

should take place ; and this he did to give a humaner character to the war, upon so brutal a system had it been carried on by his predecessors. His plea was that the peasantry had entrapped his troops by leading them astray ; but the Catalans did not understand upon what principle he acted, and were more exasperated than if he had pursued the old system of burning their villages, because they believed that their countrymen were thus carried off as recruits for Buonaparte's armies in the north. Among the Italian prisoners was the wife of an officer who accompanied her husband in man's attire.

On the 16th the French attempted to carry Fort Trinidad by assault. They were repulsed ; returning in greater strength, they forced the outer gate, and endeavoured to force the second ; but here such a steady fire of musquetry and hand-grenades was kept up against them, that they retired a second time, leaving many of their men under the walls. Captain West expecting a third attack, reinforced the fort with a party of marines, who entered by means of a rope-ladder under an incessant fire. Nothing could be more cordial than the co-operation of the Spaniards and English at this time ; but they were not strong enough to prevent the enemy from erecting batteries, which compelled the ships to keep at a distance, and a brave but unsuccessful attack from Gerona upon Souham's division on the Fluvia was the only effort made to relieve them : on that side the Spaniards would have done more had it not been for want of cavalry. There were two regiments in Tarragona with excellent horses, but so miserably in want of equipments, that it was impossible for them to take the field ; there was no money to equip them, and while they were thus remaining inactive the enemy were overrunning the Ampurdan, and carrying on the siege of Rosas at their will, because the Spaniards had no cavalry to keep them in check. The French acted with a full knowledge of the Spaniards' embarrassments, and

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*Attack upon  
Fort Trini-  
dad repulsed*



CHAP. in full reliance upon the paralysing imbecility which such dif-  
 XVI. ficulties must needs produce ; nevertheless St. Cyr was far from  
 1808. feeling at ease, knowing that Barcelona must fall unless it were  
November. speedily succoured, and that if the force which was now idly be-  
 sieging it were brought to the relief of Rosas, Catalonia might  
 speedily be cleared of its invaders, and Rousillon become in its  
 turn the scene of invasion. It was therefore necessary to press  
 the siege, the farthest day which had been appointed for his reach-  
 ing Barcelona being past. During the night of the 27th an  
 attack was made upon the town ; the helpless part of the in-  
 habitants had been removed by sea at the first approach of  
 danger ; there were about 500 men stationed there, some of  
 whom were peasants, the others part of the garrison : they de-  
 fended themselves with a courage to which the French, who are  
 seldom just to their enemies, bore witness ; but they were over-  
 powered ; about 300 fell, and hardly fifty escaped into the cita-  
 del. The conquerors immediately established batteries under  
 cover of the houses, then set fire to the houses, and cut off the  
 communication between the citadel and the fort. They ren-  
 dered it also impossible for the English to communicate with  
 the citadel. Captain West had at this time been superseded by  
 Captain Bennett of the *Fame* ; and when an officer from the  
 Marques de Lazan came on board his ship with dispatches for  
 the governor, some lives were lost in an unsuccessful attempt  
 at landing him.

*The French  
 establish  
 themselves  
 in the town.*

*Lord Coch-  
 rane throws  
 himself into  
 Fort Trini-  
 dad.*

The citadel was soon in a desperate state, and the fort might  
 have been considered so ; for it was at this time battered in  
 breach, and a passage to the lower bomb-proof being nearly  
 effected, the marines of the *Fame* were withdrawn. At this  
 juncture Lord Cochrane arrived in the *Imperieuse*. During the  
 month of September this gallant officer with his single ship had  
 kept the whole coast of Languedoc in alarm, destroyed the



newly-constructed semaphoric telegraphs (which were of the utmost consequence to the numerous coasting convoys of the French) at Bourdique, La Pinede, St. Maguire, Frontignan, Canet, and Foy; demolished fourteen barracks of the gend'armes; blown up a battery and the strong tower upon the lake of Frontignan; and not only prevented any troops from being sent from that province into Spain, but excited such dismay there, that 2000 men were drawn from Figueras to oppose him. The coasting trade was entirely suspended during this alarm; and with such consummate prudence were all his enterprises planned and executed, that not one of his men was either killed or hurt, except one, who was singed in blowing up the battery.

Lord Collingwood, with his wonted prudence, had entrusted Cochrane with discretionary orders to assist the Spaniards wherever it could be done with most probability of success, and he hastened to the Bay of Rosas as soon as he knew of the siege, . . . too late, and yet in time to signalize himself. Captain Bennett, though he had withdrawn his own men, did not alter Lord Collingwood's orders, and Cochrane threw himself into Fort Trinidad with eighty seamen and marines, at a time when the garrison, amounting to the same number, would else have surrendered, perceiving that further resistance had been thought unavailing by the English themselves. This garrison was changed, and the new men brought with them fresh hope and unexhausted strength. Cochrane formed a rampart within the breach of palisadoes and barrels, ships' hammock-cloths, awning, &c. filled with sand and rubbish; these supplied the place of walls and ditches. Sanson, the commandant of the engineers, pronounced the breach practicable. His opinion was relied on with the more confidence because he was well acquainted with the place; but the Captain who was ordered to lead the assault thought otherwise; he had been in the Spanish service, and in garrison

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*Gallant defence of the fort.*

*Sketch of the fort.*



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at that very fort, and he said that it was not possible to enter there; nevertheless he would make the attempt if he were ordered, with the certainty of perishing in it, and leading his party to destruction. Under such circumstances it requires more firmness to give the order than to obey, . . . but it is of a different kind. The order was given, and the officer perished as he had foreseen and foretold. Two of his companions escaped by the humanity of the English, who, instead of killing four men whose lives were at their mercy, suffered two to retire, while they drew up the others by a rope, to secure them as prisoners. When the breach had been rendered practicable, a more formidable assault was made. Lord Cochrane had prepared for it with that sportiveness by which English sailors are as much characterised as schoolboys. He not only stationed men with bayonets immediately within the breach, to give the assailants an immediate greeting, but he laid well-greased planks across the breach, upon which many of the French slipped and fell in endeavouring to pass; and he hung ropes there with fish-hooks fastened to them, by which not a few were caught in their retreat. The enemy suffered a severe loss on this occasion. There was in Lord Cochrane's conduct here, and in all places, that contempt of danger which in former ages would have been imputed to a reliance upon charms, and which never fails to inspire confidence. Once, while the besiegers were battering the fort, the Spanish flag fell into the ditch: he let himself down by a rope through a shower of balls to recover it, returned unhurt, and planted it again upon the walls. The citadel at length having been battered in breach till it was no longer tenable, capitulated, and the garrison, marching out with the honours of war, were sent prisoners\* into France. Two thousand men, who had given

*The citadel  
captured,  
and the fort  
evacuated.*

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\* St. Cyr (p. 50) reproaches the English for this, and says, '*Nous n'avions*



proof of steadiness and courage, were thus lost to Spain. Lord Cochrane then saw that any farther resistance in Fort Trinidad was impossible; and having maintained its shattered walls twelve days after they had been deemed untenable, he embarked all the men, and blew up the magazine.

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The French had thus been detained a whole month before a neglected and ill-provided fortress. But the men who so often during this war heroically defended half-ruined works, had too much reason to feel how little it availed by their exertions to gain time for generals who knew not how to use it. By the French commanders every thing was calculated, . . . by the Spanish, nothing. On the day after the capitulation the conquerors marched from Rosas; on the next day the whole army was collected on the Fluvia, the cavalry having returned from France. The force disposable for the relief of Barcelona consisted of 15,000 foot and 1500 horse: more than twice their number might have been brought against them, besides the Miquelets, who were esteemed by the French themselves as the best light troops in Europe, and the whole peasantry, always remarkable

*St. Cyr  
marches to  
relieve Bar-  
celona.*

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*jamais espéré prendre à la vue, et sous le canon de l'escadre, une garnison forte encore d'environ 3000 hommes. Il aurait été possible aux Anglais, en plein jour, et sur-tout facile durant la nuit, d'embarquer la garnison, et de la transporter, en quelques heures, sur la rive droite de la Fluvia, en laissant seulement un faible détachement pour remettre la forteresse; comme cela s'était pratiqué, en Février, 1795, quand une escadre Espagnole occupait la baie. But in that siege the enemy were not masters of the town, and they had now established a battery in it to cut off the communication between the citadel and the ships, which was done so effectually, that five days before the surrender Captain Bennett found it impossible to land a single messenger there. M. St. Cyr adds, that when the prisoners defiled along the shore the English ships opened a brisk fire upon them, and that the Spaniards would never be persuaded that this was done in mistake. The Marshal was not upon the spot himself; if he had, this statement would not have appeared in his Journal.*



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for their hardihood, and now animated with a hatred of their invaders as intense as it was well-founded. To deceive an enemy who was easily deceived, St. Cyr manœuvred as if he intended to besiege Gêrona. One precaution, and one only, had been effectually taken by the Spaniards: they had broken up the road along the coast, so as to render it impracticable, and any attempt at repairing it must have been made under the guns of the English squadron. Hostalrich commanded the other road, but this was not passable for artillery. He sent back his guns and his ammunition waggons to Figueras, and having reached La Bisbal, distributed to every soldier four days' biscuit and fifty cartridges, and with no farther ammunition than ten rounds per man more, which were carried upon mules, set off to force his way to Barcelona, sure of well storing it when he arrived there from the magazines of the besiegers.

Dec. 12.

*He discovers a mountain path near Hostalrich.*

Claros, who saw the enemy debouche from La Bisbal, dispatched immediate intelligence to General Vives, and taking a position with his Miquelets and a party of Somatenes at Col de la Grange, opposed their march. If this system had been well followed up, the French must soon have expended their cartridges; but every thing had been concerted on their part, and with the Spaniards in their multitude of counsellors there was neither concert nor wisdom; and so well were the French prepared, that they were better acquainted with the country than the Spaniards themselves. In passing near Palamos they received some shot from the English ships; it was the only part of the route they had chosen which exposed them to this danger. They encamped that night in the Val de Aro. The destination of the army could then no longer be concealed; still it was of importance to keep the Spaniards in doubt concerning its course, and St. Cyr profited by every hour which they passed in indecision. The next day he arrived at Vidreras. Lazan's troops were seen behind

*Cabanes, p. ii. p. 92.*



them, to the right, on the heights of Casa de la Selva; and on the 14th some skirmishing took place near Mallorquinas between these troops and the rear of the French. This gave them little interruption, and no alarm: what St. Cyr apprehended was, that he should find Vives upon the Tordera, a strong position, where some bodies of Miquelets and peasantry, well posted, might have made him expend his ammunition, and easily have frustrated his design; but it was the fate of the Spaniards now never to profit by the opportunities which were offered them. Passing by Masanet and Martorell de la Selva, upon the heights which command Hostalrich, he halted his right at Grions and his left at Masanes, while search was made for a mountain path, which leading out of reach of shot from the fortress, comes into the Barcelona road beyond it. A man who had formerly kept sheep in these parts had assured him that such a path existed, in opposition to the statement of all the smugglers whom St. Cyr consulted before he left Perpignan, and it was in reliance upon his single but sure testimony that this course was taken. The officers of the staff went to look for it, and returned exhausted with fatigue, declaring that no such path was there. St. Cyr then, who had full reliance upon his informant, set out himself, and after two hours' search discovered it, but in the attempt he had nearly fallen into the hands of a party of Somatenes.

By this path, on the 15th, the French succeeded in passing Hostalrich; they started at day-break, and had just regained the high road when the garrison, having discovered the way which they had taken, came out and annoyed their rear. In the course of the day they lost about two hundred men by repeated attacks of the Miquelets: and the troops, harassed by these skirmishes and by a fatiguing march, in which they had to cross many torrents, would fain have halted for the night when they arrived at Puente de la Tordera. The defile of Treinta-pasos was before

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CHAP. them, six miles in length, and St. Cyr knew that if they did not  
 XVI. pass it that night, they must fight their way through on the  
 1808. morrow. He urged them forward therefore, leaving a handful  
 December. of men at the entrance, to keep the Miquelets in check. The  
 Spaniards had endeavoured to impede the way by breaking up  
 the road and felling trees across it: but they had neglected  
 to occupy this important pass, and by eleven o'clock the whole  
 of the French army bivouacuated on the plain a league from  
 Llinas.

*St. Cyr,*  
 52—63.

*Indecision*  
*of General*  
*Vives.*

General Vives, during the whole time that the French were before Rosas, had been occupied with the insane purpose of laying regular siege to Barcelona. From this dream he was disturbed by advices from Gerona that the firing at Rosas had ceased; and any hope which might have remained was soon put an end to by certain intelligence of its surrender from the British squadron. The Spanish Commander had taken none of the ordinary means for obtaining information of the enemy's movements; he knew as little of their strength as of their plans: he was ill acquainted with the country, and the persons by whom he was surrounded were utterly ignorant of military affairs, and might have perplexed a firmer spirit and a clearer understanding, by their contrarious and vacillating counsels. It was a moment at which a blow might have been struck not less momentous than the battle of Baylen; for the destruction of St. Cyr's army (and destruction must have been the consequence of defeat) would have drawn after it the recovery of Barcelona and Figueras, and effectual assistance might then have been afforded to Zaragoza. But the unreasonable hopes which he had long indulged were followed by an ominous prostration of mind. Fretted as well as embarrassed by want of money; alarmed by tidings of the rout at Tudela, and of the appearance of the enemy again before Zaragoza; still more alarmed by re-



ceiving no advices from the side of Madrid, and therefore with too much reason apprehending the worst, he had no government to look to for orders, no reliance upon others, and none upon himself. Four days were wasted in hopeless indecision; then came intelligence at midnight from the Junta at Gerona that St. Cyr was on his march, and, having sent his artillery to Figueras, it was evident that Barcelona was his object. Immediately General Reding was dispatched with his division, consisting of about 4000 men, to oppose him. Succeeding advices left no doubt of the direction of the French; a council of war was held; Caldagues was of opinion that the General should march against the enemy with the greater part of his force, leaving only enough to keep up the blockade: he took however not more than 5000 with him, and, having dispatched instructions to the Marques de Lazan, followed Reding, and having joined him at Granollers, set out from that place at midnight just when the French had passed without opposition through the defile of Treinta-pasos: the Spaniards as they left Granollers saw the fires of the enemy's bivouac.

The intention was to occupy an advantageous position between Villalba and Llinas: the artillery and the want of order in some of the raw troops impeded their march; it was morning when the head of the column arrived at Cardedeu, and before Vives could reach the ground which he had intended to take he came in sight of the enemy, and his men, after a night march of eight hours, had to draw up for battle. The French were refreshed by rest: but they had consumed their biscuit, and so much of their ammunition had been expended in skirmishing with the Miquelets, that what remained would not have been sufficient for an hour in action. St. Cyr had formed them in one column at day-break. When the Spanish artillery began to play upon the head of that column, Pino, of whose division it

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*December.**Dec. 11.**He marches  
against the  
French.**Dec. 15.  
Cabañes,  
p. 9. c. 11.**Rout of the  
Spaniards  
at Llinas.*