

himself dead ; then going out, he asked the mob, with a tone of anger, why they had sent him to confess a man whom they had already killed ? They made no farther inquiry ; . . the bells tolled for his death, and by this artifice his life was saved.

The rabble now took upon themselves to reform the state ; they began by turning out the members of the Camara, throwing the chairs out of window, demolishing the seat of the Judge, and burning the public papers. They displaced officers, deposed two or three abbots, and nominated a Capuchin friar to be their General. They appointed a Junta, and made laws whereby they abolished the recruiting system, fixed the prices of milk, meat, and wine, prohibited the exportation of bread, forbade all processes for debt, suspended all law-suits during the war, abolished the fees of the parochial priests, and were hardly persuaded to spare the tithes, and, finally, exempted all tenants from payment of manorial rights ; and these laws were enacted not for their own district alone, but for the whole kingdom. This was the only indication of a revolutionary disposition which manifested itself during these unhappy times. By good hap the persons whom they had chosen to form their Junta were prudent and well-intentioned men, who temporized with them, and accepted an illegal authority in the hope of restoring order. The anniversary of a religious procession occurred at this time, and they took advantage of it. The Host was borne through the streets, a sermon adapted to the circumstances was preached with good effect, and the reformers, tired of their work, and willing to secure what they had gained by pillage, broke up, and returned to their own part of the country. The people of the land then enrolled themselves, established patrols, and subjected themselves to good discipline ; so that when a second visit of the same kind was attempted, they seized the ringleaders.

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X.

1808.

July.

*The rabble
enact laws.**Neves, iv.
287—293.*

CHAP. Troops at length came from Viana, and many of the criminals
 X. were apprehended and sent prisoners to Porto.

1808.

July.

*Communi-
 cation be-
 tween Alem-
 Tejo and the
 northern
 provinces.*

The authority of the provisional government at Porto would not have been generally acknowledged, and with so little reluctance, throughout these provinces, if that city had not been looked to as a capital, because of its great commercial importance. But so little intercourse was there between the north and south of Portugal, that both had been in insurrection against the French more than a month, before it was known in one part that any resistance had commenced in the other. Vague reports indeed were in circulation, which could be traced to no authentic source; but no intelligence upon which any reliance was placed arrived in Alem-Tejo, till a student from Coimbra, who had enlisted in the academic corps, came to Campo-Mayor on his own concerns, and gave a clear account of the transactions in which he had borne a part. The news was immediately dispatched to Badajoz; tidings of the battle of Baylen reached that city at the same time; and messengers, accredited by the governors of Badajoz and Campo-Mayor, were sent to Coimbra, to communicate the joyful accounts from Spain. They were received not merely with transports of exultation, but with as much surprise, says the Portugueze historian of these events, as if they had come from another world, . . . in such utter ignorance were the people of Beira of what had been going on in Alem-Tejo, though the two provinces, along an extent of some forty miles, are only separated by the Tagus. The messengers on their part with equal surprise learnt that the legitimate government was restored in Tras os Montes, and Entre Douro e Minho. Being thus referred to Porto, thither they proceeded; and returned from thence with letters from the Bishop and the General to the Archbishop of Evora and the Junta of Badajoz, recommending

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the establishment of a provisional government under the Archbishop, similar to that at Porto, that the same system might be pursued in the south as in the north. When they reached Coimbra on their way, they learnt the fate of Evora, that news having been circulated by the French without delay. Proceeding on their journey, when they drew near Castello-Branco they found the roads full of fugitives, removing with their children and families, and such goods as they could carry away, in fear of Loison, so far had the terror of his name extended. It was not then known that he had marched toward Abrantes; and the messengers, to avoid the danger of falling in with his troops, entered Spain by Zebreira, and so proceeded to Badajoz and Campo-Mayor.

CHAP.

X.

1808.

July.*Neves, iv.*
197—205.

Things were in this state when a British expedition arrived upon the north coast. General Leite was collecting at Olivença the troops which had escaped from Evora. The Conde de Castro-Marim was raising and embodying forces in Algarve; and the Junta of Porto were hardly less perplexed by the perilous spirit of insubordination which prevailed both in the city and in the remoter parts of the provinces, than by the deficiency of money and means for the men who willingly came forward to serve against the invaders. There were numbers, and courage, and good will, but every thing else was wanting.

CHAPTER XI.

FIRST CAMPAIGN OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN PORTUGAL.

CONVENTION OF CINTRA.

1808.

*State of
public feel-
ing in Eng-
land.*

THESE transactions in Spain and Portugal excited the deepest interest in the English people; not so much for the hope, which had thus unexpectedly arisen, of advantages to England, and to the general welfare of Europe, as for the nature of the contest, their detestation of the unequalled iniquity by which it had been provoked, and their sympathy in the instinct and principle by which it was carried on. Every day seemed lost till an army of our own should be co-operating with men engaged in a cause so sacred, so congenial to the feelings of a Briton. Such was the eagerness to participate in the glorious struggle, that the militia almost universally offered themselves for foreign service, and the country with one voice called for an effort equal to the occasion. But the Government was not prepared for such exertions. Our military operations had never yet been carried on upon a scale such as was now required, and since the peace of Amiens they had been almost wholly suspended. Though great and most essential improvements in the army had been steadily and unostentatiously carried into effect by the Duke of York, much remained to be done; and it wanted that efficiency which nothing but experience could give it. That our troops were able to beat the enemy wherever they should meet on equal terms, or even with considerable advantage of numbers on the

enemy's side, no Englishman doubted, unless he wished the enemy success; but the public confidence went no farther. The war had on our part so long been almost exclusively maritime, that the army had suffered something in reality and more in reputation. The French, always fond of war, had become a military people; their military establishment was supposed to be perfect in all its branches, their troops experienced, their officers excellent, their commanders of the highest celebrity: to oppose them we had generals very few of whom had ever been tried in command, and officers of whom the far greater number, like their men, had never seen an enemy in the field. A great effort, however, was now called for by our new allies. The Spanish Juntas with which the British Government had hitherto communicated, preferred assistance in money and supplies to an auxiliary force; they had a brave but undue confidence in their own strength, and perhaps they foresaw that mutual ill will might probably arise between combined armies whose habits and prejudices were widely dissimilar. What they desired was, that a British expedition should be employed against the French in Portugal; this would act as a powerful diversion in favour of Spain; thither we were called by the wishes and groans of the Portuguese people; and it was believed, that when the deliverance of that kingdom should have been effected, a plan of co-operation with the Spaniards might be arranged.

When the insurrection of the Spaniards began, an armament was preparing at Cork, which, as different prospects opened upon us, had been supposed to be intended at one time against Ceuta, at another for South America. Its destination was now fixed for the Peninsula, and the command was given to Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Wellesley. His instructions were, while the fleet proceeded off Cape Finisterre, to make for Coruña himself, and consult there with the Provisional Government of

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 XI.
 1808.

An expedition ordered to the coast of Portugal.



CHAP. Galicia. He was authorized to give the most distinct assurances
 XI. to the Spanish and Portugueze people, that his Majesty, in send-
 1808. ing a force to their assistance, had no other object in view than
 to afford them his most unqualified and disinterested support. In all questions respecting their provisional government, should any such arise, he was as far as possible to avoid taking any part; maintaining only these principles, that no act done by Charles or Ferdinand could be considered valid, unless they returned to their own country, and were absolutely free agents there; and that the entire evacuation of the Peninsula by the French was the only basis upon which the Spaniards should be induced to treat. In any arrangements he was directed to act with the utmost liberality and confidence, the object of Great Britain being to assist the people of Spain and Portugal in restoring and maintaining against France the independence and integrity of their respective monarchies.

*Former ser-
 vices of Sir
 A. Wellesley*

Arthur Wellesley, fourth son of Viscount Wellesley, Earl of Mornington, was born in the year 1769, at Dangan Castle, in Ireland, the seat of his ancestors. After having been a short time at Eton, he was removed, while very young, to the military academy at Angers; for there was not at that time any institution in Great Britain wherein tactics were taught, and the youth who meant to follow the military profession was obliged to go to France if he wished to learn the elements of war. He obtained his first commission about the age of eighteen, in the 41st regiment; and after a series of exchanges and promotions, his elder brother, afterwards Marquis Wellesley, purchased for him the lieutenant-colonelcy of the 33rd, in 1793. He conducted himself in the disastrous retreat from Holland so as to obtain much praise from military men. In 1795 he embarked for service in the West Indies, but being providentially driven back by storms, his destination was altered. In 1797 he went

out to India with his brother Lord Mornington, then Governor General; there he distinguished himself in the war against Tippoo, and being appointed Governor of Seringapatam after the capture of that city, and one of the commissioners for disposing of the conquered territories, he discharged his arduous duties in such manner as to deserve and obtain the gratitude of the conquered people. In the subsequent war against the Mah-rattas he commanded at the battle of Assye, against an army exceeding his own number in the proportion of ten to one; and whose disciplined troops, under French officers, more than doubled the British force. The action was severe beyond all former example in India: having won the enemy's artillery, consisting of an hundred pieces, which were served with perfect skill, he had to take them a second time with the bayonet, when men who had feigned death rose from the ground and turned them upon the conquerors as they pressed forward in pursuit. The victory was decisive; the success was followed up, and at the close of that triumphant war a monument in honour of the battle was erected at Calcutta; the inhabitants of that city presented him with a sword, and his own officers with a golden vase; the thanks of parliament were voted him, and he was made a Knight Companion of the Bath. He returned to England in 1805; took his seat in the House of Commons the ensuing year, as member for Newport in the Isle of Wight, and in 1807 was appointed Chief Secretary in Ireland. But his military services were soon required; he accompanied Lord Cathcart in the expedition against Copenhagen, and commanded in the only affair of importance which took place. He was now to be tried in more arduous undertakings; and such was the repute in which his talents were held, that when the armament for the Peninsula was placed under his command, the opinion both of the army and of the public entirely accorded with the choice which Government had made.

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XI.

1808.

July.

*Sir Arthur
lands at Co-
ruña.*

Sir Arthur Wellesley, having about ten thousand men under his command, sailed from Cork on the 12th of July, and leaving the fleet as soon as he had seen it clear of the coast, made sail in a frigate for Coruña, and arrived there on the 20th. There the Junta of Galicia informed him of the battle of Rio Seco; and that the French, being, in consequence, masters of the course of the Douro, were enabled to cut off the communication between that province and the country to the south and east. The French in Portugal they estimated at 15,000, of whom 12,000 were supposed to be at Lisbon; and he was told that the Portuguese troops at Porto amounted to 10,000, and that a Spanish corps of 2000 had begun their march for that city on the 15th, and were expected to arrive there about the 25th. Sir Arthur consulted with them concerning the immediate employment of his army. They explicitly stated that they were in no need of men, but wanted arms, ammunition, and money: . . . this latter want was relieved by the arrival of £ 200,000 from England that very day. They strongly recommended him to employ his forces against the enemy in Portugal, because while that army remained unbroken the Spaniards could never make any simultaneous effort to drive the French out of the Peninsula; and they advised him to land in the north, that he might bring forward and avail himself of the Portuguese troops in that quarter.

*He proceeds
to Porto.*

Accordingly Sir Arthur sailed for Porto, ordering the fleet to follow him. He arrived there the 24th, and had a conference that night with the Bishop and the general officers. From them, and from Lieutenant-colonel Brown, who had previously joined them, he learnt that the regular Portuguese troops who had been collected amounted to 5000 men, and were posted at Coimbra; that there were about 1200 peasants in advance, and a corps of 2500 Portuguese and 300 Spanish infantry at Porto, besides volunteers and peasants; but all were badly equipped

and armed, the peasantry having only pikes. It was concerted that the 5000 should co-operate with him, and the remainder with the Spanish corps, then, so the Spaniards had informed him, on its way from Galicia; and that the peasantry should be employed, part in the blockade of Almeida, part in the defence of Tras os Montes, which province was supposed to be threatened by Bessieres, in consequence of his victory at Rio Seco. Sir Arthur stated, that he should want cattle for draught, and for the supply of his army; the Bishop took pen and ink, wrote down the number which would be required, and replied immediately that they were ready.

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July.

*He goes to
the Tagus
to confer
with Sir C.
Cotton.*

Here Sir Arthur received a letter from Sir Charles Cotton, advising him to leave the troops either at Porto or at the mouth of the Mondego, and proceed to communicate with him off Lisbon. The fleet accordingly was ordered to Mondego Bay, and the general proceeded to confer with Sir Charles. There he found dispatches from General Spencer, stating that he had landed his corps in Andalusia, at the request of the Junta of Seville; but that he had resisted the applications made to him to join Castaños, thinking it advisable to preserve his force unbroken, for the purpose of acting with Sir Arthur. He had, however, consented to take up a position at Xeres, where he might serve as a point of support for Castaños, in case of defeat, and from whence he could re-embark in eight-and-forty hours: and he supposed that Sir Arthur would begin his campaign at Cadiz, implying an opinion that Dupont could not be defeated without English assistance. Sir Arthur, however, being convinced by the Junta of Galicia that his army would be employed with more advantage to the common cause against Junot, ordered General Spencer to join him off the coast of Portugal, unless he should be actually engaged in operations which he could not relinquish without injury to the Spaniards.

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XI.

1808.

July.

The Mondego the only place where a landing could be effected.

General Spencer represented Junot's force as exceeding 20,000 men: the admiral, according to the reports of the Portuguese, estimated them at less: Sir Arthur concluded that they were from 16,000 to 18,000, of whom about 12,000 were at Lisbon, and in its vicinity, and 2400 at Alcobaça. Any attempt at landing in the Tagus was considered impracticable: it would be equally so at Cascaes: it was at all times difficult to land an army in the small bays near the rock, and would be now especially dangerous because of the neighbourhood of the enemy: Peniche was garrisoned by the French. There was therefore no choice but to disembark in the Mondego. Thither Sir Arthur returned. He rejoined the fleet there on the 30th, and there he found intelligence of the defeat of Dupont, and advice from his own government, that he would be reinforced immediately with 5000 men, under Brigadier-General Acland, and afterwards with 10,000 who had been under Sir John Moore in Sweden, the command being vested in Sir Hew Dalrymple; but he was directed to carry into execution without delay the instructions which he had received, if he thought himself sufficiently strong. He also received accounts that Loison had been detached from Lisbon, to open the communication with Elvas, the patriots in Alem-Tejo having been joined by about a thousand men from the Spanish army of Estremadura, and being now formidable.

Troops landed in the Mondego.

This latter account made him conclude that there was no danger of being attacked by superior numbers before his reinforcements reached him; and he determined to land, both for the sake of the troops, and because he knew that the Portuguese, who were much discouraged at seeing the men remain so long on board after their arrival in Mondego Bay, would suspect either the inclination of the English to contend with the French, or their ability, if the landing were still deferred. It was now