

country ; I had to provide for the continuance of a great war ; and the Portuguese are not constitutionally a very energetic people. Yet their infantry became good, they were quite equal to our sepoys, and, like the sepoys, fought best when mixed with English troops, and commanded by English officers." Even for the Spaniards he had always a kind word to say. "What could you expect from men without discipline, or what of a nation without a Government? Thoughts were at one time entertained of trying to do with them what we had done with the Portuguese, but the plan was impracticable from the first. Had the Regency listened to the proposal, which they never did, the pride of a great nation would have rebelled against it. I made the experiment of enlisting some of them, and intermixing them in the ranks with our men, but that failed too. They could not endure the restraints of our discipline, and deserted on the first opportunity. What the Spanish armies wanted was officers. The men were active, sober, patient, and brave, but they never became such soldiers as could be trusted by themselves. Towards the end of the war they improved a good deal, but in 1811 they were quite worthless."

"Was not Romana a good officer?"

"Well, Romana might have been a good officer if he had had health, but he was in a rapid decline when he brought the wreck of his army into the lines, and died soon afterwards."

"You had a high opinion of Massena, had you not?"

"Certainly, he was by far the ablest of Buonaparte's Marshals that I had anything to do with. He made mistakes, as all men are liable to do, particularly in his pursuit of me from Guinaldo ; but his dispositions in front of the lines were admirable, and his retreat was a masterpiece. His great blunder was in facing me so long as he did. He might have seen from the first that he could not touch me, not even if he had got Soult and Joseph to co-operate with him.

"The only real danger to me was from the sea ; and I have often wondered that Buonaparte did not make a desperate

effort to gain the command of the estuary of the Tagus. There were, to be sure, nine chances to one against his succeeding. But the game which he played was worth risking even these odds to win. If by a sudden burst he could have got possession of the Tagus, and kept it for a week, we must have starved. However, I had pretty well provided against that also. We had heavy batteries which commanded the roadstead; and Belem and the other forts were well armed."

"The French must have suffered fearfully at that time."

"I can't conceive how they existed at all. They never carried supplies with them beyond the four or five days' provisions with which each man was provided. And the country for miles round was a desert. At least, so we thought. But the Portuguese had not executed the work so effectually as they ought to have done. They tried to hide cattle and grain in the woods; and these the French foragers found out. I remember one day seeing rather an amusing affair. A French foraging party had succeeded in finding some bullocks, and one was sent to the front to be divided among a battalion, which held the outposts opposite a hill on which I happened to be standing. I don't know how it came about, but just as the butcher was about to slaughter the animal, it broke loose, and came tearing towards our pickets. Our men turned out, cheering the beast, while the French shouted and pursued. At last the animal got fairly within our line of sentries, and then there rose a loud laugh on one side and a bitter groan on the other. It seemed, however, as if our men had greatly pitied the French; for though they killed the bullock and held up its quarters derisively for a while, the matter ended by their handing over half the beast to the French. It was a very amusing scene."

Speaking of the retreat itself, he gave great credit to Colonel Waters for the daring and skill with which he made himself master of the enemy's designs. "He used to go off and hide himself behind rocks, or wherever else he found he could command a view, and count the numbers of their columns on the march. He almost always succeeded, and

the information which he brought back to me, whether important or not, was always such as I knew could be depended upon. He got taken one day when so occupied, and his friends begged me to send him clothes and money under a flag of truce, for they were all very sorry for him. But I would not do it. I was sure that we should have him back again before long, and I told them so. And sure enough so we did. As we were following Massena after the affair at Sabugal, who should come galloping up the road but Waters, with his head bare, and his coat covered with flour. His story was this. The French offered him his parole, which he refused: they sent him into Ciudad-Rodrigo, where he happened to have a good many acquaintances, and where he spent a day or two not disagreeably. By and by an order came to send him to France, and he began his journey escorted by some horsemen. As he had made himself very agreeable to the French Generals, they allowed him to retain his own horse; which, however, he was to deliver to the commandant when he got to Bayonne. Waters seemed quite reconciled to his fate, but watched his opportunity, and on the second day, when the escort had begun to grow careless, he suddenly wheeled round, struck spurs into his horse, and shot off. They galloped after him, but he soon distanced them, and was beginning to congratulate himself on being safe, when the head of a French column marching to the rear, showed itself. He struck off across the country in the direction of a mill, which stood on the top of a hill. A word to the miller was enough. Waters dismounted; the miller hid him under his sacks; the horse was concealed in a thicket hard by. The French troopers, who arrived shortly after, were assured that the fugitive had taken a road through the wood, and must by this time be miles away. In that mill Waters remained covered up by sacks till the whole French army past; and so he rejoined us."

It was thus that in the evening of his days the great Duke used to converse about the wars which he had waged, and the important events in which he had taken part. You were never balked if you sought for information on any

subject, so long as his keen sense of honour permitted him to speak out. And plans of campaign and the tactics of battle were often fully discussed. But he was always most charming when he descended to little anecdotes such as this, which no one ever told better, or seemed more highly to relish, than himself.

## CHAPTER XIV.

MARMONT SUCCEEDS MASSENA—LORD WELLINGTON FAILS TO  
TAKE BADAJOZ—HE TAKES CIUDAD-RODRIGO—INVESTS  
BADAJOZ AGAIN.

THE failure of his attempt to drive the English into the sea proved fatal to Marshal Massena. He was recalled by orders from Paris, and Marshal Marmont replaced him. But Marmont made no immediate movement to the front, and Lord Wellington took advantage of the circumstance to execute a purpose which for some time past he had meditated. Leaving the rest of the army in Beira, under Sir Brent Spencer, he set off with two divisions, the 3rd and the 7th, to assume the direction of affairs in Spanish Estremadura. On the 17th of May he was at Elvas, whence he directed Marshal Beresford to follow cautiously in Soult's footsteps, and to keep him at a distance while he himself pressed the siege of Badajoz.

He had very little time at his disposal, and he knew it. On the 16th of May General Drouet, with 19 battalions, was reported to have begun his march from Castile, and Lord Wellington calculated that he would be able about the 8th of June to come into communication with Soult. Soult would then, without doubt, advance to relieve Badajoz, and the army of Portugal might be expected to co-operate in the movement. This left little margin for an enterprise so daring as the reduction of a strong place well garrisoned; more especially at a time when the resources at the disposal of the besiegers were shamefully deficient. It was of the greatest

consequence, however, that Badajoz should be recovered, and on the 25th of May ground was broken before it. On the 2nd of June the batteries opened, and on the 6th an assault was hazarded. It failed; was renewed on the 9th, and failed again. Lord Wellington felt that for a time at least the game went against him. Already Marmont was in the field. He had compelled Sir Brent Spencer to withdraw beyond the Coa, and thrown supplies into Ciudad-Rodrigo, after which he made a deflection to the left, and marched through the pass of Baños towards Placentia. Soult, at the same time, quitting his strong position at Llerena, inclined towards Marmont, and pushed forward his advanced posts as far as Los Santos. Not one of these movements escaped Lord Wellington's notice: they brought the enemy too near and in too great strength to permit a prolongation of the siege; so he converted it into a blockade, and set out with every disposable man to join Beresford.

Lord Wellington took post on the 15th of June at Albuera, with 35,268 men, of whom 8000 were Spaniards and 17,785 Portuguese. Marmont's head-quarters were then at Merida; those of Soult at Zafora. They communicated one with another by patrols; and had under their joint orders not fewer than 67,000 excellent troops, of whom 7000 were cavalry. Why they should have lain apart throughout five whole days, when a single concentric march might have brought them together, has never been explained. Was it that they already stood so much in awe of their indefatigable adversary, that they feared to offer him their flank, though only for a single day? Or did the old leaven of jealousy work, impelling them to postpone, to considerations of personal vanity, the interests of the cause which they were bound to uphold? Be this as it may, they lost an opportunity which never presented itself again. Lord Wellington put a bold face on what was really a dangerous position, till Sir Brent Spencer, who had moved along a line parallel with Marmont, began to arrive. His leading division came in on the 20th, and on the 24th the whole of the Anglo-Portuguese army was in force at Albuera.

Though still inferior to the enemy in numbers, and even

more so in the composition of his army, for his English infantry amounted to less than 25,000, and his cavalry to little more than 3000, Lord Wellington hesitated whether he should not take the initiative. A moment's reflection showed him, however, that success in a great battle would be too dearly purchased. The French could not at that season of the year retain their hold for any length of time on Estremadura, and their expulsion a few days earlier would not be worth the loss of life which must result from it.

He continued therefore to retain his defensive attitude till the 15th of July, when the French Marshals, no longer able to find subsistence for their men, broke up. Soult retired into Andalusia, Marmont recrossed the Tagus, placing his army in cantonments between Talavera and Placentia. And then rose the question, What should Lord Wellington do? If he resumed the attack upon Badajoz, he might succeed in taking the place, though at the risk of having Portugal invaded from the north. If he abandoned that enterprise for the present, it was quite possible, so at least he believed, that either by blockade or by siege operations he might make himself master of Ciudad-Rodrigo. On the whole he preferred taking the latter course, for reasons which he has himself left on record. "From the information I had received, I believed that the strength of the northern army was less than that of the south, and that the *Armée de Portugal* which was destined to oppose us, on whatever point we should direct our operations, was not likely to be so thoroughly supported in the north as in the south. In this supposition I was mistaken. The army of the north, even before the reinforcements arrived, was stronger than in the south: but it must be observed that there is nothing so difficult as to obtain information of the enemy's numbers in Spain. There is but little communication between one town and another; and although the most accurate account of numbers which have passed through one town can always be obtained, no information can be obtained of what is passing in the next. To this add that the disposition of the Spaniards naturally leads them to exaggerate the strength and success of themselves and their friends,

and to despise that of the enemy; and it will not be matter of surprise that we should have been so often misinformed regarding the enemy's numbers."

Lord Wellington refers in this memorandum to one point on which he had been misinformed. He was not aware when he broke up from Albuera, that Napoleon had begun to pour strong reinforcements into Spain. It seemed indeed as if Massena's failure had convinced him, in part, of the danger of leaving the Spanish war behind, while he himself entered upon hostilities with Russia; and he made a great effort to break the strength of the former before the latter should fairly begin. But not in this respect alone had Lord Wellington been misinformed. He was not aware that Marmont on his march towards Estremadura had thrown ample supplies into Ciudad-Rodrigo, and that the garrison of that place, which was described as incapable of living beyond the 20th of August, was provided for a longer defence. When therefore he arrived on his own ground beyond the Coa, and re-established the blockade, he found that many difficulties were to be encountered on which he had not reckoned. Ciudad-Rodrigo, if reduced at all, must be reduced by process of siege, and Marmont was at hand to interrupt the operation with 60,000 men. Now all that Lord Wellington could bring into the field, including a body of guerillas under Don Julian de Sanchez, scarcely amounted to 40,000. It was impossible under such circumstances to attempt anything brilliant, and even the maintenance of the blockade put too great a strain upon his energies. The English lay spread over a vast extent of country, guarding the principal approaches to the city. There were intervals in their line, through one of which Marmont pressed a column, and Ciudad-Rodrigo was re-victualled for eight months. Nor was this all. Twice again before the campaign came to a close his superiority in numbers enabled Marmont to take Lord Wellington at a disadvantage. The latter had directed his scattered divisions to concentrate if seriously threatened by a march to the rear of Guinaldo. But time was required to effect this, and in order to gain time, he himself took post with only two infantry brigades, and 800 horsemen on



the heights of Elbodon. Had Marmont attacked him there, as he might have done, with an entire infantry division and 30 squadrons, there is no knowing what the results might have been. But Marmont contented himself with launching his cavalry at the English, who received them in squares; and in squares, when the proper time came, they moved steadily to the rear. Thus the position of Guinaldo was reached. And here, again, fortune held out her hand to Marmont, which he refused to grasp. Some of Lord Wellington's divisions had a wide space to traverse; one, the light division, lost its way. There were but 14,000 men in position, of whom 2500 were cavalry, when Marmont began to show himself. In the course of the same afternoon, and during the night, 50,000 French troops got together, and at day-break on the 26th of Sept., Lord Wellington saw the full extent of his danger. It was in such situations as this that his great character came out. He could not quit the ground, because it was the point of assembly for the whole army. He never thought of quitting it, but chatted and laughed with all who approached him, and kept everybody in the best spirits, and on the alert. As hour after hour stole away, however, his anxiety lost itself in astonishment that Marmont should thus leave him unmolested. At last his own people began to come in, and between the evening of the 26th and the early part of the 27th the concentration of his force was complete. He immediately shifted his ground to a stronger position midway between the Aqueda and the Coa, while Marmont, sensible that he had lost his chance, and perceiving that his men were beginning to suffer from scarcity, fell back by the road which he had so fruitlessly traversed, and returned to his old cantonments.

Before this short and busy series of operations began, while as yet, indeed, Lord Wellington lay at Albuera, intelligence came in of the arrival in the Tagus of an effective siege-train from England. It was an equipment of which he had sorely felt the need in his recent attempt upon Badajoz; and being now bent upon the reduction of Ciudad-Rodrigo, he directed the train to be sent round to Oporto. To hide this purpose he desired that the store ships should sail in

the direction of Cadiz, and that smaller vessels, following them out to sea, should take the guns on board, and steer back to the mouth of the Douro. All this was accomplished easily enough, and Ciudad-Rodrigo was placed in a state of blockade, but then his difficulties began. As far as Lamega there was water carriage for the guns, but between Lamega and Almeida the roads were mere mountain-paths, and the only draught-animals available were oxen. A gun-brig had accompanied the small craft to Oporto, and in the toilsome operations which followed the officers and crew did excellent service; indeed, but for the assistance rendered by them, the siege-train never could have reached Almeida. The Duke often adverted in after-years to the obligations under which they laid him. "But it was always so," he used to add, "I never found naval men at a loss. Tell them to do anything that is not impossible, and depend upon it they will do it." "You think them superior in these respects to the officers of the army?" "I did not say that." So he always guarded himself against appearing to censure one class of persons while praising another. "I did not say that, but their manner of life creates in them a self-reliance, which you seldom find in men of other professions. They are not to be taken by surprise."

Sickness prevailed to a great extent at this time in the English army. Heavy rains fall during the autumn in Portugal, and the dregs of the Walcheren fever hung about the constitutions of many of the men. Forage likewise failed, and the horses of the cavalry and artillery died by scores. A general of ordinary capacity would have been content under such circumstances to put his troops into quarters and nurse them there; but Lord Wellington had other objects in view. He was anxious to attack in succession Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz, and the intelligence which he received encouraged him to strike the blow at once. And here I may observe, that for his knowledge of the enemy's movements, Lord Wellington was not dependent entirely upon the reports of the natives. Among his own officers there were several who served him well, especially two lieutenant-colonels bearing the same name—Colquhoun Grant—yet noways related to each other. Both

were ready linguists, and possessed a peculiar aptitude for insinuating themselves into the confidence of others ; yet one was simply a spy, the other a most enterprising chief of a distinct intelligence department. Of the latter I shall have occasion to speak by and by ; of the former it may suffice to observe, that when he put on a disguise, the closest scrutiny failed to detect the English gentleman. The story of that officer's adventures, if detailed at length, would read like a romance. He went about from place to place, round the flanks, into the rear, and through the cantonments of the French army, making himself master of many of their secrets, and rarely failing to transmit the results of his inquiries to Lord Wellington. It was through him that at this time Lord Wellington heard of the departure of 60,000 French troops from Spain into Germany, among whom were 15,000 of the *élite* of Marmont's corps, with 10,000 from the corps of Dorsenne, which kept the province of Galicia in order, and had its head-quarters in Burgos.

The knowledge of this fact, followed as it was by information that Marmont had been instructed to establish himself at Valladolid, determined Lord Wellington not to defer his daring enterprise. He had already prepared in Almeida materials for one siege ; he now gave orders that materials for another should be quietly got ready at Elvas. Meanwhile General Hill, who kept post with 15,000 men at Pontalegre, was instructed to create alarm in Andalusia, by making a demonstration in the direction of Seville, and then he himself took the field. It was in the depth of a winter unusually severe, on the 7th of January, 1812, that, amid frost and snow, he crossed the Aqueuda, and closely invested Ciudad-Rodrigo. The ground was rocky, and the cold intense, but the men worked well, and one after another two important outposts, a lunette and a fortified convent, were carried by assault. The breaching batteries then opened upon the body of the place, and on the 16th the garrison was summoned. On the 19th, a refusal to surrender having been returned, two breaches were stormed. The assault took place at night, and the resistance was stern, but it was sternly overcome. Two Generals, Craufurd and Mackinnon,

fell at the head of their divisions, and in the course of the siege 178 regimental officers, with 818 men, were killed and wounded. The town likewise caught fire in many places, and suffered the horrors of a sack; but when morning dawned, it was everywhere in possession of the English, and 1500 French troops, all that remained of the garrison, laid down their arms.

So sudden and unlooked-for a conclusion to this siege took the French a little by surprise. Marmont, indeed, never heard till the 15th that Ciudad-Rodrigo was in danger, and on the 21st, while as yet the concentration of his divisions was incomplete, he learned at a place called Fuente de Sancho, that the town had fallen. He refused at first to credit the tidings, and then, furious with himself and with everybody else, more especially with Napoleon, whom he blamed for the catastrophe, he marched off to Salamanca, which he began immediately to fortify. Salamanca was, and still is, a city of colleges and convents, of which three in particular stood then at the angles, so to speak, of a triangle. These he strengthened, and connecting them with a curtain, and covering the whole with outworks and a ditch, he made Salamanca, what Rodrigo had ceased to be, his *place d'armes* on that frontier of Portugal.

Success in the first of his great undertakings only stimulated Lord Wellington to enter upon the second. As soon as he had ascertained that the valley of the Tagus was clear, he put his columns in motion, and passed without a halt from the Aqueda to the Guadiana. It was one of the most daring and arduous marches upon record. His flank was presented to the enemy throughout, and a succession of furious winds and heavy rains rendered difficult at times the act of locomotion, both to man and horse. The troops held their way, however, and reached the Guadiana time enough to throw a bridge across the river on the 16th of March. On the 17th, Badajoz was invested; that very night ground was broken, and one after another the outworks were breached and taken. For there was no time to conduct this siege, any more than that of Rodrigo, by regular approaches. Two armies, each as numerous as his own,

looked on, so to speak, at what he was about. If he failed to master the place before either of them came to its relief, he could not hope to master it at all, and time seemed to him under the circumstances more important than any other consideration.

Nobody who understands what he is speaking or writing about, will ever uphold the Duke's sieges in the Peninsula as models of the application of science to the art of war. They were undertaken with means which any General except himself would have pronounced inadequate, and they succeeded under circumstances which ought to have rendered success impossible. Ciudad-Rodrigo, with 40,000 of the best troops in the world within four marches of it, fell after only twelve days' open trenches. Nineteen days were required to breach Badajoz in two places. Yet neither Soult nor Marmont interfered to prevent the catastrophe. Soult, indeed, was busy with his own siege of Cadiz. Making no progress, he still professed to regard conquest there as far more important than conquest anywhere else; and he suspended his operations only on the 8th, when a hurried message announced to him that the defence of Badajoz could not be much longer maintained. He marched upon Llerena, with 24,000 men, expecting to find Marmont there with 30,000 ready to co-operate with him. But Marmont had not arrived, and, worse still, Badajoz was taken.

## CHAPTER XV.

SIEGE AND ASSAULT OF BADAJOZ—LORD WELLINGTON DURING  
THE ASSAULT.

BEFORE I describe how the capture of Badajoz came to pass, it may be well to state briefly what Marmont was doing, and why he took that particular line of action on which my reader and I are going to follow him.

It was Napoleon's custom to conduct the greater operations of all his wars from his own head-quarters, wherever these might be. The mind of a giant alone could entertain such an idea; yet the giant in this instance, though usually correct in principle, often blundered, because it was impossible for him to provide against change of circumstances. His explicit order it was which compelled Marmont, against his will, to fall back upon Valladolid, and thus open the way for Lord Wellington's reduction of Ciudad-Rodrigo. In the end of February, 1812, fresh instructions reached Marmont, which Napoleon drew up subsequently to the fall of Ciudad-Rodrigo. These contemplated the step which Lord Wellington had actually taken, and ran thus; "Place your troops so that in four marches they may concentrate at Salamanca. If Wellington move towards Badajoz, do not interfere with him, but march straight upon Almeida, push your parties as far as Coimbra, and you will soon bring him back again. Write at the same time to the Duke of Dalmatia, and request him to carry into effect the orders which I have given him, to advance with 20,000 men on the Guadiana, and thus compel Hill, who has only 15,000, to remain

on the Tagus. Do not think, M. le Maréchal, of going towards the south, but penetrate at once into Portugal, if Wellington has committed the mistake of crossing to the right bank of the Tagus."

Nothing could be more judicious than the plan thus proposed; the difficulty was to get it promptly and judiciously executed. Disgusted with what he considered to be the mischievous consequences of the Emperor's interference on a previous occasion, Marmont wasted time in criticising which he ought to have spent in action. He might have been at Ciudad-Rodrigo on the 15th, while the breaches were still open; he did not reach it till the 30th, after they had been closed. Not having a battering-train at his disposal, he could only mask both that place and Almeida, and pass on. As to Soult, he paid, as we have just seen, no regard at first to the Emperor's orders; and when he did move, he moved in the expectation that Marmont would join him at Llerena. Meanwhile Lord Wellington had pushed his operations so vigorously against Badajoz, that on the 5th of April two breaches were pronounced practicable, and on the 6th arrangements were made for delivering the assault.

On the evening of that day, when darkness set in, 18,000 English and Portuguese troops filed into the trenches. They were divided into three main columns of attack with a reserve. One column in two divisions was to threaten an outwork and a bastion; another was to escalate the castle, of which the walls were lofty and untouched; the third was to throw itself simultaneously upon the two breaches. Meanwhile the guards of the trenches were to force their way into a commanding ravelin, while a Portuguese brigade, which kept up the investment on the right of the Guadiana, was to alarm, or it might be to attack, certain works, which covered the town on that side of the river. Finally the crest of the glacis was lined with skirmishers, whose duty it was, when the proper time came, to keep down the fire of the defenders; and the cavalry stood by their horses in rear of the camp ready to mount and act, as circumstances might require.

It will be seen by this hurried description that no pre-

caution was omitted to ensure success in an enterprise, which, by all engaged in it, was felt to be desperate. Through the breaches the assailants hoped to make good their entrance into the town. Yet there was not one of the many false attacks which might not be converted into a real one, and several in the course of the night became real. Lord Wellington took up his own station on an eminence facing the main breach, whence his eye could embrace the whole circle of fire, and from which orders could be sent to any point where they might appear to be needed. There was perfect silence everywhere; in the trenches, along the crest of the glacis, in the devoted town, throughout the besiegers' camp. At last the clocks in the city were heard to strike ten, and then three pieces of cannon spoke out. They gave the signal which for more than an hour had been anxiously expected, and the struggle began.

I am not going to tell how the various attacks were conducted, how led, how met, and with what results terminating. My business is with Lord Wellington, beside whom, as he stood, surrounded by his staff, the reader and I will place ourselves. He gazed first upon a sharp skirmishing fire, which opened near him, and then, being directed from the glacis towards the breaches, widened till it seemed to envelope the whole place. Immediately afterwards could be heard the hum of columns in motion, followed by the sound of men leaping by sections down into the ditch; and then a sudden tumult in the town itself, while voices, which rose over the noise of the musketry, exclaimed in clear and articulate tones—"They come, they come." A moment's pause, and suddenly before the breaches broke out a perfect illumination—blue lights, rockets, combustibles of every kind, being hurled over the parapets and down the slopes into the ditch; the blaze from which made manifest two long narrow scarlet threads, the heads of which were already well up into the breaches, while the rear still crowded forward from the mouth of the trenches. And now came the wildest tumult of war; guns from either flank vomited forth grape and canister upon the assailants; shells gleamed like



fire-flies for an instant, then flashed out and exploded, while a roll of musketry, which seemed never to grow slack, kept all the summits of the breaches in a blaze. Moments such as these prolong themselves into hours, and hours into ages. The storming parties made no way; they were in the breaches, they touched the very summits, but there they stopped. Multitudes came rolling down dead or wounded, only that their places might be taken by others; but not a man either turned to flee, or forced himself over the obstacles, be they what they might, which barred his progress.

All this Lord Wellington beheld, standing, as I have just stated, upon an eminence close to the main breach. At first a numerous staff surrounded him, but one by one these were sent away, till only the Prince of Orange and Lord March remained beside their chief. Both were very young men, and one, Lord March, held a torch, the light from which fell strong on Lord Wellington's countenance. At this moment Dr, afterwards Sir James, McGregor and Dr Forbes approached. "His Lordship," says Sir James, "was so intent on what was going on, that I believe he did not observe us. Soon after our arrival, an officer came up with an unfavourable report of the assault, announcing that Colonel McLeod and several officers were killed, with heaps of men who choked the approach to the breach. At the place where we stood we were within hearing of the voices of the assailants and the assailed, and it was now painful to notice that the voices of our countrymen had grown fainter, while the French cry of '*Avancez, étrillons ces Anglais,*' became stronger. Another officer came up with still more unfavourable reports, that no progress was being made, for almost all the officers were killed, and none left to lead on the men, of whom a great many had fallen.

"At this moment I cast my eyes on the countenance of Lord Wellington, lit up by the glare of the torch held by Lord March. I never shall forget it to the last moment of my existence, and I could even now sketch it. The jaw had fallen, the face was of unusual length, while the torch-light gave his countenance a lurid aspect; but still the expression of the face was firm. Suddenly turning to me and

putting his hand on my arm, he said, 'Go over immediately to Picton, and tell him he must try if he cannot succeed on the castle.' I replied, 'My Lord, I have not my horse with me, but I will walk as fast as I can, and I think I can find the way; I know part of the road is swampy.' 'No, no,' he replied, 'I beg your pardon, I thought it was De Lancey.' I repeated my offer, saying I was sure I could find the way, but he said, 'No.'

"Another officer arrived, asking loudly, 'Where is Lord Wellington?' He came to announce that Picton was in the castle. He was desired instantly to go to the breach, and to request the stormers to renew their efforts, announcing what had befallen; and immediately Lord Wellington called for his own horse, and followed by the Prince and Lord March, rode to the breach."

I can add nothing to the graphic power of this description, and therefore content myself with saying that the fall of the castle led to the capture of the town, and that the Governor, after keeping his hold of a detached work throughout the night, surrendered at discretion on the dawn of the following morning. Neither need I repeat in detail the well-known story of the outrages that followed. No place was ever taken by assault, or probably ever will be so taken, without these horrors attending. Let us draw a veil over them, therefore, and be relieved by stating that a stern but necessary discipline at last prevailed, and that before the close of the second day order was restored.

When all was over, Dr McGregor went as usual to make his report of the sick and wounded. He found Lord Wellington in the act of concluding his despatch, and ended his own statement with the expression of a hope that his Lordship was satisfied with the conduct of the medical officers. "Perfectly," was the answer, "I saw with my own eyes that their exertions were superhuman." "My Lord, nothing will do more good, or more encourage them, than if you say so in your despatches." Lord Wellington looked up, and said abruptly, "Is that usual? I have finished my despatch; but," after a moment's pause, "I will add something about the doctors." Something was added, and "the doc-

tors," for the first time in English military history, found themselves, after the capture of Badajoz, honourably mentioned in public despatches. It was a just tribute to their valuable services, often rendered under fire, and the good custom then established has never since fallen into abeyance.

A more desperate service was never performed in war than this capture of Badajoz by assault. The garrison, strong in numbers, and still more formidable on account of its composition, was admirably handled throughout the siege; and everything which skill and resolution could devise was applied to avert the catastrophe. The breaches were not only retrenched, but across them at the summit were drawn strong iron chains, bristling with bayonets and naked sword-blades. No man succeeded in forcing his way through that barrier; for behind it stood men who knocked on the head all who endeavoured to grasp the chain; and the attempt to bear it back by sheer strength only caused the cruel deaths of such as took part in it. But if the defence was skilful and brave, not less brave and skilful were the measures adopted to subdue it. Danger threatened the defenders from so many points at once, that those accounted the least assailable were partially neglected, and through them the besiegers made their way. When morning dawned, therefore, the breaches had become empty, and over them, mad with excitement, rushed the survivors from the late contest.

The loss to Lord Wellington in this siege was very great. It amounted to 72 officers, 51 sergeants, and 912 rank and file killed; 306 officers, 216 sergeants, and 3787 rank and file wounded. One sergeant and 68 rank and file were missing, of whom several were known to have deserted, though only one of them fell into the hands of the victors. In spite of these casualties, however, and notwithstanding the shake which such enterprises, terminate as they may, always give to discipline, Lord Wellington thought seriously of following up his success by marching direct against Soult. Indeed, nothing but the misconduct of the Spaniards, who neglected the work which he had assigned them, and left Ciudad-Rodrigo unvictualled, with its breaches partially open,

prevented his carrying that purpose into effect. "It would have been very desirable," he wrote to Lord Liverpool, "if I could have struck a severe blow at Marshal Soult before he could receive reinforcements; but, on the other hand, as the Spaniards have neglected to provision Ciudad-Rodrigo (menaced by the Duke of Ragusa) it is absolutely necessary that I should return to the frontier of Castile." In terms even more forcible he expresses himself, when writing from Badajoz to Lord Wellesley: "If Ciudad-Rodrigo had been provisioned, as I had a right to expect, there was nothing to prevent me from marching to Seville, at the head of 40,000 men, the moment the siege of Badajoz was concluded."

The force of circumstances being thus too strong, like a prudent man he yielded to them. Leaving a sufficient body of troops to cover the parties whom he employed in repairing Badajoz, and a Portuguese brigade to hold the place, till relieved by a Spanish garrison, he marched back with the rest of the army to Beira. The rumour of that movement sufficed to divert Marshal Marmont from thoughts of conquest, which, indeed, seem never to have been very decided with him. He drew back out of Portugal to his old quarters in and about Salamanca; and the British army re-establishing itself where it had rested ere the sieges began, this brilliant winter campaign came on the 25th of April to an end.