

Mediterranean and Portugal, all charged with the same instructions, namely, to demand arms, ammunition, and money; and although the Central Junta treated their demands with contempt, the English authorities answered them generously and freely. Lord Collingwood lent the assistance of his fleet; from Malta and Sicily arms were obtained, and Sir Hew Dalrymple, having completely equipped the Spanish regiments released by the convention of Cintra, despatched them to Catalonia in British transports. Yet it may be doubted if the conduct of the Central Junta were not the wisest; for the local government established at Tarragona had already become so negligent, or so corrupt, that the arms thus supplied were, instead of being used in defence of the country, sold to foreign merchants!\* Such being the political state of Catalonia, it naturally followed that the military affairs should be ill-conducted.

The Count of Caldagues, after having relieved Gerona, returned by Hostalrich, and resumed the line of the Llobregat; fifteen hundred men, drawn from the garrison of Carthagena, reached Tarragona, and the Marquis of Palacios, accompanied by the Junta, quitted the latter town, and fixed his quarters at Villa Franca, within twenty miles of Caldagues, and the latter then disposed his troops, five thousand in number, on different points between Martorel and San Boy, covering a line of eighteen miles, along the left bank of the river.†

Meanwhile Duhesme, who had rested but a few days, marched in the night from Barcelona with six thousand men, and having arrived the 2d of September at day-break on the Llobregat, attacked Caldagues' line on several points, but principally at San Boy and Molino del Rey. The former post was carried, and the Spaniards were pursued to Vegas, a distance of seven or eight miles, but at Molino del Rey the French were repulsed, and Duhesme then returned to Barcelona.

It was the intention of the British ministers, that an auxiliary force should have sailed from Sicily about this period, to aid the Catalans, and doubtless it would have been a wise and timely effort, but Napoleon's foresight prevented the execution. He directed Murat to menace Sicily, and that prince, feigning to collect forces on the coast of Calabria, spread many reports of armaments being in preparation, while, as a preliminary measure, General Lamarque carried the island of Capræ; here, Sir Hudson Lowe first became known to history by losing, in a few days, a post that, without any pretensions to celebrity, might have been defended for as many years. Murat's demonstrations sufficed to impose upon Sir John

\* Lord Collingwood's Correspondence.

† Cabanes.

Stuart, and from ten to twelve thousand British troops were thus paralyzed at a most critical period; and such will always be the result of a policy which has no fixed, definite object in view. When statesmen cannot see their own way clearly, the executive officers will seldom act with vigor.

During September the Spanish army daily increased, the tercios of Migueletes were augmented, and a regiment of hussars that had been most absurdly kept in Majorca ever since the beginning of the insurrection, arrived at Tarragona. Palacios, however, remained at Villa Franca; Caldagues continued to guard the Llobregat, and Mariano Alvarez commanded the advanced guard, composed of the garrisons of Gerona and Rosas, the corps of Juan Claros, and other partisan chiefs. Francisco Milans and Milans de Bosch, with six thousand Migueletes, kept the mountains northward and eastward of Barcelona; the latter hemming in the French right, the former covering the district of El Vallés, and watching, like a bird of prey, the enemy's foragers in the plain of Barcelona. The little port of Filieu de Quixols, near Palamos Bay, was filled with privateers, and the English frigates off the coast, besides aiding the Spanish enterprises, carried on a littoral warfare in the gulf of Lyons with great spirit and success. Many petty skirmishes happened between the Migueletes and the French; but on the 10th of October, Duhesme attacked Milans de Bosch at St. Gerony beyond the Besos, and completely dispersed his corps, and the 11th, sent Colonel Devaux, with two thousand men, against Granollers, which the Spaniards deserted, although it was their chief dépôt. Devaux, having captured and destroyed a considerable quantity of stores, returned the 12th to Mollet, where a column of equal strength was stationed in support, and then occupied the pass of Moncada, while General Millossewitz proceeded with the second column to forage El Vallés. Meanwhile Caldagues, drawing together three thousand infantry, two squadrons of cavalry, and six guns, marched by the back of the hills towards Moncada, hoping to intercept the French on their return to Barcelona; thus Millossewitz and he met unexpectedly at San Cugat.\* In the confused action which ensued, the French were beaten, and retreated across the mountains to Barcelona, while Caldagues, justly proud of his soldier-like movement, returned to his camp on the Llobregat.†

The 28th of October, Palacios was ordered to take the command of the levies then collecting in the Sierra Morena, and General Vives succeeded him in Catalonia. The army was now reinforced with more infantry from Majorca; the Spanish troops, released by

\* Lafaille, Campagne de Catalonia.

† Vacani.

the convention of Cintra, arrived at Villa Franca; seven or eight thousand Granadian levies were brought up to Tarragona by General Reding, and at the same time six thousand men, drafted from the army of Aragon, reached Lerida, under the command of the Marquis of Lazan. The whole were organized in six divisions; the troops in the Ampurdan forming one, and including the garrisons of Hostalrich, Gerona, and Rosas, this *army of the right*, as it was called, amounted to thirty-six thousand men, of which twenty-two thousand foot and twelve hundred horse were near Barcelona, or in march for it.

Vives, seeing himself at the head of such a power, and in possession of all the hills and rivers surrounding Barcelona, resolved to storm that city, and all things seemed to favor the attempt. The inhabitants were ready to rise; a battalion of the Walloon guards, who had been suffered to remain in the city in a species of neutrality, plotted to seize one of the gates, and the French were so uneasy that Duhesme actually resolved to abandon the town and confine his defence to the citadel and Montjouik; a resolution from which he was only diverted by the remonstrances of the chief engineer Lafaille. In this state of affairs, Vives, transferring his quarters to Martorel, directed a general attack on the French outposts, but he was repulsed at every point, and returned to the mountains; the Walloon guards were then disarmed, the inhabitants awed, and the defences of the town increased. From that period to the raising of the blockade, the warfare of the Spanish General was contemptible, although disputes among his adversaries had arisen to such a height that Duhesme was advised to send Lecchi a prisoner to France.

Catalonia was now a prey to innumerable disorders. Vives, a weak, indolent man, had been the friend of Godoy, and was not popular. He had, when commanding in the islands, retained the troops in them with such tenacity as to create doubts of his attachment to the cause; yet the Supreme Junta, while privately expressing their suspicions, and requesting Lord Collingwood to force him to an avowal of his true sentiments, wrote publicly to Vives in the most flattering terms, and finally appointed him Captain-General of Catalonia.\* By the people, however, he and others were vehemently suspected, and, as the mob governed throughout Spain, the authorities, civil and military, were more careful to avoid giving offence to the multitude than anxious to molest the enemy; and hence, although Catalonia was full of strong places, they were neither armed nor provisioned, for all persons were confident that the French only thought of retreating.

\* Lord Collingwood's Correspondence.

Such was the state of the province and of the armies, when Napoleon, being ready to break into the northern parts of Spain, ordered St. Cyr to commence operations. His force (including a German division of six thousand men, not yet arrived at Perpignan) amounted to more than thirty thousand men; ill-composed, however, and badly provided, and St. Cyr himself was extremely discontented with his situation.\* The Emperor had given him discretionary powers to act as he judged fitting, only bearing in mind the importance of relieving Barcelona; but Marshal Berthier neglected the equipment of the troops, and Duhesme declared that his magazines would not hold out longer than December. To march directly to Barcelona was neither an easy nor an advantageous movement. That city could only be provisioned from France, and, until the road was cleared by the taking of Gerona and Hostalrich, no convoys could pass except by sea. To attack those places with prudence, it was essential to get possession of Rosas; not only to secure an intermediate port for French vessels passing with supplies to Barcelona, but to deprive the English of a secure harbor, and the Spaniards of a point from whence they could, in concert with their allies, intercept the communications of the French army, and even blockade Figueras, which, from the want of transport, could not be provisioned at this period. These considerations having determined St. Cyr to commence by the siege of Rosas, he repaired to Figueras in person, the 6th of November, and on the 7th, General Reille, being charged to conduct the operation, after a sharp action, drove in the Spaniards before that place, and completed the investment.

#### SIEGE OF ROSAS.

This town was but a narrow slip of houses built along the water's edge, at the head of the gulf of the same name. The citadel, a large irregular pentagon, stood on one side, and, on the other, the mountains that skirt the flat and swampy plain of the Ampurdan, rose, bluff and rocky, at the distance of half a mile. An old redoubt was built at the foot of the hills, and, from thence to the citadel, an intrenchment had been drawn to cover the houses; hence Rosas, looking towards the land, had the citadel on the left hand, the mountains on the right, and the front covered by this intrenchment. The roadstead permitted ships of the line to anchor within cannon-shot of the place, and on the right hand, coming up the gulf, a star fort, called the Trinity, crowned a rugged hill about a mile and a quarter distant from the citadel, the communication between it and the

\* Muster rolls of the French army, MSS. St. Cyr.





Explanatory Sketch  
of the  
**OPERATIONS IN CATALONIA**  
in  
1808 and 1809



town being by a narrow road carried between the foot of the mountain and the water's edge.

The garrison of Rosas consisted of nearly three thousand men; two bomb-vessels, and an English seventy-four (the *Excellent*), were anchored off the town, and Captain West, the Commodore, reinforced the garrisons of the *Trinity* and the citadel with marines and seamen from these vessels; but the damages sustained in a former siege had been only partially repaired; both places were ill-found in guns and stores, and the *Trinity* was commanded at the distance of pistol-shot from a point of the mountains called the *Puig Rom*.

The force under Reille, consisting of his own and Pino's Italian division, skirmished daily with the garrison; but the rain flooded the Ampurdan, the roads became impassable for the artillery, and the opening of the trenches was delayed. Meanwhile Souham's division took post between the *Fluvia* and *Figueras*, to cover the siege on the side of *Gerona*, and General Chabot's Italian brigade was sent to *Rabos* and *Espollas*, to keep down the *Somatenes*. Before Chabot's arrival, Reille had detached a battalion to that side, and being uneasy for its safety sent three more to its assistance, but too late, for two companies had been cut off by the *Somatenes*. This loss, however, proved beneficial, it enraged the Italians and checked a disposition to desert; and *St. Cyr*, unwilling to pursue the system of burning villages and yet desirous to repress the insidious hostility of the peasants, seized, in reprisal for the loss of his companies, an equal number of villagers, whom he sent to France.\*

At Rosas the inhabitants embarked or took refuge in the citadel, leaving the houses, and the intrenchment covering them, to the French; the latter were however prevented by the fire of the English ships from making any permanent lodgment, and in a few days a mixed detachment of soldiers and townsmen re-established a post there.† This done, on the 8th Captain West, in conjunction with the Governor, made a sally, but was repulsed, and on the 9th several yards of the citadel's ramparts crumbled away. Fortunately the enemy did not perceive the accident, which was repaired in the night, and on the 15th an obstinate assault made on the *Trinity* was repulsed, the English seamen bearing a principal share in the success.

The 16th the roads became passable, and the French battering-train was put in motion. The way leading up to the *Puig Rom* was repaired, two battalions were posted there, on the point commanding the *Trinity*, and on the 19th three guns were mounted.

\* *St. Cyr*.

† Captain West's despatch.

The trenches were then opened at the distance of four hundred yards from the citadel, and the 20th the fire of the French mortars obliged the vessels of war to anchor beyond the range of the shells.

During this time Souham was harassed by the Migueletes from the side of Gerona, and the French cavalry, unable to find forage, were sent back to France. Napoleon, meanwhile, rendered uneasy by the reports of General Duhesme, directed the seventh corps to advance to Barcelona, so as to arrive there by the 26th of November, yet St. Cyr refused to abandon the siege of Rosas without a more positive order.\* On the other side, the assistance afforded to the besieged by Captain West was represented to the Catalonian government as an attempt to possess himself of the place, and the Junta, readily believing the tale, entered into an angry correspondence with Don Pedro O'Daly, the Governor, relative to the supposed treachery, yet took no measures to raise the siege. Pending the correspondence, however, the Excellent sailed from Rosas, and was succeeded by the *Fame*, Captain Bennet, who immediately landed some men under the *Trinity*, and endeavored, but ineffectually, to take the battery opposed to that fort.

The 27th the besiegers assaulted the Spaniards, who had entrenched themselves in the deserted houses of the town; a hundred and sixty were taken, fifty escaped into the citadel, and the rest were slain. Breaching batteries were then commenced among the ruins of the houses, and the communication with the shipping rendered so unsafe, that Lazan, who had come from Lerida to Gerona with six thousand men, and had collected provisions and stores at the mouth of the *Fluvia*, with the intention of supplying Rosas by sea, abandoned his design.†

Reille, observing the dilapidated state of the citadel, now sent another summons; but the governor was firm, and meanwhile, as the engineers reported the breach in the *Trinity* to be practicable, an assault there was ordered for the 30th of November. An Italian officer, who had formerly served in the fort, being appointed to lead the storming party, asserted that the breach was a false one; his remonstrance was unheeded, and indeed the Spanish commandant thought the post so untenable, that two days before, the marines of the *Fame* had been withdrawn by Captain Bennet. But at this moment Lord Cochrane, a man of infinite talent in his profession, and of surpassing courage and enterprise, threw himself with eighty seamen into the fort. He found the breach really practicable, yet broken into an old gallery, which he immediately filled with earth and hammocks, and so cut off the opening; hence

\* St Cyr.

† Doyle's Correspondence, MS.

the unfortunate Italian could do nothing, and fell with all his followers, except two who escaped to their own side, and two who, being spared by the seamen, were drawn up with ropes. A second assault, made a few days after, was likewise repulsed.

While this passed at the Trinity, the breaching batteries opened against the citadel, and a false attack was commenced on the opposite side; the next night the garrison made a sally with some success, but the walls were completely broken by the French fire, and the 5th of December, O'Daly, hopeless of relief, surrendered with two thousand four hundred men. Lord Cochrane then abandoned the Trinity, first blowing up the magazine.

St. Cyr observes that the garrison of Rosas might have been easily carried off, at night, by the British shipping. To embark two thousand five hundred men, in the boats of two ships, and under a heavy fire, whether by night or day, is not an easy operation, yet the censure seems well founded, because sufficient preparation might have been previously made. Nor can the defence of the place (with the exception of Lord Cochrane's exploit) be deemed brilliant, whether with relation to the importance of the place, the assistance that might have been rendered from the sea, or the number of the garrison compared with that of the besiegers. It held out, however, thirty days, and, if that time had been well employed by the Spaniards outside, the loss of the garrison would have been amply repaid; but Vives, wholly occupied with Barcelona, was indifferent to the fate of Rosas; a fruitless attack on Souham's posts, by Mariano Alvarez, was the only effort made to interrupt the siege, or to impede the farther progress of the enemy. Lazan, although at the head of six or seven thousand men, could not rely upon more than three thousand, and his applications to Vives for a reinforcement were unheeded.\*

The fall of Rosas enabled St. Cyr to march to the relief of Barcelona, and he resolved to do so, although the project, at first sight, appeared rather insane than hardy; for the roads, by which Gerona and Hostalrich were to be turned, being mere paths impervious to carriages, no artillery, and little ammunition, could be carried, and the country was full of strong positions. The Germans had not yet arrived at Perpignan; it was indispensable to leave Reille in the Ampurdan, to protect Rosas and Figueras; and these deductions being made, less than eighteen thousand men, including the cavalry, which had been recalled from France, remained disposable for the operation: but, on the Spanish side, Reding having come up, there were twenty-five thousand men in the camp before Barcelona, and ten thousand others, under Lazan

\* Doyle's Correspondence, MS.

and Alvarez, were at Gerona. The Spanish troops were, however, exceedingly ill organized. Two-thirds of the Migueletes carried pikes, and many were without any arms at all; there was no sound military system; the Spanish generals were ignorant of the French movements and strength, and their own indolence and want of vigilance drew upon them the contempt and suspicion of the people.\*

The 8th of December St. Cyr united his army on the left bank of the Fluvia. The 9th he passed that river, and driving the Spaniards over the Ter, established his head-quarters at Mediñya ten miles from Gerona. He wished, before pursuing his own march, to defeat Lazan, lest the latter should harass the rear of the army; but, finding that the Marquis would not engage in a serious affair, he made a show of sitting down before Gerona on the 10th, hoping thereby to mislead Vives, and render him slow to break up the blockade of Barcelona: † this succeeded, the Spaniard remained in his camp, irresolute and helpless, while his enemy was rapidly passing the defiles and rivers between Gerona and the Besos.

The nature of the country between Figueras and Barcelona has been described in a former place, and referring to that description, the reader will find that the only carriage routes by which St. Cyr could march were, one by the sea-coast, and one leading through Gerona and Hostalrich. The first, exposed to the fire of the English vessels, had been broken up by Lord Cochrane, in August; and to use the second, it was necessary, either to take the fortresses, or to turn them by marching for three days through the mountains. St. Cyr adopted the last plan, trusting that rapidity and superior knowledge of war would enable him to separate Lazan and Alvarez from Vives, and so defeat them all in succession.

The 11th of December he crossed the Ter and reached La Bisbal; here he left the last of his carriages, delivered out four days' biscuit and fifty rounds of ammunition to the soldiers, and with this provision, a drove of cattle, and a reserve of only ten rounds of ammunition for each man, he commenced his hardy march, making for Palamos. On the route he encountered and beat some Migueletes that Juan Claros had brought to oppose him, and, when near Palamos, he suffered a little from the fire of the English ships; but he had gained the first step, and his hopes were high.

The 13th, he turned his back upon the coast, and, by a forced march, reached Vidreras and Llagostera, thus placing himself between Vives and Lazan, for the latter had not yet passed the heights of Casa de Selva.

\* Cabanes.

† St. Cyr.



The 14th, marching by Mazanet de Selva and Martorel, he reached the heights above Hostalrich, and encamped at Grions and Masanas. During this day's journey, his rear was slightly harassed by Lazan and Claros, but he was well content to find the strong banks of the Tordera undefended by Vives. His situation was, however, extremely critical. Lazan and Claros had, the one on the 11th, the other on the 12th, informed Vives of the movement; hence the bulk of the Spanish force before Barcelona might be expected, at any moment, in some of the strong positions in which the country abounded; the troops from Gerona were, as we have seen, in the rear, the Somatenes were gathering thickly on the flanks, Hostalrich was in front, and the French soldiers had only sixteen rounds of ammunition.

St. Cyr's design was to turn Hostalrich, and get into the main road again behind that fortress. The smugglers of Perpignan had affirmed that there was no pathway, but a shepherd assured him that there was a track by which it could be effected; and, when the efforts of the staff officers to trace it failed, St. Cyr himself discovered it, but nearly fell into the hands of the Somatenes during the search.

The 15th, at daybreak, the troops being put in motion, turned the fortress and gained the main road, and the garrison of the place, endeavoring to harass their rear, was repulsed; yet the Somatenes on the flanks, emboldened because the French, to save ammunition, did not return their fire, became exceedingly troublesome, and near San Celoni the head of the column encountered some battalions of Migueletes, which Francisco Milans had brought up from Arenas de Mar, by the pass of Villa Gorguin.

Milans, not being aware of St. Cyr's approach, was soon beaten, and his men fell back, part to Villa Gorguin, part to the heights of Nuestra Señora de Cordera: the French thus gained the defile of Treintapazos, but they were now so fatigued that all desired to halt, save the General, who insisted upon the troops clearing that defile, and reaching a plain on the other side, which was not effected before ten o'clock. Lazan's troops did not appear during the day, but Vives' army was in front, and its fires were seen on the hills between Cardadeu and Llinas.

Information of St. Cyr's march, as I have already observed, had been transmitted to Vives on the 11th, and there was time for him to have carried the bulk of his forces to the Tordera, before the French could pass that river; but intelligence of the battle of Tudela, and of the appearance of the French near Zaragoza, arrived at the same moment, and the Spanish General betrayed the greatest weakness and indecision; at one moment resolving to

continue before Barcelona, at another designing to march against St. Cyr.\* He had, on the 9th, sent Reding, with six guns, six hundred cavalry, and one thousand infantry, to take the command in the Ampurdan; and the 12th, after receiving Lazan's report, he reinforced Reding, who was still at Granollers, and directed him upon Cardadeu. The 14th, he ordered Francisco Milans to march by Mattaro and Arenas de Mar, to examine the coast road, and, if the enemy was not in that line, to repair also to Cardadeu. The 15th, Milans, as we have seen, was beaten at St. Celoni, but, in the night, he rallied his whole division on the heights of Cordera, thus flanking the left of the French forces at Llinas.

A Spanish council of war had been held on the 13th. Caldagues advised that four thousand Migueletes should be left to observe Duhesme, and that the rest of the army should march at once to fight St. Cyr: good and soldier-like counsel; but Vives was loth to abandon the siege of Barcelona, and adopting half measures, left Caldagues, with the right wing of the army, to watch Duhesme, and carried the centre and the left, by the route of Granollers, to the heights between Cardadeu and Llinas, where, exclusive of Milans' division, he united, in the night of the 15th, about eight thousand regulars, besides several thousand Somatenes. Duhesme immediately occupied the posts abandoned by Vives, and thus separated him from Caldagues; yet St. Cyr's position, on the morning of the 16th, would have been very dangerous, if he had been opposed by any but Spanish generals and Spanish troops.

Vives and those about him, irresolute and weak as they were in action, were not deficient in boasting words; they called the French army, in derision, "*the succor*;" and, in allusion to the battle of Baylen, announced that a second "*bull-fight*," in which Reding was again the "*matador*," would be exhibited.† Dupont and St. Cyr were, however, men of a different temper: the latter, knowing that the Spaniards were not troops to stand the shock of a good column, united his army in one solid mass at daybreak on the 16th, and without hesitation marched against the centre of the enemy, ordering the head of the column to go headlong on, without either firing or forming line.

#### BATTLE OF CARDADEU.

The hills occupied by the Spanish army were high and wooded. Vives, in person, commanded on the left; the other wing was under Reding, and the Somatenes clustered upon a lofty ridge which was separated from the right of the position by the little river Mo-

\* Cabanes. Doyle's Correspondence, MS.

† St. Cyr.

gent. The main road from Llinas led through the centre of the line, and a second road branching off from the first, and running between the Mogent and Reding's ground, went to Mattaro.

The flank of the French attacking column was galled by the Somatenes, and halted. General Pino, who led it, instead of falling on briskly, sent for fresh instructions, and meanwhile extended his first brigade in a line to his left. St. Cyr reiterated the order to fight in column; but he was sorely troubled at Pino's error, for Reding, advancing against the front and flank of the extended brigade, obliged it to commence a fire, which it could not nourish from the want of ammunition.

In this difficulty the French General acted with great ability and vigor. Pino's second brigade was directed to do that which the first should have done; two companies were sent to menace the left of the Spaniards, and St. Cyr himself rapidly carried Souham's division, by the Mattaro road, against Reding's extreme right. The effect was instantaneous and complete; the Spaniards, overthrown on their centre and right, and charged by the cavalry, were beaten, and dispersed in every direction, leaving their artillery, ammunition, and two thousand prisoners behind.

Vives escaped on foot across the mountain to Mattaro, where he was taken on board an English vessel; but Reding fled on horseback by the main road, and the next day, having rallied some of the fugitives at Monmalo, retreated by the route of San Culgat to Molino del Rey. The loss of the French was only six hundred men, and the battle, which lasted one hour, was so decisive, that St. Cyr resolved to push on to Barcelona immediately, without seeking to defeat Milans or Lazan, whom he judged too timid to venture an action: moreover, he hoped that Duhesme, who had been informed on the 7th of the intended march, and who could hear the sound of the artillery, would intercept and turn back the flying troops.

The French had scarcely quitted the field of battle when Milans arrived, and, finding how matters stood, retired to Arenas de Mar, giving notice to Lazan, who retreated to Gerona; St. Cyr's rear was thus cleared. Meanwhile Duhesme, heedless of what was passing at Cardadeu, instead of intercepting the beaten army, sent Lecchi to attack Caldagues, who, having concentrated his division on the evening of the 16th, repulsed Lecchi, and then retired behind the Llobregat, leaving behind some artillery and the large magazines which Vives had collected for the siege. Thus St. Cyr reached Barcelona without encountering any of Duhesme's troops, and, in his Memoirs of this campaign, he represents that General as astonishingly negligent; seeking neither to molest the enemy nor

to meet the French army; treating everything belonging to the service with indifference; making false returns, and conniving at gross malversation in his generals. Duhesme, however, has not wanted defenders.

St. Cyr, now reflecting upon the facility with which his opponents could be defeated, and the difficulty of pursuing them, resolved to rest a few days at Barcelona, in hopes that the Spaniards, if unmolested, would re-assemble in numbers behind the Llobregat, and enable him to strike an effectual blow, for his design was to disperse their forces so that they should be unable to interrupt the sieges which he meditated; nor was he deceived in his calculations. Reding joined Caldagues, rallied from twelve to fifteen thousand men behind the Llobregat, and Vives, who had relanded at Sitjes, sent orders to Lazan and Milans to join him there by the way of Vallés; the arrival of the latter was, however, so uncertain that the French General, who knew of these orders, judging it better to attack Reding at once, united Chabran's division to his own, and on the 20th advanced to St. Felieu de Llobregat.

The Spaniards were drawn up on the heights behind the village of San Vincente, and their position, lofty and rugged, commanded a free view of the approaches from Barcelona; the Llobregat covered the front, and the left was secured from attack, except at the bridge of Molino del Rey, which was intrenched, guarded by a strong detachment, and protected by heavy guns. Reding's cavalry amounted to one thousand, and he had fifty pieces of artillery, the greatest part of which were in battery at the bridge of Molino del Rey; his right was, however, accessible, because the river was fordable in several places. The main road to Villa Franca led through this position, and, at the distance of ten or twelve miles in the rear, the pass of Ordal offered another post of great strength.

Vives was at San Vincente on the 19th, but returned to Villa Franca the same day; hence, when the French appeared on the 20th, the camp was thrown into confusion, and a council of war being held, one party was for fighting, another for retreating to Ordal;\* finally an officer was sent to Vives for orders, and he returned with a message, that Reding might retreat if he could not defend his post; but the latter fearing that he should be accused, and perhaps sacrificed for returning without reason, resolved to fight, although he anticipated nothing but disaster. The season was extremely severe, snow was falling, and both armies suffered from cold and wet; but the Spanish soldiers were dispirited by past defeats, and the despondency and irresolution of their generals

\* Cabanes.

could not escape observation, while the French and Italian troops were confident in their commander, and flushed with success. In these dispositions the two armies passed the night.

#### BATTLE OF MOLINO DEL REY.

St. Cyr, observing that Reding's attention was principally directed to the bridge of Molino, ordered Chabran's division to that side, with instructions to create a diversion by opening a fire from some artillery, and then retiring as if his guns could not resist the weight of the Spanish metal; in short, to persuade the enemy that a powerful effort would be made there; but when the centre and right of the Spaniards should be attacked, Chabran was to force the passage of the bridge, and assail the heights beyond it. The stratagem succeeded; Reding accumulated troops on his left, and neglected his right, which was the real point of attack.

The 21st, Pino's division crossing the Llobregat at daylight, by a ford in front of St. Felieu, marched against the right of the Spanish position; Chabot's division followed; Souham's, which had passed at a ford lower down, and then ascended by the right bank, covered Pino's passage; the light cavalry were held in reserve behind Chabot's division, and a regiment of cuirassiers was sent to support Chabran at Molino del Rey.

The Spanish position consisted of two mountain heads, separated by a narrow ravine and a torrent, and as the troops of the right wing were exceedingly weakened, they were immediately chased off their headland by the leading brigade of Pino's division. Reding then, seeing his error, changed his front, drawing up on the other mountain, on a new line, nearly perpendicular to the Llobregat, but he still kept a strong detachment at the bridge of Molino, which was thus in rear of his left. The French divisions formed rapidly for a fresh effort, Souham was on the right, Pino in the centre, and Chabot on the left; and the latter gained ground in the direction of Villa Franca, endeavoring to turn the Spaniards' right, and cut off their retreat, while the light cavalry, making way between the mountain and the river, sought to connect themselves with Chabran at Molino. The other two columns, having crossed the ravine that separated them from the Spaniards, ascended the opposite mountain. The Catalans, forming quickly, opposed their enemies with an orderly but ill-directed fire, and their front line advancing, offered to charge with an appearance of great intrepidity; but their courage sinking, they turned as the hostile masses approached, and the reserve immediately opened a confused volley upon both parties. In this disorder, the road to Villa Franca being intercepted by Chabot, the right was forced upon the centre, the

centre upon the left, and the whole pushed back in confusion upon Molino del Rey. Meantime a detachment from Chabran's division, passing the Llobregat above Molino, blocked the road to Martorel, and in this miserable situation, the Spaniards being charged by the light cavalry, scarcely a man would have escaped if Chabran had obeyed his orders, by pushing across the bridge of Molino upon their rear. But that General, at all times feeble in execution, remained a tranquil spectator of the action, until the right of Souham's division reached the bridge; thus the routed troops escaped by dispersion, throwing away everything that could impede their flight across the mountains. Vives reached the field of battle just as the rout was complete, and was forced to fly with the rest. The victorious army pursued in three columns; Chabran's in the direction of Igualada; Chabot's by the road of San Sadurni, which turned the pass of Ordal; Souham's by the royal route of Villa Franca, at which place the head-quarters were established on the 22d. The posts of Villa Nueva and Sitjes were immediately occupied by Pino, while Souham pushed the fugitives to the gates of Tarragona.

The loss of the Spaniards, owing to their swiftness, was less than might have been expected; not more than twelve hundred fell into the hands of the French, but many superior officers were killed or wounded, and, on the 22d, the Count de Caldagues was taken, a man apparently pedantic in military affairs, and wanting in modesty, but evidently possessed of both courage and talent. The whole of the artillery, vast quantities of powder, and a magazine of English muskets quite new, were captured, yet many of the Migueletes were unarmed, and the Junta were unceasing in their demands for succors of this nature! but the history of any one province was the history of all Spain.



## CHAPTER V.

Tumult in Tarragona—Reding proclaimed General—Reinforcements join the Spaniards—Actions at Bruch—Lazan advances, and fights at Castel Ampurias—He quarrels with Reding, and marches towards Zaragoza—Reding's plans—St. Cyr breaks Reding's line at Llacuna—Actions at Capellades, Igualada, and St. Magi—French General, unable to take the abbey of Creus, turns it, and reaches Villaradoña—Joined by Souham's division, takes post at Valls and Pla—Reding rallies his centre and left wing—Endeavors to reach Tarragona—Battle of Valls—Weak condition of Tortosa—St. Cyr blockades Tarragona—Sickness in that city—St. Cyr resolves to retire—Chabran forces the bridge of Molino del Rey—Conspiracy in Barcelona fails—Colonel Briche arrives with a detachment from Aragon—St. Cyr retires behind the Llobregat—Pino defeats Wimpfen at Tarrasa—Reding dies—His character—Blake is appointed Captain-General of the *Coronilla*—Changes the line of operations to Aragon—Events in that province—Suchet takes the command of the French at Zaragoza—Colonel Perena and Baget oblige eight French companies to surrender—Blake advances—Battle of Aleanit—Suchet falls back—Disorder in his army—Blake neglects Catalonia—St. Cyr marches by the valley of Congosto upon Vich—Action at the defile of Garriga—Lecchi conducts the prisoners to the Fluvia—St. Cyr hears of the Austrian war—Barcelona victualled by a French squadron—Observations.

BARCELONA was now completely relieved, and the captured magazines supplied it for several months; there was no longer a Spanish army in the field, and in Tarragona, where some eight or nine thousand of the Spanish fugitives from this and the former battle had taken refuge, there was terrible disorder. The people rose tumultuously, broke open the public stores, and laying hands on all the weapons they could find, rushed from place to place, as if searching for something to vent their fury upon; they called aloud for the head of Vives, and to save his life he was cast into prison by Reding, who was proclaimed General-in-chief.\* The regular officers were insulted by the populace, and there was as usual a general cry to defend the city, mixed with furious menaces against traitors; but there were neither guns, nor ammunition, nor provisions, and during the first moment of anarchy, St. Cyr might certainly have rendered himself master of Tarragona, by a vigorous effort.† The opportunity soon passed away; the French General, seeking only to procure subsistence, occupied himself in forming a train of field artillery, while Reding, who had been almost without hope, proceeded to rally the army, and place the town in a state of defence.

The 1st of January eleven thousand infantry and eight hundred cavalry re-assembled at Tarragona and Reus; a Swiss regiment from Majorca, and two Spanish regiments from Granada, increased

\* Cabanes.

† St. Cyr.

this force, and the 5th three thousand four hundred men arrived from Valencia, from whence also five thousand muskets, ammunition in proportion, and ten thousand pikes fresh from England, were forwarded to Tarragona, and a supply of money, obtained from the British agents at Seville, completed the list of fortuitous events following the disaster of Molino del Rey.\* These fortunate circumstances, and the inactivity of St. Cyr, who seemed paralyzed, restored the confidence of the Catalans, yet their system remained unchanged, for in Spain confidence often led to insubordination, but never to victory.

A part of the fugitives from Molino had taken refuge at Bruch, where, being joined by the Somatenes, they chose Major Green, an English military agent, for their general, thinking to hold that post, which was considered impregnable ever since the defeats of Chabran and Swartz. St. Cyr, glad of this opportunity to retrieve the honor of the French arms, detached Chabran himself the 11th January to take his own revenge; but as that General was still depressed by the recollection of his former defeat, to encourage him, Chabot was directed from San Sadurni upon Igualada, by which the defile of Bruch was turned, and a permanent defence rendered impossible.† Green made little or no resistance; eight guns were taken, a considerable number of men were killed, the French pursued to Igualada, and a detachment, without orders, even assailed and took Montserrat itself, and rejoined the main body without loss. Chabot was then recalled to San Sadurni, and Chabran was quartered at Martorel.

While these events were passing beyond the Llobregat, the Marquis of Lazan advanced, with seven or eight thousand men, towards Castellon de Ampurias. The 1st of January he drove back a battalion of infantry upon Rosas with considerable loss, but the next day General Reille, having assembled about three thousand men, intercepted his communications, and attacked him in his position behind the Muga; the victory seems to have been undecided, and in the night Lazan, regaining his communications, returned to Gerona.

The battle of Molino del Rey having abated, for a time, the ardor of the Catalans, Reding was enabled to avoid serious actions, while the Somatenes harassed the enemy; and this plan, being followed during the months of January and February, was exceedingly troublesome to St. Cyr, because he was obliged to send small parties continually to seek for provision, which the country people hid with great care, striving hard to protect their scanty

\* Doyle's Correspondence, MS.

† St. Cyr.

stores. In the beginning of February the country between the Llobregat and Tarragona was almost exhausted of food; the English ships continued to vex the coast-line, and the French, besides deserters, lost many men, killed and wounded, in the innumerable petty skirmishes sustained by the marauding parties. Still St. Cyr maintained his positions, until the country people, tired of a warfare in which they were the chief sufferers, clamored against Reding, that he, with a large regular force, should look calmly on, until the last morsel of food was discovered, and torn from their starving families; the townspeople, also feeling the burden of supporting the troops, impatiently urged the General to fight, nor was this insubordination confined to the rude multitude. Lazan, although at the head of nine thousand men, remained perfectly inactive after the skirmish at Castellon de Ampurias; but when Reding required him to leave a suitable garrison in Gerona, and bring the rest of his troops to Igualada, he would not obey, and their dispute was only terminated by Lazan's marching, with five thousand men, to the assistance of Zaragoza. His operations there have been related in the narrative of that siege.

The army immediately under Reding was very considerable, the Swiss battalions were numerous and good, and some of the most experienced of the Spanish regiments were in Catalonia; every fifth man of the robust population had been called out after the defeat of Molino del Rey, and, although the people, averse to serve as regular soldiers, did not readily answer the call, the force under Reding was, in the beginning of February, not less than twenty-eight thousand men. The urban guards were also put in activity, and above fifteen thousand Somatenes assisted the regular troops; but there was more show than real power, for Reding was incapable of wielding the regular troops skilfully, and the Migueletes, being ill armed, without clothing and insubordinate, devastated the country equally with the enemy. The Somatenes, who only took arms for local interests, would not fight, except at the times, in the manner, and in the place that suited themselves; they neglected the advice of the regular officers, reviled all who would not adopt their own views, and caused many to be removed from their commands. The Spanish generals never obtained from them good information of the enemy's movements; yet their own plans were always made known to the French, for at Reding's head-quarters, as at those of Castaños before the battle of Tudela, every project was openly and ostentatiously discussed. Reding himself was a man of no military talent, his activity was of body, not of mind; but he was brave and honorable; and popular, because, being without system, arrangement, or deep design, and easy in his

nature, he thwarted no man's humors, and thus floated in the troubled waters until their sudden reflux left him on the rocks.

The Catalonian army was now divided into four distinct corps.

Alvarez, with four thousand men, held Gerona and the Ampurdan.

Lazan, with five thousand, was near Zaragoza.

Don Juan Castro, an officer accused by the Spaniards of treachery, and who afterwards did attach himself to Joseph's party, occupied, with sixteen thousand men, a line extending from Olessa, on the upper Llobregat, to the pass of San Cristina, near Tarragona; this line, running through Bruch, Igualada, and Llacuna, was above sixty miles long.

The remainder of the army, amounting to ten or twelve thousand men under Reding himself, was quartered at Tarragona, Reus, and the vicinity of those places.

The troops were fed from Valencia and Aragon, the convoys from the former being conveyed in vessels along the coast; but the magazines being accumulated on one or two points of the line, and chosen without judgment, fettered Reding's movements and regulated those of the French, whose only difficulty, in fact, was to procure food.

Early in February, St. Cyr, having exhausted the country about him, and finding his communications much vexed by the Soma-tenes, and by descents from the English ships, concentrated his divisions in masses at Vendril, Villa Franca, San Sadurni, and Martorel. The seventh corps, having been reinforced by the German division, and by some conscripts, amounted at this period to forty-eight thousand men, of which forty-one thousand were under arms, but the force immediately with St. Cyr did not exceed twenty-three thousand combatants.\* The relative position of the two armies was, however, entirely in favor of the French General; his line, extending from Vendril, by Villa Franca, to Martorel, was not more than thirty miles, and he had a royal road by which to retreat on Barcelona; whereas the Spanish posts, covering an extent of above sixty miles, formed a half-circle round the French line, and their communications were more rugged than those of St. Cyr. Nevertheless, it is not to be doubted that, by avoiding any serious action, the Catalans might have obliged the French to abandon the country between the Llobregat and Tarragona; famine, and the continued drain of men in a mountain warfare, would have forced the latter away, nor could they have struck any formidable blow to relieve themselves, seeing that all the important places were fortified towns requiring a regular siege. The never-failing arrogance of the Spanish character, and the unstable judgment of Reding, induced him to forego these advantages. The closing of the French

\* Appendix, No. 30, § 6.

posts, and some success in a few petty skirmishes, were magnified, the last into victories, and the first into a design on the part of the enemy to fly; and an intercourse opened with some of the inhabitants of Barcelona, gave hopes of regaining that city by means of a conspiracy within the walls. The Catalans had before made proposals to General Lecchi to deliver up the citadel of that place; nor is there anything that more strongly marks the absurd self-sufficiency of the Spaniards during this war, than the repeated attempts they made to corrupt the French commanders. As late as the year 1810, Martin Carrera, being at the head of about two thousand ragged peasants, half-armed, and only existing under the protection of the English outposts, offered to Marshal Ney, then investing Ciudad Rodrigo, rank and honors in the Spanish army if he would desert!

Reding, swayed by the popular clamor which this state of affairs produced, resolved to attack; and in this view directed Castro to collect his sixteen thousand men, to fall upon the right flank and rear of St. Cyr, by the routes of Llacuna and Igualada, and to send a detachment to seize the pass of Ordal, to cut off the French line of retreat to Barcelona; meanwhile, advancing with eight thousand by the road of Vendril and St. Cristina, he himself was to attack the enemy in front. All the Migueletes and Somatenes between Gerona and the Besos were to aid in these operations, the object being to surround the French, a favorite project with the Spaniards at all times; and as they publicly announced this intention, the joy was universal the destruction of the hostile army being as usual anticipated with the utmost confidence.

The Catalans were in motion on the 14th of February, but St. Cyr had kept his army well in hand, and seeing the Spaniards were ready to break in upon him, resolved to strike first. Wherefore, leaving Souham's division at Vendril, to hold Reding in check, on the 16th St. Cyr marched from Villa Franca, with Pino's division, and overthrew Castro's advanced posts which were at Lacuña and Saint Quinti. The Spanish centre was thus pierced, their wings completely separated, and Castro's right was thrown back upon Capellades.

The 17th, the French General, continuing his movement with Pino's division, reached Capellades, where he expected to unite with Chabot and Chabran, who had orders to concentrate there,—the one from San Sadurni, the other from Martorel. By this skilful movement he avoided the pass of Bruch, and concentrated three divisions on the extreme right of Castro's left wing and close to his magazines, which were at Igualada.

Chabot arrived the first, and being for a little time unsupported.

was attacked and driven back with loss; but when the other divisions came up, the action was restored and the Spaniards put to flight. They rallied again at Pobla de Claramunt, between Capellades and Igualada, a circumstance agreeable to St. Cyr, because he had sent Mazzuchelli's brigade from Llacuna direct upon Igualada, and if Chabot had not been so hard pressed, the action of Capellades was to have been delayed until Mazzuchelli had got into the rear; scarcely, however, was the head of that General's column descried, when Castro, who was at Igualada with his reserves, recalled the troops from Pobla de Claramunt.\* The French were close at their heels, and the whole passed through Igualada, fighting and in disorder; after which, losing all courage, the Spaniards threw away their arms, and fled by the three routes of Cervera, Calaf, and Manresa. They were pursued all the 17th, yet the French returned the next day with few prisoners, because, says St. Cyr, "*the Catalans are endowed by nature with strong knees.*"

Having thus broken through the centre of the Spanish line, defeated a part of the left wing and taken the magazines, St. Cyr posted Chabot and Chabran at Igualada, to keep the beaten troops in check, while himself, with Pino's division, marched on the 18th to fight Reding, whose extreme left was now at St. Magi. Souham also had been instructed, when by preconcerted signals he should know that the attack at Igualada had succeeded, to force the pass of Cristina, and push forward to Villa Radoña, upon which town St. Cyr was now marching.

The position of St. Magi, being attacked at four o'clock in the evening of the 18th, was carried without difficulty, but it was impossible to find a single peasant to guide the troops on the next day's march to the abbey of Santa Creus. In this perplexity, a wounded Spanish captain, who was prisoner, having demanded to be allowed to go to Tarragona, St. Cyr assented, offering to carry him to the Creus, and thus the prisoner unconsciously acted as a guide to his enemies.\* The march was long and difficult, and it was late ere they reached the abbey, which was a strong point, occupied in force by the troops that had been beaten in San Mag, the evening before, wherefore the French, after a fruitless demonstration of assaulting it, took a position for the night. Meanwhile Reding, hearing of Castro's defeat, made a draft of men and guns from the right wing, and was marching by Pla and the pass of Cabra, intending to rally his left; his road ran just behind St. Creus, and he was passing at the moment when the French appeared

\* St. Cyr.

† Ibid.



before that place; but as neither general was aware of the other's presence, each continued his particular movement.

The 20th St. Cyr, crossing the Gaya river under a fire from the abbey, continued his rapid march upon Villa Radoña, near which place he dispersed a small corps; but finding that Souham was not come up, he sent an officer, escorted by a battalion, to hasten that General, whose non-arrival gave reason to believe that the staff officers and spies, sent with the previous instructions, had all been intercepted. This caused the delay of a day and a half, which would otherwise have sufficed to crush Reding's right wing, surprised as it would have been, without a chief, in the plain of Tarragona.

While the French rested at Villa Radoña, Reding pursued his march to St. Coloma de Querault, where he rallied many of Castro's fugitives, and thus the aspect of affairs was totally changed; for Souham, after forcing the pass of San Cristina, reached Villa Radoña the 21st, and, at the same time, the weakly men, who had been left at Villa Franca, also arrived; hence more than two-thirds of the whole French army were concentrated at Villa Radoña at the moment when the Spanish commander, being joined by the detachment beaten from San Cristina and by the troops from the abbey of Creus, had also rallied the greatest part of his forces at St. Coloma de Querault. Each general could now, by a rapid march, overwhelm his adversary's right wing; but the troops left by Reding, in the plain of Tarragona, could retire upon that fortress, while those left by St. Cyr at Igualada were without support. When, therefore, the French General, who, continuing his movement on Tarragona, had reached Valls the 22d, heard of Reding's march, he immediately returned with Pino's division to Pla, resolved, if the Spanish General should advance towards Igualada, to follow him with a sharp spur.

The 23d the French halted; Souham at Valls to watch the Spanish troops in the plain of Tarragona; Pino's division at Pla, but sending detachments to the abbey of Creus and towards Santa Coloma to feel for Reding. In the evening these detachments returned with some prisoners; the one reported that the abbey was abandoned; the other that the Spanish General was making his way back to Tarragona, by the route of Sarreal and Momblanch. St. Cyr, therefore, retaining Pino's division at Pla, pushed his advanced posts on the right to the abbey, and in front to the defile of Cabra, designing to encounter the Spaniards, if they returned by either of these roads; and he ordered Souham to take post in front of Valls, with his left on the Francoli river, his right towards Pla

and his advanced guard at Pixa Moxons, to watch for Reding by the road of Momblanch.

The 24th the Spanish General, being in St. Coloma, called a council of war, at which Colonel Doyle, the British military agent, assisted. One party was for fighting St. Cyr, another for retreating to Lerida, a third for attacking Chabran at Igualada, a fourth for regaining the plain of Tarragona. There were many opinions, but neither wisdom nor resolution, and finally Reding, leaving General Wimpfen, with four thousand men, at Santa Coloma, decided to regain Tarragona, and took the route of Momblanch with ten thousand of his best troops, following the Spanish accounts, but St. Cyr says with fifteen thousand. The Captain-General knew that Valls was occupied, and his line of march intercepted; but he imagined the French to be only five or six thousand, for the exact situation and strength of an enemy were particulars that seldom troubled Spanish commanders.

#### BATTLE OF VALLS.

While in full march without any scouts, at daybreak on the 25th of February, the head of Reding's column was suddenly fired upon at Pixa Moxons by Souham's detachment, which was immediately driven in upon the main body; and this attack being vigorously followed, the whole of that General's division gave way. Under cover of this fight the Spanish baggage and artillery passed the Francoli river, and the road to Tarragona being thus opened, Reding might have effected his retreat without difficulty; but he continued to press Souham until St. Cyr, who had early intelligence of what was passing, came down from Pla upon the left flank of the Spanish army. When the French dragoons, which preceded their infantry, appeared in Souham's line, Reding re-crossed the Francoli and took a position behind that river, intending to retreat from thence in the evening, but his able opponent obliged him again to fight.

At three o'clock the action recommenced. The banks of the Francoli were steep and rugged, and the positions beyond strong and difficult of access, yet the French General wishing, as he himself states, to increase the moral ascendancy of his soldiers, forbade the artillery, although well placed for execution, to play on Reding's battalions, lest they should fly before the infantry could reach them! Under this curious arrangement the action was begun by the light troops.

The French, or rather Italian infantry, were superior in number to the Spaniards, and the columns, covered by the skirmishers, passed the river with great alacrity, and ascended the heights

under an exceedingly regular fire, which was continued until the attacking troops had nearly reached the summit of the position; then both Swiss and Catalans wavered, and breaking ere the infantry could close with them, were instantly charged by the French cavalry. Reding, after receiving several sabre wounds, saved himself at Tarragona, where the greatest number of the vanquished also took refuge, while the remainder fled in the greatest disorder by the routes of Tortosa and Lerida; the Count of Castel d'Orius and many other superior officers, the artillery and baggage were taken, and four thousand men were killed or wounded. During all these movements and actions, Reding received no assistance from the Somatenes; nor is this surprising, for it may be received as an axiom in war, that armed peasants are only formidable to stragglers and small detachments: when the regular forces engage, the poor countryman, sensible of his own weakness, wisely quits the field.

St. Cyr lost only a thousand men, and on the 26th Souham entered the rich town of Reus, where, contrary to the general custom, the inhabitants remained. Pino then occupied Pla, Alcover and Valls; detachments were sent to Salou and Villa Seca, on the sea-coast west of Tarragona, and Chabot, recalled from Igualada, was posted at Santa Cruz, to watch Wimpfen, who still remained at Santa Coloma de Querault.

The battle of Valls finished the regular warfare in Catalonia. Those detachments, which by the previous movements had been cut off from the main body of the army, joined the Somatenes, and as partisan corps, troubled the communications of the French; but St. Cyr had no longer a regular army to deal with in the field, and Tortosa, which was in a miserably defenceless condition, without provisions, must have fallen, if after the battle any attempt had been made against it. Lazan, indeed, after his defeat near Zaragoza, carried a few men to Tortosa, where he declared himself independent of Reding's command; but this battle and the fall of Zaragoza had stricken terror far and wide; the neighboring provinces, fearing and acting each for its own safety, had no regard to any general plan, and the confusion was universal.

Meanwhile, the fugitives from Valls, joined to the troops already in Tarragona, crowded the latter place, and an infectious disorder breaking out, a great mortality ensued; wherefore St. Cyr, satisfied that sickness should do the work of the sword, begirt the city with a resolution to hold his positions while food could be procured. In this policy he remained steadfast until the middle of March, although Wimpfen attacked and drove Chabran in succession from Igualada, Llacuna, and St. Quinti, to Villa Franca; and although

the two Milans and Claros, acting between the Besos and the Llobregat, had cut his communication with Barcelona, and in conjunction with the English squadron, renewed the blockade of that city. This plan appears injudicious; the sickness in Tarragona did not cause it to surrender, and the subjugation of Catalonia was certainly retarded by the cessation of offensive operations. The object of the French General should have been to seize some strong places, such as Tortosa, Tarragona, Gerona, or Lerida, while the terror of defeat was fresh; his inactivity after the battle of Molino del Rey and at this period, enabled the Catalonians to recover confidence, and to put those towns in a state of defence; thus he gained nothing but the barren glory of victory.

Towards the middle of March, the resources of the country being all exhausted, he at last determined to abandon the plains of Tarragona, and take some position where he could feed his troops, cover the projected siege of Gerona, and yet be at hand to relieve Barcelona. The valleys about Vich alone offered all these advantages, but as Claros and the Milans were in force at Molino del Rey, he ordered Chabran to drive them from that point, that the sick and wounded men might be first transferred from Valls to Barcelona.

The 10th of March, Chabran sent a battalion with one piece of artillery on that service, and the Migueletes, thinking it was the advanced guard of a greater force, abandoned the post, but being undeceived, returned, beat the battalion, and took the gun. The 12th, Chabran received orders to march with his whole division, consisting of eight battalions and three squadrons, and he reached the bridge, yet he returned without daring to attack. St. Cyr repeated his orders, and on the 14th the troops, apparently ashamed of their General's irresolution, fell on vigorously, carried the bridge and established themselves on the heights at both sides of the river.\*

The communication thus opened, it was found that Duhesme, pressed by the Migueletes without, was also extremely fearful of conspiracies within the walls; his fears, and the villainous conduct of his police, had at last excited the inhabitants to attempt that which their enemies seemed so much to dread.† In March, an insurrection was planned in concert with the Migueletes and the English squadron, and the latter coming close in cannonaded the town on the 10th, expecting that Wimpfen, the Milans, and Claros would have assaulted the gates, which was to have been the signal for the insurrection within. The inhabitants were sanguine of success, because there were above two thousand Spanish pris-

\* St. Cyr.

† Ibid.

oners in the city, and outside the walls there were two tercios secretly recruited and maintained by the citizens; and these men, being without uniforms, constantly passed in and out of the town, yet Duhesme was never able to discover or to prevent them. This curious circumstance is illustrative of the peculiar genius of the Spaniards, which in all matters of surprise and stratagem is unrivalled. The project against the city was, however, baffled by Chabran's actions at Molino del Rey, which occupied the partisan corps outside the walls, and the British squadron, exposed to a heavy gale, and disappointed in the co-operation from the land side, sailed away the 11th.

St. Cyr intended to commence his retrograde movement the 18th, but the 17th a cannonade was heard on the side of Monblanch, which was ascertained to proceed from a detachment of six hundred men, with two guns, under the command of Colonel Briche. This officer, being sent by Mortier to open the communication after the fall of Zaragoza, had forced his way through the Spanish partisan corps, and to favor his return the army halted two days; but the enterprise, after a trial, appeared so dangerous, that he relinquished it, and attached himself to the seventh corps.

Meanwhile the inactivity that succeeded the battle of Valls, and the timidity displayed by Chabran in the subsequent skirmishes, had depressed the spirits of the troops; they contemplated the approaching retreat with great uneasiness, and many officers infected with fear advised the General to hide his movements from the enemy; but he, anxious to restore their confidence, took the part of giving the Spaniards a formal notice of his intentions, desiring Reding to send proper officers to take over the hospitals which had been fitted up at Valls, as well as some French, wounded, that could not be moved. This done, the army commenced its retreat, reached Villa Franca the 21st of March, and the 22d passed the Llobregat, followed, but not molested, by some feeble Spanish detachments. The 23d, Wimpfen, who had rallied the Migueletes of Claros and the Milans, at Tarrasa after the affair of the 24th, was beaten by General Pino, who pursued him to near Manresa, and then foraging the country, returned with provisions sufficient to feed the army without drawing on the magazines of Barcelona.

During these proceedings, Reding died in Tarragona of his wounds. He had been received there with such dissatisfaction after the battle of Valls, that the interference of the British consul was necessary to save him from the first fury of the populace, who were always ready to attribute a defeat to the treachery of the General. His military conduct was, by his own officers, generally and justly condemned, and his skill in war was slight, but his courage

and honesty were unquestionable, and he was of distinguished humanity; at this unhappy period, when the French prisoners in every part of Spain were tortured with the most savage cruelty, and when to refrain from such deeds was to incur suspicion, Reding had the manliness, not only to repress all barbarities within the range of his command, but even to conclude a convention with St. Cyr, under which the wounded men on both sides were to receive decent treatment, and to be exchanged as soon as their hurts were cured.\* In his last moments he complained that he had been ill-served as a general; that the Somatenes had not supported him; that his orders were neglected, his plans disclosed to the enemy, and that he could never get true intelligence; complaints which the experience of Moore, Baird, Cradock, and, above all, of Wellington, proved to be applicable to every part of Spain, at every period of the war. Coupigny succeeded Reding, but was soon superseded by Blake, who was appointed Captain-General of the Coronilla, or little crown, a title given to the union of Valencia, Aragon, and Catalonia. The warfare in Aragon being thus ultimately connected with that in Catalonia, a short account of what was passing in the former province will be useful.

When Zaragoza fell, Lannes returned to France, and Mortier, who succeeded him, sent detachments against Monzon, Jaca, Mequinenza, and Lerida. The fort of Monzon, commanding a passage over the Cinca river, was abandoned by the Spaniards, and Jaca surrendered, by which a new and important line of communication was opened with France; but the demonstration against Mequinenza failed, and the summons to Lerida was fruitless. Mortier then quartered his troops on both sides of the Ebro, from Barbastro to Alcañitz, and sent Colonel Briche, as we have seen, to open a communication with the seventh corps. This was in March, and in April Mortier moved with the fifth corps to Castile, leaving Junot with the third corps to hold Aragon; but that officer being sick, soon returned to France, and was replaced by General Suchet. The third corps was now very much reduced; one brigade was employed to protect the communication with Navarre, another was escorting the prisoners from Zaragoza to Bayonne, and many artillery-men and non-commissioned officers had been withdrawn to serve in Germany: thus the number of disposable troops in Aragon did not exceed twelve thousand men under arms.

The weakness of the army gave the new General great uneasiness, which was not allayed when he found that men and officers were discontented and dispirited. Suchet was, however, no ordinary man; with equal vigor and prudence he commenced a system

\* St. Cyr.



of discipline in his corps, and of order in his government, that afterwards carried him, with scarcely a check, from one success to another, until he obtained for himself the rank of Marshal, and for his troops the honor of belonging to the only French army in Spain that never suffered any signal reverse. He at first hoped that the battle of Valls, and other defeats sustained by the Spaniards at this period, would give him time to re-organize his corps in tranquillity; but this hope soon vanished. The peasantry, observing the weakness of the third corps, only waited for a favorable opportunity to rise, and the Migueletes and Somatenes of the mountains about Lerida and Mequinenza were, under the command of Pereña and Baget, already in activity.

While Junot still held the command, Blake, drawing troops from Valencia and Tarragona, had joined Lazan, and fixed his quarters at Morella, on the frontier of Aragon. Designing to operate in that province rather than in Catalonia, he endeavored to re-ignite the fire of insurrection; nor was fortune adverse to him, for a part of the garrison of Monzon having made an unsuccessful marauding excursion beyond the Cinca, the citizens fell upon those who remained, and obliged them to abandon that post, which was immediately occupied by Pereña. The Duke of Abrantes then sent eight companies of infantry and thirty cuirassiers to retake the place, but Baget reinforced Pereña, the French were repulsed, and the Cinca suddenly overflowing behind them cut off their retreat; the cavalry, plunging with their horses into the river, escaped by swimming; the infantry, finding the lower passages guarded by the garrison of Lerida, and the upper cut off by the partisan corps, after three days' marching and skirmishing, surrendered. The prisoners were carried to Tarragona, and soon afterwards exchanged, in pursuance of a convention made by Reding and St. Cyr.

This slight success excited the most extravagant hopes, and the garrison of Mequinenza having contrived to burn the bridge of boats which the French had thrown over the Ebro at Caspe, Blake drove the French from Beceyta and Val de Ajorfa, and entered Alcañitz. The beaten troops retired with loss to Samper and Ixar; and it was at this moment, when the quarters on both sides of the Ebro were harassed, and the wings of the third corps separated by the destruction of the bridge at Caspe, that Suchet arrived to take the command of the third corps. Finding his troops spread over a great tract of country, and in danger of being beaten in detail, he immediately ordered General Habert to abandon the left bank of the Ebro, cross that river at Fuentes, and follow in reserve upon Ixar, where Suchet himself rallied all the rest of the troops, with the exception of a small garrison left in Zaragoza.

## BATTLE OF ALCANITZ.

The French battalions were fearful and disorderly; but the General, anxious to raise their spirits, marched towards Blake on the 23d of May.\* The latter was in position in front of Alcañitz; a bridge over the Guadalupe was immediately behind his centre, which was covered by a hill, and his left was well posted near some pools of water, but his right was rather exposed. The French had about eight thousand infantry and seven hundred cavalry in the field, and the Spaniards about twelve thousand of all arms.

Suchet, observing Blake's dispositions, judged that, if he could carry the hill in the centre and so separate the Spanish wings, the latter would be cut off from the bridge of Alcañitz, and obliged to surrender. In this design he directed a column against each wing to draw Blake's attention to his flanks, and when the skirmishers were well engaged, three thousand men, pushing rapidly along the main road, attacked the hillock; but a brisk fire of musketry and artillery checked their progress, the Spaniards stood firm, and the French, after a feeble effort to ascend the hill, began to waver, and finally fled outright. Suchet, who was himself slightly wounded, rallied them in the plain, and remained there for the rest of the day, but without daring to renew the action. In the night he retreated, but, although not pursued, his troops were seized with panic, and, at daylight, came pouring into Samper with all the tumult and disorder of a rout. Blake's inactivity enabled the French General to restore order, and he caused the man who first commenced the alarm to be shot; then encouraging the troops, that they might not seem to fly, he rested in position two whole days, after which he retreated to Zaragoza.

This action at Alcañitz was a subject of triumph and rejoicing all over Spain; the Supreme Junta conferred an estate upon Blake; the kingdom of Murcia was added to his command, his army rapidly augmented, and he, greatly elated and confirmed in a design he had formed to retake Zaragoza, turned his whole attention to Aragon, and totally neglected Catalonia. To the affairs of that province it is now time to return.

St. Cyr remained in Barcelona for a considerable period, during which he endeavored to remedy the evils of Duhesme's government, and to make himself acquainted with the political disposition of the inhabitants. He also filled the magazines with three months' provisions, and, as the prisoners within the walls were an encumbrance on account of their subsistence, and a source of uneasiness from their numbers, he resolved to send them to France. The 15th of

\* Suchet's Memoirs.

April, having transferred his sick and weakly men to the charge of Duhesme, and exchanged Chabran's for Lecchi's division, he marched to Granollers, giving out that he was returning to the frontier of France, lest the Catalans should remove their provisions from Vich, and thus frustrate his principal object.

The Migueletes, under Milans and Claros, had taken post on each side of the long and narrow defile of Garriga, in the valley of the Congosto, which they barricadoed with trees and pieces of rock, and mined in several places; Wimpfen with his corps was also at a little distance, ready to join them at the first alarm. Hence, when on the 16th Lecchi's division, escorting two thousand prisoners, appeared at the head of the defile, an action commenced, but in an hour the Migueletes fled on all sides; for St. Cyr, fully aware of the strength of the position, had secretly detached Pino to attack Wimpfen, and, while Lecchi was engaged at the entrance, Souham and Chabot, traversing the mountains, arrived, the one upon the flank, the other at the further end of this formidable pass.

The 18th, the French were established at Vich; the inhabitants had fled to the hills with their effects, but left their provisions behind. Chabot's and Pino's division were immediately posted at Centellas, San Martin, Tona, and Col de Sespino, to guard the entrances into the valley, but Souham's division remained near the town, his right being at Roda and Manlieu on the Ter, and his advanced posts at Gulp, St. Sebastian, and St. Eularia. General Lecchi then marched with the prisoners by Filieu de Pallerols to Besalu, and although he was attacked several times on the march, delivered his charge to General Reille, and returned without loss, bringing news of Napoleon's arrival in Paris, and of the approaching war with Austria. On the other side, a movable column sent to Barcelona brought back the pleasing intelligence that Admiral Cosmao's squadron, baffling the extreme vigilance of Lord Collingwood, had reached that city with ample supplies. Thus, in May, what may be called the irregular movements in Catalonia terminated, and the more methodical warfare of sieges commenced; but this part was committed to other hands; General Verdier had succeeded Reille in the Ampurdan, and Marshal Augereau was on the road to supersede St. Cyr.

OBSERVATIONS.—1. Although his marches were hardy, his battles vigorous, and delivered in right time and place, St. Cyr's campaign may be characterized as one of great efforts without corresponding advantages. He himself attributes this to the condition of the seventh corps, destitute and neglected, because *the Emperor disliked and wished to ruin its chief*; a strange accusation, and unsustained by reason or facts. What! Napoleon wilfully