

fever, was sent into the rear, both for change of air, and that it might be removed from intercourse with the rest of the army. The rain sometimes rendered it difficult to communicate with the more distant corps: a Portugueze brigade belonging to Sir Rowland was once four days without bread or meat, a rivulet, small at other times, being so swoln as to become impassable. But in general, money was the scarcest article: dollars, which were exchanged at so low a rate after the spoils at Vittoria, sold now for eight shillings each.

The disposition of the French toward the Bourbons could at this time be so little doubted, that though the allies did not yet openly support their claim, dies were made to cut out fleurs-de-lys for scarfs, to be worn on the arms of those who might be willing to declare in favour of the old loyal cause. During the weeks of inactivity which the season occasioned, preparations were made for crossing the Adour, investing Bayonne, and carrying the war into the heart of France. The snow on the lower range of the Pyrenees had visibly lessened on the 6th, and in the course of a week it wholly disappeared. On the 14th of February, Sir Rowland put the right of the army in motion, drove in the enemy's piquets on the Joyeuse river, attacked Harispe's position at Hellete, and compelled him to retire with loss toward S. Martin. That General then took up a strong position in front of Garris, on the heights of La Montagne, where he was joined by troops from the enemy's centre, and by Paris with his division, who, having commenced their march toward the interior of France, had been recalled because of the danger in this quarter. On the same day the detachment of Mina's troops in the valley of Bastan advanced upon Baygorrey and Bidarrey, and blockaded St. Jean de Pied-de-Port, Sir Rowland having cut off the direct communication of the enemy with that fort. On the morrow,

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*Operations
are re-
newed.*

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Morillo, after driving in their advanced posts, was ordered to move toward S. Palais, by a ridge parallel to that on which they had taken their position, that he might turn their left, and cut off their retreat upon that road by the bridge of S. Palais, while the second division under Sir William Stewart should attack in front. The day was far gone before the attack could be commenced, and the action lasted till after night had closed: the position, though remarkably strong, was carried without much loss on the first effort; many gallant attempts were made to recover it, and as gallantly resisted; the struggle was more obstinate in the darkness than it had been while daylight lasted, and the French being encountered in all their charges with the wonted resolution of British troops, more men were bayoneted than usual in proportion to the numbers engaged. The enemy at length gave up the contest, and retired with considerable loss, leaving ten officers and about 200 men prisoners; but they reached S. Palais before Morillo could arrive, and crossed the Bidouze during the night, and destroyed the bridges. The right of the centre made a corresponding movement with the right wing on these two days, and the allied posts were this evening on the Bidouze. The bridges were repaired; Sir Rowland crossed the next day, and on the following drove the enemy across the Gave de Mouleon. They attempted to destroy the bridge at Arriverete, as if it were their intention to dispute the passage, but time was not allowed them to complete its destruction; and a ford having been discovered above the bridge, the 92d, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Cameron, crossed there, covered by the fire of Captain Beane's troop of horse artillery, which was advantageously placed; this regiment made a gallant attack upon two battalions of French infantry in the village of Arriverete, and drove them out with much loss. The enemy retired in the night across the Gave

d'Oleron. Sir Rowland's posts were established on that Gave the next day; and the French took up a position in the neighbourhood of Sauveterre, where they were reinforced. The position was very strong, and covered in front by a broad and rapid river; but it seemed now as if no position, however advantageous, could give the French confidence; they had been driven during the last four days from a country of peculiar difficulty, where frequent rivers afforded them great opportunities for defending it; and when Marshal Soult understood with how little success it had been defended, he directed his whole attention to that side, destroyed all the bridges over the Adour which were not protected by Bayonne, left that place to its own resources, and, concentrating his forces behind the Gave de Pau, fixed his head-quarters at Orthes.

During these operations the left wing of the army continued to observe Bayonne, with the 4th division, also, which occupied the heights of Monguerre, communicating with the left on the Nive, and resting its right on the Adour, and thus preventing the enemy from drawing any supplies for the fortress from that side of the river. Preparations had been made for passing that river, and for throwing a bridge over it, both below Bayonne, .. enterprizes so difficult, that though Soult had witnessed the passage of the Douro, he seems not to have apprehended that they would be attempted. His attention had now been withdrawn from that side by Sir Rowland's movements; the 4th division moved to the right to support that larger part of the allied army which was now assembled on the Gave d'Oleron; the 5th replaced it in the position of Monguerre, and was itself replaced by Lord Aylmer's brigade of the first, and the Portuguese under Colonel Campbell; thus making room for Freyre's Spanish division, which had been cantoned within their own frontier, and now, to the dismay of the inhabitants,

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CHAP. re-entered France. The people lamented the departure of the
 XLVI. English, and dreaded the arrival of the Spaniards; and knowing
 1814. their vindictive spirit, and the long provocation which it had
 February. received, they expressed their earnest hopes that some English
 authorities might be left for their protection.

The Adour.

Adour is like Gave, a name common to many rivers in the Pyrenees, both simply meaning water in some of those primeval languages, the remains of which are still widely preserved in the appellations of rivers and mountains. The greater and noted stream, into which the others are received, has its sources in the county of Bigorre, under the Pics du Midi and d'Espade, two of the highest mountains in the chain; it passes by Campan, Bagnères, Montgaillard, and Tarbes, and begins to be navigable near Grenade, a small town in the little county of Marsan; having been joined by the Douze on its right below Tartas, it inclines to the south-west from its junction, passes Acqs, and then holds an almost southerly course to meet the Gave de Pau, which brings with its own waters those of the Gave d'Oleron, into which the Gave de Mauleon has been received. The Adour is then joined by the Bidouze, and lastly by the Nive. Formerly it made a turn to the northward, after that junction, at Boucaut, below Bayonne, and held for about six leagues a slow and winding way, parallel with the coast, before it entered the sea at Cape Breton, its direct course having apparently been obstructed by an accumulation of sand. But toward the latter part of the sixteenth century, Louis de Foix, whose water-works at Toledo were then among the wonders of machinery, and who built the lighthouse at the mouth of the Garonne, (the Smeaton and the Telford of his age), opened the present channel, . . . an arduous undertaking, in which he was more than once foiled. His intent was, by erecting a dam across the river at its curvature, to force it into a straighter

line, and make it clear a way for itself through the sands: the river again and again swept away his embankments, but he, with a just confidence in his own theory, persevered in the attempt; at length, on the day of St. Simon and St. Jude, in the year 1579, such torrents poured down from the Pyrenees, that Bayonne was in danger of being destroyed by an inundation; the Adour took then, with its increased weight of water, a straight course, and the engineer was rewarded for all his anxieties by beholding the complete triumph of his art. The Bayonnese, however, ascribed the whole merit, not to him, but to the two joint Saints of the day, and appointed a commemorative thanksgiving to be celebrated annually from that time forth upon their festival. An excellent port would now have been formed in the Adour, if the constant tendency of the sea to throw up a bar at its entrance could have been overcome. With this view the French government constructed massive stone embankments on both sides, from Boucaut to the sea; it was hoped that by thus confining the stream, its current, which at ebb tide runs about seven miles an hour, would with its own force and weight of water keep always a clear channel; but the effect was only to remove the bar somewhat farther, without lessening the difficulty or the danger of the entrance. These were so great, that the enemy at this time relied on them. They had the Sappho corvette anchored so as to flank an inundation, which protected the right of their intrenched camp; they had many armed boats on the Adour, above the town, to protect the convoys of provision which came down the river, and sometimes succeeded in getting in; the mountain guns of the allies, which were the only ones that could be removed, now and then exchanged shots with these; below Bayonne they had some gun-boats in the bend of the river, by the village of Boucaut, stationed there, as it seemed,

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*Pierre de
Marca, Histoire de
Bearn, p.
28.*

*Thuanus,
l. 80. T. 3.
p. 619.*

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to strengthen their intrenched camp by a flanking fire ; but the only precaution that the enemy had taken to impede the passage was that of removing the signal staff on the left bank, which marked the line for vessels to steer by, in making for the mouth of the river.

*Passage of
the Adour.*

A number of Spanish *chasse-marées* had been collected at Socoa for forming a bridge ; materials also were ready for a boom to protect it. The naval part of the operation was under Admiral Penrose's direction, and the 21st was the day appointed for the attempt ; but the weather proved unfavourable, and it was not possible for the vessels and their convoy to get out of Socoa. Sir John Hope, however, would not delay his movement, and resolved to attempt the passage without naval co-operation ; the troops, it was thought, might be towed over upon rafts formed of pontoons, and carrying about 100 men each. On the evening of the 22nd, the troops were ordered to be in readiness for marching at midnight ; they had with them a brigade of 18-pounders, and a rocket detachment which had arrived at Passages a few days after the passage of the Nive. There was a prejudice in the army against this weapon, which had hitherto not been used in the field ; the opinion seems to have been, that if it had been an efficient means of destruction, it would sooner have been borrowed from the East Indian nations. Lord Wellington, however, was willing that they should be tried ; and some experiments which were made at Fontarabia gave reason for supposing that they might be found useful on the Adour. The direction of this new arm was assigned to Sir Augustus Fraser, but the trial was to be made under all the disadvantages of inexperience ; for the corps was composed of men hastily brought together, and entirely ignorant of the arm they were to use ; and the rockets themselves were equipped in five different ways, and consequently

liable to as many failures. Altogether the enterprize was one of no ordinary hazard ; the entrance of the river was frequently impracticable, and always perilous ; its width where it was to be bridged was 270 yards, and the tide and the ripple were there so formidable as to preclude the use of any thing smaller than decked vessels of twenty or thirty tons burthen ; the navigation from Socoa was uncertain ; and there were the corvette and the flotilla of gun-boats to assist a garrison which consisted of more than 10,000 men. Yet even those who fully understood the difficulties of the operation had nevertheless full confidence that it would succeed.

Soon after midnight the troops were in motion ; when within a short distance of Anglet, they turned by a cross-road toward the coast, marching in strict silence along the skirts of the enemy's outposts. It was a dark night, the road narrow, deep in mud, and with ditches on either side ; one of the 18-pounders was drawn too near the edge in the darkness, the side of the road gave way under its weight, and it sunk into the ditch, dragging the near horses after it. This delayed the march for some time, till, by the greatest exertions, the gun was drawn up out of the deep mud ; but no ill consequence arose from this mischance ; the enemy were not on the alert, and the troops arrived before daylight on the sand-hills which border the coast from the vicinity of Biaritz to the mouth of the Adour : the tract between these hills and the intrenched camp is almost wholly covered by the pine-wood called the Bois de Bayonne. At daybreak, two light battalions of the German Legion patrolled through the wood, and dislodged the enemy's piquets, which retired from thence, and from the village of Anglet, into the intrenched camp. The first brigade of guards, under Colonel Maitland, debouched from the wood near the place where the signal-staff, known by the name of the *Balise Orientale*, had stood,

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which was on a high sand-hill nearly opposite Boucaut. The ground here could not be reconnoitred till the enemy's piquets were driven in; and this of course was avoided till the last moment, that no alarm might be given. It had been supposed that the guns might be brought within 700 or 800 yards of the Sappho, and that they might sink her, lest she should be employed against the bridge; but, when they had been brought with great labour through the deep sandy ground, it was necessary to place them where they were sheltered from the guns of the intrenched camp, and this was in a situation 1500 yards from the corvette. There they were placed in battery, and the brigade was posted behind some sand-hills, close to the marsh which protected the front of the camp. Don Carlos d'España meantime made a demonstration on the heights above Anglet, to prevent the enemy from detaching any troops.

As soon as the French saw the brigade debouching from the pine-wood, they commenced a cannonade against it from their gun-boats. This had been foreseen; the rocket-corps had, therefore, been divided into three parties, one of which went, with the first division, towards the mouth of the Adour, and the other two accompanied the 18-pounders to be employed against the flotilla. There were twelve boats to assist the Sappho; but when a few rockets had been discharged, the terrified sailors took to their oars, and made all speed up the river; the effect, indeed, of these weapons was most terrific; they dashed through the water like fiery serpents, and pierced the sides of the boat, burning apparently even under water with undiminished force. The guns meantime opened upon the corvette, and fired about 400 rounds at her, some toward the conclusion with hot shot. This failed to set her on fire; and when the three-coloured flag was shot from the flag-staff, the enemy presently nailed it to the mast-head; but after some hours the French retired from the

contest, under the protection of the citadel, their captain having been killed, and 34, out of a crew of 40 men, killed or wounded, sacrificed, as it should seem, in a display of courage which could be of no avail. The action had served as a spectacle for the inhabitants of Bayonne, who came out from the promenade which skirts the river to witness, and apparently to enjoy it, the day being remarkably fine, and the action itself, with all its circumstances, as described by an eye-witness, more resembling some festival display than the dreadful reality of war; the spectators, too, thought themselves at safe distance, till one poor fellow came rashly within range of the guns, and had his head carried off by a shot which passed completely through the corvette.

That vessel had not been destroyed, but the attack on it, and the other demonstrations in front of the intrenched camp, had the desired effect of occupying the enemy's whole attention; a bend which the Adour makes on the seaward side of the town, and the pine-wood, which extended almost close to its banks, prevented them from seeing the movements of the allies on that side, and they kept little watch there, because they apprehended no danger. But meantime the whole of the first division, except the brigade of guards which accompanied the artillery that attacked the Sappho, had marched to attempt a passage near the mouth of the river. With this force there were eighteen pontoons and six small boats, forty rocketeers, and an officer with a few artillerymen, destined to spike the guns of a battery on the enemy's side of the water. The intention was, to construct six rafts, each upon three pontoons, by which, in two passages, 1200 men might be passed across before the day should dawn; 1200 more being ready to follow, while these held their ground, supported by twelve field-pieces from the left bank. But, owing to the difficulty of getting the pontoons on,

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*Batty's
Campaign,
p. 120.*