

CHAP. which at little expense might be rendered a second Gibraltar, . .  
 XXXVIII. for little was necessary to render it impregnable: here was a  
 1811. post where they could receive supplies, and here a depôt might  
 be securely established. Eroles, therefore, dispatched orders  
 for 500 men to come and garrison it. The French were equally  
 aware of the advantage which the possession of this point would  
 give their enemies. They brought down a considerable force  
 to Estardit, a village on the opposite shore, and opened bat-  
 teries against the island, which was within reach of shells. The  
 succours which Eroles had gone to expedite did not appear;  
 the force upon the island consisted only of 146 men, exhausted  
 with the fatigues which they had undergone; and Colonel Green  
 reluctantly yielding to the representations of the officer of the  
 Undaunted, abandoned the works which he had begun, and with  
 them the hopes which he had formed, and blew up the fort.  
 The opportunity, however, was happily retrieved. Lacy, who  
 felt the want of such a point to look to, embarked with 200 men  
 from Arens de Mar in the Undaunted; and taking with him  
 labourers, tools, and stores in some transports, re-occupied the  
 islands, giving them the names of the Isles of Restoration, be-  
 cause, he said, this might be considered as the first step to the  
 recovery of the principality. Water was discovered there, a  
 sufficient garrison established, and the fortifications commenced  
 and carried on in sight of the enemy on the opposite shore, and  
 in defiance of their batteries. Bomb-proofs for men and stores  
 were soon made in a situation favourable for such works. The  
 chief battery was named Lacy by the governor; but that general  
 said he would not permit himself to receive this honour, it  
 should be called Montardit, in honour of the last Catalan whom  
 the French, having taken in arms, had put to death, in viola-  
 tion of the laws of war.

General Lacy, being unable to undertake any considerable

attempt against the enemy, determined, in the right spirit of a soldier, to make activity and enterprise supply the want of numbers, and cut up the invaders in detail. They had formed a chain of fortified posts from Barcelona to Lerida. These he resolved to attack, and began by a rapid march upon Igualada, where the enemy had fortified a Capuchine convent. Four hundred men with two guns were to have joined him from Cardona; but he was disappointed of this aid, for no means of moving the guns, nor for making the road practicable for them, could be procured in time; all that could be done was to surprise the town, and cut off as many of the French as possible before they could take refuge in their fort. At three in the morning the sentinels were put to the sword, the enemy surprised in their quarters, twenty-five prisoners were taken, and about 150 killed; the rest escaped into the convent, as they got out of their beds; and Lacy, seeing at daybreak that succours were coming to them from Monserrate and Casa-Masana, retired to Coll de Gusem satisfied with his success, and thence to Manresa. This made them suppose that he had desisted from offensive operations; and a convoy which, in fear of his movements, had been for some days detained at Cervera, ventured to move toward Igualada. Eroles with half the Catalan force got before it, and the commander-in-chief with the other half cut off its retreat. A column with artillery sallied from Igualada to its assistance, but came only to share in the defeat; 200 were wounded and made prisoners, the killed were in proportion, and the whole convoy was taken.

The general finding now that his presence was necessary in the Junta, to forward the formation and organization of the army, left Eroles, his second in command, to complete the plan, which had already so far succeeded that the French, dreading a second attack, and weakened by this last loss, retired precipi-

CHAP.  
XXXVIII.  
1811.

September.

Successful  
enterprise  
of Lacy  
and Eroles.

Oct. 4.

Oct. 7.

CHAP.  
XXXVIII.

1811.

Oct. 10.

tately from Igualada, Monserrate, and Casa-Masana, to Barcelona. Eroles no sooner knew that Igualada had been evacuated, than he marched against Cervera. The French, when they saw him approaching, withdrew from the city into the university, which they had fortified; and a body of 500 foot and thirty horse, which had just arrived from Lerida to their support, turned back to provide for its own safety. D. Luis de Crefft and D. Jose Casas were sent to pursue them, while Eroles with one ten-pounder prepared to attack buildings which had been designed by their founders for far other purposes than those of war. This single gun threw down part of the house in which it was planted; but Eroles turned the accident to advantage; for while he affected to be replacing it, in order to deceive the enemy, the gun was moved to another situation, from whence it opened its fire anew, and its carriage was rattled along so as to make them believe that more artillery was about to be brought to bear. Their commandant soon hung out the white flag, and 630 men were made prisoners of war, at an expense to the Catalans of only ten in killed and wounded.

*Corregidor  
of Cervera  
taken and  
punished.*

This conquest set free a considerable territory, which, ever since the loss of Tarragona, had been at the enemy's mercy. Crefft, meantime, with a force inferior to that he was pursuing, followed the column which was retreating to Lerida, and which on its way was joined by the garrison of Tarrega, another post abandoned by the French in their alarm. In this pursuit the corregidor of Cervera was taken attempting to escape with the enemy; a man who had joined the French, and, with the malevolence of a traitor, persecuted his own countrymen. He had invented a cage in which to imprison those who did not pay their contributions, or were in any way obnoxious to him: it was so constructed as to confine the whole body, leaving the head exposed to be buffeted and spit upon; and sometimes this

devilish villain anointed the face of his victim with honey to attract the flies and wasps. "To-morrow," said Eroles in his dispatches, "the señor corregidor will go out to parade the streets in this same cage, where the persons who have suffered this grievous torment may behold him: *Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnerè Divos!*" The capture of this man was worth as much, in the feelings of the people, as all the preceding success.

Eroles, with the rest of his division, now hastened to Bellpuig, where Crefft had blockaded about 400 French in the old palace of the Dukes of Sesa, a castle of the fifteenth century, which they had fortified, and which commanded the town. The besiegers had only one ten-pounder, and the walls were more than seven feet thick. They had no time to lose, for Latour, with the troops who had escaped from Igualada, and the garrisons of the other evacuated posts, was preparing, in concert with the enemies from Lerida and Balaguer, to march against them. Unused as they were to such operations, and, as Eroles said, without any other engineers than ingenuity and strong desire, they made three mines which reduced the castle almost to a heap of ruins: 184 prisoners were taken, the rest of the garrison perished. This success completed Lacy's plan, and set free the whole of the country between Lerida and Barcelona. Eroles then, by a movement as judicious as it was unexpected, while the French commanders were concerting plans against him, marched by the Seu de Urgel to Puigcerda, where he routed all the force that the enemy could bring against him: then having occupied the pass of the Valle de Luerol, he entered France, and levied contributions in Languedoc. It was the earnest wish of Baron de Eroles, that his troops in this expedition should be as much distinguished by their good order, moderation, and humanity, as the French in Spain were for their crimes. In every place, except one, this object was effected; but in the

CHAP.  
XXXVIII.  
1811.

October.

*Eroles enters France and levies contributions.*

Oct. 14.

CHAP.  
XXXVIII.

1811.

October.

little town of Marens, the only place where resistance was made by the inhabitants and an armed force, a soldier, in violation of his orders, set fire to one of the houses: the wind was high, the flames spread, notwithstanding the efforts which were made to stop them, and the whole place was burnt. Villamil, governor of Seu de Urgel, who commanded this division of Eroles' army, expressed his regret for what had happened; "But, perhaps," he said, "the furious hand which committed the evil had been impelled by divine justice, that France might behold an image of Manresa." Every where else the orders of the commander were rigidly observed; and the French, admiring the humanity of an enemy who had been so grievously wronged, in many places where they paid the required contribution, acknowledged the justice of this retaliation. Some thousand sheep and corn, and specie to the amount of 50,000 dollars, were the fruits of this first inroad of the Spaniards into France.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE FRENCH ENTER GALICIA. LORD WELLINGTON THREATENS CIUDAD RODRIGO, WHICH IS RELIEVED BY MARMONT. GENERAL HILL SURPRISES THE ENEMY AT ARROYO MOLINOS. SIEGE OF MURVIEDRO. DEFEAT OF BLAKE, AND CAPTURE OF VALENCIA.

At no time had Lord Wellington's situation been more uneasy than at this: not so much because of the inadequacy of his means in the field, for, such as they were, he was able to oppose the enemy and baffle him at all points; as because of the distressed state of the Portugueze Government, and the apprehended instability of his own. Marlborough had had more various and conflicting interests to adjust and keep in unison, but he had no other difficulty with his allies: he could rely upon a sure support in the British cabinet, till he had beaten down all opposition in the field; and the feelings both of the army and the nation were with him. Lord Wellington might rely upon himself with a confidence as well founded, but he could have no other trust. Nothing was to be expected from any government which the Spaniards might form for themselves; and it now began to appear that the inert part of the nation, which must every where be the majority, would have been best pleased to remain neuter if that had been possible, and let the French and English fight the battle and bear the cost. Portugal, indeed, had been delivered from the enemy; but there

CHAP.  
XXXIX.

1811.

August.  
State of  
Portugal.

CHAP.  
XXXIX.  
1811.

*August.*

Lord Wellington had to contend with intrigues and jealousies in the Government both at Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro; and with the difficulties arising from want of provisions, want of transports, and the state of the commissariat, the persons employed in which were for the most part either idle or dishonest, or ignorant of their duty; so that at this time the Portuguese army, though brought by Marshal Beresford and the British officers to an efficient state of discipline, was reduced to half its nominal strength. Their troops were starving in the field, and dying in the hospitals, for want of money. If there was much to complain of here on the part of the Portuguese ministry, the conduct of Great Britain itself was neither consistent nor generous. Engaged as we were in the war, Lord Wellington thought we ought to have entered upon it with a determination of carrying Portugal through it at whatever cost; that for this purpose we should have required an efficient control over all the departments of the state, have seen the resources of the country honestly and exclusively applied to the objects of the war, and have made up the deficiency whatever it might be: this he had recommended from the beginning, but the influence which was exercised was less at this time than it had been when the Convention of Cintra was concluded.

*Expectation  
of peace.*

No general ever more anxiously desired to be placed at the head of an army than Lord Wellington did now to be relieved from the command; but of this he had no prospect, except from such a peace as would in its certain consequences have given Buonaparte all that he was seeking vainly to obtain by war. There was great apparent danger of this at this time. In case of the death of the king, or the acknowledged unlikelihood of his recovery (which now daily became more unlikely), the French speculated upon a change of administration in England, and the accession of the Whigs to power. The French officers

eagerly looked for this, expecting to make such a peace as would enable them to withdraw from the Peninsula without loss of credit, and to re-enter it as soon as their perfidious policy should have prepared a favourable opportunity. In our own army also there were many who regarded the probability of peace with as much complacency as if the end for which the war had been waged would have been secured by it. These were persons who neither by their acquirements, nor pitch of mind, were qualified for the rank which they had attained in their profession ; who had not the slightest feeling or perception of the great interests which were at stake, but knowing little, understanding nothing, and criticising every thing, infected all about them with despondency and discontent.

On the other hand, there were at this time, in many parts of Europe, hopeful symptoms, of which Lord Wellington was well informed. Even when Austria had concluded the most unfortunate of its struggles, with loss of honour as well as loss of territory, one of the wisest heads in Germany assured the British Government, that although the German courts swarmed with men who were great calculators of all possible disasters, and who knew nothing more of the human heart than its weaknesses and its selfishness, . . . the Germans themselves, though subjugated, were not yet debased by their subjugation ; they would one day revenge their wrongs ; a warlike spirit would be developed among them, which had been neglected or suppressed by their feeble and corrupt governments ; and it would then be seen that there are times when enthusiasm judges more wisely than experience, and when elevation of mind creates resources for the talents which it calls forth. Russia, which had so long been duped by Buonaparte, became sensible of his perfidy, when, in violation of the treaty of Tilsit, he incorporated the Hanse towns and the duchy of Oldenburgh with the French

CHAP.  
XXXIX.

1811.

*August.**Disposition  
of the conti-  
nental pow-  
ers to resist  
Buona-  
parte.*



CHAP.  
XXXIX.

1811.

August.

empire. An opposition to the tyrant's schemes was manifested in Sweden, where it was less to have been expected: for when the French government demanded permission to march troops through Sweden into Norway, and embark them there for the purpose of invading England, the Swedish government refused, and communicated its refusal to the British cabinet. Prussia, meantime, was silently preparing to break its yoke; and in the course of this autumn, arms, stores, and artillery to a considerable amount, were shipped from England for its use. This was so secretly done, that not a rumour got abroad of any expectations from that quarter; and if the British ministry had acted with as much ability in the management of the war, as in its other foreign relations, its conduct would now have been entitled to unqualified praise: but no representations could as yet induce it to make exertions proportionate to the opportunities that invited, or the necessity that called for them. Whether Buonaparte apprehended, or not, any opposition to his ambitious career in the north of Europe, he was too able a politician to let pass the opportunity of employing as large a force in the Peninsula as could be supported there upon his predatory system of warfare; and accordingly more than 50,000 troops were marched into Spain between the middle of July and the end of September.

Plans of  
Soul and  
Marmont.

When Marmont and Soult, finding it impossible to take Lord Wellington at advantage, separated on the Guadiana, their plan was, that the former should keep the English in check, while Dorsenne, who had succeeded Bessieres in the north, should enter Galicia, fortify Lugo, seize Coruña by a *coup de main*, and in this manner once more obtain military possession of the province.

Dorsenne  
enters Gali-  
cia.

Abadia had just taken the command of the Galician army; it was in wretched equipment, and without magazines of any

kind; but the men had confidence in their general, and when Spanish soldiers have this feeling to invigorate them, they will support privations under which the troops of almost any other nation would sink. His advanced guard was at S. Martin de los Torres, and occupied the bridge of Cebrones; one division was at Bañeza, another at the bridge of Orbigo, and the reserve at Astorga. Dorsenne collected his troops in a line of operations on the Ezla, the right leaning upon Leon, and the left at Castro Gonzalo: then he crossed the Ezla, one division marching upon the Bridge of Orbigo, two upon Bañeza, and the reserve upon Cebrones. Abadia well knowing the state of his own army, and the strength of the country behind him, had formed his plans in case of such an attack. The division at Bañeza withstood a charge of lancers, and fell back in good order to Castro Contrigo, from whence its retreat was unmolested to Puebla de Sanabria, the place appointed.

CHAP.  
XXXIX.  
1811.

August.

Aug. 25.

The other divisions fell back from four in the evening, when the enemy first presented themselves, till night had closed, when they were all collected in Castrillo. The next day the French entered upon the mountains behind Astorga in pursuit. The points of Manzanal and Molina Seca were well defended, and though the Spaniards retired at both points before superior numbers, they brought off with them the eagle of the sixth regiment of infantry, which Abadia, in the name of the army, dedicated to Santiago, and deposited in the chapel of that saint, in his cathedral at Compostella. Seeing the force of the enemy, and divining their purpose, he fell back to Ponferrada, covering, with his little cavalry, a considerable body of men who were crippled for want of shoes, and in the most dismal state of nakedness and want. The ferry in Valdeorras, that gorge through which the river Sil entering Galicia carries with it all the waters of the Bierzo, was the point of re-union. The

Retreat of  
Abadia.