

quantity could ever be provided. More than once also ammunition became scarce, great part coming from Toulouse, and even from so remote a point as Strasbourg. Unhappily the Spaniards were in no condition to profit by the embarrassments of the enemy; and nothing was done by England for Catalonia, where, during the first years of the struggle, so much might have been done with effect. The army which in the preceding autumn had been ordered thither from Sicily, and detained by its general for the protection of that island, was employed at this time in an expedition against Naples, as a diversion in favour of the Austrians; and thus the means which might have saved Gerona were misdirected.

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.

July.

St. Cyr,  
164.

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650.

Meantime the main attacks of the besiegers were directed against the ravelin which was now the main defence of Monjuic. While it was possible to maintain it, the garrison contended who should be stationed there, as at the post of honour. It was repeatedly attacked by night, but the defenders were always ready, and always repulsed the assailants. It was now discovered that the enemy were mining; this was distinctly ascertained by the sounds which were heard in the direction of the fosse. The castle was founded upon a rock, and therefore the officers apprehended no immediate danger from operations of this nature. The purpose of the French was to destroy a breast-work which protected that gate of the castle through which was the passage to the ravelin: the breast-work was almost wholly of earth, and its explosion did no hurt, but it left the gate exposed. A battery, already prepared, began to play upon it, and the communication between the castle and the ravelin was thus rendered exceedingly difficult. A sally was made against this battery, and the guns were spiked; a priest was one of the foremost in this adventure: he received a ball in his thigh, and fell; the enemy pressed on to kill him; one of their officers, at

The ravelin  
taken.

CHAP. the hazard of his own life, protected him, and in this act of humane  
 XXVI. interference was slain by the Spaniards, . . a circumstance which  
 1809. their journalists recorded with becoming regret. The success  
 August. which had been obtained was of little avail, for the French had  
 artillery in abundance: in the course of a few hours they  
 mounted other pieces in place of those which had been rendered  
 useless, and continued their fire upon the gate and the ravelin.  
 At the same time they formed a covered way from their own  
 parapet to the breach of the ravelin; by this, on the night  
 between the 4th and 5th of August they poured a sufficient body  
 of troops through the breach to overpower the forty men who  
 were stationed there; but having won the place, they could not  
 maintain it, exposed as it was to musketry from the castle. It  
 was, therefore, left for the dead who covered it. About forty  
 hours afterwards a few Spaniards determined to go and bring  
 off the arms which the French had not had time to carry away:  
 they found a lad of sixteen who had lain thus long among the  
 carcasses; he was the only one of his comrades who escaped  
 death or captivity, . . they brought him off, and he was sent to  
 the hospital half dead with exhaustion.

*Monjuic  
 abandoned.*

The guns of Monjuic had now been silenced; the enemy  
 were so near, that sometimes the Spaniards knocked them down  
 with stones: it was with difficulty that the governor, D. Guil-  
 lherme Nasch, could restrain his men: impatient at remaining  
 inactive, they earnestly solicited permission to sally out upon  
 the most desperate attempts. The garrison had held out seven-  
 and-thirty days since a practicable breach was made. A week  
 had elapsed since the ravelin was lost, and three sides of the  
 castle were now entirely in ruins; there was little water left,  
 and that little, foul and unwholesome; the number of soldiers  
 was every day diminished by disease as well as by the chances of  
 war. Under these circumstances the governor deemed it his duty

to preserve the men who were still left, that they might assist in the defence of the city. On the evening of the 11th he abandoned the ruins, and retired into Gerona, every man taking with him two hand-grenades and as many cartridges as he could carry. Matches were left in the magazine, and the retreat was effected with only the loss of one man, who was killed by a shell when he had entered the gates.

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XXVI.  
1809.  
*August.*

Elated with this success, . . . a success dearly purchased, and bringing no glory to the conqueror, . . . Verdier assured his government that Gerona could not now hold out longer than from eight to fifteen days. He planted one battery against the bulwark of St. Pedro, and another upon Monjuic, which commanded all the works in the plain, and the whole line of the city from St. Pedro to the tower of Gironella. Other batteries, placed by St. Daniel's Tower, commanded Fort Calvary, the Castle of the Constable, and one of its advanced posts. While they were forming these, and throwing up works nearer the city than they could approach before the fall of Monjuic, a little respite was necessarily afforded to the besieged; but, that no rest might be given them, shells were thrown in from time to time by night and day. From the commencement of the siege Alvarez had felt the want of men, and had repeatedly solicited a reinforcement of 2000; even then the garrison would hardly have amounted to half its complement. Nothing but the want of men prevented him from making more frequent sallies, . . . in all that were made, the desperate courage and high sense of duty which inspired the Spaniards gave them a decided advantage. "Never," said he, in his report to the government, "never have I seen the precious enthusiasm of all who are within this city abated even for a moment; and a thousand times would they have sallied out, if I had not, because of their scanty numbers, been compelled to forbid them." Just after the fall of Monjuic, D. Ramon

*Verdier expects the town to fall.*

CHAP. XXVI. Foxa, and D. Jose Cantera, brought him 700 men, a trifling number considering the state of Gerona, and the importance of defending it; but they were volunteers, and went with willing and prepared minds to make the sacrifice which was required of them.

1809.  
*August.*  
*A battery planted on the cathedral.*

Alvarez now planted upon the roof of the cathedral a battery of three cannon. The little opposition which was made to this as an act of profanation was soon overcome, for the clergy felt that, as when fighting in the field they were employed in the service of the altar, so, in such a war, the temple could not be desecrated by using it as a fortress. Till now a watch had been kept upon the tower, to observe the movements of the enemy, and ring the alarm whenever an attack was about to be made. It was composed of the clergy of the cathedral, with one of the Canons at their head: now that the battery was planted there, this guard made their station a place of arms also, and annoyed the besiegers with musketry. The cathedral had been hitherto the hospital for wounded officers; it now became necessary to remove them to a safer quarter, for the enemy directed their fire thither with a perseverance that discovered how much they were annoyed from thence. In the frequent removal of the hospitals which the bombardment occasioned, the company of St. Barbara was of the most essential service; throughout the whole siege, these heroic women shrunk from no duty, however laborious, however perilous, or however painful. Three of the leaders are especially mentioned, Dona Lucia Joana de Fitzgéral, D. Mariangela Vivern, and D. Maria Custi, commanders of the three divisions of St. Narcis, St. Dorothy, and St. Eulalia.

At the end of August several breaches had been made by the batteries of Monjuic, and it was every day apprehended that they would be made practicable. Alvarez then declared in

his general orders, that if any of the defenders flinched from the breach when it was attacked, they should immediately be considered as enemies, and fired upon accordingly. The besiegers continually constructed new works, they had troops at command, artillery in abundance, and engineers of the greatest skill. The garrison was considerably reduced; the hospitals were no longer able to contain the numbers who required admission: the contagion increased, and became more virulent; the magazines were exhausted of all their provisions except wheat and a little flour, and famine began to be severely felt. Not a word of capitulation was permitted within the city, nor a thought of it entertained; but Blake was well aware that it was now absolutely necessary to make a great effort for the relief of the place, and throw in troops and supplies. This was exceedingly difficult; for, although the enemy occupied an extensive line, it might easily be contracted, and they would certainly employ their whole force to prevent the entrance of supplies into a place which they had strictly blockaded for more than three months. The only means of succeeding would be to divert their attention upon various points, and make them suppose that the Spaniards intended to give battle in the quarter directly opposite to that by which the convoy was to proceed. Blake's head-quarters were at S. Ilari when he began his movements; he ordered Don Manuel Llanden, lieutenant of the regiment of Ultonia, with as many troops as could be allotted for this service, and as many of the Somatenes as he could collect on the way, to march to the heights of Los Angeles, which are north of Gerona, dislodge the enemy from that position, where they had only a small body of infantry, and protect the convoy which was to be introduced on that side. Blake then advanced two hours' march towards the Er-mida, or Chapel of Pradro, with the reserve, that he might be

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.

*August.**Distress of  
the city.**Attempt to  
introduce  
succours.*

CHAP. ready to give assistance wherever it was wanted ; from thence  
 XXVI. he dispatched the colonel of the regiment of Ultonia, D. Enrique  
 1809. O'Donnell, with 1200 foot and a few cavalry, to attack the  
 August. French at Bruñolas, his object being to make them suppose  
 that the convoy was proceeding in that direction.

Sept. 1. O'Donnell, by the error of his guides, was led more than  
 two hours' march out of the direct road, and thus prevented  
 from attacking the enemy at daybreak, according to his inten-  
 tion. This, however, did not frustrate the plan. Bruñolas was  
 a strong position, the enemy were posted in two bodies, and  
 they had a redoubt with entrenchments on the top of the moun-  
 tain. Stationing one part of his men at the foot of the ascent,  
 to defeat the purpose of the enemy, which he perceived was to  
 attack his principal column in flank, he ordered Sarsfield, with  
 the greater part of his force, to attack the French in front ; it  
 was done with complete success ; they were driven from their  
 entrenchments, and reinforcements came hastening towards  
 them, this, as Blake had designed, being supposed to be the  
 point which it was of most importance to secure. O'Donnell  
 having succeeded in this diversion, now descended into the  
 plain, lest he should be turned by superior numbers. There was  
 some difficulty in the descent, owing to its steepness and the  
 proximity of the enemy, nevertheless it was effected in perfect  
 order, and having reached the plain, he halted, and formed in  
 order of battle. Another division of the Spaniards under General  
 Loygorri joined him, and they continued in that position to  
 occupy the attention of the French, and draw more of their  
 troops from the side of the Ter during the whole of the day.

While O'Donnell thus successfully executed his orders on  
 one side, D. Juan Claros acted on another in concert with the  
 Doctor-Colonel Rovira. Rovira dislodged the enemy from the  
 castle of Montagut, which they had fortified. Claros at the

same time attacked them on the left bank of the Ter, dislodged them from the height which they occupied on that part of the river, killed the Westphalian General Hadelin, burnt their encampments at Sarria and Montrospe, and won the battery of Casa Enroca. Llanden meantime obtained possession of the heights of Los Angeles: this opened a way for the convoy, with which Garcia Conde, at the head of 4000 foot and 500 horse, advanced from Amer, crossed the Ter, and hastened along the right bank toward Gerona. The attention of the enemy had been so well diverted by the attacks on other points, that the Spaniards were enabled to break through the force which had been left there, set fire to the tents, and effect their entrance. Six hundred men sallied at the same time from the city to the plain of Salt, partly to assist in confusing the enemy, but more for the purpose of restoring water to the only two mills within the walls. In this they failed; for, since the French had broken the water-courses, it was discovered that the weather had completed their destruction; . . . had not this detachment thus uselessly employed their time, they might have carried off the besiegers' magazines from Salt.

CHAP.  
XXVI.  
1809.  
September.

*Garcia  
Conde en-  
ters with  
reinforce-  
ments.*

These operations, so honourable to Blake who planned, and to the officers who executed them, were performed during a day of heavy and incessant rain, which concealed their movements from the enemy. Of the troops who got into Gerona, 3000 remained there. Alvarez did not conceal from them the desperate nature of the service upon which they had entered; he addressed both officers and men, telling them, that if any one among them dreaded the thoughts of death, now was the time to leave the city, for the Geronans and their defenders had sworn to perish rather than surrender, and he asked if they were willing to swear the like? They readily took the oath. Conde, with the rest of the army and the beasts of the convoy, accom-

*Inadequacy  
of this re-  
lief.*

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1809.

September.

plished his return as happily as his entrance. Of all Blake's actions this was the only one which was completely successful. But more might have been done, and ought to have been attempted. If he had given the French battle, a victory would have delivered Gerona; and a defeat could only have produced the dispersion of his own troops, in a country which they knew, where every man was friendly to them, and where they would presently have re-assembled. He had little to lose, and every thing to gain. Even if, instead of retreating as soon as his object of introducing supplies was effected, he had continued to threaten the enemy, without risking an action, an opportunity of attacking them at advantage must have been given him; for of the two days' biscuit which had been reserved for such an occasion, one had been consumed, and the French army could not have been kept together for want of supplies. Blake was highly and deservedly extolled for the skill with which he had conducted his operations; but the attempt, though it had succeeded in all parts, was miserably inadequate to the object. The stores, which after so much preparation and with such skilful movements had been introduced, contained only a supply for fifteen days. Hopes indeed were held out of others which were to follow, but it was impossible not to perceive that the enemy would be more vigilant hereafter, and that the introduction of a second convoy would be rendered far more difficult than that of the first. Alvarez was so well convinced of this, that he immediately reduced the rations one half, preparing at once with invincible resolution for the extremity which he knew was now to be expected; and then, it is said, that for the first time there was some desertion from the Spanish troops.

*St. Cyr,*  
231.

*Los Angeles  
taken, and  
the garrison  
put to the  
sword.*

The Spaniards, after the late action, had occupied with 500 men the convent of N. Señora de los Angeles, which was situated upon the highest ground in the vicinity, and having been forti-



fied, was now an important point, as facilitating both ingress and egress for the besieged, while it remained in their hands. Mazuchelli, therefore, with the Italian troops, was ordered to take it. According to his statement the Spanish commandant Llanden fired upon the officer who summoned him; and therefore when the post was carried, after a brave resistance, every man was put to the sword except three officers, whom the Italian commander saved, and Llanden himself, who leapt from one of the church-windows, and effected his escape. The Italian soldiers had become mercilessly ferocious in the course of this war, exasperated, it is said, by the murder of some of their sick and wounded who had fallen into the hands of Rovira and other guerilla chiefs. In these dreadful cases, where cruelty excites revenge, and revenge provokes fresh cruelty, there is a fearful accumulation of guilt on all the parties who thus aggravate the evils of war: but that the inhumanity of the invaders was carried on upon a wider scale, that it was systematically encouraged and sometimes enjoined, and that it extended to women and even children, is as certain . . . as that the provocation was given by them, and the example set, . . . an example which neither the Spaniards nor Portuguese were likely to be slow in following. The enemy were less fortunate in an attack upon the irregular forces under Claros and Rovira, who with incessant activity intercepted their communication with Figueras. Verdier attacked them at S. Gregori, where they were well posted and well commanded, for these leaders were men well fitted for the sort of warfare in which they were engaged, and the French were compelled to retire with the loss of one of their generals.

The besiegers were at this time compelled for want of ammunition to suspend their efforts till a supply could be received from France. The time was not lost by the garrison in strengthening

CHAP.  
XXVI.1809.  
September.*St. Cyr,*  
243.*ib.* 262.*Unsuccessful sally.*

CHAP. their works, works however which derived their main strength  
 XXVI. from the unconquerable spirit of the inhabitants. When the  
 1809. supplies arrived the enemy directed their fire upon the three  
September. points of St. Lucia, St. Cristobal, and the Quartel de Alemanes,  
 or Quarter of the Germans. This latter building rested in part  
 of its foundation upon the wall itself, and the object of the  
 enemy was to beat it down, that they might enter over its ruins  
 as by a bridge. The fire from the cathedral, from the Sarra-  
 cinas, and from the tower of Gironella, was well kept up in  
 return; but the French had so greatly the advantage both in  
 the number and size of their artillery, that Alvarez ordered a  
 sally, in the hope of spiking their guns. That it might be the  
 more unexpected, the gate of S. Pedro, which had been walled  
 up since the loss of Monjuic, was re-opened, and the Spaniards  
 advanced with such rapidity upon the enemy's works, that the  
 attack was made almost as soon as they were seen. In many  
 points it was successful, in some the Spaniards failed, and when  
 they were thrown into confusion they were unable to rally. In  
 some few of the persons chosen for the sally, something worse  
 than want of discipline discovered itself, . . . they lagged behind  
 in the assault, and, without sharing the danger, fell in with their  
 braver comrades on their return. So much was done, and so  
 much more must have been effected, if all had behaved equally  
 well, that Colonel Marshal, an Englishman in the Spanish  
 service, exclaimed, "We have lost a great victory!"

*The French  
 repulsed in  
 a general  
 assault.*

The guns which had been rendered useless were soon re-  
 placed, and an incessant fire was kept up upon the three great  
 breaches; on the 18th, the French engineers declared that all  
 three were practicable. Monjuic had taught the enemy not to  
 be too confident of success; the breaches indeed were of such  
 magnitude that it seemed scarcely possible they should fail in  
 storming them, but they knew that victory must be dearly pur-