

so dark that the enemy could not perceive and take advantage of any change in their position. The night was again rainy, and in posting the sentries at some parts, it was not easy, because of the darkness, to avoid interfering with the French piquets. The weather cleared toward morning; drums and trumpets were heard at intervals along the enemy's line; and at sunrise their staff officers were seen riding in all directions. Soult showed three or four divisions; and at ten some severe skirmishing began, which continued till three, being chiefly confined to the wood and the immediate ground about the house of Barouillet. The loss was not great, but it fell chiefly on the guards: Captain Watson, the adjutant of the 3d guards, observed in the morning that "plenty of laurel grew round that house to deck the graves of those who should fall" .. and he was one of the first. Lord Wellington, foreseeing Soult's intention, moved the 4th and 7th divisions to the rear of the light division and of the first, where they might afford support to either. But Marshal Soult, when he found how fully the allies were prepared, did not deem it prudent to make any farther effort on this side, where he had tried his fortune skilfully, bravely, and perseveringly, but without success. The skirmishing therefore ceased in the afternoon, and the enemy retired entirely within their intrenched camp that night.

The last four days had been most harassing to the troops, exposed as they had been, and continually under arms; but the fifth day of these multiplied actions proved more murderous than any of the foregoing. During the night Soult passed a large force through Bayonne, with the intention of making a most formidable attack upon the right wing of the allies. Sir Rowland was aware of his movements, and prepared accordingly. His position was about a league from Bayonne, in the form of a crescent, extending about four miles from the Adour

CHAP.  
XLV.

1813.

*December.*  
Dec. 12.



CHAP. XLV.  
 1813. 

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 December. to the Nive. Major-General Pringle's brigade, consisting of the 28th, 34th, and 39th regiments, formed the left, stationed on a ridge of hilly ground extending from Ville-Franche toward Bayonne, and bounded on one side by the Nive, and on the other by large mill-dams in a deep hollow, which separates it from the heights of Monguerre. Major-General Byng's brigade, consisting of the 31st, 57th, and 68th, formed the right, posted also on a long ridge, in front of the village of Vieux Monguerre, which had the Adour on its right, and mill-dams in like manner on its left, separating it from the heights in the centre. Brigadier-General Ashworth's Portugueze brigade occupied the centre ridge opposite the village of S. Pierre. The ground was favourable, because it admitted of only one or two points of attack, one of which was by the main road.

It was a clear frosty morning, but the ground so wet, and the road so heavy in that deep and rich soil, that the horses were knee-deep in stiff mud and clay. Soon after eight o'clock, the allied out-posts on the great road were attacked by *tirailleurs* in great numbers, and the French columns advanced close in the rear. Soult showed that day about four divisions; and these, drawn up in two lines and supporting columns, appeared, from the confined ground on which they acted, more numerous than they were. They advanced up the long slope in front of the centre position, their column extending a good way on either side of the road; at the same time a large body moved against the left of the centre, up the hollow way, its right resting upon the mill-dams. Sir Rowland, as soon as the enemy's intention of piercing the centre was manifest, brought Major-General Barnes's brigade forward from the heights of Petit Monguerre, and stationed it on the right of Ashworth's Portugueze. He moved also the whole of Byng's brigade, except one regiment, and the light companies of the others, to



support the right of the centre, and Brigadier-General Buchan's Portugueze brigade from behind Ville-Franche, to support its left. These troops arrived just at the time when they were most needed; four guns of Lieutenant-Colonel Ross's troop, and Lieutenant-Colonel Tullock's brigade of Portugueze artillery, were also moved up in aid of the centre, and kept up a steady but cautious fire, all possible exertions being used meantime for bringing them a supply of ammunition. The light companies which had gone forward in support of the piquets were borne back by weight of numbers upon the main line, and the French established themselves upon a height close to the position; and here the heat of the contest lay, this post being repeatedly won and lost, till Barnes's brigade, with the 92d Highlanders, and Ashworth's Portugueze, made a final charge, and drove the enemy down. The artillery fired this day with dreadful effect, and the main road was in many places literally running with blood.

On the right a feint only was made, before which the battalion that had been left there retired from Vieux Monguerre to the heights in its rear; but, ascertaining from thence that the enemy on this side were not in force, they re-entered the village, and made some prisoners there. But on the left centre the columns which had advanced up the hollow way made a powerful attack; and though the 71st and part of the 92d were sent to aid the Portugueze there, the enemy, by dint of superior force, won an important part of the position in front of Ville-Franche. Two Portugueze regiments opportunely arrived: Sir William Stewart directed the one to turn the right flank of the attacking columns, while the other attacked the enemy in front, charging them with the bayonet; and this was decisive in that quarter. A hot fire of *tirailleurs* was kept up meantime upon Major-General Pringle's brigade, with a view of preventing it

CHAP.  
XLV.

1813.

December.



CHAP. from aiding the centre ; but that General, occupying a line at  
 XLV. right angles to theirs, caused them considerable loss by a well-  
 1813. directed flanking fire.

December.

Foreseeing such an attack on Sir Rowland, Lord Wellington had provided against it by requesting Marshal Beresford to reinforce him with the 6th division, which had crossed the Nive accordingly at daylight that morning ; and he sent also for the fourth and two brigades of the third, and formed them in reserve. The expected coming of the 6th division gave Sir Rowland great facility in making his movements ; but before its arrival he had completely repulsed the enemy, the troops under his immediate command being about 13,000 men, and the force by which they were attacked little, if at all, short of twice that number. The allies kept their ground, . . . their purpose, therefore, was effected ; Soult's troops, when beaten back, had the city and the intrenched camp in their immediate rear, and retired under cover of their guns placed in position. They remained in great force in front of that camp, and kept up a warm cannonade upon the centre ; but the officers could not induce their men again to renew attacks which they had found so destructive. Sir William Stewart then directed Major-General Byng to unite his brigade and attack the enemy upon the opposite bank of the mill-stream, in front of the height of Vieux Monguerre. Byng did this in the most gallant style, carrying the colours of the 66th himself, and planting them, under a hot fire of musketry and artillery, in their position. The third regiment crossed the mill-stream to co-operate in the attack ; the brigade then drove the enemy down, and Buchan's Portugueze arrived to aid in finally repulsing them. About four o'clock the action terminated in a continued skirmishing : at night the enemy retired within their camp.

The loss of the allies during these five days, in killed,



wounded, and missing, amounted to 5029, of whom 302 were officers: nearly half the loss fell upon the Portugueze, upon whom, indeed, as much reliance was now placed as upon the British themselves. The last day was the most destructive: Generals Barnes, Le Cor, and Ashworth, and nearly the whole of the staff and aides-de-camp of Sir William Stewart, and of Generals Barnes and Byng, were wounded. The French return made their loss 1314 killed and 4600 wounded. They fought well in this long series of actions, far better than they had done in defending their position upon the Nivelle; and this can only be explained by the different feeling with which men, and especially men of the French temperament, are animated when standing on their defence, from that which excites them when they are themselves the assailants. Marshal Soult, who was never wanting in ability, never displayed more than on this occasion. The often repeated effort cost him his best troops, and forced upon him the mortifying conviction that, brave as they were, and admirably disciplined, they were nevertheless inferior to their opponents: for all circumstances here had been in his favour; the points of attack were at his own choice, and wherever he attacked he brought into the field a greatly superior force; yet every where he had been defeated. Not venturing, therefore, again to repeat a trial in which he had so often failed, though he had at this time 50,000 infantry and 6000 cavalry, he cantoned his army in a defensive position, having its right on the camp round Bayonne, its centre spread along the right of the Adour to Port de Laune, and its left along the right of the Bidouse, from its confluence to S. Palais, posting two divisions of cavalry on the left of that place, and a weak division, under Harispe, at S. Jean de Pied-de-Port. That General had been withdrawn from Suchet's army for this service, because, being a native of the valley of Baigorry, and

CHAP.  
XLV.

1813.

December.

*Soult takes  
a defensive  
position.*



CHAP. XLV.  
 1813. *December.* having distinguished himself as a partizan in the Pyrenees, in the years 1794 and 1795, it was supposed that he might raise some irregular corps of his countrymen, and turn against the allies that system of guerrilla warfare which had proved so destructive to the invaders in Spain. Marshal Soult apprehended that Bayonne would be invested; and therefore he made Port de Lanne, which is on the Adour, eighteen miles above that city, his principal depôt, laying down a bridge there, and protecting it by strong works; and he lined the right of the river with redoubts armed with heavy cannon. He intrenched Hastings, and covered Peyrehorade with a *tête-de-pont*, for the defence of the Gave de Pau; and in like manner secured the passages over the Bidouse at Guiche, Bedache, and Came. He also strengthened the fortifications of S. Jean de Pied-de-Port and Navarreins, and intrenched Dax as an entrepôt for stores and reinforcements from the interior; thus omitting no measure of precaution which a just estimate of his enemy's strength seemed to require.

*The allies wait in their cantonments for better weather.*

The weather, by impeding for awhile any advance on the part of the allies, allowed him time for this. Lord Wellington waited till it should become more favourable, having obtained possession of a large tract of country, and being in a situation from whence to resume his operations with advantage as soon as the season might permit. Upon first entering France he had circulated among the inhabitants those general orders in which he enjoined his troops to respect their persons and property, accompanying them with a brief proclamation to the people. He had given, he said, and would enforce these positive orders for preventing those evils that might otherwise be looked for as the ordinary consequences of an invasion which they knew was the result of their own government's invasion of Spain, and of the victories of the allied armies. He



requested them to apprehend and bring before him any person who, disobeying these instructions, might offer them any injury; and, on their side, he required them to remain in their houses, and take no part in the war of which their country was now to be the scene. Great injury must inevitably be endured by the inhabitants of any country upon which that visitation falls; but none was suffered now which could be prevented by vigilant discipline founded upon just views of policy and a strict sense of justice. On the morning after the line of the Nivelle had been forced, a peasant was brought before Lord Wellington, having been taken near the British outposts: the man's simple account of himself was, that he was going to drive his sheep to Bayonne; upon which he was told that he might go where he pleased, and take his sheep where he pleased too. When the French saw that the peasantry were thus treated, . . . that the very few who were taken in arms were shipped off, like other prisoners, for England, . . . and that marauders were brought to summary punishment, they perceived that their invaders were as equitable as they were brave, and that the word of a British general was sacred.

The guerrilla troops, whom it would have been more difficult to restrain, were kept upon their own frontier. The discipline of the Portugueze was as good as that of the English. Marshal Beresford, when he commended them in one of his orders for their excellent conduct at the line of the Nivelle, expressed his particular satisfaction with their behaviour in their quarters and towards the inhabitants in general. They had proved, he said, their superiority over the French troops in the field of battle; and they had shown, also, to the French people that they were not less superior to those troops in humanity and in their whole deportment, whereby, as well as by their discipline and courage, they did honour to their country. The Portugueze were not less gratified by another order which Marshal Beres-

CHAP.  
XLV.

1813.

December.

Nov. 28.



CHAP. XLV. ford issued after the passage of the Nive. He had deemed it necessary, in the spring of the preceding year, to deprive certain militia regiments of their colours, till they should have redeemed their character in the presence of the enemy; this, he said, they had had no opportunity of doing, the war having happily been removed far from their own country: but regiments raised in the same parts of Portugal, composed of their brethren and other near kinsmen, and in which, in fact, many of the very men who, in the said militias, had incurred this disgrace were now serving, had, in the late series of victories, demeaned themselves so gallantly, that they had re-established the character of their respective provinces; wherefore in justice he ordered that their colours should be restored. Their misconduct, he added, had proceeded not from want of courage, but from insubordination, . . . and that, too, not the effect of wilful disobedience, but arising from habits of undue familiarity between the officers and the men, owing to which, the latter were not prepared to render prompt obedience when it was indispensable. He reminded the officers, therefore, how necessary it was that they should obtain the respect of their soldiers by treatment at the same time just, impartial, gentle, and firm; and observed that the provincial governors would see the necessity henceforth of recommending, for commissions in the militia, persons who were qualified by their means and by their local respectability. Marshal Beresford understood the national character. The Portugueze were in no slight degree gratified by this: they were proud of the military reputation which they had now established, and not less deservedly of that national feeling which they had manifested under every circumstance of good or evil fortune. A signal example of this feeling was given shortly afterwards by a battalion of Portugueze and Spaniards, composed of men who had been entrapped into the enemy's service

CHAP.  
XLV.  
1813.

*December.*  
*Marshal Beresford restores the colours of certain Portugueze regiments.*  
*Dec. 29.*  
*See p. 433.*

*Correio Braziliense, t. 12, p. 306.*

*Conduct of Spanish and Portugueze soldiers at Dantzic.*



before the commencement of the struggle in their own country. They formed part of the garrison of Dantzic when the allies besieged it; and, knowing that the besiegers were in alliance with Spain and Portugal, no threats or inducements could prevail upon them to bear arms in defence of the city: in consequence of this firm refusal, the French commander compelled them to work upon the fortifications; but they had their reward; and when the place surrendered, they were maintained at the expense of the Russian government, till they could be transported to England on their way home.

The Spanish government had shown no want of gratitude to Lord Wellington in conferring upon him honours and rewards. They gave him the title of Duque del Vittoria after the victory which drove the Intruder out of Spain; but while in such things they conformed to the national sentiment, their conduct sometimes manifested a want of that frank and generous confidence which ought to have been given in as full measure as it was deserved. In direct breach of the engagement made with him when he accepted the command of the Spanish armies, they had superseded Castaños, and made other changes, not only without his advice and concurrence, but contrary to his wishes, and in disregard of his remonstrances: and this might have produced the most injurious effect, if the war had not speedily been transferred to the enemy's country. Libels were circulated imputing sinister views to England, because some of its troops still remained at Cadiz and at Carthagená; and the government allowed these libels to circulate without taking any means for counteracting the impression which the calumny was intended to produce. Lord Wellington withdrew the troops as soon (after their presence had ceased to be necessary there) as he could obtain the Prince Regent's orders; and, in notifying this to the British ambassador, he stated the circumstances under which those fortresses had

CHAP.  
XLV.

1813.

*Ill conduct  
of the Spa-  
nish govern-  
ment toward  
Lord Well-  
ington.*