

CHAP. the whole army was deposited there ; the bridge at Alcantara was
 XLI. repaired for a readier communication with Sir Rowland's corps ;
 1812. and on the 13th of June the army broke up from its cantonments
 June. on the Agueda. On the 16th they came up with the enemy,
 about six miles from Salamanca, on the Valmusa, and there was
 a skirmish with their cavalry ; in the evening the French with-
 drew across the Tormes, and the army bivouacked within a
 league of Salamanca.

Salamanca.

When the earliest accounts of Spain begin, Salamanca was already a considerable place, and known by a name little different from what it bears at present. It fell to decay after the Moorish conquest, but was repeopled at the same time with certain other towns upon the Tormes by the Leonese in the 10th century, after the great battle of Simancas: in the 13th King St. Ferdinand removed thither the university from Palencia. It soon became one of the most flourishing seats of learning in Christendom, and continued to be so till Spain rejected the light of the reformation. In its best days it is said to have contained no fewer than 8,000 native students, and 7,000 from foreign countries: when the present war began, the number little exceeded 3,000, among whom a few Irish were the only foreigners. The population consisted of some 3,400 families: it had once been much greater. But Salamanca was still an important and a famous place: popular fiction had made its name familiar to those who are unacquainted with its history; while to the antiquary, the historian, and the philosopher, it is a city of no ordinary interest. The Roman road which extended from thence to Merida, and so to Seville, may still be traced in its vicinity: its bridge of twenty-seven arches, over the Tormes, is said to be in part a Roman work. The Mozarabic liturgy is retained in one of its churches. Its cathedral, though far inferior to some of the older edifices,

whether of Moorish or Gothic architecture, in Spain, is a large and imposing structure. Twenty-five parish churches are enclosed within its walls, twenty convents of monks or friars, eleven of nuns: these, with its numerous colleges, give it an imposing appearance from without, and a melancholy solemnity within. Nowhere, indeed, were there more munificent endowments for education, and for literature, and for religion; and nowhere could be less of that happy effect which the benefactors in their piety had contemplated: the philosophy which was taught there was that of the schoolmen, the morality that of the casuists, the religion that of the Inquisition. It is a popular belief in Spain, that the Devil also has his college at Salamanca, where students of the black art take their degrees in certain caverns, every seventh being left with him, in earnest of the after-payment to which they all are bound.

The city stands in a commanding situation, on the right bank of the Tormes, a river of considerable magnitude there, which rises near the Sierra de Tablada in Old Castille, and falls into the Douro on the Portugueze frontier, opposite Bemposta. The country round is open, without trees, and with a few villages interspersed, in which the houses are constructed of clay. On the left of the river there are extensive pastures, on the right a wide and unenclosed corn country. The pastures are common, and the arable land occupied after a manner not usual in other parts of Spain: it is cultivated in annual allotments, and reverts to the commonalty after the harvest.

Marmont had apprehended this advance of the allies, and had applied for reinforcements without effect. He showed some cavalry and a small body of infantry in front of the town, and manifested an intention of holding the heights on the south side of the Tormes; but in the evening of the 16th the enemy with-

CHAP.
XLI.

1812.

June.

*The Tormes.**The allies enter Salamanca.*

CHAP. drew over the river, and the allies bivouacked within a league of
 XLI. Salamanca. The French retired from that city during the night,
 1812. leaving some 800 men in the fortifications which they had con-
 June. structed there. These works commanded the bridge; the left
 column of the allied army therefore crossed at the ford of El
 Campo, a league below the city, the centre and the right at the
 ford of Santa Martha. The utmost joy was expressed by the in-
 habitants when the English entered, and women crowded to thank
 Lord Wellington and bless him for their deliverance. Some aching
 hearts there were among those who had connected themselves by
 marriage, or by looser ties, with the enemies of their country, but
 the general feeling was that of perfect and grateful joy; for
 though this city had suffered none of the immediate evils of war,
 its consequences had been severely felt there. During the three
 years of its captivity, the French had demolished thirteen of its
 convents and twenty-two of its twenty-five colleges; the people
 had been compelled to labour upon works erected for their own
 subjugation; and the last act of the enemy before they left the city
 was to set fire to such houses as obstructed the defence of their
 works, . . . consisting of a fort and two redoubts. For the same
 reason, they had previously demolished the Convent of St. Au-
 gustine, the colleges of Cuenca and Oviedo, and the magnificent
 King's College. The fort was formed out of the Convent of St.
 Vicente, a large building in the centre of the angle of the old
 wall, on a perpendicular cliff over the Tormes. The windows
 had been built up and loopholed; on both sides it was con-
 nected by lines of works with the old wall. There was a
 fascine battery in a re-entering angle of the convent, not en-
 closed by these lines, and this was protected by a loopholed
 wall, with a palisade in front. The demolition of so many sub-
 stantial edifices supplied timber of the best quality, and in
 abundance, for gates, drawbridges, palisades, and splinter proofs;

*Siege of the
 forts there.*

*Col. Jones's
 Sieges,
 158-9.*

and the whole was well flanked in every part. The ground to the south, which was toward the bridge, fell by a steep descent: at the bottom was a small stream flowing to the Tormes; and on the opposite bank the convents of San Cayetano and La Merced had been converted with great skill into two redoubts, with well-covered perpendicular escarpes, deep ditches, and casemated counterscarps; they were also full of bomb proofs, made by supporting a roof horizontally and vertically with strong beams, and covering it with six feet of earth. These works were seen at once to be far more respectable than Lord Wellington had expected to find, his information amounting to little more than that some convents had been fortified. It was necessary to reduce them before the army could advance, but the means of attack had been provided on this inadequate knowledge: they consisted of only four iron eighteen-pounders and four 24-pounder iron howitzers, with an hundred rounds for each. The engineers had only 400 intrenching-tools, without any stores; there were present three engineer officers, with nine men of the corps of royal military artificers; and the works were soon found to be even more formidable than they appeared.

The sixth division broke ground before the fort. The left wing of the army moved to Villares de la Reyna, a league in advance of Salamanca; the right and centre bivouacked on the Tormes, near Santa Martha, on the right bank. Lieutenant-Colonel Ponsonby's brigade followed the retiring enemy, and skirmished with them for two leagues. A battery was erected for breaching the main wall of the fort. It was nearly full moon; little could be done therefore during the first night. An attempt to blow in part of the counterscarp opposite to the intended breach was frustrated by the vigilance of a dog; and an attempt at mining it failed also, the party being ordered to withdraw in consequence of the loss sustained by a

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June.

June 17.

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June.

plunging fire from the top of the convent. On the second night two batteries were completed: they opened the following morning, and beat down part of the wall; but the enemy's musketry fired with great effect from loopholes in the upper windows, and their fire was more than ordinarily destructive, because of the large openings of the embrasures which were necessary for such short pieces as the howitzers. More ammunition was sent for to Almeida. Early on the third day, the lower part of the convent wall, three feet and a half thick, was pierced through, and at a single shot half the length of that face of the building came down, bringing the roof with it, and laying the interior open: the men were seen firing through the loopholes at the moment of its fall, and they of course were buried in the ruins. Carcasses were then fired into the convent to set it on fire, but the enemy's precautions prevented them from taking effect.

*Marmont
moves to re-
lieve them.*

Marmont at this time moved forward from Fuente Sabuco, making the most display of the force which he could then bring together: it was estimated at about 16,000 men. He advanced as if with a determination of giving battle, firing artillery the whole way to give the forts notice of his approach. Lord Wellington immediately formed the allied army upon the heights: his left, where the rains had formed a deep ravine, rested on a chapel; his centre was in the village of S. Christobal de la Cuesta, and his right on another eminence in front of Castellanos de los Moriscos. . . The advanced posts retired before the enemy with little loss; there was a considerable cannonade on both sides; the enemy's cavalry were dislodged by our guns from the position in which they had halted; and Marmont, after manoeuvring for some time in front of the position, took up ground in the plain below it, near the village of Villares, and just out of cannon-shot, his right resting upon the great road to Toro, his left in Castellanos de los Moriscos. The allies were under arms

at daylight, expecting an attack. In the course of the day the French received reinforcements, but not sufficient to justify them in bringing on an action, scarcely in exposing themselves to one. Both armies remained quiet in front of each other, the allies on the heights, the French close under their position, occupying Castellanos de los Moriscos in force, and having a considerable bivouac between that village and another on their right: both villages were soon completely unroofed for firewood, and there were wells in both, whereas the allies were badly off for wood and water, which were brought to them in insufficient supply from Salamanca. There was not a tree on the position; but the midsummer sun was less powerful than it usually is in that country, and the troops did not suffer from heat.

During the night, the French occupied an eminence on the right flank of the allies. Sir Thomas Graham was directed to dislodge them. The 58th and 61st carried the hill immediately, and drove them from the ground with considerable loss. The enemy's troops got under arms, expecting a general attack, but they made no attempt to regain the hill. They retired in the night, and on the following evening posted themselves with their right on the heights near Cabeza Velloso, their left on the Tormes at Huerta, their centre at Aldea Rubia, their object in this movement being to communicate with the garrison. Lord Wellington therefore changed the front of his army, placing the right at S. Martha, and the advanced posts at Aldea Lingua; and he sent Major-General Bock's brigade of heavy dragoons across the river in order to observe the fords. By this time a battery which had been opened on the Cayetano redoubt had beaten down the palisades and injured the parapet; and when night closed, 300 men from the 6th division were ordered to attack it by escalade. The undertaking was difficult, and the men seemed to feel it. Major-General Bowes went forward

CHAP.

XLI.

1812.

June 21.

June 23.

CHAP. with the storming party: he was wounded, returned to the
 XLI. attack as soon as his wound was dressed, and was then killed.

1812. The enemy made so resolute a resistance, that only two ladders
 were reared against the redoubt, and no one mounted them.
 120 men were killed or wounded in this unsuccessful attempt.
 On the following evening, a truce was made for removing the
 killed and wounded; till then the French would neither allow
 them to be removed, nor remove them themselves.

June 24. There had been a report on the preceding afternoon, that
 the enemy had crossed at Huerta. Lord Wellington was on
 the hill at Aldea Lingua by daybreak. It was certain that they
 had made some movement, but the morning was so foggy that
 nothing could be seen. Soon Major-General Bock's brigade
 was heard skirmishing, and from their fire it was evident that
 they were losing ground. The French had crossed about two
 in the morning in considerable force; and when the fog cleared
 General Bock was seen retiring in the best order before superior
 numbers, who had also the advantage of having artillery with
 them. Lord Wellington, upon the first certainty that the
 enemy had passed the Tormes, ordered the 1st and 7th divisions,
 under Sir Thomas Graham, to cross and take up a position to
 the right in front of Santa Martha, and Major-General Le
 Marchant's brigade of cavalry was sent to support General
 Bock; the rest of the army he concentrated between Castellanos
 de los Moriscos and Cabrerizas, keeping the advanced posts at
 Aldea Lingua. The French, who had crossed with 10,000
 infantry and fourteen squadrons of horse, gained possession of
 Calvarasa de Abaxo; but seeing the disposition which was made
 for their reception, they did not venture upon an attack. About
 three in the afternoon they began to withdraw, and before night
 they had repassed the river to their former position. The allies
 also recrossed.

Both armies remained quiet during the following day, but on the next night a communication was carried along the bottom of the ravine between the redoubts and the fort, and a piquet was lodged under the gorge of S. Cayetano. On the morrow a supply of ammunition arrived, and red-hot shot were then fired against San Vicente. By the third shot the roof of a large square tower on the convent was set on fire and consumed; but the conflagration did not spread, and during the day wherever fires broke out they were speedily extinguished. The inhabitants said that the powder in the fort was well secured; but no activity on the enemy's part could long counteract the means of destruction which were now employed. Hot shot were fired during the whole night: by ten in the morning the convent was in flames. At the same time a breach had been effected in the gorge of S. Cayetano: the troops were formed in readiness for assaulting it, when a white flag was hoisted there, and the commanding officer offered to surrender that and the other redoubt in two hours, which time he asked for that he might represent his situation to the commandant in San Vicente. Lord Wellington offered him five minutes to march out, in which case he should preserve his baggage; but it presently appeared that he was only negotiating for the sake of gaining time, as in fact he could not venture without the commandant's sanction to carry into effect the capitulation which he had offered. He was ordered, therefore, to take down his white flag. The commandant meantime sent out a flag of truce, and proposed to surrender San Vicente in three hours: five minutes were allowed, and as at the expiration of that short term there was no appearance of their coming out, both redoubts were stormed, and carried with little resistance. The troops moved forward against the fort: a few shot were fired from it, by which six

CHAP.
XLI.

1812.

July.

*Surrender
of the forts.*

CHAP. men were killed or wounded; but with that the resistance
 XLI. ended: the enemy even helped the Portugueze caçadores into
 1812. the work, and Lord Wellington allowed them to march out
 June. with the honours of war, but to be prisoners of war, the officers
 retaining their personal military baggage, and the soldiers their
 knapsacks. There were 36 pieces of cannon in the forts, with
 large depôts of clothing, and military stores of every kind: these
 were consigned to the Spaniards, and the works were destroyed.
 The prisoners were somewhat more than 700; the loss of the be-
 siegers about 450.

*Marmont
 falls back
 upon the
 Douro.*

Marmont commenced his retreat at midnight, as if, said the Spaniards, he had only come thither to witness the capture of his fort, and see the illumination made by it when on fire. At daylight their column was nearly out of sight, and their rear-guard moving off the ground. During this tarriance, the French, considering that part of Spain no longer as a subjected but as a hostile country, had acted in the same spirit of disgraceful barbarity as had rendered their name execrable in Portugal; and when they departed, they left the villages of Castellanos de los Moriscos, Huerta, Babila Fuente, Villoria, and Villaruela in flames: where they did not burn the villages, they sacked the houses, and murdered those who had ventured to remain in them; and where they did not trample down the standing corn, they set fire to it. The popular feeling had been strongly manifested during the operations against the forts: not only were all necessaries and accommodations for the wounded abundantly supplied, but women of all ranks offered their services to attend on them. High mass was performed this day in the cathedral, at which Lord Wellington and most of the general officers attended. Lord Wellington gave a dinner in Salamanca, and the Junta a ball in the evening; but some of the principal in-