such an order as he had frequently issued to his officers in India. "There is a report that there are some stragglers, Portuguese as well as English, in the villages on the right and left of the road, near where you are cantoned, and I shall be obliged to you if you will send out patrols, and take up all men of this description, and send them in here as prisoners." But these acts of insubordination were comparatively few, and the most flagrant alone were punished with severity. Sacrilege and murder were not forgiven, but such instances were happily

\* Vide p. 80. Vol. i.

rare. Indeed, Lord Wellington did not represent to the secretary that any indiscipline had arisen; on the contrary, he stated, on the fifth of October, "that, with few exceptions, the troops had continued to conduct themselves with great regularity, and had suffered no fatigue." But the fact was, that this retrograde movement of the allies was one of choice, not necessity; and had this peculiarity belonging to it, that it was made by a victorious army. Lord Wellington did not wish to risk another action; Massena had no disposition to challenge or detain him, after the fatal affair of Busaco; and the leisurely, inactive conduct of the enemy in pursuit, engendered a spirit of insubordination, a degree of confusion, and opportunity for pillage, amongst the French, that disgraced both general and army, rendering the latter more like a pursued than pursuing force.

Wherever the allies passed, from the moment of the evacuation of Coimbra, their flanks were covered with the miserable fugitives. The stupidity and indifference of the regency had totally deceived and misled them, for, had they known that the French would be permitted to pass the frontier, they would at once have submitted to the terms of the proclamation. A witness to those scenes thus feelingly describes the general feature of the distressing picture. "I feel that no powers of description can convey to the mind of my reader the afflicting scenes, the cheerless desolation, we daily witnessed on our march from the Mondego to the Lines. Wherever we moved, the mandate which enjoined the wretched inhabitants to forsake their homes, and to remove or destroy their little property, had gone before us. The villages were deserted; the churches, retreats so often yet so vainly confided in, were empty; the mountain-cottages stood open and untenanted; the mills in the valley, but yesterday so busy, were motionless and silent."

During three whole days the French army was in the utmost disorder; and although Massena had strictly prohibited the commission of any excesses at Coimbra, Junot desired his men to break into the houses which the owners had deserted; and here, it is said, provision sufficient for his army for two months was discovered, but Massena's improvidence was such,

that he neither directed that they should be stored in case of need, nor did he insist upon his soldiers abstaining from plunder. Active service is the best remedy for insubordination in an army, and, unable to control the ferocity of his followers while at rest, he put his heavy column once more in motion from Coimbra, on the fourth of October. Before his departure he made the best provision in his power for the sick and wounded, amounting to about five thousand, whom he lodged in the convent of Santa Clara : besides this great deduction from the amount of the invading army, an equal number had been put *hors de combat* at Busaco, so that the policy of Wellington was now working, with a terrible certainty, the destruction of the enemy, ten thousand being now to be subducted. Famine was also beginning to aid disease and slaughter in the field of battle : as early as the fifth, Lord Wellington mentions, in his official communication to Lord Liverpool, " From all accounts which I have received, the enemy suffer great distress. The inhabitants of the country have fled from their houses universally, carrying with them every thing they could take away that could be deemed useful to the enemy; and the habits of plunder which have so long been encouraged in the enemy's army, prevent them from deriving any general advantage from the little resources which the inhabitants may have been obliged to leave behind them." A gross error which Massena committed in pursuing the allies, was his neglecting to keep open a retreat, or to retain secure communication with his places of arms : his confidence in the belief that Wellington was only marching to the sea, the deduction of ten thousand men from his force, his contempt of the native troops, and his total ignorance of the fortified position which the British general had, to his immortal renown, prepared for the defence of Lisbon, all combined to render him indifferent to any operations of either Spaniards or Portuguese in his rear. This was an inexcusable blunder, a mistake not to be remedied, and which Massena lived to repent. Scarcely had he evacuated Coimbra, when Trant, an enterprising officer, whose spirit, gallantry, and judgment were unequalled, calling Miller and Wilson, generals in the army of

the north, to his assistance, begun to close upon the enemy's rear, and by his first movements intercepted their communication with Almeida. Continuing his dull pursuit, with little diminution of interval between the main bodies of both armies, Massena reached Pombal on the fourth, where he drove in the pickets of the allies, and moved with an accelerated pace on Leyria. The approach to this place was by a road that intersected, at right angles, a succession of deep ravines. In one of these, a squadron of British cavalry, commanded by Captain Cocks, was posted; and when the head of the enemy's column came in front of the defile, he charged it with so much effect, as to check all further advance. The resolution of this officer succeeded in delaying the enemy, until the arrival of a troop of artillery, and a brigade of cavalry headed by General Anson, whose united efforts restrained the enemy so seriously, that the allies were enabled to evacuate Leyria without any confusion or inconvenience. The loss of the enemy was by no means insignificant, and that of the British included nine officers and forty men. From Leyria the retrogression was continued: Hill's corps proceeded by Thomar and Santarem; the centre of the army took the route of Batalha and Rio Major, and the left by Alcobaca\* and Obidos.

Communication with Almeida had been cut off by the courage and activity of Trant, who would have harassed the

\* "The monks of Alcobaca performed on this occasion towards the British officers, their last act of hospitality. Most of them had already departed from the magnificent and ancient abode, where the greater part of their lives had been spent peacefully and inoffensively, to seek an asylum where they could; the few who remained prepared dinner for their guests in the great hall, and in the apartments reserved for strangers, after which they brought them the keys, and desired them to take whatever they liked, for they expected that every thing would be destroyed by the French. Means were afforded them, through General Mackinnon's kindness, for securing some things which they could not otherwise have removed; and then the most venerable edifice in Portugal for its antiquity, its history, its literary treasures, and the tombs which it contained, was abandoned to an invader who delighted in defiling whatever was held sacred, and in destroying whatever a generous enemy, from the impulse of feeling and the sense of honour, would carefully have preserved."—*Southey's History of the Peninsular War*.

French army during their route from Coimbra, had his force been of any considerable amount: he now, however, resolved upon an act of boldness, an enterprise of the most daring character, the success of which must have rested altogether upon the heroism of the leader; this was, to surprise Coimbra.

The devastated condition of the country to the north of Milheada prevented the timely arrival of Wilson and Millar, and Trant was aware that delay would be fatal to his design; without waiting for their arrival, therefore, he advanced rapidly towards Coimbra, and, falling in with a detachment of the enemy at Fornos, he succeeded in capturing the whole, a few excepted, who fell in offering a gallant resistance. This success, however encouraging, was not required to stimulate Trant's followers to the boldest exploits, the heroism of their leader was the magic spell that nerved their arms. Now, as he approached the city, he called to him a chosen band of cavalry, and directing them to dash into the streets, make, at full gallop, for the bridge at the further end of the town, of which they were to take possession, and so cut off communication between the French army and the garrison of Coimbra. This exploit was performed as might have been expected from the soldiers of such an officer; and, although a volley of musketry was poured upon them as they flew rapidly past the convent of Santa Clara, they reached the bridge with little or no loss. And now the infantry arrived, and returned the fire of the garrison, and of the convalescents, who had undertaken to defend the hospital, and for one hour the French continued to make a faint show of resistance, after which they proposed to capitulate: Trant, however, neither adopted nor accepted any half-measures, and assuring them that their instant and discretionary surrender alone could save them, from either a more honourable death in fighting to the last, or a fate much less so, and which he should deplore, at the hands of the infuriated Portuguese, the garrison surrendered, and were protected according to the promise given by Colonel Trant: the unfortunate convalescents held out too long for the impatience of the citizens, and their hospital being taken by storm, few of them were reserved to perish



by the slow process of disease in their cells of sickness, being butchered inhumanly by the rabble. This last act, so disgraceful to the character of the inhabitants, was to be expected, but cannot on any grounds be palliated: the exertions of Trant in the cause of humanity, as a generous enemy, were incessant; and although partisan writers, who never fail to defame the British military character in this war, whenever the least pretence could be discovered for doing so, have endeavoured to affix a stigma on this gallant soldier's honour for having permitted this cruel slaughter, it has been proved, by letters of thanks addressed to him by the French officers of the garrison who became his prisoners, that his exertions to restrain the Portuguese were of the most meritorious character. It should be stated, not in extenuation, but as one of the causes of the outrage committed upon the prisoners, that, of Trant's militia-men eight hundred were natives of Coimbra, and, when they passed through the streets where they saw their doors had been broken open, their homes pillaged, their wives and daughters driven to perish in the mountains, or forcibly carried away by ruthless invaders—these, if palliation be admissible, form the plea of forgiveness which may be offered in their defence. Additional, convincing, and honourable testimony to the humanity of Trant's conduct, and his observance of the laws of war, is the fact of his having marched the prisoners, four thousand in number, to Oporto, from a conviction of their insecurity at Coimbra; and he felt it necessary also that he should accompany them in person, otherwise the chances were against their ever reaching their destination. Millar and Wilson now came up, to wonder at and imitate the enterprise and bravery of their co-adjutor, and, fixing their quarters at Coimbra, took possession of military stores and provisions of considerable value.

As Massena moved along, the acquisitions he had made fell gradually away, lopped off by the persevering labours of a spirited and able officer, who tracked his footsteps;—he was cut off from Almeida first, then Coimbra fell back into the hands of his enemies, “by an exploit,” says Colonel Napier, “as daring and hardy as any performed by a partisan officer

during the war, and which convicted Massena of bad generalship, and shook his plan of invasion to its base." Wellington alone told his true condition, which was, "that Massena possessed in Portugal only the space his army occupied."

Massena's negligence of all advantages in the rear of his army was analogous to his inactivity in the pursuit of the enemy; he seemed to feel that the latter were unimportant to his design, and that the allies must of necessity go forward, and therefore the less loss he sustained in following them, the greater force would remain for the occupancy of Lisbon. This inertness allowed some leisure to the commander-in-chief for attending to the harassing communications received from the regency; in reply to one of which, he alludes to the extraordinary secrecy with which his measures for the defence of Lisbon had been conducted, and shows how entirely his own is the glory of defeating the Prince of Essling. It was on the sixth of October, at a short distance only from the celebrated Lines, and when the main body had reached Campo Mayor, that his lordship thus wrote to Mr. Charles Stuart: "I do not know what people feel at Lisbon—but we at the army entertain but little doubt of success. The Bishop and Souza would do more harm than good in the north, where we are carrying on operations of great importance. But I hope the letter, which I enclose, will bring these gentry to their senses, or I shall certainly carry into execution the threat which it contains. *I believe you and the government do not know where the Lines are.* Those round Lisbon are not those in which I shall place the army, but those extending from Torres Vedras to the Tagus. All I shall ask from the government is tranquillity in Lisbon, and provisions for their own troops; and as God Almighty does not give 'the race to the swift or the battle to the strong,' and I have fought battles enough to know, that *under the best arrangements*, the result of any one is not certain—I only beg that they will adopt preparatory arrangements to take out of the enemy's way those persons who would suffer if they were to fall into his hands." This last paragraph, which is a repetition of his well-known complaint against fortune, for never granting to him an advantage which

he had not secured by his genius, he introduced as a post-script to a still stronger and more imperative letter which he wrote to the same civil officer on the following day: "I beg that you will do me the favour to inform the regency, and above all the principal Souza, that as his majesty and the prince regent have intrusted me with the command of their armies, and exclusively with the conduct of the military operations, I will not suffer them, or any body else, to interfere with them: that I know best where to station my troops, and where to make a stand against the enemy,\* and I shall not alter a system framed upon mature consideration, upon any suggestion of theirs. I am responsible for what I do, and they are not: and I recommend to them to look to the measures for which they are responsible, which I long ago recommended to them, namely, to provide for the tranquillity of Lisbon, and for the food of the army, and of the people, while the troops shall be engaged with the enemy. As for principal Souza, I beg you will tell him from me, that I have no satisfaction in transacting the business of this country since he has been a member of the government; that being embarked in a course of military operations, of which I hope to see the successful termination, I shall continue to carry them on to their end; but that no power on earth shall induce me to remain in the Peninsula for one moment after I shall have obtained his majesty's leave to resign my charge, if principal Souza is to remain either a

\* The most remarkable illustration of Wellington's military prescience which occurred during his eventful command, was at Busaco. When he took up his position, saying, "the enemy will attack me here," every officer in his own army was of a contrary opinion, believing that it would have been little less than madness in an enemy to assault a position so completely impregnable; it was also the opinion of Massena, that Lord Wellington did not seriously mean to occupy that abrupt precipice in his front, as a military station,—nor did Massena intend to have attacked the heights of Busaco when first he perceived that they were occupied; so that, while the British generals could not believe that Massena would attack them, nor Massena himself foresee that he would be induced to attempt it; yet, so great a master of human nature was the British hero, that he calculated upon the impetuosity of the French national character alone, when he declared, "that they would make an attack upon him at Busaco:" the enemy themselves, at the same moment, would have pronounced this to be false, but they soon after fatally verified his power of prophecy.

member of the government, or to continue at Lisbon. Either he must quit the country, or I shall; and should I be obliged to go, I will take care that the world, in Portugal at least, and the prince regent, shall be made acquainted with my reasons. From the letter of the third instant, which I had received from Don Miguel Forjaz, I had hoped that the government were satisfied with what I had done, and intended to do; and that, instead of endeavouring to render all further defence fruitless, by disturbing the minds of the populace at Lisbon, they would have done their duty by adopting measures to secure the tranquillity of the town. But I suppose, that, like other weak individuals, they add duplicity to their weakness; and that their expressions of approbation, and even gratitude, were intended to convey censure. I request you to communicate this letter to the regency, and to transmit it to the secretary of state for foreign affairs."

The determination evinced in this letter was necessary for the maintenance of his own authority; the asperity was occasioned by the infamous intrigues which these ungrateful miscreants conducted, for the removal of Lord Wellington, and substitution of the Duke of Brunswick. Had their dislike, disapproval, or recommendation been overt, they would have had nothing to dread, or encounter, but the calm reasonings of the great soldier, in defence of his gigantic plans for the salvation of their country; but their opposition was mean, therefore they were ashamed of it; and managed clandestinely, which exposed them to deserved insult when discovered. To accomplish the disgrace of the only man who had led their wild levies in disciplined lines against the enemy, they disobeyed his orders, and secretly lent themselves to the frustration of his projects. They delayed the enforcement of the proclamation, by which the sufferings of the people were multiplied, and the inconvenience sustained by the retiring army very much augmented; in addition to the creation of this impediment to the military operations, the government purposely neglected to seize the boats at Santarem before the arrival of the enemy, although repeatedly urged by Lord Wellington



to do so, an event which his lordship said "he considered to be the greatest misfortune which could happen to the army, and which might oblige them to change their position, and take up their second line. "The French," said he, "will either arm these boats, and operate upon Hill's flank, in which case the strength of Admiral Berkeley's flotilla, and the support given to it by larger vessels, would become an object for his consideration ; or, they will use them to form a bridge, and establish themselves upon the island in the Tagus, across Hill's right flank ; or, they will use them for a bridge, or other communication, with Mortier, whom they will have it in their power to draw to their support, either on this side or on the other side of the river. In whichever way the boats may be used, their loss is a serious misfortune, and at all events the whole of the Alemtejo lies at the mercy of the enemy !! The government may congratulate themselves upon this notable arrangement: they would not adopt in time any one measure to remove what might be useful or necessary to the enemy ; they neglected their peculiar business, to occupy themselves with what did not concern them ; and there is not an arrangement of any description, which depended upon them or their officers, which has not failed. At this moment the enemy are living upon grain found close to the Lines, and they grind it into flour with the mills in our sight, which the government were repeatedly pressed to order the people to render useless, and which could have been rendered useless, only by taking away the sails." Souza and the intriguers would have stabbed the reputation of the great man in secret, upon whom they dared not to make an open assault : so that this apparent submission to his will, and approval of his policy, were the immediate results of his declaration.

As the retrogressive movement continued, some slight skirmishes took place between the cavalry that covered the march and the enemy's advance, at Leyria, Alcoentre, and Quinta de los Torres. The heavy falls of rain had broken up the roads much, and were otherwise a serious impediment to the advance of the cavalry, obliging them to bivouack every night, by which



much delay was occasioned. On the eighth, however, Sir Stapleton Cotton reached Alcoentre, and established his quarters in the village: he was not long in possession when the shouts of a rapidly approaching squadron, which had driven in his pickets at Rio Mayor, and the sounds of an irregular fire of musketry, told that danger was near, and in a few minutes the enemy dashed gallantly into the village, and took six pieces of artillery which they found there. This was but a fleeting gleam of glory, for a squadron of the tenth, recovering from their surprise, instantly charged down upon them, sabred numbers, drove the survivors through the streets before them, out into the open country, and recovered the guns.

Irritated by disappointment and defeat, the third regiment of French hussars returned to the attack next morning, and having displayed the utmost gallantry by their assault upon the British, withdrew without obtaining any advantage, but with the loss of many valuable men. While these vain interruptions continued to be repeated, with consequences uniformly more fatal to the enemy than the allies, the latter began, unconsciously, to enter the Lines; this movement was made in three great divisions—the central by Sobral, the left by Torres Vedras, while Hill's corps, which arrived from Thomar at Villa Franca on the tenth, occupied the right by Alhandra. "These movements all took place on the eleventh, and on the following morning every division occupied the ground marked out for it, and all were in readiness, at a moment's notice, to assume the posts which they might be required to defend."

General Paek's brigade, and the light division, were exposed to a surprise at Alemquer, from which the courage and discipline of their men rescued them. Reaching Alemquer on the ninth, owing to the inclemency of the weather, Craufurd put his men under shelter, gave no orders as to resuming their march, posted no guards, sent out no patrols, nor took any of the usual precautions, although the town lay in a hollow, and, therefore, peculiarly favourable for any sudden attack from an enemy. This want of caution alarmed some of the junior officers, and induced them to observe, attentively, the

hill in front; nor were they long detained on this their voluntary watch, before a squadron of dragoons was observed on the verge of the summit. Soon the alarm was spread, and the troops in a few moments were under arms, and at their posts. The position which they occupied, however, was exposed, and the line of retreat lay through a narrow ancient archway; and as the column of the enemy seemed to increase every instant, Craufurd desired his ranks to break, and to re-form beyond the archway. This rash order was the prelude to disaster: rushing at the word of command towards the contracted entrance, like the devotees on the Ganges when our satellite is at the full, numbers were crushed and trampled to death in the entrance; and the loss of life would have been still more deplorable, had not the same prudent officers who had kept a careful look-out upon the enemy, detained the steadiest of the companies in their ranks, until the first rush of this ill-judged order had terminated as it might.

The enemy perceiving the disorder, galloped through the high street of the village, and attacked the rear of the British; but such was the steadiness of the division, that they repulsed them with loss, and covered effectually the disorderly movements of their front. The risk encountered in skirmishing with the enemy's advanced guard was of little comparative importance, to the difficulties which the affair of Alemquer had nearly exposed the division. Craufurd was to have marched by Cadafaes to the position of Aruda, but, being thrown out by the affair of Alemquer, mistook the road, and the division moved on Sobral, thus leaving the Lines open to the enemy for several miles. Of this fact General Hill became informed, and fearing for the security of the second line, he fell back upon Alveiria; but learning soon after that his information was but partially correct, and that the error had been rectified by a flank march of the division along the foot of the lines to Aruda, he returned to his position at Alhandra. Massena, still in utter ignorance of the designs of Wellington, but rendered cautious by the experience, which this retreat gave him, of the quality of his forces, preserved a regular interval between both

armies by moving *pari passu* with the allies, but when the latter entered the lines, and came to a stand, his advanced guard was necessarily brought into contact with the outposts of the British. A large division of infantry, the advanced guard of the eighth corps, moved upon Sobral, and dislodged Sir Brent Spencer from that town, who fell back upon the great redoubt of Sobral. The despatch which brought to England the account of the allies having entered the lines, concluded with these memorable words, "As I conceive that I have reason to hope for success, I propose to bring matters to extremities, and to contend for the possession and independence of Portugal in one of the strongest positions in this part of the country. The Marquess de la Romana marched to Campo Mayor on the eighth, to join this army, and share our fortune." It is a remarkable feature in Lord Wellington's despatches, official letters, and correspondence with private friends, that while he was in the midst of difficulties, harassed, almost tortured, by the wretched, unstable, provisional governments of Spain and Portugal, vilified by the despondents at home, and continually cautioned by ministers against rashly risking the lives of the British under his control, that, in no one instance does an expression of doubt, distrust, or failure find its way into his correspondence. He appears never to have calculated upon the possibility of defeat; and this tone, in the delivery of orders, is known to have produced a most powerful effect.

The party that entered Sobral, surprised at the disappearance of the British on their advance, now hesitated as to the more advisable route, and, meeting with a peasant, they endeavoured to ascertain from him whither the allies had moved. These interrogatories obtained for the enemy the astounding truth, of which they had not before the most remote knowledge or conception, namely, that the British commander-in-chief had been for several months engaged in fortifying the summits of a mountain-chain, extending from Alhandra on the Tagus to Torres Vedras on the sea; that the allies were now, in full force, posted on those heights, that their retreat was a mere mockery of the French, performed by the genius of the British chief; and,

that the French might, from the spot on which this intelligence was communicated, obtain a confirmation of its truth by only looking towards the heights of Zibreira and Aruda.

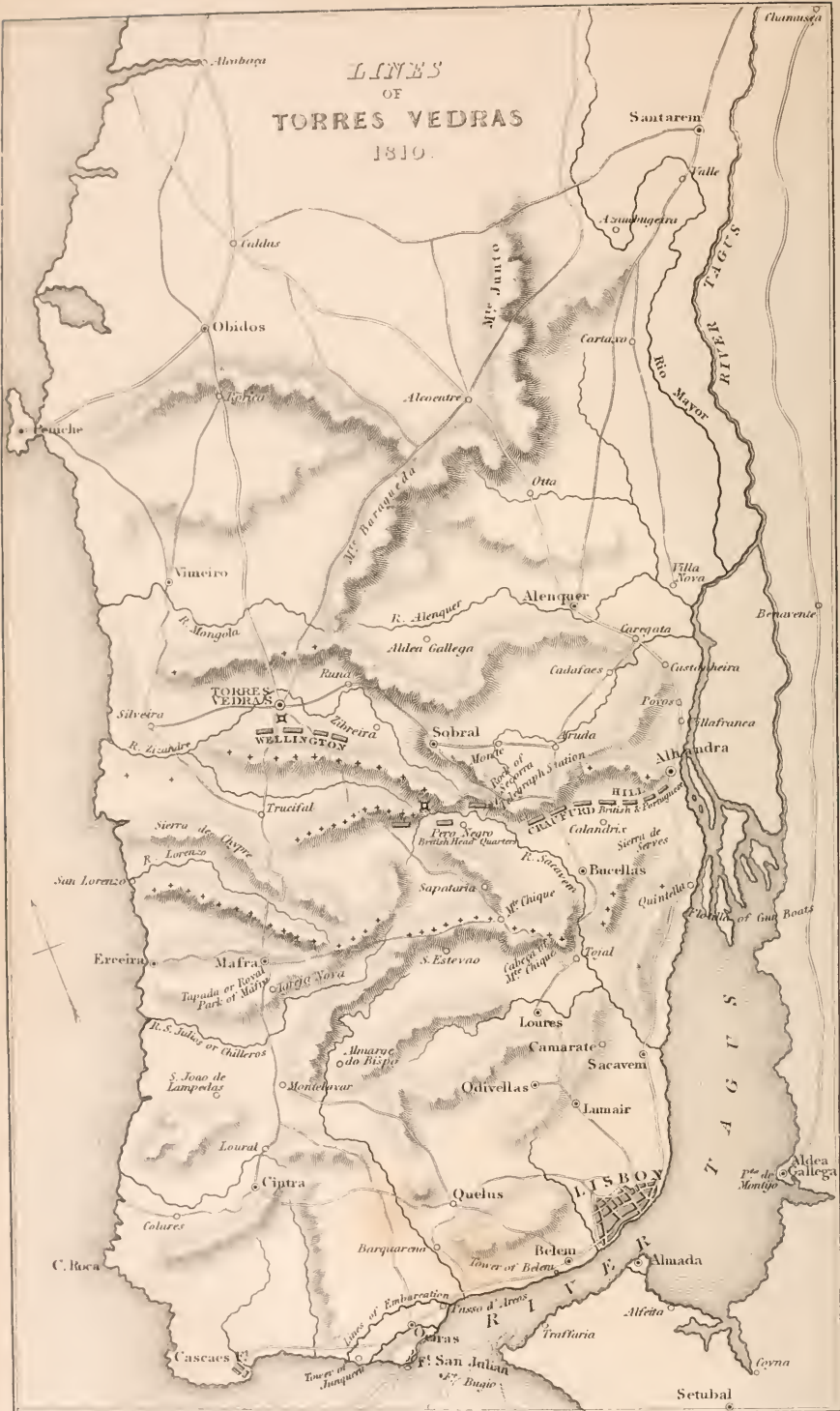
Here then, at last, the British Fabius triumphed over his own ungrateful country—over the favourite general of the great Napoleon—over the stupid, infatuated governments of Spain and Portugal—over the bright genius even of his own brave officers! When the grateful testimonials, which wondering nations, in after-times, shall raise to the memory of him who saved all Europe from the degrading tyranny of a splendid monarch, but a remorseless conqueror, shall have fallen to decay, the rude heights of Torres Vedras will yet survive, to testify the fact, that such things were, and be Wellington's greatest, best, and most enduring monument. The corps to which the intelligence of the construction of the Lines was first communicated, are said to have fallen back some paces, as one body, upon its announcement. When Massena received the appalling news he stood for a while motionless, and totally confused: the dreadful truth now burst upon him, that he was unequal to cope with the master-mind of Wellington: he had been taught, by his imperial master, to despise the weakness of the allies—but he was not reminded, that the deficiency of their numbers was amply compensated by the great talents of their leader.

As he paused and pondered over his fortunes, and analyzed the movements and manœuvres of the British, he found that Wellington had never fought unless he had the advantage in position, and that by his military skill he had always been enabled to choose his ground. This had been his policy at Talavera and Busaco, on both which occasions the issues proved that his confidence in his troops was not misplaced, and that it was utterly impossible to dislodge a British army from such positions as the British general uniformly selected for them. Less prospect, therefore, of success remained before Torres Vedras; although some parts of the lines had been disgarnished of troops, while the divisions were entering, Massena could not have taken advantage of it by a sudden attack, because he knew nothing of such entrenchments; and, against such natural strength, such perfect





# LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS 1810.



fortification, such indomitable troops, and after the sanguinary repulse from the brow of Busaco, what hope of success could be cherished in attacking the allies in their new position? The eagle essayed to wing its flight to the heights, but, ere it flapped its heavy wing, the "leopard" placed his talons on its back, and pinioned it to the ground. During three days Massena remained in sullen mood, at first incredulous, thenponding—fortune had deserted him, and proved her inferiority to virtue. Awaking for a moment from this reverie, he sent out reconnoitering parties, to ascertain whether any hope of advancing yet remained. On the 14th, a detachment of infantry, supported by artillery, attacked a party of the seventy-first regiment, which was then headed by Colonels Cadogan and Reynell; but this little band charged them with so much gallantry, that they fled into the town of Sobral. The whole of the eighth corps d'armée, however, arriving on the evening of that day, Sir Brent Spencer's division was withdrawn from its advanced position to Zibreira, about one mile in the rear. With this brilliant affair, in which Cadogan received a sabre cut which passed through his Highland bonnet, all attempts at reconnaissance terminated. Experience had taught Massena that the British were not to be subdued by the species of warfare hitherto attempted, so he now quietly disposed his three corps d'armée in bivouac.

The celebrated works, improperly denominated "The Lines of Torres Vedras," consisted of three distinct ranges of defence, constructed across a tongue of land included between the Tagus and the ocean, and having Lisbon seated at its extremity. Of these, the first, which extended forty miles in length, and obeyed the windings of the mountain-chain, connected Alhandra on the Tagus with the embouchure of the little river Zizandre; the direct distance between these points being twenty-nine miles: the second, which preserved an average interval from the former of about eight miles, formed a chain of posts from Quintella on the Tagus to San Lorenzo on the sea; the extent of this line was about twenty-four miles: and the third, or innermost line, constructed

with a view to cover a forced embarkation, was between Passo d'Arcos on the Tagus, and the tower of Junquera on the coast. Within the third, or shortest line, an entrenched camp was formed, to protect an embarkation still more effectually, if the allies should be reduced to that extremity, and subjected to unexpected delay or interruption: this last place of retreat rested on Fort San Julian, a work of considerable strength, with lofty ramparts, and deep-cut ditches, which defied all attempts at escalade; while provision was made at the rear, for the defence of the whole army within, and, during embarkation, by a guard of even limited numbers, if only possessed of resolution.

The first lines of defence were not originally constructed with any idea of permanent occupation; they were intended as a place for resting, and rallying, and re-forming, in order that the allies might move thence with more complete system and regularity, into their position in the second or principal lines, and take up their ground there; but Wellington had contrived to protract the campaign, by hovering around the besieged places, and prolonging the operations of the enemy, by affecting to despise the solicitations of Spain and Portugal to put the issue to the hazard of a battle, and by patiently enduring the ingratitude of his own countrymen; thus, while so many of the summer's suns were setting on Massena inactive, the defences of the first lines of Torres Vedras were daily acquiring such strength and perfection, that their author considered them sufficiently secure for every purpose. The first lines of defence\* consisted of five principal positions. The first on the right extended from Alhandra to the entrance of the valley of Calandrix, a distance of five miles. This was a lofty, rugged ridge, the brow of which, in the only assailable part, had been scarped to a height of about twenty feet, and thirteen redoubts were constructed along its length. Here Hill fixed his head-

\* Vide Wellington Despatches, 20th October, 1809; Memorandum for Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, commanding Royal Engineers; also, Memoranda by Colonel Jones, in Napier's History of the Peninsular War; the Marquis of Londonderry's Narrative, vols. i. and ii.; and Robinson's Life of Sir Thomas Picton.

quarters, having a force under his command consisting of both British and Portuguese: the Tagus rolled its smooth deep course at the foot of this fortified hill, and a flotilla of gun-boats was moored between the island and the shore, flanking the allied position. The second position was of nearly equal length, and was formed by two projecting hills, between which lay the town of Aruda. Three redoubts commanded the approach; but the commander-in-chief placed still greater confidence in the gallantry of Craufurd and his light troops, to whom the defence was entrusted, than in the strength of the military works at this particular point. The central position, Monte Agraça, was the summit of a conspicuous eminence; from which every point in the first lines was distinctly visible. Separated from Aruda on the right by a deep ravine, and hanging over the valley and village of Zibreira on the left, the town of Sobral lay at its base in front. The summit of this great mountain-mass was occupied by one immense redoubt, mounting twenty-five heavy guns, while three minor works, with nineteen guns, were clustered around it. The face of the hill was scarped, and all access made impracticable; and, as the great battery completely covered Sobral, the strong castle at that place commanded the great Lisbon road, rendering approach by that line utterly hopeless. Pack's brigade, two thousand strong, garrisoned this position; the reverse of which was taken up by General Leith and the fifth division. A rough and well-defined extent of ground between Zibreira and Torres Vedras, watered by the Zizandre, was at first left undefended; but the rains having set in, the river having swollen and overflowed its banks, it was deemed advisable to make this a position, and here the fresh troops just arrived from England and from Cadiz were placed, under the immediate command of Lord Wellington. On the rock of Secorra a telegraph was erected, by means of which constant correspondence was maintained with every part of the Lines, and the British head-quarters were fixed at Pero Negro, adjacent to the telegraph station. At Torres Vedras, from which these great works have derived the name by which



they are henceforth to be remembered, an immense redoubt, mounting forty guns, was constructed, and every approach, however insignificant, was guarded by a smaller work; forts crowned every eminence from the great redoubt to the sea-shore, and the Zizandre, which had totally forsaken its banks, and assumed the dignity of a spacious lake, forbade all attempt at approach for a length of many miles. Along the foot of the hills, and in front of the lines, there was a paved road, after the Roman manner, continued from Albandra, by Aruda, Sobral, and Runa, to Torres Vedras. Such were the outer lines of Torres Vedras, designed by Lord Wellington in October, 1809, and strengthened much beyond his original intention by acquirements, natural and artificial, which the inactivity of the enemy had enabled him to make.

The second lines, where Wellington actually proposed to plant the British standard, and defend it by British fortitude, included three grand positions: the first of seven miles in extent was between Mafra and the embouchure of the San Lorenzo. This length was occupied by steep and broken hills, scarped wherever there was necessity, but in general presenting mural cliffs, broken craggs, and deep ravines. Each salient point was fortified; and, to secure the road between Cintra and Erceira, a secondary post, in the rear, was strongly secured. The position on the right, in the second lines, was the immediate vicinity of the Tapada or royal park of Mafra. The Sierra de Chypre, in front of Mafra, was totally impregnable, being thickly covered with redoubts; and the defile of Mafra was guarded by fourteen redoubts constructed with the best skill and caution of two able British engineers. Bucellas was the third point of importance in these Lines; between it and the Tapada rises the huge mass of the Cabeça or Monte Chique, blocking up the whole centre of the Lines, and overtopping all other summits in the Lisbon range; this vast hill, connected with Mafra by a series of forts, was further secured by difficult ground in front, by a stronger range of heights behind, which were unapproachable by carrying either the Sierra de Chypre, or the pass of the Cabeça de Monte Chique: but the



works on the latter commanded all approaches, and the heights themselves were naturally impregnable; and so completely secure was the Cabeça considered in its own precipitous strength, that it had not been thought necessary to apply to art for any further aid, than by destroying one narrow mule-road. The Sierra de Serves, a cluster of inaccessible rocks, arose on the right of Bucellas, and filled up a space of two miles in extent, then, laying aside its rude character, the surface sloped gradually down into the level of Quintella on the Tagus. It was here that the ingenuity of Colonel Fletcher was displayed in the most conspicuous manner, by the system of fortification employed to strengthen this too vulnerable point. Water-cuts, retrenchments, and numerous redoubts, were formed; yet this point remained the most defenceless of the whole. The first Lines were pierced by five lines of road, one at Alhandra, two at Sobral, and the same number at Torres Vedras; two of these uniting at Cabeça, reduced the number that passed the second lines to four, namely at Quintella, Bucellas, Monte Chique, and Mafra. Few positions can be conceived much stronger by nature, as military defensive ground, none of equal extent has ever been so securely fortified. Had the enemy entered the first lines, they would have had to fight the allies on positions selected for them twelve months previously by their general, and where defeat would have been inevitable; besides, although the first lines might have been forced, it appears impossible that the second ever could have been entered. Lord Wellington accomplished more than he designed; his object was to bring the enemy inside the first lines, and there fight them at an incalculable advantage; but he had so strengthened his defences, that he was enabled to defeat them without fighting, and to choose, notwithstanding much personal suffering, the merciful part. The Lines of Torres Vedras extended fifty miles, included one hundred and fifty forts, and mounted six hundred pieces of artillery, yet the movements of the great force, which was employed to man them, were free and unrestrained, the commander being able, in the space of a few hours, to concentrate the greater part of the allies at any given point in his lines. Not so his enemies;

their movements, on the contrary, were crippled and disjointed; the huge Monte Junto sent out a lofty ridge, the Baragueda, that extended nearly to Torres Vedras, and as this giant stood in the very centre of Massena's field of operations, it became absolutely necessary to choose on which side of the great arm of the mountain he should pitch his camp. It would have been unwise to have moved his army across the ridge occasionally, as the ground was difficult, and the experiment dangerous, the redoubt of Monte Agraca completely commanding the ridge, whence the British could pour down upon his flank; so that although delay, accident, circumstances, had probably saved the army of Massena from certain death within the first lines of Torres Vedras, outside of these defences they were not free from insuperable difficulties. Lord Wellington's care for the safety of the Portuguese extended further than the repulsion of the enemy, or relief of Lisbon from the intrusion of the French; he had caused Peniche, Setuval, and Palmela to be fortified, as places of refuge for those of the Portuguese who should prefer voluntary exile to the arbitrary government of some military ruler; and he had never contemplated a necessity for deserting Peniche, on the contrary, he calculated upon retaining that fortress permanently, under any circumstances.

The separate positions which constituted the three great Lines, by which the triangular and mountainous area included between the Tagus and the sea was fortified, being thus rather minutely described, it will perhaps contribute to the clearer comprehension of Lord Wellington's vast plan of defence, to name the officers appointed to the command of each position, fortress, or redoubt. To the general scholar, or mere student of history, it may possibly form a subject of little moment to investigate the reasons why Craufurd was placed at one battery, or brave Picton directed to hold another, but the military mind will discover new beauties in the Wellington designs at Torres Vedras, in an analysis of the characters of the respective general officers; and the study of their biography will demonstrate the fact, that the commander-in-chief posted each individual where his peculiar talent would be most

likely to correspond with the peculiar difficulties of each respective situation. The extreme right of the external line was the most remote from head-quarters, and the most exposed to the assaults of the enemy; there Hill was stationed, who not only had for some time previously a separate command, but on whose calm courage the firmest reliance might be placed. On Hill's left was the division of Craufurd; this was a situation where the efforts of science were believed to have been employed in vain, but where such oft-tried bravery as that of Craufurd might calculate safely upon arresting the transit of ten times his own numbers. Pack's brigade was honoured with the defence of the great redoubt above Sobral; Sir Brent Spencer garrisoned the heights over Zibreira; while that loyal and gallant ancient Briton, Picton, watched a deep ravine on Spencer's left, not unlike in character, and not inferior in importance, to the defile of San Antonio de Cantara at Busaco, where he first established his imperishable name as a splendid example of devotion to his country—Picton was the Fluellen of the Georgian era; Cole's division continued the line of the allies along the mountain's brow as far as the Lisbon road; and Campbell's corps formed the extreme left of the army. The comprehensive mind of the British chieftain provided for the general safety of the natives, by the complete fortification of a superficies of one thousand two hundred and fifty square miles; every salient rock or available point in which, was garnished with ordnance, and garrisoned with troops. The control and arrangement of these means and masses, and the almost sole dictatorship of Portugal, these, even these extensive duties did not include the sum of Wellington's arduous labours; but the tide of the Tagus supported on its heaving waves a numerous fleet, and his country, draining itself of all resources that could be spared, had sent to his aid a fine corps of marines; these new resources he now united in operation with the municipal guards of Lisbon, the Portuguese heavy artillery, and the Estremaduran Ordenanzas in a powerful reserve, covering every square mile, from the outer lines to the fort of St. Julian, with a guard of armed men. In addition to this great organized force,

Wellington had influence sufficient over the honest and sensible judgment of Romana, to induce him to co-operate in his plan of operations; and this brave officer, with a deserved contempt for the prohibitory mandate of his wretched government, crossed the Tagus at Aldea Gallega on the 19th of Oct. and took up a position behind the Monte Agraça at Exara de los Cavalleros—thus “not less than one hundred and eighty thousand fighting men received rations within the lines; more than seventy thousand being regular troops, completely disposable, and unfettered by the works.”

With regard to the security of the works, independent of the actual strength of the force which Lord Wellington had concentrated within them, Lord Londonderry observes, “In fortifying a line such as that of Torres Vedras, for the support of a large army in the field, the ordinary practice is to construct batteries, and other *points d'appui*, which shall present as imposing a front as possible to the attacking force, but shall remain open and utterly defenceless from the rear. In the present instance, however, the redoubts thrown up were not so much field-works, as regular castles, many of which were capable of containing several hundreds, whilst one required no fewer than three thousand men to form its garrison. These were built as if each had been intended to stand a siege of six weeks, at the most moderate computation: they were placed in situations which rendered them quite as defensible from one side as from another; and they were all, to a certain extent at least, independent of those near them, and well sheltered from their fire, should they fall into the hands of the enemy. It was Lord Wellington's design to garrison these posts chiefly with the militia and least disciplined regiments, whilst he kept the whole of the British troops, and the *élite* of the Portuguese, free and unencumbered, as the circumstances might require. I cannot,” adds his lordship, “proceed further without desiring to draw the attention of my brother soldiers, in a particular manner, not only to this point, but to the whole plan of the campaign; because I am sure that a British army never participated in one better adapted to instruct it in the art of manœu-



vering on a great scale, nor consequently so well calculated to make efficient officers of those who shared in it, or are disposed to take the trouble of studying it as it deserves."\*

While Wellington was labouring to deserve success, a combination of circumstances contributed to the consummation of his vast designs: amongst these, the retirement of Mortier across the Morena, and the expedition of Soult to press the siege of Cadiz, were not the least important; they widened the distance between the French corps simultaneously with Wellington's labours to concentrate the allies. Massena having recovered from the stupor and reverie that followed the sudden disclosure of the designs of his powerful antagonist, devoted his best energies, and employed all the skill and experience he possessed, in making a careful reconnoissance. Alhandra, it was true, he dared not assail, but the defiles of Aruda and Calandrix invited further inquiry. The passage of the Calandrix would enable him to turn Hill's left, and penetrate, possibly, the second lines, but closer examination discovered that the allies were still busied in strengthening that point by abattis and redoubts. Towards Aruda, then, he turned his view, and tried every art to induce Craufurd to declare his real strength, but the genuine courage of that fine soldier enabled him to play with Massena's skirmishers from Aruda, which he occupied as an advanced post, while his men were engaged in performing prodigies of labour to secure their position effectually. The description given of this performance, in the History of the Peninsular war, is almost incredible, partaking more of the character of ancient Roman achievements than of modern warfare.† "Across the ravine on the left a loose stone wall, sixteen feet thick and forty feet high, was raised; and across the great valley of Aruda a double line of abattis was drawn: not composed, as is usual, of the limbs of trees, but of *full-grown oaks and chesnuts, dug up with all their roots and branches*, dragged by main force, for several hundred yards, and then reset and crossed, so that no human strength could

\* Narrative of the Peninsular War, vol. ii. p. 19.

† Colonel Napier's History.



break through. Breast-works, at convenient distances, to defend this line of trees, were then cast up; and along the summits of the mountain, for a space of nearly three miles, including the salient points, other stone walls, six feet high and four in thickness, with banquettes, were built; so that a good defence could have been made against the attacks of twenty thousand men." In placing General Craufurd at the weakest point of the lines, Lord Wellington understood perfectly the character of the man; and, although he had more than once perilled the safety of his division, he was not deficient in excellent judgment; his resources were considerable, his enthusiasm unbounded, his bravery never exceeded. Thus, the second reconnoissance was even more discouraging than the first: the vale of the Zizandre appeared to offer some better opportunity for an attack, being unguarded in front, but the flanks and rear were fortified so strongly that it would inevitably prove a valley of death to an army that was rash enough to enter it.

All his resources were now exhausted, the cup was totally drained, even hope seemed to have fled from the camp of the invaders; Massena, therefore, resolved upon sitting down patiently before these fortified mountains, and awaiting the result of accident, time, or revived energies. Disposing his forces between Sobral and Villa Franca, in a manner that menaced the weakest points in the Lines, he allowed the second corps to observe Alhandra, while the eighth corps was advanced towards Sobral. In effecting even these neutral arrangements, Massena had sustained some loss, disgrace, and disappointment. On the fourteenth, a party of skirmishers attempting to drive the seventy-first from one of their field-works, were repulsed with frightful slaughter, and actually deprived of their own entrenchments. At Villa Franca the enemy sustained another serious disaster, and lost a gallant officer, St. Croix, who was killed by the fire from the gun-boats in the Tagus. In one of these petty affairs, General Stacey received a severe but not a mortal wound. The war in Portugal was now literally reduced to a blockade; Wellington having taken every possible means to devastate the country through which he passed,

resolved to remain in his strong hold until famine should begin to waste the ranks of the enemy; and Massena was equally determined never to discontinue the blockade while food of any kind could be procured for his numerous army. The appalling truth of the strengthened lines reached him in time sufficient to halt his sixth corps at Otta, and he now despatched foraging parties, to collect provisions and form a magazine at Santarem: but in this, too, he was frustrated by his quick-sighted antagonist, who invited the militia and Ordenanza, to move on the rear of the enemy, and obtained the co-operation also of Carlos d'España in harassing all foragers, and contracting the enemy's sphere of operations. It will scarcely be credited by the reader of history in after ages, that the wise and matured schemes of Napoleon for the invasion of Portugal were frustrated, that Massena's manœuvres were seen through and counteracted, that the myriads of myrmidons, whom the imperial marshals led over the Iberian border, were reduced incredibly in amount, that all these great ends were accomplished by a man who was reviled by the government of the very country he was employed in saving, vilified as a military assassin by a set of men at home possessed of splendid mental acquirements, but who panted for place so eagerly that they were incapable of viewing the position of our army with calmness. These intriguing politicians, whose oratorical powers have not failed to shed a lustre on their descendants, would have acted more honourably for their own memories, had they extended the aid of their acknowledged talents to relieve, to encourage, their gallant countryman, entangled, as they supposed him to be, in the complicated maize of an unusual warfare: they would have reflected a brighter lustre on their names, by calling up precedents to defend his failures, in case he should have been so unfortunate as to encounter any; nor would they have had occasion to blush for the part they had acted, while they were permitted to quote great Chatham as their type. "I will not," said that statesman, "condemn ministers: they might have instructed their general wisely, he might have executed his instructions faithfully and judiciously, and yet he might have miscarried.

There are many events in war, which the greatest human foresight cannot provide against."

Despairing of success in any attempt upon the Lines, Massena directed his attention to the opportunity afforded by the islands in the Tagus, of cutting off the communication between the capital and the rural districts, and of annoying the right of the allies. By culpable neglect on the part of the Portuguese, or rather wilful and perverse resistance to the orders of Wellington by Souza and the Patriarch, the boats were permitted to remain at Santarem until the arrival of the enemy; an event which Lord Wellington "considered to be the greatest misfortune that could have happened to the allies, and which might possibly have obliged them to change their position and take up the second line." "The French," observed his lordship, in his very first despatch from Pero Negro, "will either arm these boats, and operate upon Hill's right flank, in which case the strength of the flotilla, and support to be given it by larger vessels would become an object for serious consideration; or they will use them to form a bridge, and establish themselves upon the islands in the Tagus across Hill's right flank; or they will employ them for a bridge or other communication with Mortier, whom they will have it in their power to draw to their support either on the left or right side of the river." Possession of the boats facilitated the descent of the French upon Leyceria, where they discovered a very seasonable supply of provisions, which ministered for a while to their pressing necessities, and for which they were indebted solely to the improper conduct of the regency. The renewal of actual annoyance on the part of the Portuguese government, did not disable the British general from pursuing the labours either of the field or the bureau, and as the enemy seemed dormant after the affair of the fourteenth, and the death of St. Croix, his lordship devoted more than his usual portion of time to minor matters connected with his varied duties. His applications, remonstrances, and threats were incessant: he denounced the regency, demanded a supply of shoes for his men, called the attention of the envoy to slanderous paragraphs in the English

journals, totally groundless, and tending to bring the office of commander-in-chief into disrepute; required an explanation of the difference in amount between the surgeon's report of sick in hospital, and the actual number of absentees; entered at considerable length into the questions of the exportation of merinos by the Americans from the Portuguese ports, and supplied Vice-Admiral Berkeley and Captain Wedekind with very full instructions as to the quantity of balks, planks, anchors, cables, cordage, &c. which would be requisite for the construction of three bridges, which he then contemplated throwing, one over the Zezere, at Punhete; the others over the Tagus, at Villa Velha and Abrantes. The preceding subjects are not included in any of the *thirteen* important and voluminous despatches written at head-quarters on the twenty-seventh day of October. The latter expressed his feelings and conclusions as to the intended movements of the enemy. He assured his brother Henry that the French could do him no mischief; on the contrary, that an attack on him would necessarily be attended with the loss of the greatest part of their army; and should they remain much longer, they would inevitably starve. The only active measures in which the French appeared to be engaged towards the close of October, were the further collection of boats, and materials adapted for the construction of a bridge.

Lord Wellington being pressed by the envoy for his opinion as to what were the enemy's objects, replied, "It is impossible for me to say positively, whether they will perform this operation, having first endeavoured to carry the positions occupied by the army, or without making such an attempt: but, adverting to the numbers with which they entered this country, and to their probable existing force, and to the character and reputation of the general commanding the army, and to the importance of the object to be gained by their forcing our position, and the certain loss of character, of time, and of all the objects of the campaign, by their retreat without attempting to carry it, I cannot believe that the attempt will not be made, as soon as the means of passing the Tagus, in a retreat, in case of failure, shall have been prepared." To this specimen of



close reasoning, his lordship added an admonitory sentence, for the guidance of the incapable regency, which was, "that the enemy is constructing this bridge with the sole view of passing into the Alemtejo." His lordship pressed urgently the advantage and necessity for evacuating the Alemtejo by the inhabitants; but his importunities were met by the intrigues of Souza, who demanded that an officer and troops should be sent to Almada, and the war in fact waged upon the frontier. To this absurd proposition he required Mr. Stuart to state, in reply, "that he considered it unbecoming members of the Portuguese government to urge him to weaken his army by detachments, when they were conscious, that owing to the weakness and pusillanimity of their system of government, nearly two-thirds of the militia were absent without leave, and the military laws had not the power of punishing them; when they knew also, that during the previous year, in which the works which saved the country had been constructed, he was never able procure a tenth part of the number of workmen required, notwithstanding repeated and earnest representations to the regency, and that the works were consequently not so complete as they ought to have been." The misconduct of this miserable government was at length fully understood in England, and Lord Wellesley now desired his brother's opinion as to the reform most desirable to be introduced for its amelioration: on this point he evinced the same deliberate, unprejudiced views, and, although it was hardly possible there could be found a more wretched assembly, nor could any body of men be pointed to more deeply stained with ingratitude, yet the magnanimity of Wellington blotted out the recollection of their meanness and their crimes, and, giving all the powers of his great mind to the chief question alone in which the general safety was involved, declared that it was not advisable to disturb the government by the removal of any of its members, with the exception of Principal Souza; that this one oblation to his offended feelings would be sufficient, as with him he was finally resolved to hold no further official intercourse. "As for the Patriarch," he observed, "he is in my opinion a necessary evil. He has acquired a kind of popularity



and confidence throughout the country, which would increase if he were removed from office, and he is just the kind of man to do much mischief if he were not employed. If we should succeed in removing the Principal, which *must* be done, I think the Patriarch will take the warning, and behave better in future. If Principal Souza does not go to England, or somewhere out of Portugal, the country will be lost; the time we lose in discussing matters which ought to be executed immediately, and the wrong directions given to the deliberation of the government, is inconceivable." His lordship had also obliged the intriguers to publish a contradiction of the injurious falsehood that appeared in the Sun newspaper, relative to the conduct of the British officers in the proscriptions at Lisbon; but these evasive wretches were only disposed to state that those brave men "had no share in the proceeding," omitting to add, "that they had no knowledge of it until it was executed:" the matter, however, was taken up, discussed, sifted, and truth separated from falsehood, in England, by which means the infamy of one party was established as distinctly, as the humanity and honour of the other.

And now the twenty-seventh of October arrived, a day marked by the dictation of a greater number of despatches than his lordship probably had ever issued on any other single occasion, in his long military service. He commenced the labours of the bureau on this memorable day, by recommending the vice-admiral, Berkeley, to send the French prisoners to England, and repeated to him his desire to re-establish three bridges at the places already named, in the event of the enemy's retiring, which he now began to think would take place at no very distant day. He complained to the British admiral also of Souza's misconduct, and expressed his conviction that the Portuguese government originated and circulated the calumny, that he had not only approved, but caused the illegal arrests at Lisbon. A curious instance of official confusion occurred in the instance of Colonel Wilson, an active able officer. When Lord Wellington arrived in Portugal, he found him doing duty with the Lusitanian legion, but could not ascertain by whose leave or

authority. His abilities soon recommended him to Marshal Beresford and the commander-in-chief; and when orders were sent to him to join the Royal York Rangers, Lord Wellington suspended their execution, and assigned such reasons for that suspension, as proved the amazing perspicuity of his own judgment in the quick selection of meritorious men, and conferred a reputation on the brave officer, of which ages shall not be able to despoil him. He afterwards attained the rank of Major-General in the British army, and was appointed to the command of the forces in the island of Ceylon.

When the Marquis Romana seceded from Spanish authority, he relied upon the generosity of the British for the maintenance of his followers; and the English spirit, which had always influenced the actions of this gallant soldier, formed a strong bond of union between him and the British chieftain. Wellington had supplied him with money, shoes, and provisions, on account of the Spanish government, or, more properly, the Spanish cause; and of this circumstance he now deemed it necessary to inform Lord Liverpool officially. Amongst the enclosures contained in the despatches of the same date, were several intercepted letters addressed to the Prince of Essling, from which it appeared that the enemy possessed means of acquiring intelligence in England; the statements of the strength of the different divisions of the allies having undoubtedly been extracted from the weekly statements transmitted to that country. From another letter it appeared that reinforcements had arrived to the French army at Vittoria, but not destined to succour the army of Massena. Lord Wellington expressed his belief that the enemy could not remain much longer in their position, and his astonishment at their having continued there so long. The troops had no issue of bread from the day of their quitting Almeida, when biscuit for fifteen days was distributed; but the greater portion of them being unable to carry so much, threw their allowance away. The distress, therefore, arising from want of provisions was becoming so oppressive, that Lord Wellington's despatches breathed a confident tone, and painted the

deplorable state, in which the country they were about to evacuate would be left, and the sufferings to which the inhabitants of the wasted districts would be subsequently exposed. He reminded the minister, "that upon former occasions the wealthy inhabitants of Great Britain, and of London in particular, had stepped forward to assist the distresses of foreign nations, whether suffering under calamities inflicted by Providence, or by a cruel and powerful enemy. This nation has received the benefit of the charitable disposition of his majesty's subjects; and there never was a case in which their assistance was required in a greater degree, whether the sufferings of the people, or their fidelity to the cause they have espoused, and their attachment to his majesty's subjects, be considered. I declare that I have scarcely known an instance in which any person in Portugal, even of the lowest order, has had communication with the enemy, inconsistent with his duty to his own sovereign, or with the orders he had received. I would, therefore, beg leave to recommend the unfortunate portion of the inhabitants who have suffered from the enemy's invasion, to your lordship's protection; and I request you to consider of the mode of recommending them to the benevolent disposition of his majesty's subjects, at the moment, which I hope may not be far distant, that the enemy may be under the necessity of evacuating the country." Nothing could damp the ardour of Lord Wellington in the cause of humanity; innumerable instances have already been adduced, when ostentation could have had no share in the transaction, the sublime feeling of relieving a fellow-creature being the sole reward: in this case the strongest incentives to anger, and even vengeance, had been applied, by the regency, to the mind and the feelings of the British chieftain, without the slightest effect; he discriminated between the few that were guilty, and the guiltless nation: he fell into no confusion as to the criminality of Souza, when his keen glance rested upon the thousand pallid countenances that looked to him imploringly for help. He consigned Souza and his faction to the punishment of a

conscience wrung by mental agony and disappointment, and thought alone of those who had been the victims of an unjust invasion and pretenceless war. After an interval of but two brief days, the image of Portuguese suffering again presented itself to his benevolent mind, and found its way into an official communication addressed to Mr. Charles Stuart, upon various military topics. "I do not know," observed his lordship, "whether they sent you open a despatch which I wrote to Lord Liverpool, to endeavour to prevail upon him to get a subscription in London for the Portuguese, who have suffered by the passage of the French through their country. I propose to have one in the army, and I have no doubt that every soldier will contribute. But besides this measure, we must turn our minds, seriously, to the introduction of large quantities of grain into the country during the winter. I spoke to Sampaio yesterday upon this point, and told him I would lend myself to the accomplishment of any reasonable plan for this purpose. I have not much leisure to enter deeply into the consideration of details; but I shall be obliged to you if you will consider the subject, and see what it will be best to do, and how to do it, to prevent the people of Upper Beira, in particular, from starving in the winter and spring."

Never checked in the pursuit of glory or humanity by any of the griefs or disappointments with which the cup of life is mingled, or its pleasure alloyed, these affecting, generous, manly appeals to the rich and the noble were urged with the utmost fervour, while the public journals teemed with the vilest calumnies against his own honour. The *Moniteur*, ever foremost in falsehood where British character was impeached, even when unimpeachable, now loudly accused Lord Wellington of having cruelly deceived Herrasti, the brave governor of Ciudad Rodrigo, by promises of relief. This charge, re-echoed by the anti-ministerial journals at home, excited painful feelings in the hero's bosom for an instant, but, advancing and grappling with the foe, he soon subdued him, with that power and efficacy by which truth first chastises, and then annihilates falsehood. Wellington's defence of his conduct on that momentous occasion,



an occasion which laid the foundation of much and lasting discontent amongst the Spaniards generally, was not only full and sufficient as regarded his personal promises, but retorted the arguments of the French writers upon their authors.

Time rolled his ceaseless course, yet no decisive movement was made by the main body of the enemy, up to the twenty-seventh of October, at which date Lord Wellington thus described the relative positions of the combatants. "In my opinion, the enemy ought to retire, for he has no chance of annoying our position, and delay will only aggravate his distress, and make his retreat more difficult. I calculate that a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men would not give him so good an army as he had at Busaco. He had two thousand men killed there; Trant took five thousand prisoners at Coimbra; above one thousand prisoners have gone through this army, many more have been killed by the peasantry, and in the skirmishes with our different detachments; and they had two hundred or three hundred wounded in the affair with our outposts about Sobral. They cannot have less than four thousand sick, after the march they have made, the distress they have suffered, and the weather to which they were exposed. Indeed, the deserters and prisoners tell us that almost every body is sick. From this statement you will judge of the diminution of their numbers, and you will see that I have not much reason to apprehend anything from the *quinze beaux bataillons* which fought at Essling, and which cannot be here before the middle of November. I do not think I have much to apprehend even if Mortier should be added to them. However, we shall see how that will be. We have an excellent position, which we are improving every day; and the army is in good order and spirits, and not sickly. By the last returns we had four thousand two hundred in hospital, and no serious disorder. We had eight thousand five hundred sick in the military returns, but these included convalescents at Belem, of whom, I hope, under better regulations not to have so many. I am not quite certain that I ought not to attack the French, particularly as they have detached Loison either to look for



provisions, or to open the road for their retreat ; but I think the *sure* game, and that in which I am likely to lose fewest men, the most consistent with my instructions and the intentions of the king's government, and I therefore prefer to wait the attack. Besides, although I have the advantage of numbers, the enemy are in a very good position, which I could not turn with any large force, without laying open my own rear, and the road to the sea. This is the worst of all these strong countries, that they afford equally good positions to both sides." While Wellington soothed the wavering minister of England, by flattering representations of the condition of his troops, and the strength of his position, he felt most acutely the injuries that had been done to the cause generally by the intrigues of Souza and the Patriarch; nor was he totally relieved from doubt as to the possibility of the enemy maintaining his ground, until some assistance in men, money, or provisions should arrive.

On the last day of October, Massena appearing as resolute as before in the continuance of the blockade, Lord Wellington felt the great injury that had been done to his military reputation by the non-removal of subsistence of every kind from the ground occupied by the enemy, and, in bitterness of spirit, thus wrote to the British envoy: "For aught I know to the contrary, the enemy may be able to maintain their position till the whole French army is brought to their assistance. *It is heart-breaking to contemplate the chance of failure from such obstinacy and folly.*" This culpability on the part of the regency, Lord Wellington still further explained, and more clearly fixed upon the supineness of the government, in a despatch of the first of November, in which he observes, "Had I not been able to stop the enemy at Busaco, he must have been in his present situation long before the order for devastation could have reached those to whom it was addressed. All this conduct was to be attributed to the same course, a desire to avoid adopting a measure which, however beneficial to the real interests of the country, was likely to disturb the habits of indolence and ease of the inhabitants, and to throw the odium of the measure upon me, and upon the British government."

The Portuguese minister desired to see the war sustained on the frontier by the allied army, and expressed surprise that the measure of abandoning their homes should have been at all introduced in that part of the kingdom; but his lordship replied, satisfactorily to those who were sincere in the pursuit of truth, by reminding the envoy, that "the same measure was carried into complete execution in Upper Beira; notwithstanding that the army was in that province, and the means of transport were required for its service, not a soul remained, excepting at Coimbra, to which town his personal authority and influence did not reach, not an article of any description had been left behind, and all the mills upon the Coa and Mondego, and their dependent streams, were rendered useless. But there were no discussions then upon the propriety of maintaining the war upon the frontier. The orders were given, and they were obeyed in time, and the enemy suffered accordingly." His lordship pursued this painful controversy with these infatuated statesmen in language that became his elevated situation in that country, his important duties in the eventful struggle for the recovery of European liberty, and, with as little indignation and irony as could possibly have been expected, when the injustice and folly with which he was treated are remembered, "I may," said Lord Wellington, "have mistaken the system of defence to be adopted for this country, and Principal Souza, and other members of the regency, may be better judges of the capacity of the troops, and of the operations to be carried on, than I am. In this case, they should desire his majesty and the prince regent to remove me from the command of the army. *But they cannot doubt my zeal for the cause in which we are engaged; and they know that there is not a moment of my time, nor a faculty of my mind, that is not devoted to promote it; and the records of the government will show what I have done for them and for their country.* If, therefore, they do not manifest their dissatisfaction and want of confidence in the measures which I adopt, by desiring that I should be removed, they are bound, as honest men, and faithful servants to their prince, to co-operate with me, by all

the means in their power; and they should neither thwart them by opposition, nor render them nugatory by useless delays and discussions." The climax of this great man's anger seemed to have attained its height about this period; and the multitude of irritating topics, with which he was tormented, led to the composition of the following passage, which occurs in a letter to Major-General Fane, the greatest departure from the usual mild philosophy of his character, to be found in his correspondence during twenty years of active, arduous, public service. "My dear Fane, I cannot be answerable for a *mad-man*. We sent the orders to the caçadores as stated to you. This person got hold of them, and you know the consequence. I wish I had it in my power to give you well-clothed troops, or to *hang* those that ought to have given them their clothing. You must make the best of them, and I will give you full credit for everything you do." Unimportant to history, this little burst of passion is valuable to biography; it answers Lord Wellington's contemporaries, rivals, enemies, who have so often and so falsely denied to him the susceptibility of enthusiastic feeling, either of anger or affection: that he possessed the latter abundantly, has been often demonstrated, and the continuance of the friends of his youth around the path of his old age, carries with it a memorable conviction of the fact. Contempt, disappointment, or anger, he appears less seldom to have expressed; and the instance here adduced will probably prove a solitary example, from which, therefore, it cannot be concluded that he was either subject to, or controlled by, the impulse of evil passions. Like the lowering clouds of a gathering storm, which the sunbeams break through and dissipate, the momentary vexation that brooded over his mind was put to flight by the arrival of a communication from the King of England, desiring that Lord Wellington would immediately proceed to invest Marshal Beresford with the Order of the Bath. Feelings diametrically opposite in tendency and character were displayed in an instant; and the labours of the bureau became light and grateful, while his lordship thus addressed his brave companion in arms: "I rather believe it would be

better to invest you in the mode in which I invested Sir J. Sherbrooke, in presence of as many officers of the army, and other individuals, as I can collect at a feast; or, if you prefer that mode, on a parade of some of the troops." The warmth of his affection for Marshal Beresford, a warmth that sustained no abatement, even from the chiliness that accompanies the evening of life, was always manifested in the strongest possible manner: it would be vain to say that Wellington did not envy their well-earned honours to the brave men who shared his fortunes in the field, and aided him in weaving his laurel wreath, this would be but a weak and worthless compliment to his generosity, for he was not only superior to every feeling of rivalry, envy, or illiberality, but he earnestly supplicated the government to confer, upon every meritorious officer, the highest honours to which his fortune, courage, or ability had entitled him; and, in almost every instance, he exhibited the sincerity of his joy at their obtaining the honourable reward of their ambition, by becoming the medium through which such marks of distinction were generally conveyed.

Free from every apprehension as to the operations of the enemy, and dismissing the angry thoughts to which the ignorant suggestions of the regency had given birth, he seemed intent upon the single object of conferring this proud distinction upon Marshal Beresford, with every circumstance of esteem and honour. His plan consisted in assembling all the officers of the army not on duty, all the respectable society at Lisbon and the vicinity, Admiral Berkeley and the captains of the squadron in the Tagus, to a feast at Mafra, on the seventh of November; and, in presence of this elegant and joyous assemblage, to perform the ceremony of investiture. The officers of rank, both naval and military, were entertained at a dinner, after which there was a grand ball. The style of his lordship's invitations, even that part which relates to the gentle sex, is quite *a la militaire*, stating that he had ordered quarters to be prepared for Lady Emily Berkeley and her family, and, as to the numerous ladies and gentlemen, with whose names he was unacquainted, but whose rank he respected, and in consequence



desired the pleasure of their company, he informed them, in the same military phraseology, "that quarters would be prepared at Mafra for any person who would apply for them to Captain Kelly, the deputy assistant-quarter-master-general." How much and sincerely the brave soldier entered into the spirit of festivity on this occasion, and how entirely dedicated were his efforts to the happiness and honour of his friend, appears from his reply to the admiral of the fleet upon his acceptance of the invitation to the feast: "I am very much obliged to you for your kindness to *Marshal Beresford* and me; and I enclose a letter from Mr. Deputy Commissary Dunmore, which I hope will provide for you the means of moving what is necessary for Lady Emily, who, I anxiously hope, will not suffer by her desire to favour us with her company. We shall appear in our best attire, but I fear that, with many, bad is the best: and we shall be highly flattered by your company, and that of the captains of the fleet, whether in full or in frock uniforms." What a condensation of graceful compliment, kind and thoughtful consideration, and attention to professional forms, without the least neglect of all those rational courtesies that belong to refined society! The delicacy also with which he apologizes for many of the brave partners of his fame, whose uniforms were less gay and glittering than beseeemed the ball-room and the ladies' presence, must not pass unnoticed, nor the indulgence which he expresses himself prepared to extend to those of the naval service, who might happen to be similarly circumstanced. His lordship's plan of operations was too well laid, to have undergone the slightest risk of failure; and the prosperous end was found to correspond with the kind means employed for its accomplishment.

It was during the precise days, on which his invitations were being distributed to the naval and military officers, to join the festivities at Mafra, that Lord Wellington drew up that celebrated defence of his past military measures, that extraordinary comparison of the fulfilment of his prophecies as to the results of the campaign, that able vindication of his resistance to Portuguese misrule and intrigue, that clear insight into the views



of the enemy, which were sufficient to establish his claim to the character of a politic statesman, and a cautious general. "Were all other records of Lord Wellington's genius to be lost, this remarkable letter would alone suffice to vindicate his great reputation to posterity."\* It is a masterly composition, showing how clearly he read his adversaries' views, and how little confidence he reposed in the support of that fickle goddess whom Massena is said to have worshipped with the most entire devotion. "I wish it was in my power to give your lordship† an opinion of the probable course of the enemy's operations, founded upon the existing state of affairs here, considered in a military point of view; but, from what I am about to state to your lordship, you will observe that it is impossible to form such an opinion. The expedition into Portugal was, in my opinion, founded originally upon political and financial, rather than military considerations. It is true, that with a view to the conquest of Spain, there were advantages purely military to be derived from the removal of the British army from Portugal: but I think I could show that it was not essentially necessary to effect that object, particularly after the door into Castile had been closed upon us by the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida.

"The political object, therefore, in removing us from Portugal, which was, the effect that our evacuation of the Peninsula would have had upon the inhabitants of Spain in general, and upon those of Cadiz in particular—and the financial object, which was the possession and plunder of Lisbon and Oporto—were the principal motives for the perseverance in the expedition into Portugal. I believe the latter to have been more pressing even than the former. It is impossible to describe to your lordship the pecuniary and other distresses of the French armies in the Peninsula. All the troops are several months in arrears of pay; they are in general very badly clothed; their armies want horses, carriages, and equipments of every descrip-

\* Napier's History.

† Despatch addressed to the Earl of Liverpool, dated from Pero Negro, third of Nov. 1810.

tion : their troops subsist solely upon plunder, whether acquired individually, or more regularly by the way of requisition and contribution : they receive no money, or scarcely any, from France ; and they realize but little for their pecuniary contributions in Spain. Indeed, I have lately discovered, that the expense of the pay, and of the hospitals alone, of the French army in the Peninsula, amounts to more than the sum stated in the financial *exposé* as the whole expense of the entire French army."

"This state of things has very much weakened, and in some instances destroyed, the discipline of the army ; and all the intercepted letters advert to acts of malversation, and corruption, and misapplication of stores, &c. by all the persons attached to the army. I have no doubt, therefore, that the desire to relieve the state of distress, and to remove the consequent evils occasioned by it, by the plunder of Lisbon and Oporto, was the first motive for the expedition into Portugal. The expedition not having been founded upon any military necessity, has been carried on and persevered in against every military principle. We know that Massena could expect no immediate reinforcements ; and without adverting to the various errors which I believe he would acknowledge he had committed in the course of the service, he has persevered in it, after he found that he was unable to force the troops opposed to him when posted in a strong position, and when he knew that they had one still stronger in their rear, to which they were about to retire ; and that they were likely to be reinforced, while his army would be further weakened by sickness, and by the privations to which he knew they must be liable on their march. He knew that the whole country was against him ; that a considerable corps was formed upon the Douro, which would immediately operate on his rear ; that at the time of the battle of Busaco he had no longer any communication with Spain ; and that every step he took further in advance, was a step towards additional difficulty and inconvenience, from which the retreat would be almost impossible.

"If the expedition into Portugal had been founded upon

military principles only, it would have ended at Busaco; and I do not hesitate to acknowledge that I expected that Massena would retire from thence, or at all events would not advance beyond the Mondego. But he has continued to advance, contrary to every military principle; and therefore, I conclude that the pressure of financial distress, which was the original motive for the expedition, was that for persevering in it, and may operate upon the measures for the present moment. In this view of the case, it is probable that Massena may endeavour to maintain his position as long as he can keep alive any proportion of his troops, being certain that the same difficulties which induced the emperor to undertake the expedition without any military necessity, would induce him to make every effort to reinforce him at the earliest possible period of time, and, therefore, that he will remain some time longer where he is.

“Your lordship is already acquainted with the means of reinforcing him. There is no doubt that, by raising the siege of Cadiz, and abandoning other *unattainable* objects, Massena may be reinforced to a considerable extent. Under these circumstances, *I have frequently turned over in my mind the expediency of attacking the French army now in my front*, before it should be joined by its reinforcements; and, upon the whole, I am inclined to be of opinion *that I ought not to do so*. I enclose your lordship an account of the number of battalions, squadrons, &c. which entered Portugal with Massena, and I cannot believe that they composed an army of less than seventy thousand men at the battle of Busaco. I calculate their loss, including sick, since that time, at fifteen thousand men, which would leave them with fifty-five thousand men, of whom six thousand or seven thousand are cavalry, at the present moment. The effective strength of the British army, according to the last return, was twenty-nine thousand infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and one regiment at Lisbon, and one at Torres Vedras, which, in the view of the contest, ought not to be taken into the account: and I enclose a statement of the Portuguese force, according to the last returns. Besides this,

force, the Marquess de la Romana's corps consists of about five thousand men, making a total of fifty-eight thousand six hundred and fifteen, of which I could command the services, in case I should act offensively against the enemy, of which about\* ————— would be cavalry. Besides these troops, there are different bodies of militia, infantry, and artillery in our positions, but I should deceive myself if I could expect, and your lordship if I should state, that any advantage would be derived from their assistance in an offensive operation against the enemy.

“Although the enemy's position is not so strong as that which we occupy, there is no doubt but that it has its advantages; one of which is, that in attacking it, we could hardly use our artillery. I would also observe, that in every operation of this description by the British army in Portugal, no attempt can be made to manœuvre upon the enemy's flank or rear; first, because the enemy show that they are indifferent about their flanks or rear, or their communications; and secondly, because the inevitable consequences of attempting such a manœuvre would be to open some one or other road to Lisbon, and to our shipping, of which the enemy would take immediate advantage to attain his object. We must carry their positions therefore by main force, and consequently with loss; and, in the course of the operations, I must draw the army out of their cantonments; I must expose the troops and horses to the inclemencies of the weather at this season of the year; and must look to all the consequences of that measure, in increased sickness of the men, and in loss of efficiency and condition in the horses.

“I observe that, notwithstanding the length of time which has elapsed since the greatest and most efficient part of the French army has been employed against us, there is yet no other military body in the Peninsula, which is capable of taking, much less of keeping the field; and the relief of Cadiz, which appears to me to be a probable consequence of the state of affairs here, would not give us the assistance of an army from

\* This *hiatus* occurs in the original.



that quarter, either in the way of co-operation or diversion, nor would the removal of Sebastiani from Granada, which would be the consequence of the relief of Cadiz, enable Blake to make any progress beyond the Sierra Morena towards Madrid. We should still stand alone in the Peninsula as an army; and if I should succeed in forcing Massena's position, it would become a question whether I should be able to maintain my own, in case the enemy should march another army into this country. But when I observe how small the superiority of numbers is in my favour, and know that the position will be in favour of the enemy, I cannot but be of opinion that I act in conformity with the instructions and intentions of his majesty's government, in waiting for the result of what is going on, and in incurring no extraordinary risk. Every day's delay, at this season of the year, narrows our line of defence, and consequently strengthens it; and when the winter shall have set in, no number, however formidable, can venture to attack it; and the increase of the enemy's numbers at that period will only add to their distress, and increase the difficulties of their retreat. I have thought it proper to make your lordship acquainted with the course of my reflections upon this subject, and my present determination, which I hope will be consistent with the wishes of his majesty's government. Circumstances may change: the enemy's distresses for provisions, and the operations of our detachments in his rear, may induce him to detach to such a degree, as to render a general attack upon him a measure of positive advantage, in which case I shall alter my determination. But, adverting to the necessity of placing the troops in the field in this season, if I should make any attack, the advantage must be very obvious, before I adopt a measure which must be attended by the consequence of losing the services of my men by sickness."

This able, anxious, memorable letter, upon the military and political circumstances of Portugal, was followed, on the next day, by a despatch of equal power and perspicuity upon the assemblage of the cortes, choice of a regent, and provisional government of Spain. The cares, the duties, the responsibili-



ties which he had submitted to and undertaken, were of the most extensive kind and highest importance, too much for a nation to impose on an individual, yet not too heavy for the strength and firmness of him upon whom they had providentially fallen.

From the light and playful letters of invitation in which he bade all welcome to the festive board spread in honour of his gallant coadjutor, his calm yet thoughtful mind turns with facility to the consideration of the gravest temporal subjects that can arise amongst mankind, and exhibits the same degree of wisdom, discrimination, propriety, and justice, in every subject to which he had given his attention. He had always expressed distrust in the provisional governments, or rather self-elected local parliaments, of Spain, and his confidence was not obtained for the lately assembled cortes by their initial measures. In his letter to his brother Henry on this important subject, Lord Wellington repeats his caution as to the inevitably democratic tendency of all popular assemblies, and suggests, as a balance, the immediate appointment of a regency : in the choice, however, of a regent, delicacy and difficulty appeared ; and his advice to the cortes was, therefore, "to appoint or recognize as regent of the kingdom, with all the regal authorities, whoever would succeed to the office according to the law, as applied to the case upon fair analogy."

A very interesting opportunity of comparing Lord Wellington with himself, and of establishing, conclusively, an uniformity, equality, and consistency of conduct and principle in every transaction of his eventful life, a fact, also, to which attention has been frequently invited, occurred at this period, in the case of Mr. Ogilvie, a commissariat officer of much ability, and whom Lord Wellington considered deserving of being placed over the heads of many who had grown old without experience in the same service. Colonel Gordon, the commissary-in-chief, had ventured to remonstrate upon this departure from the accustomed rule, and urged the propriety of adherence to customs sanctioned by practice rather than prudence ; but this was a doctrine of which Wellington never approved, and by the violation of which England was twice saved from conquest

within the brief period of some ten short years, in the memorable instances of Nelson and himself. "When a man like Ogilvie," said his lordship, "is found out, who is really capable of being the commissary-general of an army, the rule is a bad one which prevents his immediate promotion. I may be wrong but I have objections to all those rules which prevent the promotion of officers of merit. It is the abuse of the unlimited power of promotion which ought to be prevented, but the power itself ought not to be taken away, by regulation, from the crown, or from those who do the business of the crown. If this rule be obstinately adhered to in the commissariat, an army will be lost on some fine day, on account of the total incapacity of the greater number of the officers, seniors as well as juniors, to perform any duty except that which they learn in England, namely, the superintendence of deliveries by a contractor, and to compare his accounts with his vouchers. There is no power anywhere of rewarding extraordinary services or conspicuous merit; and under circumstances which require unwearied exertion in every branch and department of our military system, we appear to be framing regulations to prevent ourselves from commanding it by the only stimulus — the honourable reward of promotion: these are my decided opinions. They go to the principle of our proceedings, and not to Ogilvie's case alone. If Kennedy was gone to-morrow, Ogilvie is, I think, the person most qualified to fill his situation, and I should then propose that he should be made a commissary-general. I wish to know whether, in any service in the world, a man has ever been placed at the head of such a concern as that which I am conducting, without having the power of selecting the person who shall succeed to fill such an office as that which Kennedy fills; and whether any minister could show his face to the country, and object 'that such an appointment is contrary to the regulations.' The regulation, therefore, *must* be nugatory, and ought not to be made. As for the gentleman who would succeed Kennedy, according to the regulation, he is quite unfit for the situation, and I could not do business with him for an hour. This is even a stronger case

than that which exists, though, by the bye, that is pretty strong. Ogilvie, an assistant commissary, is found the most capable in the whole department of conducting the business of General Hill's separate corps, and he cannot be made a deputy-commissary, because he has not served five years; and there are other assistants in the army senior to him, who, although very good men, and possibly able to do the duty of assistant-commissary, are not able to do the duty which Ogilvie performs well, and for which he was selected, notwithstanding that there were *many* deputy-commissaries with the army! The next thing to do will be to order that the deputy-commissaries shall perform those superior duties when there are any with the army; and then I hope the gentlemen in London will be so kind as to be responsible for all that passes here; and bear all the abuse and misrepresentation to which he must make up his mind, who is honoured with the command of the British troops on a foreign service."

This direct disapproval of rules which, in such a perilous service, should have been obsolete, this just sarcasm applied to the heads of the department in England, did not originate in any desire of acquiring patronage, or any undue partiality for the individual Ogilvie, but was based upon one of Lord Wellington's military maxims, a maxim on which he acted in his earliest offices and campaigns, a maxim originating in disinterestedness and a love of justice, and an indication of the possession of those great natural abilities, which he so generally acknowledged in others, no matter how humble the possessor.

The enemy's movements now assuming the appearance of an intention to attack Abrantes, Wellington's military instinct and prescience enabled him to perceive and provide against their efforts. Accordingly he directed Major-General Fane to communicate to Colonel Lobo, who commanded in that district, his entire approbation of that officer's general conduct, as a stimulus to increased exertion in the event of an attack. His attention was also bestowed on the operations of Don Carlos de Espana, who had embarked in the cause of his country, and was offering a gallant resistance to the invader, at the head of

a small corps of twelve hundred Spaniards. Lord Wellington calls this patriot, in his despatch to General Fane, "a very good man, and a good officer;" and he directs Marshal Beresford to place confidence in him as an ally: in this there was, at that period, little risk, for it was the interest, as well as the inclination, of Carlos to be faithful.

Considerable uneasiness began to be perceived in the French quarters, and demonstrations were made daily, almost hourly, towards different points. Amongst the prisoners brought in by one of the patrols was a Portuguese named Mascarenhas, who was in the French service, and aide-de-camp to Junot. On his person were found despatches from the Prince of Essling to the Prince of Wagram, relative to the battle of Busaco, besides a series of questions to be put to the bearer of the despatches at Paris, and the answers which he was to give. Mascarenhas was on his road to the valley of the Mondego, towards the frontier, in the disguise of a Spanish peasant, and was taken by the Ordenanza. This was the second despatch which Massena had written since his entering Portugal, that had fallen into Lord Wellington's hands. This renegade, who was a lieutenant of cavalry in the French army, had deserted his country with Marshal Junot. Although a manifest traitor, there was some distinction between the guilt of those who quitted Portugal in 1807 or 1808, and those who deserted to the enemy on Soult's occupation of Oporto. These extenuating circumstances Lord Wellington was willing to admit, and perceiving the sanguinary views of the Portuguese, he at once appealed to the British minister, sought his co-operation in suspending the traitor's fate, and deprecated a system of retaliation to which the execution of Mascarenhas would give rise, and in which the lives of many eminent, honourable, and valiant men might possibly be forfeited, nor would the retaliation be confined to Portuguese officers. This remonstrance was necessary, humane, and characteristic: had he not called on the British government to support his authority, the unfortunate messenger would have been assassinated; and, in all instances of pardonable crimes, in his own army, Lord Wellington

ton was opposed to capital punishment: besides, he did not consider an example of this description necessary in Portugal, as no disposition existed in any class to favour the French invasion. His lordship, therefore, recommended that Masçarenhas, after trial, should be sent to the Brazils, to be disposed of as the prince regent should think proper. This sentence, so consonant to his practice of avoiding the infliction of the extreme penalty of offended laws, his lordship felt himself called upon to revise, and for this change assigned the following reason to the Earl of Liverpool, on the twelfth of November. "I think it not very important what they do with Masçarenhas, as there is one fact in his case that would justify the putting him to death, whatever might be the decision on the point referred to in my despatch of the tenth instant; and that is, that being a lieutenant of cavalry in the French service, and aide-de-camp to Junot, he was taken in the disguise of a Spanish peasant; and, upon his first examination by the officer who took him, declared that he was a Spanish peasant. He is, therefore, liable to be hanged as a spy. I had not seen his examination when I wrote to you on Saturday, and was not certain of this fact."

Inactivity leads to habitual idleness, and idleness to profligacy and disruption of the ties of honour and of duty. The British soldiers, whose early habits were moral if not religious, whose instinctive propensity is attachment to their country, and submission to its laws, even they became infected with the disease of desertion, and occasioned the most painful feelings at the loss of national character, to the great man whose bright star they had so longed followed: at the period when this deplorable calamity befell our army, there was no sickness amongst them, the number in hospital was below four thousand; no arrears of pay occurred, no stern laws had been enacted or enforced; on the contrary, every indulgence that could be granted, consistently with their duties, was permitted both to soldiers and officers, by the commander-in-chief; yet desertion disgraced the army. On the twelfth of November Lord Wellington thus deplores the circumstance in a



letter to the secretary at war." Your lordship will be concerned to observe the continued, and I am concerned to add, increasing desertion of British soldiers to the enemy, a crime, which till within the last few years was almost unknown in our army. It is difficult to account for the prevalence of this crime, particularly in this army lately. The British soldiers see the deserters from the enemy coming into their lines daily, all with a story of the unparalleled distresses which their army are suffering, and of the loss of all hope of success in the result of their enterprise : at the same time that they know and feel that they are suffering neither hardship nor distress ; that there is not an article of food or clothing which can contribute to their health or comfort that is not provided for them ; that they are well lodged and taken care of in every respect, and not fatigued by work or duty ; and having every prospect of success." The deserters from the British ranks were principally Irishmen, in whom a love of change and a thoughtlessness of disposition originated the commission of crime. The description of men drafted from the Irish militia was bad, they had been infected with disorderly principles in the disturbances of their own country ; and they had communicated their love of licentiousness, and impatience of restraint, to their fellow-soldiers in the retreat through the north of Spain in the winter of 1808-9, in their subsequent service in the French army, and in their wanderings through the country back again into Portugal. The remedy for this disease, the check to this deplorable crime, was nearer than the general imagined, and the unfortunate cause of this disgraceful effect, inactivity, was soon about to be exchanged for the ardent pursuit of glory. To the honour of the British army it should be observed, that this was one of the very few instances in which the crime of desertion disgraced it ; and as it was the worst, so was it also the last case.

That the desertion from the British army is to be attributed to individual licentiousness and disregard of honour, to a recklessness and restlessness of character, to wantonness and moral depravity, and similar causes, rather than to the severity or incaution of the commander-in-chief, will appear from the fol-

lowing account of the mode in which the blockaded army spent their time, written by one who was a participator in what he describes, and who is too noble to be duped by art to a purpose. "Neither the time of our soldiers nor that of their chief was, however, wasted in idleness; the former were busily employed in the construction of new works, whenever their erection appeared at all desirable, and in giving additional solidity to those already thrown up: till the Lines became as perfect a specimen of a fortified position, as it was possible for nature and art to produce. The latter was indefatigable in his exertions to bring his army into a condition of general efficiency, and his exertions were too judiciously applied not to be crowned with success. The Portuguese being now thoroughly amalgamated with the British troops, learned from them all those lessons, which, in after campaigns, they turned to an excellent account: and Beresford, to whom the entire merit of their training is due, was, in consequence, relieved from all further responsibility in field-operations. Every day brought in its improvement amongst them; and the general was soon rewarded for all his trouble by the conviction that he might rely upon them almost as perfectly as upon his own countrymen. Nor was Lord Wellington inattentive to the comforts, and even luxuries, of his followers. Provisions were abundant; there was no want of wine; and sports and amusements went on, as if we had not been at the seat of war, but in England. Officers of all ranks, and in every department, from the commander-in-chief down to the regimental subaltern, occasionally enjoyed the field-sports of hunting, shooting, and fishing. The men, too, had their pastimes, when not employed on duty; in a word, seldom has an army occupying ground in the face of its enemy, enjoyed so many hours of relaxation, or continued to unite so completely the pleasures of country life, with the serious business of war. It is probably needless to add, that so great a show of security in their leader had the best possible effect upon the temper of the troops; or that the *morale* of the army was sustained, not more by a contemplation of things as they really were, than by a conviction that

they must be going on prosperously, otherwise so much relaxation could not abound.”\*

While these scenes of recreation were performing along the steep brows, and amid the wooded dells, of Torres Vedras, Monte Junto, and Bucellas, distress pervaded the thousands of refugees, whom the stern commands of the generalissimo had compelled to take shelter within the lines; for, the rapidity with which they were forced to abandon their homes, prevented them from carrying or transporting supplies, so that the destitution in the crowded preeincts of Lisbon was most lamentable. It is not to be concluded, however, that the infirm, or the impoverished, were abandoned by those whom duty, humanity, or religion should actuate in such cases; on the contrary, as far as human relief could be administered their sufferings were alleviated. Government threw open the port of Lisbon to vessels from Barbary, England, and America; so that a supply of provisions, and on terms reduced by competition, was provided, equal to the wants both of the army and the increased population. Besides the influx of commodities and stores from foreign countries, the fertile provinces of Alemtejo and Algarve remained unmolested by the hungry hordes of the enemy,—that district, which the inhabitants themselves call the granary of Portugal, was yet unconquered, and within their own control. While the military and civil governments adopted these prudent precautions for the maintenance of the people, the nobility and rich citizens contributed liberally, bountifully, both by pecuniary means and personal attention, to mitigate the amount of suffering and distress. Subscriptions poured into a public treasury, to be employed in hutting some of the fugitives in the open country outside the city, in transporting numbers across the Tagus into the district not yet despoiled by the enemy, and in removing others to their homes at Coimbra, from which the French had been driven by the intrepidity of Trant. There was another, a still more sublime source from which bounty flowed, and relief emanated—religion; and it is assuredly a blessed attri-

\* Narrative of the Peninsular War, by the Marquis of Londonderry.

bute of their national faith, that it enjoins the giving of alms, although accompanied with the detractive character of being a compensation for sin. The members of different monastic orders were foremost in the work of mercy; charitable institutions were opened for the distribution of food and clothing, and administering of medical aid; and magazines were stored with corn purchased from the ships in the Tagus, and laid up as with the prospect of a protracted blockade. This unremitting attention to the necessities of the fugitives, soon calmed the agitation attendant upon the irruption of so many thousand destitute beings within the limits of the Lines, and a feeling of security not only returned, but brought with it such a degree of confidence, that at no period were the public theatres more crowded, or their private and public assemblies more gay and brilliant, than when the liberties of Portugal were threatened by an army of seventy thousand men, rendered desperate by privations, and who lay panting for plunder almost under the walls of their metropolis. "It was strange to see such fearless and inconsistent gaiety among people who might, in the course of a few short hours, be placed at the mercy of a conqueror: but we are all the creatures of custom, and short experience will reconcile us to anything. Hence it is that the inhabitants of Portici sleep tranquilly under the burning Vesuvius, and mariners sing jovially while rocked upon the restless waves, in which the starting of a single plank might engulf them for ever!"

The security which the allies as well as the inhabitants of Lisbon seemed to feel, the unrestricted pleasure in which they appeared to indulge at such a crisis, excited the highest and most marked indignation in the despondents in England, whose supporters, attached to the public journals, proclaimed their disapprobation in terms not to be misunderstood, but not either to be respected: they confessed their confident belief "that Lisbon, not Massena, was in danger of famine; he," they asserted, "could drive in upon our lines the population of the surrounding country, to increase our difficulties; and to relieve his own, could send his foraging parties into an immense tract of



country, as yet untouched. England, meantime, must send out not merely regiment after regiment, but cargo after cargo of grain throughout the winter; and what if the bar of the Tagus should be locked up by adverse winds? Massena, we might be sure; with the talents and prudence universally ascribed to him, did not act without a confident prospect of success. It had been said in the gazette, that he possessed only the ground on which his army stood; this was an *erratum*, where for "Massena," we ought to read "Wellington." Our situation in Portugal would become infinitely more disagreeable than his, even if he did not bring in his whole force to bear on one, two, or three points, and by his superior numbers thus concentrated, break the lines in which Lord Wellington's army was so much drawn out. He would have the most productive part of the kingdom open to him: we should have only Lisbon and its vicinity, with the whole Portuguese army to maintain, as well as the British; nay, with the whole population of Lisbon, increased by the fugitives who had taken asylum there, deprived of their usual resources, and thrown upon us even for daily bread! What a delicate and irksome part then would our troops have to support, if they were to pass the winter upon those mountains, possessing no part of Portugal but that in which they were posted, incessantly harassed by the French in their front, with a Portuguese army double their own number within their lines, and a starving metropolis in their rear? The French had obviously the advantage: they could remain in their positions as long or as short a time as they pleased; they could retire, and return at their discretion. They might wait for the reinforcements which their master would draw to their aid from every quarter of subjected Europe; they were likely to accumulate, while the British must in the nature of things decrease. Massena was in truth master of the game he had to play. The most disastrous thing that could happen to us, next to positive defeat, would be the necessity of keeping our position on those heights for the winter; "and we trust," said these hopeful directors of public opinion, "we trust that we shall not have to incur that calamity! Lord Wellington may



re-embark his troops without much molestation, and, rather than he should be driven to the necessity of continuing in these positions for the winter, we confess that we wish he were re-embarked." This extract is preferred, in this place, to very many others of similar character, because, having been quoted by Dr. Southey, in his History of the Peninsular War, a double assurance of its authenticity is thus supplied.—The new popular assembly, which assumed the reins of government in Spain, in imitation of the liberal portion of British institutions, publicly permitted freedom of the press, and so closely did their partisans pursue the analogy, that, *mutato nomine*, they repeated precisely the same fallacies and falsehoods as applicable to Romana, which the free press of Britain had uttered of Wellington. It was this unprincipled employment of their privilege which elicited from Wellington that well-tempered, and considerate remonstrance, in which he universally expressed his own private, personal opinion of this great national question, and which he addressed to his brother Henry on the eleventh of November, 1810, from head-quarters at Pero Negro.

"The Marquess de la Romana," said Lord Wellington, "is a good deal distressed by the paragraphs in the Cadiz newspapers respecting his march to this quarter; and I acknowledge that neither the public mind in Spain, nor those whose conduct is likely to become the subject of these discussions, are prepared for them. *The freedom of the press is, undoubtedly, a benefit, and it is difficult to fix the limits beyond which it shall not go.* But if the benefit consists in the information which the press conveys to the nation and the world in general, it appears to be necessary that that information should be founded in fact, and that discussions upon the conduct of military operations, and the characters of officers who carry them on, should be founded on real knowledge of events, of the true state of affairs, of the character of the troops, and, above all, of the topography of the country which may be the seat of operations. I think much mischief is done in England, *not only to me personally*, but to the character of the army, and of the country, by foolish observations upon what passes here, in all

the newspapers. But in England we are accustomed to these calumnies, and to read this nonsense, which, *it is to be hoped*, makes no real impression, particularly as the same newspaper generally contradicts the first statement, or argues against the first reasoning, in the course of a short time after it has been inserted. But in Spain, a country unaccustomed to these discussions, in which all, even the best men, are objects of suspicion, and every measure is considered the result of a treasonable conspiracy, it is highly dangerous to expose men, in the situation of the Marquess de la Romana, to this description of calumny, and unfair statement and sophistical reasoning upon his conduct. And it is particularly hard upon the individual, because, in the present situation of affairs in the Peninsula, neither he, nor his friends, nor the government, who in this instance have approved of his conduct, can venture to defend him, because, if they do on real grounds, they must convey information to the enemy.\*

“There is another very forcible objection, in my opinion, to subjecting officers in the situation of Romana to this description of discussion, and that is, the effect which it may be expected it will have on the officers and soldiers of the armies under their command. The Spanish armies, which are neither fed, nor paid, nor clothed, cannot be kept together by the bonds of discipline, as I keep my troops; but the authority of the general, and the operations of the armies, depend almost entirely upon the opinion which they entertain of him, and the confidence they repose in him. Both must be shaken by this description of discussion; and I should not be at all surprised if Romana were to inform me, on some fine day, that the opinion of his army was against his remaining here, and that he must go; as Carrera informed me during the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, that notwithstanding his opinion agreed entirely with mine, and he wished to remain with me during the campaign, the opinion of his troops would be so much

\* This was precisely Lord Wellington's own situation while he was secretly fortifying the heights of Torres Vedras, declining battle, and protracting the campaign. In fact, the entire of this letter is equally applicable to his own case.

against us, if we did not attempt to relieve the place, that he should be obliged to separate from me, if it should fall; and he actually marched on the evening of the day that the place surrendered. This fact shows what it is to command troops held together solely by opinion, and how dangerous those discussions must be in a country which has only an army of this description.

“Romana’s junction with me in this position was founded upon two circumstances. First, the impossibility of his remaining in Estremadura, if I should be obliged to embark; and the expediency of his embarking his troops at the same time, in order to save them for the Spanish nation. Secondly, upon the expediency of increasing, to the utmost extent that was practicable, the disposable force which I should collect in these positions. In respect to the operations proposed for Romana, in these discussions, on the enemy’s rear, we have so much force in their rear at present, that they have no communication with Spain, excepting by large corps; and they have not attempted such a communication. The addition of the Marquess de la Romana’s corps to the other troops thus employed, would not have increased their difficulties for subsistence, or have enabled us to press closer on their rear, because even if Romana could have ventured to place himself on the right of the Tagus, behind the enemy, he could not have ventured to place himself on the right of the Zezere. The enemy must still have had possession of the country along the right bank of the Tagus to that river, and they extend no farther now. But if Romana had placed himself upon the right of the upper Tagus by Abrantes, and we had been obliged to embark, what was to become of his corps? It must have been left behind to the mercy of the enemy, or must have made the best of its way through the mountains, to the Mondego, and thence to the north of Portugal. In the mean time the want of its services and assistance in these positions, by its absence for other objects, in a situation in which it could be of no use, might be the cause of the loss of the whole, and of the misfortune of our being obliged to withdraw.

“I have written you this much, in order that you may have topics, wherewith to remind your friends in the cortes, that they should not always go full gallop ; they should pull the bit sometimes, or they will destroy the whole fabric which it is their object to raise, and will lose the confidence of all the wise and thinking men of Europe.”

However disgusted Wellington might have been with the cortes at Cadiz, however indignant he might have felt towards the public press in England, or rather that part of it which was either corrupt or ignorant, his measures or movements did not, in consequence, sustain a moment's suspension, or the minutest change. With his mind as intently fixed as his keen glance, upon the least symptom of animation in the great body of his enemy, that had so long lain extended before him, he awaited cautiously the first fair opportunity of pouncing upon his victim ; nor was Massena insensible to the hazard of his situation, although it was long before he recovered sufficiently from the effects of surprise, to be able to act with vigour, or reflect with patience and caution. While desertion and sickness were rapidly thinning the ranks of the French, the Lines were acquiring increased strength. The rear of the French was harassed, the guerilla bands were hovering around, and the country behind them was laid waste : the allies had obtained an accession of strength by the arrival of Romana and of troops from Cadiz, and the ports were thrown open to commercial enterprise, by which means their supplies became inexhaustible. A council of war was assembled by the Prince of Essling, at which Ney, Regnier, Junôt, and Montbrun were present, where it was decided, that application should be made to Napoleon for reinforcements and advice, and that the army should occupy a central position in Portugal, until the arrival of one or both. General Foy was chosen for this dangerous embassy, but his courage and energy were fully equal to the task. In the struggle between Wellington and Massena to reduce each other by famine, the former had eminently succeeded ; the French were necessitated to live by plunder, and at length every place was so completely rifled, that the utmost ingenuity was required to procure any supplies.

It was the practice of the enemy to plunder systematically, and tools for spoliation formed as constant a quantity in their military stores, as arms or clothing. Furnished with such implements, plundering parties marched in different directions, under the guidance of their officers. Every article of furniture, in which it was possible that effects of value could be concealed, was broken into pieces; every piece of fresh masonry was pulled down; and, wherever the earth presented any appearance of having been recently turned, an examination was made there to some depth. Taught by their commander-in-chief those principles and that practice which he subsequently condemned and punished, a number of deserters from the French ranks formed themselves into a regular corps, appointed their own officers, and commenced the occupation of banditti: all those who had previously fled from the army, readily rallied round the standard of spoliation, and small parties, sent out to forage, frequently abandoned the more for the less orderly system of plunder. Sixteen hundred men were leagued together in this infamous cause, creating little less uneasiness to the general whom they had abandoned, than to the inhabitants of the villages—who in some instances gave them an unexpected repulse. Two strong detachments were at length sent against them by Massena, who caused their leader to be shot, and received the remainder into the ranks again.

Amongst the first cares of Massena, when he sat down before the Lines of Torres Vedras, was that of collecting all the boats, that had been left upon the Tagus by the culpable negligence of the regency, with a view of crossing the Zezere and the Tagus. Large supplies of provisions, collected by Montbrun's cavalry along the right bank of the Tagus, were stored carefully at Santarem, Barquina, and other depôts: rafts were constructed, and the few boats they possessed were placed on wheels, for convenience of transport to such situations as tentation might require, until a practicable passage was ascertained. These operations had attracted the watchful eye of the British general, and Major-General Fane had been passed over with a brigade of Portuguese cavalry, several guns, and a howitzer, to



the left bank of the Tagus, to destroy any boats, or other preparations, which the enemy might be proceeding with near Santarem or elsewhere. Fane partially succeeded; he destroyed the enemy's incipient flotilla, but his howitzer having been disabled, and, by some accident, his congreve rockets being overlooked, he abandoned further effort, and went into cantonments opposite to Santarem, a situation admirably calculated for rendering assistance to the garrison of Abrantes. With immense labour the French constructed a bridge over the Zezere, above Punhete, but the flood of that impetuous torrent almost immediately after carried it away, an event which seemed only to increase their efforts, and evidence their intentions very fully, for they not only restored the lost structure, but even built a second, higher up the stream, at Martinahal. Thus far prepared, Massena began to withdraw his army with the extremest caution, and by stealth, from before the memorable Lines of Torres Vedras—a movement more difficult and more hazardous than his approach to them, being overlooked from the Monte Agraça. His preparatory operations consisted in sending the corps of Marshal Ney to Thomar silently, gradually, and in the most perfect order; Montbrun was ordered to march upon Leyria, Loison to Golegao; while head-quarters were to be transferred to Torres Novas.

Having decided upon withdrawing from before the Lines, and having made dispositions for that purpose, which prove indisputably his military knowledge and ability, on the night of the fourteenth of November, 1810, the French army took the first step in their downward career, a step which they never after retraced or recovered; and from these heights the eagle of France taking flight, never soared again in spiral path, or with threatening aspect, over the head of the British lion. On the fourteenth of November, aided by the darkness of night, and by a thick mist that clothed the summits and sides of the mountain, General Clausel withdrew from his position at Sobral; and the eighth corps passed through the defile of Alemquer on the following morning, under cover of a strong rear-guard, and a body of cavalry posted in front of the heights of Aruda,

and moved on Torres Novas, while the second broke up simultaneously from Alhandra, falling back upon Santarem. When the clouds that hung over the moving columns of his enemy had rolled away, and daylight, divested of morning's thin veil, was displayed in all its truth and brilliancy, Wellington perceived that Massena too kept secret councils, and, as he had been brought into peril most unsuspectingly, by his adversary, so did he prove himself equal to the achievement of extricating his army, with perhaps less ability, but equal secrecy and caution. The slopes of Monte Junto, Torres Vedras, and Alhandra, so lately occupied by seventy thousand enemies, were evacuated so silently, that the first information which reached the allied Lines was derived from their own reconnaissance, at early dawn on the fifteenth. Sooner or later Wellington expected this movement, and he had frequently expressed his surprise that the enemy had held their position so long, yet such was his astonishment at the rapidity of their flight, and such his transports at the complete success of his great design for the salvation of Portugal, that he now appeared in activity to exceed himself, and never were more stirring compositions written than the orders which he issued to his general officers when he saw that the French had fled.

At ten o'clock on the morning of the fifteenth, he began to deliver orders, and continued to pour forth a perfect torrent of commands, all well digested and obviously preconcerted, to counteract the movements and operations of the enemy. From the heights in front of Sobral he wrote first to Craufurd, acquainting him with the retirement of Massena, and, that Sir Brent Spencer's division was already feeling its way towards Alemquer, and desiring him, in case the enemy "had retired, their left as well as their right," to cross the river, and feel his way towards Alemquer also, but by the Aruda road. He requested that his note might be forwarded to Hill, as he wished him to feel his way by the road of Villa Franca, and Castanheira, to Carrageda. These advanced guards were like so many *antennæ*, put out to learn something certain of the enemy's intentions, for a report had reached the Lines on the four-

teenth, that a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men was on its way to join the army of Massena, having reached the frontier of Upper Beira on the ninth, which rendered the utmost caution necessary in every movement of the allies. This brief note gave impulse to the different corps; the next, also to Craufurd, commences thus, "I enclose a letter in *triplicate*, which I wrote to you this morning, and I hope somebody at Aruda will have opened it, and acted upon it in your absence. *You see the enemy at Villa Nova*, I conclude—in the morning I wish you to feel your way thither, and thence to Santarem. I shall be up here very early in the morning. A courier flew to Admiral Berkeley at the same instant, requesting "that he would have boats sent up the river immediately, as far as Alhandra, and there await his further instructions." In this way "the work went bravely on," nor could any language convey a more active picture of the night before a battle, or give a more animated description of the dreadful note of preparation, than the following spirited letter addressed to Major-General Fane, almost at the same instant: few graphic attempts to convey the idea of rapidity of thought and action, have ever been more successful:—"The enemy retreated last night, their outposts were this evening at Villa Nova. They have all gone to Santarem. Our advanced guard is this night at Alemquer, they will to-morrow be well on towards Santarem. Hill will be at Villa Nova, Spencer at Alemquer. The enemy intend either to retire across the Zezere into Spain, or the Tagus into Spain, or the Zezere to attack Abrantes. The last is possible, as I last night heard they had a reinforcement at Beira Alta. I have requested the admiral to have boats brought up the Tagus, and I propose to pass over General Hill's corps to Salvaterra, or at least to be in readiness for that movement as soon as possible. This will enable me to prevent the success of an attack upon Abrantes, at all events, and possibly the movement of retreat across the Tagus; and if they retreat across the Zezere, I shall be able to annoy them by passing the river at or above Abrantes. You must, in the first instance, rocket Santarem, if you believe that

the boats and materials are still there ; in the next, you must encourage Lobo, at Abrantes, to hold out, whatever may be the attack made upon him. If the French could pass the Tagus between you and him, desire him to get his boats over to the right of the Tagus, and let Don Carlos de España pass over to Abrantes, and tell him that in this case Abrantes cannot be attacked. You will, in that case, take care of yourself, by withdrawing down the river. If you find that they are using their materials in constructing a bridge over the Zezere, move your cavalry opposite to Abrantes ; make a great show there ; throw a bridge over the Tagus, with the exception of three or four boats on the other side, and have every thing in readiness for a complete bridge for you and Hill to cross, either to pursue the enemy through Beria Alta, or to oppose him in his attack upon Abrantes. In this case (of their using their materials to make a bridge over the Zezere) I think it probable that you will have your caçadores, and rockets, and artillery still opposite to Santarem ; but if you should have reason to believe that the whole have been taken from Santarem, or that the design to cross the Zezere is manifest, move your whole force opposite to Abrantes, and encourage Lobo and the garrison by all means in your power."

The intentions of the enemy not being sufficiently developed, the utmost caution was not only prudent, but observed by the allies. It was suspected that the enemy had fallen back to a position suitable for the junction of expected reinforcements, and adapted for the reception of an attack from the allies : it was conjectured that his design was a *ruse*, to draw the allies after his retreating columns, and then suddenly to wheel round, and, with all his strength, strike one great blow upon the position of Torres Vedras. This it has been said was highly improbable ; but judgment may be arrested on that point by the recollection, that no general had ever experienced a more vexatious disappointment than Massena, by the construction of the military works at Torres Vedras—that he too was ready to exclaim, like the mortified British queen, that the name of that place, before which his high hopes were prostrated, would be

found engraven on his heart : his confidence had been increased immeasurably by the smiles of fortune, and the impetuosity of a French army, rendered the speculation by no means improbable ; and, lastly, an attack on Abrantes might have been his object. For every practicable or possible design, the British commander was prepared ; he sent forward bold yet cautious officers, to track the enemy, and feel the way ; while the main body of the allies retained its impregnable position within the Lines : Sir Thomas Williams, and Captain Beresford were already resting on their oars on the Tagus, waiting the signal for passing across the troops to defend the Alemtejos ; and every movement, in the great military scene that was then enacting, was within the ken, and under the immediate guidance, of the commander-in-chief. Pursuing their retreat, however, in two columns, the one taking the line of Rio Mayor, the other of Santarem, the enemy soon convinced Lord Wellington, by passing beyond Alcoentre, that they had no intention of setting all upon the hazard of the die, by making a last desperate assault upon Torres Vedras. As they had still the control of two bridges over the Zezere, they might direct their march towards them, and cross that river, or turn to their left towards the Mondego. This uncertainty rendered it advisable to harass the enemy's rear, before the arrival of their expected reinforcements, and the light division and the cavalry being sent forward, succeeded in taking four hundred prisoners :\* from these, however, no information could be obtained, they were sick and weak men, who had literally been abandoned to their fate, whose number had been increased by the addition of a marauding party, that was acting independently of military control, and committing robberies in the district through which the enemy had just passed. Reports had so far imposed upon Fane, that he at first assured

\* On this occasion "a remarkable exploit was performed by one Baxter, a sergeant of the sixteenth dragoons ; this man having only five troopers, came suddenly upon a picket of fifty men, who were cooking. The Frenchmen ran to their arms, and killed one of the dragoons ; but the rest broke in amongst them so strongly, that Baxter, with the assistance of some countrymen, made forty-two captives."—*Napier's History*.



the commander-in-chief, that Massena was in full flight to the Spanish border, having left only a rear-guard at Santarem to cover his retreat. Upon this intelligence, Hill was directed to cross the Tagus, and move upon Abrantes, to give countenance to the defence of that place, in case the enemy should attack it: or, if they should retire from Portugal through Lower Beira, that he might annoy them on their retreat. The pursuit of the enemy was rather slack; the rains that had fallen, after the fifteenth, destroyed the roads, and filled the rivulets, so that had expedition been a vital object to the pursuing army, they would most probably have been frustrated. But, however fortune may have sported with the fate of the allies, the precaution of their commander was never baffled by her unkindness; he pursued slowly, over broken roads, and in tempestuous weather, an enemy of whose strength and position he was ignorant: deceived by false intelligence as to their numbers and objects at Santarem, and elated, possibly, by the triumphant success of his great measure for the relief of Portugal, Wellington yet paused before the new position the rear-guard, as he was assured, had taken up, and, contrary to Fane's advice, from his own intuitive perception, and with a wariness never to be surprised, declined attacking the enemy. One who marched in the columns of the allies on this day describes that burning desire, which pervades a pursuing army, and so much augments the difficulty of restraining them, when an opportunity of assault occurs. "The day was wet and stormy, and the roads deep and heavy: but our line of march was all gaiety and animation. To follow up a retreating army is at all times amusing; but when you do so for the first time, your curiosity and pleasure are almost puerile." This feeling it became the duty of the commander-in-chief to check, from well-founded suspicions of the truth of his information, and on the nineteenth he wrote from Cartaxo to General Hill, desiring that he would proceed no further than Chamusca, until he found that the enemy were actually passing the Zezere, after which, he thus explains his own inaction. "I did not attack Santarem this morning, as the artillery for the left had missed its way: and

I am rather glad that I did not make the attack, as the enemy have there a very strong post, which we must endeavour to turn ; or, if they have not retired across the *Zezere*, or towards the *Alva*, they must be too strong for us here. I *believe*, however, I shall attack them to-morrow." The cause of Fane's mistake was attributable to an error of Massena's, who had suffered the eighth corps to be removed to a distance of ten miles at least from Santarem, so that the second corps might have been cut off by his adversary. Regnier perceiving the fault which the commander-in-chief had committed, hastened to apply a remedy, and, forwarding his baggage and hospitals with the utmost rapidity to Golegao, and despatching a squadron to watch the bridges by which he apprehended the allies would approach, succeeded in correcting the oversight, and deceiving Fane into the belief that the whole French army were in full retreat to the frontier.

Santarem is one of those strong positions which are everywhere to be found in a rugged, water-worn region, conferring little advantage on the occupying army, inasmuch as the adversary can readily find one of equal strength, and only valuable as an asylum from which ultimately the army may, by stealth and in darkness, effect its escape. Massena too late, however, had been instructed by his enemy in this species of manœuvring, and adopted a remedy which was inapplicable to the case: retreat, precipitate retreat, held out the only prospect of relief to his famishing army, while delay was tantamount to a lingering but certain death. Besides, as delay was the game of Wellington, it was therefore infatuation of Massena to imitate or adopt it.

Borrowing the idea of a strengthened position from the memorable example of Torres Vedras, the French marshal resolved on taking up the strong ground of Santarem,\* and

\*Santarem is a large town fourteen leagues from Lisbon, situated upon an eminence that overlooks a wide plain, much exposed, as well as the lower part of the town, in winter, to the inundations of the *Tagus*. A considerable part of the ancient walls of its citadel, with the additions of Alphonso VI., still remains in good preservation. In the time of the Romans it was named

awaiting the result of the fortune of war, for certainly no definite object was then contemplated, with the exception of the approach of reinforcements, and he had not at that time received any communication on the subject from Paris. Like Busaco's stern front, the mural cliffs of Santarem rise perpendicularly from the banks of the Tagus; these form a sort of advanced works to a range of hills that succeeds and commands the Ponte Seca, a bridge and narrow causeway, half a mile in length, crossing the Rio Mayor, and the marsh that extends from that stream to the foot of the rugged hill, and being the only approach to Santarem from the Lisbon road. The plain at the foot of Santarem mountains extending to the Tagus, was a species of moss, intersected by deep drains, and impassable by any description of troops; this constituted the defence of the enemy's left; the Rio Mayor, with its two branches now swollen into one great expanse of water, protected his right; and those who were bold enough to assault this position were necessarily confined to the causeway and Ponte Seca. At this point, which was so easily defended by military means, abattis were constructed, and a battery established on a rising ground that swept the road from end to end. The inclemency of the season, by swelling the rivers, had increased the natural strength and security of this position,—a position, the military value of which Lord Wellington had long before perceived and pointed out to his officers; on the 21st of November, in a letter from Cartaxo, addressed to Mr. Charles Stuart, he says, “the enemy have a position stronger than Busaco or Sobral,”—and so far back as the tenth of August, 1808, he thus spoke of the same position in a communication with Sir Harry Burrard. “The possibility that in the present state of affairs, the French corps at this moment in Portugal may be reinforced, affords an additional

Scalabis, and also *Presidium Julium*; and at later periods became the scene of frequent combats between the Christians and the Moors, and subsequently the residence of several of the Portuguese sovereigns. It contains a chapter of the canons of the order of Avis. Its commercial communications with Lisbon are very important, and form the chief source of its wealth. The village of Rio Mayor, which is included within its jurisdiction, possesses salt-works, while Azinheira supplies the surrounding country with gun-flints.—*Kinsey's Portugal*.

reason for taking the position at Santarem, which I apprised you in my letter of the eighth I should occupy, if the command of the army were to remain in my hands, after the reinforcements should arrive: if you should occupy it, you will not only be in the best situation to support my operations, and to cut off the retreat of the enemy; but if any reinforcement of French troops should enter Portugal, you will be *in the best situation to collect your whole force to oppose it.*"

While the judgment of Massena is complimented, by the acknowledgment that he perfectly comprehended the importance and valued the strength of this position, it is obviously not at the expense of Wellington's military reputation: and, although the position was well chosen, it is a matter of doubt whether he should have halted, or held it beyond the time required for resting and restoring his famishing legions. "As a military body," observed Lord Wellington, "retreat was the measure most expedient for them to adopt. By a retreat into Spain, they would—first, have been able to provide their army with plenty of food during the winter;—secondly, they would have been able to put them into good and quiet cantonments;—thirdly, they would have been able to provide their numerous sick with surgeons and medicines, the whole of which they had lost;—fourthly, they would have been able to clothe and re-equip their troops with shoes, and other necessities, which they required—fifthly, they must have been perfectly aware that even should they be of insufficient strength to hope to make any impression upon the position of the allies in Portugal, they would experience no difficulty in regaining the position of Santarem from the frontier—sixthly, they must have been aware that as long as they remained in the country, its cultivation would be impeded, and that by remaining they cut up the roots, the resources which were to enable them to attack the allies upon a future occasion." These reflections, added to Fane's communication, confirmed the belief that a rear-guard, the second corps, remained at Santarem, and induced Lord Wellington to send Hill across the Tagus on the eighteenth, having taken up his own head-quarters at Cartaxo

on the preceding day. In this state of hesitation, having the most entire reliance on the honour and bravery of his officers, yet from the prescient attribute of his mind, distrusting in some instances their penetration, Wellington paused before Santarem, and, like the Roman Cæsar, filled up a moment of inaction by adding a new roll to his military memoirs. This important passage in his autobiography is as free from egotism as the commentaries of his great predecessor, and not inferior in perspicuity and clearness of manner. "Having advanced from the positions," said his lordship, "in which I was enabled to bring the enemy to a stand, and to oblige them to retire without venturing upon any attack, it is but justice to Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher, and the officers of the royal engineers, to draw your lordship's attention to the ability and diligence with which they have executed the works by which these positions have been strengthened, to such a degree as to render any attack upon that line occupied by the allied army very doubtful, if not entirely hopeless. The enemy's army may be reinforced, and they may again induce me to think it expedient, in the existing state of affairs in the Peninsula, to resume these positions; but I do not believe they have it in their power to bring such a force against us as to render the contest a matter of doubt. We are indebted for these advantages to Lieutenant-Colonel Fletcher and the officers of the royal engineers, amongst whom I must particularly mention Captain Chapman, who has given me great assistance upon various occasions."

On the twenty-second of November, the movements of the British towards the right of the position of Santarem, occasioning some jealousy on that flank, the enemy brought up a large body of troops, from the direction of Torres Novas, and the rear, which drove in the pickets of Major-General Anson's and Brigadier-General Pack's brigades at the bridge of Calhariz, where they halted, after which the enemy retired in the night. This affair confirmed the suspicions of the commander-in-chief, that the numbers posted in Santarem were considerable, and that troops were returning to that position from the



rear, in fact Massena's whole force was between Santarem and the Zezere. It was now the determination of the British hero not to depart from his matured system of tactics; all his suspicions had proved correct; his own judgment alone must henceforth, as hitherto, support his fortunes. Slow famine and pale disease had proved irresistible enemies to the French, who would now, with more willingness, have encountered the point of the British bayonet; but the calm-judging warrior, on whose genius and fortune the fate of Europe hung, was immovable from his purpose. "I do not," he observed, "propose to make any movement by which I shall incur the risk of involving the army in a general action, on ground less advantageous than that which I had fixed upon to bring the contest to that issue. The enemy can be relieved from the difficulties of their situation only by the occurrence of some misfortune to the allied army: and I should forward their views by placing the fate of the campaign on the result of a general action, on ground chosen by them, instead of on that selected by me; I therefore propose to continue the operations of the light troops on the flanks and rear of the enemy's army, and to confine them as much as possible, but to engage in no serious affair in this part of the country, on ground on which the result can be at all doubtful."

Influenced therefore by so many considerations,—the state of the weather, the roads, and rivulets; the concentration of the enemy in the strongest position in Portugal, the risk attending any attempt, of having some of his detachments insulated and cut off; the inferiority in the description of the allied troops to those of the enemy; the spirit and meaning of the instructions received from the secretary at war, with other arguments, Lord Wellington did not conceive that he would be justified in any attempt on the French position; and, therefore, entrenching his advanced troops in front of Santarem, between the town of Rio Mayor and the Tagus, fixing head-quarters at Cartaxo, and the main body in cantonments at Alcoentre, Alemquer, and Villa Franca, keeping open a free and unimpeded communication with all the roads leading to the Lines, between the Monte Junto

and the Tagus, Torres Vedras continuing to be occupied in strength sufficient to repulse any assault that might be made from the north front of the Monte Junto, retreat, secure retreat, and an impregnable asylum, lay always open to the allies. The works at Alhandra, Aruda, and Monte Agraça were still further strengthened : from the heights of Almada on the south side of the river, where Lisbon is commanded, as far as Taffrai, works were thrown up parallel to the shores of the Tagus ; the towns of Abrantes, Setuval, and Palmella were provisioned, and the discipline and organization of the native troops almost hourly improved. During these anxious moments and movements, the British hero knew that the eyes of all Europe were directed towards him : and however his dignified manner might have tended to conceal mental anxiety, his portion of personal suffering must have been such as magnanimity alone could sustain. It is known that he slept in his clothes, rose at four in the morning, and one hour after appeared on horseback in the field, making a visit to the various posts. His example infused a martial spirit into those that were not within the control of martial law ; and not only the great fortified camp, but the city of Lisbon itself began to assume a military character. The British marines garrisoned Lisbon, the Portuguese garrison having joined the allied army : Romana had arrived within the Lines, and Cadiz had sent its contribution of men : sailors and marines had been landed from the fleet, to work the guns on the batteries : the banks of the Tagus were flanked by armed launches, supported by seven British sloops of war, while redoubts on the south side of the river covered the shipping. The Peninsula near Aldea Gallega and St. Ubes was fortified by the double lines already noticed, where three thousand British seamen were placed at the guns. Hill's corps, which had been passed across the Tagus in boats at Valada, on the eighteenth of November, under the superintendence of Admiral Sir T. Williams and Captain Beresford, remained on the left side of the river, to obstruct any designs of the enemy upon Alemtejo, and proceeding to Almeyrim, a small town two miles from the Tagus, and directly opposite to Santarem, there took up their

position,\* while retreat to his old ground at Alhandra was always practicable, floating bridges being in constant readiness on the Tagus and its tributaries. Between the two great divisions of the allies the Tagus rolled its ruffled course, bearing on its agitated surface a British fleet: this proud armament, under Admiral Berkeley's command, with all the ardour of British sailors, was ready to co-operate in every or in any way by which the cause of their country could be promoted; always prepared for action, but equally disposed to transport the brave troops from side to side of the rapid flood, as occasion might require or necessity demand, so that, although the army was divided by the intervening river, the power of concentration was always retained.

Notwithstanding this grand spectacle of a fortified country, the whole area between the sea and the Tagus being a continued

\* A mile from Almeyrim, embosomed among tress, but commanding a fine view of the towns and buildings of Upper Santarem, stood a beautiful quinta, in his happier and innocent days the residence of the Marquis d'Alorna, a nobleman of Portugal, once a general in her armies, but one who, deceived or corrupted by the French, had fled his country, openly espoused their cause, and had now returned as the guide and counsellor of their legions. This miserable man was for three months resident (with Massena's army) in Santarem; a town in which he had often, no doubt, been greeted with affection and respect by a smiling and a happy population, but where his eye now encountered, on every side, the glance of suspicion, contempt, or indignation from foreigners, who, notwithstanding their own bold and lawless aggressions, may sometimes reverence the patriot who opposes them, but will ever distrust and despise the very traitor who serves them. The quinta d'Alorna was at this time occupied by servants who held it for the crown, and the peasantry represented the marquis as a kind landlord, a tender husband and father. What must such a man have felt, when from the window of his cheerless billet, he looked down upon his family mansion, and knew that he was banished from it for ever? I can hardly imagine to myself a situation more painful; he must have regarded the quinta as a fearful monument of days of peace gone by for ever; as the tomb of his honour and happiness, the grave of all his hopes. "Of all criminals, I look upon the traitor as one whose punishment in this life is most certain; for it is a punishment which the smiles of fortune or of power can neither avert nor soften; it is a restless poison of the mind, an ever-aching void in the desolate and lonely heart; kindred, friendship, love, all cast from their blessed bosoms the wretch who has betrayed his country."—*Recollections of the Peninsula*. To this just censure of the crime of treason, every honest bosom yields assent; but Alorna's apostasy admits of palliation, vide vol ii. page 400.

camp, Torres Vedras retained its pre-eminence as the entrance to the sanctuary, within which the retreating army or fugitive people might find an asylum under the most adverse fortune.

Torres Vedras, the *Turres Veteres* of the Romans, who fixed a seat of government here, is of insignificant extent, encompassing the summit of a steep hill, crowned by the fragments of an ancient castle. The interior does not correspond with the idea formed from a distant view, yet it is still the chief place of a district. The low country in its vicinity is cultivated, and abounds with orchards and vineyards; sand-hills and pine-woods appear on one side, grey limestone cliffs with hanging trees upon the other. Thermal springs gush up at the foot of the mountains; and, if industry prevailed here, bituminous coal might be raised in abundance.\*

The position of Santarem is said to have been skilfully chosen,—but could it have been overlooked by an experienced general? It has been shown that Wellington was as familiar with its military advantages as with those of Torres Vedras; and in later years here Don Miguel, the usurper, lay for some time encamped; and so far was Massena from having deceived, surprised, or disappointed the British general by entrenching himself in this inaccessible spot, that his stratagem had been foreseen by that able officer, who thus alludes to it in a letter of the fifteenth of November, addressed to General Fane: ‘There is still a chance that the enemy may take up, and *try to keep*, a position at Santarem, endeavouring to keep his rear open, and his communication with Ciudad Rodrigo across the Zézere. However, this ought not to alter your measures.’ Three distinct lines of defence were to be broken in, before the French could be assaulted in their citadel, which was itself capable of

\* At Torres Vedras there is a fortress of considerable extent on a hill overhanging the town, which marks it as having been a place of no little importance during the time of the Moors; but some vestiges of Roman workmanship, which appear among its ruins, establish its claim to higher antiquity. The eminence on which this fortress is constructed, round a mound, is a singular feature in the landscape; unconnected, isolated, it presents the appearance of an artificial mount raised above the plain for the purpose of defence. *Bradford's Narrative and Kinsey's Portugal.*

offering resistance; and Massena's front at least was secure from attack; the second corps was spread over the flat country in the vicinity of Golegao: Loisson's division observing the Tagus, and maintaining a communication with Punhete, where they had a strong post; the eighth corps was disposed with its right at Alcanhete, its centre at Pernes, and its left thrown back on Torres Novas, the head-quarters of the enemy; beyond Alcanhete the cavalry extended itself towards Leiria; the reserve, sixth corps, being stationed at Thomar. Massena spread his army, but securely, over a surface large enough to furnish him with supplies, and in the country eastward of Santarem, vegetables, cattle, reaped corn, and maize upon the stalk, were obtained; the inhabitants, encouraged by Souza and the Patriarch, declining to comply with the proclamation of Lord Wellington. These trifling supplies ministered to the wants of the enemy for awhile, and enabled their commander to continue and complete his plans of securing a communication with Coimbra, of keeping open a retreat on Spain by means of his bridges over the Zezere, of commencing offensive operations on his right, by turning the position of the Monte Junto, or of attempting the passage of the Tagus on the left. To these specious pretexts for continuing at Santarem, may be added the still more visionary view which French historians add, namely, that while Massena held this position, Lisbon must be considered as in a state of siege, which every day's protraction rendered more and more calamitous. But foreign writers do more justice to the memory of Massena, by attributing his obstinate tenure of Santarem not to his strategic acquirements, but rather to his political speculation and judgment. He was aware that the opposition party in England were watching any false step of Wellington, as a plea for pouncing on places of political power; this necessarily rendered that careful general still more cautious, and less willing to hazard the chances of a battle. Massena might, perhaps ought, to have attacked the allies, his loss would have been quickly repaired; if Wellington suffered a repulse, the Lines might have been entered, Lisbon besieged, the opposition party thereby brought



into office, whose first act would have been the withdrawal of the army from the Peninsula. The state of the king's health gave new hopes to the opposition, and augmented the difficulties of Wellington's position: the prince regent had, from his earliest years, associated with some of the most learned and accomplished men of his age, who all happened to be of what was called the liberal party; it was a natural and reasonable presumption, that, on his accession to power, he would not have forsaken the friends of his youth, especially as they were in the possession of eminent talents. Massena, who was furnished with accurate information of affairs in England by the opposition journals, and of the movements of the allied army by spies and traitors, circulated a report that George III. was dead; the late Prince of Wales seated on the British throne; the advocates of freedom in England become ministers of state—whence he argued, that he, whom the veteran soldiers of France, led on by the most fortunate generals of that military nation, were unable to subdue, would at length be overborne, in an unnatural combat with his own countrymen, and that his recall might be looked for every hour. To this prospect of discomfiture, arising from England, Massena added the expectation that the Patriarch would so materially obstruct the measures recommended for the defence of Lisbon, that the British general would either become disgusted, or rendered unpopular with the Portuguese nation. It was on these, and similar political grounds, that Massena rested his chief hopes of being ultimately able to enter Lisbon, and repay, with plunder, the services and the sufferings of his soldiers. He had still another hope to cling to, should political speculation prove abortive,—that was, the arrival of reinforcements, in time sufficient to undertake offensive operations with some prospect of success. Gardanne, who had entered Portugal on the fourteenth of November, acted a culpable part: at first he moved on the frontier, then returned to Sobreira Formosa, and again resuming his route, entered Spain. He was accompanied by five thousand men, and a convoy from Ciudad Rodrigo, and crossing the frontier, reached Cardegos, only three leagues from the French army.

Harassed by the Ordenanzas in his advance, who retook from him some prisoners, and followed by Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. F. Ponsonby, on a reconnoissance from Abrantes to the river Codes, who ascertained that the enemy had made very particular inquiries respecting the position of Hill's corps, and the means which the allies possessed of crossing the Tagus at Abrantes; and, having been falsely informed by their prisoners, that General Hill was preparing to move against them, they commenced their march from Cardegos towards the Codes in the morning; thence retired about eleven with great precipitation, and continued their retreat in the same manner till they reached the frontier. They were followed by the Ordenanzas, who not only did them much mischief, but took a great part of their baggage; and so much were they harassed by this irregular corps, that they destroyed all the horses and mules that could not keep up with them: in short, their march, if it had been ordered by superior authority, and was connected with any other arrangements, presented every appearance, and was attended with all the consequences, of a forced retreat.

The main body of the enemy continued at Santarem, without making any new demonstration, up to the fifteenth of December, with the exception of sending a detachment of four regiments towards Coimbra, where they were baffled by the activity of Trant, who had left Bacellar in possession of that place.—Still expectations were entertained, hopes fondly cherished, of aid from the ninth corps under Drouet; reports were rife that Massena designed to move on Oporto, that large reinforcements were advancing; and the building of boats at Santarem, to increase the fleet at Punhete and Barquinha, implied prospective activity on both banks of the Tagus. The duty of Drouet was inadequately performed, his connexion with Massena lost, a division of his corps, harassed by the guerillas, and advancing in connexion with Gardannes, was defeated with loss by Silveira, who immediately after formed a junction with Miller.\* Gardannes pursued his

\* When the disposition was formed for the defence of Portugal, the troops of the line, and the British troops, were brought to the most vulnerable points

route, however, until he encountered Colonel Ponsonby and a party of the Ordenanza. On the fifteenth, the reinforcement under Drouet crossed the Coa at Almeida, and moved into Upper Beira by the roads of Pinhel, Trancoso, Alverca, and Celerico. This was something of a forward movement, but the whole force, which included Gardanne's division, and the whole of the ninth corps, did not exceed fifteen thousand men; advancing at a tardy pace, they reached Maceira, in the valley of the Mondego, on the twenty-second, and two days after arrived at Leiria, from whence their march to join on the right flank of the army remained unobstructed, Wilson feeling the necessity of avoiding an encounter with the ninth corps. General Silveira had retired with his division of troops to Moimenta de Beira, but Miller, Wilson, and himself were always in readiness to act across the Mondego upon the flanks and rear of the enemy. To cover his advance, and keep open a line of retreat, Drouet had left Claparede at Guarda; this opportunity tempted Silveira, a brave but vain soldier, to aspire to new laurels by cutting off the rear-guard of the enemy. His attempt, which completely failed at Trancoso, did not deter him from a second rash assault, which ended more fatally, as well as by his being driven across the Douro. These failures, by which the road to Oporto was left unguarded, alarmed Bacellar, and he now called in his troops, kept them more concentrated, allowing Wilson to follow, and hang on Claparede's rear. This was the most brilliant era in the military history of these brave fellows, whose active and serviceable co-operation received a check from Providence, by the sudden death of Miller at

between the Douro and the Tagus, and to the south of the Tagus. The northern provinces were entrusted to the northern militia, about fifteen thousand in number, which were the best in Portugal; and they were distributed into three divisions, one under General Silveira, another under General Miller, and a third under Colonel Trant, each division being aided by a body of regular cavalry and artillery, and the whole under the command of General Bacellar. When the enemy's attack upon Portugal was decided between the Douro and the Tagus, these corps all crossed the Douro, and continued in various communications, but the defence of the northern provinces was the principal object.—*Wellington Despatches, note to Mem. of Operations in 1810.*

Viseu, which no defeat or repulse from the enemy could have exceeded in poignancy of feeling.

In Estremadura, Mendizabel and Ballasteros obtained some slight advantage over a division of Mortier's corps which was stationed at Llerena, and obliged it to retire with loss upon Guadalcanal. Reports reached Lord Wellington, at the same time, that Mortier had received instructions from Paris to effect a junction with Massena. No matter what truth the report conveyed, it afforded an excellent opportunity for urging the reluctant ministry at home to send out timely aid. "I have heard," observed Lord Wellington to the Earl of Liverpool, "that General Foy has passed through Madrid on his way to Andalusia with orders for Soult. If this be true, it is probable that Mortier's corps, or even more troops, are directed to co-operate with Massena. I do not mind even that reinforcement: but, as I believe you have some regiments of infantry in readiness to reinforce us, I think you will do well to send them out."

The ignorance in which Massena and Soult were kept, reciprocally, as to each other's instructions, designs, or operations, was extraordinary, and the emperor is supposed to have been unacquainted with Massena's difficulties until the arrival of Foy in Paris.\* This inconvenience was the natural consequence of the rapacity, and system of pillage, by which the armies of Portugal and Andalusia were maintained: as they acted the part of robbers, every man became their natural foe; and any messenger attempting to pass between their armies, lost his despatches, his liberty, and, too often, his life also. On

\* General Foy has published a history of the Peninsular War, which attracted much attention amongst his countrymen, and, on his arrival in Paris from the scene of operations, inserted various accounts in the *Moniteur* relative to the conduct of his fellow-soldiers and the dispositions of the British army. "In these statements," observes Lord Londonderry, "I can by no means concur; for example, he assured the French public, that whilst multitudes daily came over from our camp, the crime of desertion was hardly known in the French army: whereas the returns in my possession distinctly prove that we took in no fewer than seven hundred and thirty-three deserters in the course of three months."

the twenty-first of December, Lord Wellington thus writes on this remarkable fact to the secretary at war. "It is certainly astonishing that the enemy have been able to remain in this country so long, and it is an extraordinary instance of what a French army can do. It is positively a fact, that they brought no provisions with them, and they have not received even a letter since they entered Portugal. With all our money, and having in our favour the good inclinations of the country, I assure you that I could not maintain one division in the district in which they have maintained not less than sixty thousand men, and twenty thousand animals, for more than two months. This time last year, I was obliged to move the British cavalry only, from the district they now occupy with their whole army, because it could not be subsisted, *but they take everything, and leave the unfortunate inhabitants to starve.*"

The French had now retired from Torres Vedras, and partially demonstrated the efficacy of Wellington's system of warfare; Lisbon was unapproachable from any side by an enemy, but open towards the sea, for the admission of reinforcements and supplies. The Spaniards began to doubt the invincibility of the French, and expose their own lives, even too daringly, against their regular masses. But the long continuance of the war, its tedious character, the infrequent opportunities of winning new laurels, tried the temper, and almost the health, of the British officers, and several of the most meritorious applied for leave of absence. Foremost on the list was one, the loss of whose services was much felt and regretted. General Hill had been placed in a separate command on the left bank of the Tagus, and Lord Wellington had uniformly relied upon his good temper and admirable judgment; length of service, severity of weather, and an insalubrious situation induced fever and ague, against which he vainly struggled at his quarters in Chamusca. Being conveyed to Lisbon, he landed at the square, so weak that he was unable to walk without assistance, and, supported by two officers, tottered to a chamber of sickness. Several other general officers laboured under indisposition, and also pleaded for relaxation, but their claims and their cases shall be considered



together, at the period when their number and frequency seemed to call for public inquiry. The infirmity of General Hill began to assume an alarming character, Major-General the Hon. C. Stewart was directed to undertake the command. This brave soldier, distrusting in some degree the practicability and success of some of the measures entrusted to his activity, at Hill's departure communicated his feelings to Lord Wellington, who immediately appointed Sir W. Beresford to assume the command of the troops on the left bank of the Tagus, until General Hill's health should be sufficiently re-established to enable him to resume that duty;" but that event was reserved by Providence for a period much more distant than the great chieftain had supposed, for General Hill was obliged to seek for the blessings of invigorated health in the more variable climate of his native country.

During the months of November and December in the year 1810, the rancour of party in England appeared to have attained its climax: no assertions were too daring, or in fact too false, for those who aimed at the possession of political power, and no demonstrations proved sufficiently convincing, if urged by those whose crime was the enjoyment of office. As Great Britain was involved in war, our foreign policy constituted the most prominent political feature, was the everlasting object at which all arguments were levelled; and, as the success of our arms could alone redeem the measures of ministers, Lord Wellington became the principal, the sole object of vituperation, by those journals which then supported the opinions of the opposition. The wise judgment of Lord Wellington, upon that abuse of the liberty of the press which put the enemy in possession of the weakness of our army, has been already remarked, but his calm forbearance, under such repeated personal assaults, by the most powerful journal of that day in England, deserves to be pointed out for imitation. When it was the bounden duty of every loyal, every generous Briton, to have encouraged their gallant countryman, whom, had he fallen then, they would have immortalized by their griefs, the opposition affected to disbelieve the contents of his despatches, of which time has since established the truth and

value; and where even specious reasoning could not be advanced, they directed the shafts of ridicule. "The narratives of Count Ugolino," observed the organ of the party, "are trifles to the gift of starving possessed by Massena and his followers. He displayed this talent for starving in no common degree at Genoa, but he has fully demonstrated his powers of abstinence in Portugal." Again, on the twenty-sixth of November, the following invidious paragraph appeared in the same journal, "The private advices we have received bring intelligence *two days later* than the public despatches, and from these we infer that the French are not so destitute of provisions as has been represented, and that they are throwing up works in their rear, apparently for the more convenient occupation of the ground they possess, during the winter." This intelligence, if ever received, must necessarily have been derived from the enemy, for, the fact of the distress which the French endured was known to every soldier in the allied army: the deserters from the enemy's ranks conveyed the knowledge.

Had the editor of the celebrated liberal journal, that pleaded the cause of liberty so loudly, been bought with the gold of the enemy, like the traitorous orator at Athens, he could not have espoused the cause of Massena and of France more warmly than the following extracts from his political essays testify. "As to Lord Wellington's despatches, we feel bound to point out the palpable absurdities which it would be serviceable to his fame to refute. We shall most unfeignedly rejoice, if he shall triumph over the *redoubted Massena*; but with *such a general opposed to him*, we cannot take glaring absurdities for proofs of advantage; nor agree, even at the call of ministers, "to halloo until we are out of the wood." Another extract goes to contradict, in the most direct manner, an assertion of Wellington, which time alone could have established or refuted. "The public now begin to perceive the resources of Massena. *He is no longer confined to the ground his army occupies*; he has the fertile and untouched province of Beira open to him, and may now keep his position for the winter." A moment conscience-stricken, this willing worker of so much mischief, ac-

knowledges a *qualm*, and thus defends himself against a writer of less genius, but more integrity. "The '*Sun*' charges us with exultation in the *disastrous aspect* of our affairs in Portugal. The imputation is unmerited, for none can feel more sensibly than we do the predicament into which so many gallant men are brought, by the unwise prosecution of a scheme inconsistent with our means and our character as a maritime nation. We have, from the commencement, deplored the expedition, and feel no pleasure in the verification of our prophecies—all that we now pray for is, that our eyes may at length be opened to the true policy which we ought to pursue—that of retrieving our finances, and employing our resources in objects truly British." The preceding paragraph had just been given to the public, under the especial patronage of a British duke, when intelligence arrived of the retreat of Massena, and advance of Wellington, indisputable evidence of the veracity of Lord Wellington's unvarnished despatches, upon which the following was the ingenious, but not ingenuous commentary of the despondents. "He (Massena) has put himself in an entrenched position and has drawn the *enemy* out of theirs; he has separated, and consequently weakened, Lord Wellington's army, and the whole *may* be a feint, to bring the allies to a battle."\*

As the year 1810 waned, the virulence of the anti-Wellington party seemed rather to acquire additional venom; the successes of the hero lashed them to madness, and in a frenzied fit, on the very last day of the year, the following announcement appeared in the columns of England's Buonapartist journal. "Lord Burghersh has arrived with despatches, *and we have reason to*

\* Amongst other evidences of bad taste exhibited by the organ of the opposition, that of pointing to provincial distinctions and superiority, was not the least remarkable. Speaking of the officers who distinguished themselves in this *inauspicious* campaign, the leading journal of the despondents observed, "It must be a singular gratification to the natives of Ireland, that among the officers that have distinguished themselves in Portugal, they reckon among their countrymen, Lord Wellington, Marshal Beresford, Sir B. Spencer, General Cole, General Stewart, Lord Aylmer, General Pack, General Cox, Colonels Pakenham, Roach, Doyle, McCreigh, &c."

*believe that Lord Wellington is now convinced of the utter impracticability of the objects of the expedition.*" This declaration was the suggestion of the despondents' evil genius, who was at length disgusted with the wickedness of her disciples, for just one month before, the same British Æschines had confessed, and published that confession, "*that those accounts of Lord Wellington were written in the implicit belief of ultimate success.*" Other journals, imitating the great original, followed in the same path of private calumny and public mischief, but their reasonings and reputations have sunk in the stream of history, while the extracts here presented, from the rank of the parties to whom the authorship belongs, may, and will doubtless float still nearer to that vast ocean where all that's worthless shall ultimately perish. With one more remarkable *excerptum* from the splenetic attacks of party upon the greatest hero that Great Britain has ever produced, the domestic notices of the year 1810 must be concluded; it is a paragraph so personal, so pointed, and such a recapitulation of their special pleading to detract from the individual, that it is inseparably associated with the biography of our hero.

"Whether Lord Wellington shall remain in his present quarters at Cartaxo, or return to his former position at Torres Vedras, is of little consequence. He will remain inactive at the one place or the other, until it shall be convenient for the enemy to renew the campaign; unless, indeed, it may be dreamt, that we may even yet look to some fortunate chance that may turn the tide of affairs in our favour. That there are men who still flatter themselves with some happy incident that may trample down the conqueror and tyrant of Europe—some resurrection of spirit in France itself, or the humbled countries around it—we have no doubt, for their whole conduct seems marked by the insanity which trusts to improbable and miraculous interference. We seem, as a nation, to have shut our eyes to the just contemplation of the course we are pursuing, and to strive only to preserve the delusion in which we delight. It is afflicting to read in the journals devoted to ministry, the pains that are taken to inveigh against all



endeavours to enlighten the public on this subject. The love of military expeditions, and of creating a military power, has absorbed in some minds all other passions, and every thing has been sacrificed to its expression and fatal gratification. We fear that no warning and no calamity are sufficient to arrest our career; though every calm observer is convinced that we are driving headlong to national ruin."

Of the conduct of political parties in the Peninsula, it will be necessary to speak more at length at a subsequent period, when the effects of their measures shall have begun to operate upon the military policy of Lord Wellington; here it will be sufficient to observe, that while the political writers in England were detracting from Wellington's character as a man of genius, policy, and wisdom, the supporters of the cortes were endeavouring to diminish the actual strength of his army, by abstracting the corps of Romana, and bringing that body of men to Cadiz. The absurd pomp with which this vapouring senate was called together, their extravagant and unsupported pretensions, had early excited the contempt of Lord Wellington, and, too bold to dread their anger, too noble to mystify his sentiments, he openly expressed his total want of confidence in that body, and deprecated, at that period, their impolitic interference in his military measures. The cortes had insidiously attempted to exercise a sovereign authority over Romana, to control his movements, and bring his corps into Cadiz as their life-guard. Lord Wellington opposed this unwise step in a decided and successful manner: his lordship considered that the measure of calling Romana to Cadiz, was founded upon domestic, political expediency, rather than upon military necessity; and, as he was aware that the soldiers of that corps, although possessed of strong personal attachment to their brave general, could not be depended upon in a contest between him and the people of Cadiz, or a popular assembly, he looked upon the experiment as highly dangerous. It was pretended that the object of calling Romana's corps to Cadiz, was to silence "*les braileurs*" by their presence: but to



this Lord Wellington replied, "If it is supposed that the cortes are doing mischief, (of which I acknowledge that I have long had no doubt, and am convinced that they have done no good,) the best mode of providing a remedy for that mischief, is to keep such men as the Marquess de la Romana, and the Catalonian O'Donnell, and their armies, clear of the influence of that body, and of the intrigues which must always prevail, more or less, at the place in which they are assembled. At all events, I am of opinion that the Marquess de la Romana, and his troops, can do no good in Cadiz, and that they may be entirely destroyed there, if they attempt to interfere with the cortes: and that in the mean time the absence of the marquess from this part of the Peninsula will be a fatal blow to the cause of the allies."

When Wellington declared that the withdrawal of Romana from that part of the Peninsula must prove fatal to the allies, how dimly did he see into events beyond the grave! Romana was soon to be called away from the theatre of this world, leaving to history another great, ennobled, honourable name, which his countrymen will do well to imitate, when an enemy shall carry desolation into her fertile fields. In the month of January, 1811, this brave soldier, while in quarters at Cartaxo, was suddenly seized with spasms in the chest, and, after a few days of painful suffering, expired on the twenty-third of that month. That Lord Wellington was sincere in his expressions, as to the loss the cause would have sustained by the removal of Romana to Cadiz, is confirmed by his regret at the death of so gallant a brother soldier. "His loss," said his lordship, "is irreparable under existing circumstances. I know not how he can be replaced, and we may expect that it will be followed by the fall of Badajoz." When Mendizabel was appointed to the vacant command, Lord Wellington seized on the opportunity thus afforded of relieving his mind from its weight of anguish, by making that gallant officer a participator in his feelings. "You will, Sir," writes the hero, "have been made acquainted with the irreparable loss sustained by the Spanish

army, by your country, and the world, by the unexpected death of the Marquess de la Romana,\* after a short illness. I have lost a colleague, a friend, and an adviser, with whom I have lived on the happiest terms of friendship, intimacy, and confidence; and *I shall revere and regret his memory to the last moment of my existence.*" The affectionate regard which Lord Wellington entertained for the noble patriot, who had fallen so unexpectedly into an early grave, was the result of a long acquaintance with his many virtues; and he was always so fully impressed with the excellence of Romana's character, that he had repeatedly eulogized him in his public despatches, and as frequently mentioned him with the warmth of friendship, in his private communications. The power that inflicted this loss upon the defender of the liberties of Europe was almighty, irresistible, omniscient, and the great man bowed before it with resignation: but against the multitude of obstacles which the intrigues, jealousies, ingratitude of those who had been

\* Don Pedro Caro y Sureda, Marquess de la Romana, was a native of the island of Majorca, and born at Palmain, in 1762; he was a grandee of Spain by descent, and by services, grand cross of the royal Spanish order of Charles the third, and captain-general of the Spanish armies. After an education suitable to his birth, during which he made a rapid progress in languages, and became intimately acquainted with classics; emulous of his father's glory, who fell in the expedition against the Algerines, in 1775, he commenced a military life in the marine guards of the royal Spanish navy, in which he served until the war that followed the French revolution, having obtained the command of a frigate. At this time, however, he exchanged into the land-service, and was appointed a colonel in the army of Navarre, then commanded by his uncle, Lieutenant-general Don Ventura Caro. His eminent abilities soon recommended him to his country, and in 1801 he was made captain-general of Catalonia, and president of the Audiencia of that province, in which situation he found many opportunities of displaying his extensive learning and sound political views. The fame he acquired in this office, led to his elevation to that of director-general of engineers, and counsellor at war. When Napoleon had matured his plan for the usurpation of the Spanish throne, he seduced Romana from his country, and sent him to the north of Europe; ostensibly in an honourable military service, but his real object was the removal of that able and honest soldier from the vicinity of his unjust aggression upon his country. From this period the biography of Romana is inseparable from that of the great man who honoured him with his friendship while living, and who cherished his memory with the fondest regard. Vide p. 127 and 184. vol. i.

created free, and whose actions, therefore, were within their own control, he offered a resistance that has conferred immortality upon his character, for wisdom, temper, and firmness. Had he fled from the legions of Massena, dishonour would have marked his name; had he failed in moral courage to oppose the intrigues of the cortes, or patiently to endure the taunts of the despondents, his lot would, if possible, have been more deplorable; and, had he felt too keenly the privations to which Providence had subjected him, by the premature fall of his gallant associate, he would have violated the spirit of that pure faith which constituted his best inheritance. Equal to the occasion, he displayed a daring front to the foe; he heard heedlessly, the idle criticism of disappointed statesmen, and maintained his equanimity and firmness, until he extorted their reluctant approbation from one party, while the other became a fatal illustration of the greatness of his military views. Having driven Soult from Oporto, with circumstances as honourable to himself as inglorious to his adversary; having converted the wild hordes of Portuguese peasantry into well-trained bands; having inflicted severe and memorable disgrace upon the arms of France, in the hard-fought field of Talavera, and shed fresh lustre over the name of Britain, by a splendid display of genius and bravery in the defence of Busaco; having established for ever the military reputation of his country, by the scientific lines of Torres Vedras; and, lastly, having triumphed over the most formidable opponent in the civilized world—opinion, public opinion—by firmly persevering in a deliberate system of destroying his enemy, he had the gratification of beholding “the favourite child of victory” hastening back ingloriously to the Spanish frontier, as the last winter’s sun of the year 1810 shed its fading rays upon the Peninsula.

END OF VOL. II.









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