

CHAP. posed of them by raffle, and appropriated the produce to the
 XXXV. relief of faithful Spaniards in the province of Burgos and La
 1811. Mancha.

*Massena
 perseveres
 in remain-
 ing, against
 Ney's ad-
 vice.*

Had Ney's advice been followed, the French, as soon as they had ascertained that it was hopeless to attack the lines of Torres Vedras, would have retreated immediately to the frontier. Well had it been for the credit of that army, and well for humanity, if this counsel had been taken. But he and Massena were upon ill terms; Massena, by his defence of Genoa, had acquired a character for endurance which was supposed to influence him at this time; and Buonaparte, in whose calculations human sufferings were never regarded, undoubtedly expected that there would be a change of ministry in England, and that the first measure of the Whigs when in power would be to withdraw the army from Portugal and leave Lisbon open to him. That party deceived him by their hopes as much as they deceived themselves; and they in return were duped by the falsehoods which the French Government published for the purpose of deluding the French people. The only statements which were allowed to be made public in France admitted, indeed, that the English force, and still more the nature of the ground, rendered the lines of Torres Vedras a strong position; but they affirmed that within those lines there was so severe a famine, that people lay dead and dying in the streets of Lisbon, while the French in their quarters were abundantly supplied. But at this very time it was felt by the invading army as no slight aggravation of their sufferings, that while they were in want of every thing, there was plenty beyond that near demarcation which they were unable to force, with all their courage and their excellent skill in war. Throughout the tract which they occupied, the towns of Torres Novas and Thomar were the only places where the inhabitants had generally re-

mained in their houses: but now, when they who had erroneously chosen this as the least of two evils found that the food was taken from them and their children, they began to retire within the British lines, . . . almost in a starving state. Lisbon, notwithstanding the great military force which it then had to support, and though 200,000 fugitives had taken shelter there, was constantly and plentifully supplied; and the distress for food which was felt there, arose only from want of means wherewith to purchase what was in the market. This was relieved by the Government and by the religious houses, who in feeding the poor at this time rendered unequivocal service to the community. Private charity also was never more nobly manifested than in this exigency; among the British officers, a weekly subscription was regularly raised in aid of the destitute; and it is believed that not less than 80,000 of the persons thus suddenly thrown upon the mercy of their fellow-creatures were housed, fed, and clothed at the private cost of those who in their own circumstances had very materially suffered from the interruption which the war had occasioned to their trade, from the pressure of war taxes, and of other requisitions rendered necessary by the exigencies of a state which was struggling for existence. There had been more danger from disease than from dearth, for no sooner had the army retreated upon the lines than the military hospitals were filled, and various other public and private buildings in or near the capital, which were appropriated to the same use. The hospital stores of every kind had been consumed, or carried off by Junot's army, and had not yet been re-supplied. Recourse was immediately had to the benevolent feelings of the people, and clothing and other things needful for the sick were liberally contributed. But during the time that the armies remained in their respective positions, the fever in the hospitals proved more destructive than the sword of the enemy. Meantime the condition of the Portuguese who remained without the lines, though

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*State of the
people with-
in the lines.*

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 XXXV. dreadful; they were not within reach of that eleemosynary dis-
 1811. tribution by which their less miserable countrymen were sup-
 ported; any thing which the country could afford was only to
 be obtained by rescuing it from the enemy, or by marauding in
 those parts which were open to his ravages: and when the men
 of the family perished in this pursuit, or were rendered by over-
 exertion and disease incapable of following it, there was no
 other resource for the women and children and the men thus
 rendered helpless, than the scanty aid which the troops stationed
 there could bestow. The British officers at Caldas da Rainha
 formed a hospital for these unhappy persons, anxiety and inanition
 having produced a fever: in that little, but then crowded town, the
 average of burials was from twenty-five to thirty a day: a trench
 was dug, and the dead laid along the side of it, till a Priest came
 once a day, and with one funeral service consigned them to the
 common grave. Orphaned children were wandering about with
 none to care for them, or give them food: and frightful as the
 mortality was, it would have been far greater but for a dis-
 tribution of soup and maize bread, made once a day by the
 British officers.

*False state-
 ments in
 France.*

It was also asserted in France that the discontent of the
 Portugueze, under the privations which their allies compelled
 them to endure, was at its height; that Marshal Beresford had
 ordered every inhabitant to be shot without process, who did
 not abandon his house upon the enemy's approach; that Trant
 and Silveira had been destroyed; and that not a day passed in
 which English deserters did not come over. Germans and Portu-
 gueze, it was said, were not accounted deserters, because they only
 returned to their duty in joining the army of Napoleon. Such
 representations obtained more credit among factious English-
 men than in France, and Massena looked with far less hope to
 the result of his operations than was expressed by these de-

spondents. With that confident ignorance which always characterised their speculations, they gave him an additional army of more than 20,000 men, which was to join him under Bessieres, and they called Sebastiani from Malaga to co-operate in the united attack. "The whole effort," said they, "will be directed against Lord Wellington: the whole force is collecting and marching to the different points of attack, with the knowledge of the allies, but without their having any means of warding off the blow. The battle must be fought at the time, and in the way we have always foretold; and he must have firm nerves who can contemplate the probable issue with composure." "The crisis in Portugal," said another self-constituted director of public opinion, "may now be expected daily; and then let the calumniators of Sir John Moore do justice to the memory of that injured officer, who was goaded to commit his errors, and then abused for being defeated! He had not interest enough to have his errors christened exploits, and his flight victory." Another demagogue, after representing that it was England which caused the calamities of Portugal, and the English, whom the Portuguese ought to hate and execrate as the authors of their sufferings, asked triumphantly, "Who is there mad enough to expect that we shall be able to put the French out of the Peninsula, either by arms, or by negotiation? Where is the man, in his senses, who believes, or will say that he believes, that we shall be able to accomplish this? Suppose peace were to become the subject of discussion, does any one believe that Napoleon would enter into negotiations about Spain and Portugal? Does any one believe that we must not leave them to their fate? This is bringing the matter to the test. And if the reader is persuaded that we should not be able to stipulate for the independence of the Peninsula, the question is settled, and the result of the war is in reality ascertained!"

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*Schemes of
co-operation
from the
side of
Andalusia.*

An immediate retreat, such as Ney advised, would have been attended with a loss of reputation, which if Massena had been willing to incur, would have been ill brooked by Buonaparte. But in the position which the French had taken, if they could by any means subsist there, they might look for assistance from Soult, and so waiting, facilitate his operations, by occupying the chief attention of the British army. The Spaniards had nowhere displayed so little spirit as in Andalusia. The people of Cadiz, contented with the security for which they were beholden to their situation, seemed not inclined to make any effort against their besiegers; Soult, therefore, might spare a sufficient force for besieging Badajoz. His means for the siege were ample, and the place must fall unless it were relieved by an army capable of meeting the besiegers in the field; but such a force could be drawn only from the lines of Torres Vedras. If the allies were thus weakened, their position might be attacked; or should this still be thought too hazardous, the passage of the Tagus might probably be effected. This would put great part of Alemtejo in their power, and open the communication with Seville and Madrid. If, on the other hand, Badajoz were suffered to fall without an attempt at relieving it, the same advantage would follow from the advance of the victorious army. Masters of Badajoz, and the other less important fortresses, they might leave Elvas behind them: and if they could win the heights opposite Lisbon, they might from thence bombard the capital and destroy the shipping. With these views, Massena made preparations for crossing the Tagus. The British troops which were detached to the south bank, for the purpose of defeating this intention, were cantoned in the villages there, and suffered very much from ague in that low and unwholesome country. Opposite Santarem the river is sometimes fordable; and once the enemy took possession of an island,

called Ilha dos Ingleses, whence they carried off a guard of the Ordenanza, and some cattle. The possession of this islet might have greatly facilitated their passage, but they were speedily dislodged by a company of the 34th, which remained there from that time. To provide, however, against the possibility of their effecting this movement, and also against the advance of a force from the Alentejo frontier, measures had been taken for fortifying a line from the Tagus opposite Lisbon to Setubal; orders were issued for clearing and evacuating the country on their approach; and the inhabitants (well knowing by Loison's campaign what atrocities were to be expected from such invaders) were required to retire within this line.

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Soult and Mortier accordingly, as had been foreseen, advanced from Seville in the latter end of December. Ballasteros, with his ill-equipped and ill-disciplined, but indefatigable troops, was driven out of the field; and Mendizabal, who, with 6000 foot and 2500 Portuguese and Spanish cavalry, had advanced to Llerena, and forced Girard to retire from thence, was now himself compelled to fall back upon Almendralejo and Merida, and finally upon Badajoz, throwing 3000 men into Olivença, a place which had been of great importance in the Acclamation and Succession wars, but which it would at this time have been more prudent to dismantle than to defend. Taking immediate advantage of this error, Soult sent Girard against it with the artillery of the advanced guard. The trenches were opened on the 12th of January. The commander, Don Manuel Herk, communicated with Mendizabal on the 21st, assuring him of his determination and ability to hold out: but a division of besieging artillery had arrived; it was planted in battery that night; and in the morning as soon as it opened, Herk surrendered at discretion. Mortier then immediately invested Badajoz.

*Olivença
taken by the
French.*

The city of Badajoz, which in the age of Moorish anarchy was sometimes the capital of a short-lived kingdom, stands on the left

*Badajoz in-
vested.*

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bank of the Guadiana, near to the spot where it receives the Gevora, and about a league from the little river Caya, which on that part of the frontier divides Spain from Portugal. Its population before the war was estimated at 16,000. Elvas is in sight, at the distance of twelve miles, standing on higher ground, and in a healthier as well as stronger situation; for endemic diseases prevail at certain seasons in the low grounds upon the Guadiana. Count La Lippe had made Elvas one of the strongest fortifications in Europe. Badajoz is a place of the third order: it has no advantage of natural strength, like its old rival; but it had been well fortified, and was protected by two strong forts, S. Christoval on the west, and Las Pardaleras on the east. The acquisition of this city was of the utmost importance to the enemy; if Massena could keep his ground till it fell, a communication would be opened for him with Andalusia; Mortier's army would be enabled to co-operate with him and act against Abrantes; and against Lisbon itself, unless the Trans-tagan lines, which were in progress, should be as formidable as those of Torres Vedras: and supplies might then be drawn from Alentejo, the western part of that province being a rich corn country.

*Death of
Romana.*

Lord Wellington had concerted his plans for the defence of this important frontier with Romana; and a position behind the Gevora had been fixed on for keeping open a communication with Badajoz. Romana's army re-crossed the Tagus, and began their march thither; British troops were to follow, as soon as the reinforcements should arrive, which westerly winds, unusually prevalent at that season, had long delayed; and Romana had named the following day for his own departure, when he was cut off by sudden* death, occasioned by ossification about

Jan. 23.

* A small edition of Pindar, which he had brought from the north, was in his pocket when he died. It is now in the possession of my friend Mr. Locker.

the heart. Due honours were paid to his remains by the Portuguese Government, as well as by the British army: his bowels were buried close to the high altar at Belem, the burial-place of the Portuguese kings, during the most splendid age of their history: his heart and body were sent to his native place, Majorca; and a monument was voted to him by the Cortes. Castanos was appointed to succeed him, and sailed from Cadiz for Lisbon accordingly; but before he could arrive, the consequences of Romana's death had been severely felt. Under the most difficult and hopeless circumstances that noble Spaniard had still kept his army in the field, and had repeatedly annoyed the enemy and obstructed their measures, without ever exposing himself to any considerable loss. The troops, therefore, had full confidence in him; but when Mendizabal met them at Elvas, and took the command, they had no such reliance upon their new leader. On the same day the Portuguese cavalry, under General Madden, drove the French beyond the Gevora; but being unsupported, they were driven back with some loss by General Latour Maubourg, and the whole force then entered, some into Badajoz, some into Fort Christoval. On the morrow a sortie was made, with more gallantry than good fortune, and with the loss of eighty-five officers, and 500 men killed and wounded: Don Carlos d'España was among the latter. The courage of the men in this sally was not more remarkable than the total want of arrangement in their leaders: when they had won the first battery they could not disable the guns, because they had forgotten to take spikes with them! Not discouraged by this severe loss, the troops came out on the 9th. The enemy's cavalry retired before them across the Gevora, and they took up their intended position on the heights of S. Christoval, between the Gevora, the Caya, and the Guadiana. From thence Mendizabal communicated with Elvas

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CHAP. and Campo Mayor, and there he fancied himself in perfect
 XXXV. security. The position, indeed, was strong, and while it was
 1811. held, Badajoz could not be taken. Lord Wellington had advised
 February. Romana to occupy it, but he had advised him to intrench it also,
 Destruction and the necessity of so doing had been repeatedly represented to
 of his army. Mendizabal in vain. Well understanding with what an antagonist
 he had to deal, Mortier would instantly have attacked him if
 the Gevora and Guadiana had not at this time overflowed their
 banks. Losing, however, no time in his operations, he carried
 Las Pardaleras by assault on the night of the 11th. On the
 18th all things were ready for the passage of the Guadiana, and
 a few shells from a well-planted howitzer had the effect of
 making Mendizabal remove his whole army out of the protection
 of the fort. Thus he abandoned the main advantage of his
 position, and yet took no other precaution against an attack
 than that of destroying a bridge over the Gevora; but soldiers
 seldom fail to know when they are ill commanded, and Ro-
 mana's men now deserted in troops, rather than be exposed to
 the certain destruction which they foresaw. That very night
 Mortier threw a flying bridge over the Guadiana, forded the
 Gevora where it was waist-deep, and surprised Mendizabal on
 the heights. The camp was taken standing, with all the baggage
 and artillery: the cavalry fled, notwithstanding the efforts of
 their officers to rally them; 850 men were killed; more than
 5000 taken; some escaped into the city; some, with better for-
 tune, into Elvas; the rest dispersed. The loss of the French,
 in killed and wounded, was only 170, so cheaply was this im-
 portant success obtained.

*Governor
 of Badajoz
 killed.*

This was the first consequence of Romana's death; far worse
 were to ensue. Relieved from all inquietude on that side, Mor-
 tier now pressed the siege; and yet not with that full confidence
 of success which the consciousness of his own strength and