

was now appointed to the chief command, and Sir John Moore, who had suddenly and unexpectedly returned from the Baltic, having by his firmness and address saved himself and his troops from the madness of the Swedish monarch, was, with marked disrespect, directed to place himself under the orders of Sir Harry Burrard, and proceed to Portugal. Thus two men comparatively unknown and unused to the command of armies, superseded the only generals in the British service whose talents and experience were indisputable. The secret springs of this proceeding are not so deep as to baffle investigation ; but that task scarcely belongs to the general historian, who does enough when he exposes the effects of envy, treachery, and base cunning, without tracing those vices home to their possessors.

Notwithstanding these changes in the command, the uncertainty of the ministers' plans continued. The same day that Sir Hew Dalrymple was appointed to be commander-in-chief, a despatch, containing the following project of campaign, was sent to Sir Arthur Wellesley:‡ “The motives which have induced the sending so large a force to that quarter (the coast of Portugal), are, 1st, to provide effectually for an attack upon the Tagus ; and, 2dly, to have such an additional force disposable beyond what may be indispensably requisite for that operation, as may admit of a detachment being made to the southward, either with a view to secure Cadiz, if it should be threatened by the French force under General Dupont, or to co-operate with the Spanish troops in reducing that corps, if circumstances should favor such an operation, or any other that may be concerted. His Majesty is pleased to direct that the *attack upon the Tagus should be considered as the first object to be attended to* ; and as the whole force of which a statement is inclosed, when assembled, will amount to not less than thirty thousand, *it is considered that both services may be provided for amply.* The precise distribution, as between Portugal and Andalusia, both as to time and proportion of force, must depend upon circumstances, to be judged of on the spot ; and should it be deemed advisable to fulfil the assurance which Lieutenant General Sir Hew Dalrymple appears to have given to the Supreme Junta of Seville, under the authority of my despatch of (no date), that it was the intention of His Majesty to employ a corps of ten thousand men to co-operate with the Spaniards in that quarter, a corps of this magnitude may, I should hope, be detached without prejudice to the main operation against the Tagus, and may be reinforced, according to circumstances, after the Tagus has been secured. But if, previous to the arrival of the force under orders from England, Cadiz should be

* Parl. Pap. Ld. Castlereagh to Sir A. Wellesley, 15th July.

seriously threatened, it must rest with the senior officer of the Tagus at his discretion to detach, upon receiving a requisition to that effect, such an amount of force as may place that important place out of the reach of immediate danger, *even though it should for the time suspend operations against the Tagus.*"

The inconsistent folly of this despatch is apparent, but the occupation of Cadiz was a favorite project with the Cabinet, which was not discouraged by Spencer's unsuccessful effort to gain admittance, nor by the representations of Sir Hew Dalrymple, who had grounds to believe that the attempt would bring down the army under Castanos to oppose it by force. Neither did the minister consider that, in a political view, such a measure, pressed as a preliminary, would give a handle for misrepresentation, and that, in a military view, the burden of Cadiz would clog operations in Portugal. Adopting all projects, and weighing none, they displayed the most incredible confusion of ideas; for the plan of sending ten thousand men to Seville was said to be in pursuance of a promise made by Sir Hew Dalrymple to the Junta, whereas the despatch of that General, quoted as authority for this promise of help, contained nothing of the kind, and was even written *before any junta existed!*

In England, at this period, personal enmity to Napoleon, and violent party prejudices, had so disturbed the judgments of men relative to that monarch, that any information speaking of strength or success for him was regarded with suspicion even by the ministers, who, as commonly happens in such cases, becoming the dupes of their own practices, listened with complacency to all those tales of mutiny among his troops, disaffection of his generals, and insurrections in France, which the cunning or folly of their agents transmitted to them. Hence sprung such projects as the one above, the false calculations of which may be exposed by a short comparative statement. The whole English force was not much above thirty thousand men, distributed off Cadiz, off the coast of Portugal, on the eastern parts of England, and in the Channel. The French in Spain and Portugal were about a hundred and twenty thousand men, and they possessed all the Portuguese, and most of the Spanish fortresses. The English army had no reserve, no fixed plan, and it was to be divided, and to act upon a double line of operations. The French had a strong reserve at Bayonne, and the grand French army of four hundred thousand veterans was untouched, and ready to succor the troops in the Peninsula if they required it.

Happily, this visionary plan was in no particular followed by the generals intrusted with the conduct of it. A variety of causes combined to prevent the execution. The catastrophe of Baylen marred the great combinations of the French Emperor, fortune

drew the scattered divisions of the English army together, and the decisive vigor of Sir Arthur Wellesley, sweeping away these cobweb projects, obtained all the success that the bad arrangements of the ministers would permit. In the next chapter, resuming the thread of the history, I shall relate the proceedings of the first British campaign in the Peninsula. But I judged it necessary to make an exposition of the previous preparations and plans of the Cabinet, lest the reader's attention, not being fully awakened to the difficulties cast in the way of the English generals, by the incapacity of the government, should, with hasty censure, or niggard praise, do the former injustice; for, as a noble forest hides many noisome swamps and evil things, so the Duke of Wellington's actions have covered the innumerable errors of the ministers.

CHAPTER IV.

Sir A. Wellesley quits his troops and proceeds to Coruña—Junta refuse assistance in men, but ask for and obtain money—Sir Arthur goes to Oporto; arranges a plan with the Bishop; proceeds to the Tagus; rejoins his troops; joined by Spencer; disembarks at the Mondego; has an interview with General Freire d'Andrada; marches to Leiria—Portuguese insurrection weak—Junot's position and dispositons—Laborde marches to Alcobaça, Loison to Abrantes—General Freire separates from the British—Junot quits Lisbon with the reserve—Laborde takes post at Roriça—Action of Roriça—Laborde retreats to Montechique—Sir A. Wellesley marches to Vimiero—Junot concentrates his army at Torres Vedras.

A FEW days after sailing from Cork, Sir Arthur Wellesley, quitting the fleet, repaired in a frigate to Coruña, where he arrived the 20th of July, and immediately held a conference with the Gallician Junta, by whom he was informed of the battle of Rio Seco.* The account was glossed over in the Spanish manner, and the issue of that contest had caused no change of policy, if policy that may be called, which was but a desire to obtain money and to avoid personal inconvenience. The aid of troops was rejected, but arms and gold were demanded, and while the conference went on, the last was supplied, for an English frigate entered the harbor with two hundred thousand pounds. The Junta recommended that the British should be employed in the north of Portugal, promised to aid them by sending a Spanish division to Oporto, and supported their recommendation with an incorrect statement of the number of men, Spanish and Portuguese, who, they asserted, were in arms near that

* Sir A. Wellesley's Narrative. Court of Inquiry.

city. They gave also a still more inaccurate estimate of the forces under Junot, and in this manner persuaded Sir Arthur not to land in their province: yet, at the moment they were rejecting the assistance of the British troops, the whole kingdom of Galicia was lying at the mercy of Marshal Bessières, and there were neither men nor means to impede the progress of his victorious army.

Mr. Charles Stuart, appointed envoy to the Gallician Junta, had arrived with Sir Arthur Wellesley at Coruña, and quickly penetrating the flimsy veil of Spanish enthusiasm, informed his government of the true state of affairs; but his despatches were unheeded, while the inflated reports of the subordinate civil and military agents were blazoned forth, and taken as sure guides. Meanwhile Sir Arthur proceeded to Oporto, where he found Colonel Browne, an active, intelligent officer, employed to distribute succors. From his reports it appears that no Spanish troops were in the north of Portugal, and that all the Portuguese force was upon the Mondego, to the south of which river the insurrection had already spread. A French division of eight thousand men was supposed to be in their front, and some great disaster was to be expected, for, to use Colonel Browne's words, "with every good will in the people, their exertions were so short-lived, and with so little combination, that there was no hope of their being able to resist the advances of the enemy;*" in fact, only five thousand regulars and militia, half armed, and associated with ten or twelve thousand peasants without any arms, were in the field at all. A large army was, however, made out upon paper by the Bishop of Oporto, who, having assembled his civil and military coadjutors in council, proposed various plans of operation for the allied forces, none of which Sir Arthur was inclined to adopt;† but after some discussion it was finally arranged that the prelate and the paper army should look to the defence of the *Tras os Montes* against Bessières, and that the five thousand soldiers on the Mondego should co-operate with the British forces.

This being settled, Sir Arthur Wellesley hastened to consult with Sir Charles Cotton relative to the descent at the mouth of the Tagus, which had so long haunted the imaginations of the ministers. The strength of the French, the bar of the river, the disposition of the forts, and the difficulty of landing in the immediate neighborhood, occasioned by the heavy surf playing upon all the undefended creeks and bays, convinced him that such an enterprise was unadvisable, if not impracticable. There remained a choice of landing to the north of Lisbon at such a distance as to avoid the danger of a disputed disembarkation; or of proceeding to the

* Parliamentary Papers, 1809.

† Sir A. Wellesley's Narrative. Court of Inquiry.

southward to join General Spencer, and commence operations in that quarter against Dupont.* Sir Arthur Wellesley decided against the latter, which promised no good result while Junot held Portugal and Bessières hung on the northern frontier; for he foresaw that the jealousy of the Spaniards, evinced by their frequent refusal to admit English troops into Cadiz, would assuredly bring on a tedious negotiation, and waste the season of action before the army could obtain a place of arms; or that the campaign must be commenced without any secure base of operations.† Nothing was then known of the Spanish troops, except that they were inexperienced, and without good aid from them it would have been idle with fourteen thousand men to take the field against twenty thousand, strongly posted in the Sierra Morena, and communicating freely with the main body of the French army. A momentary advance was useless; and if the campaign was protracted, the line of operations, running nearly parallel to the frontier of Portugal, would have required a covering army on the Guadiana to watch the movements of Junot.

The double line of operations, proposed by Lord Castlereagh, was contrary to all military principle, and as Spencer's despatches announced that his division was at St. Mary's, near Cadiz, and disengaged from any connection with the Spaniards—a fortunate circumstance, scarcely to have been expected—Sir Arthur sent him orders to sail to the mouth of the Mondego, whither he himself also repaired, to join the fleet having his own army on board.

Off the Mondego he received the despatches announcing Sir Hew Dalrymple's appointment and the sailing of Sir John Moore's troops, but this mortifying intelligence did not relax his activity; he directed fast-sailing vessels to look out for Anstruther's armament, and conduct it to the Mondego, and having heard of Dupont's capitulation, resolved, without waiting for General Spencer's arrival, to disembark his own troops and commence the campaign—a determination that marked the cool decisive vigor of his character. He was, indeed, sure that, in consequence of Dupont's defeat, Bessières would not enter Portugal; yet his information led him to estimate Junot's own force at sixteen to eighteen thousand men—a number, indeed, below the truth, yet sufficient to make the hardest general pause before he disembarked with only nine thousand men, and without any certainty that his fleet could remain even for a day in that dangerous offing:‡ another man, also, was coming to profit from any success that might be obtained, and a failure would have

* Sir A. Wellesley's Narrative. Court of Inquiry.

† Sir H. Dalrymple's and Lord Collingwood's Correspondence.

‡ Sir A. Wellesley's Narrative. Court of Inquiry.

ruined his own reputation in the estimation of the English public, always ready to deride the skill of an Indian general.

It was difficult to find a good point of disembarkation. The coast of Portugal, from the Minho to the Tagus, presents, with few exceptions, a rugged and dangerous shore; all the harbors formed by the rivers have bars, that render most of them difficult of access even for boats; with the slightest breeze from the sea-board, a terrible surf breaks along the whole line of coast, forbidding all approach; and when the south wind, which commonly prevails from August to the winter months, blows, a more dangerous shore is not to be found in any part of the world.

The small peninsula of Peniché, about seventy miles northward of the Lisbon Rock, alone offered a safe and accessible bay, perfectly adapted for a disembarkation; but the anchorage was completely within range of the fort, which contained a hundred guns and a garrison of a thousand men. The next best place was the Mondego river, and as the little fort of Figueras, taken, as I have before related, by the student Zagalo, and now occupied by English marines, secured a free entrance, Sir Arthur commenced landing his troops there on the 1st of August. The weather was calm, yet the operation was so difficult, that it was not completed before the 5th, and at that moment, by singular good fortune, General Spencer arrived; he had not received Sir Arthur's orders, but with great promptitude had sailed for the Tagus the moment Dupont surrendered, and by Sir Charles Cotton had been directed to Mondego.* The united forces, however, only amounted to twelve thousand three hundred men, because a veteran battalion, being destined for Gibraltar, was left on board the ships.

When the army was on shore, the British General repaired to Montemor Velho, to confer with Don Bernardin Freire d'Andrada, the Portuguese commander-in-chief, who proposed that the troops of the two nations should relinquish all communication with the coast, and throwing themselves into the heart of Beira, commence an offensive campaign. He promised ample stores of provisions, but Sir Arthur, having already discovered the weakness of the insurrection, placed no reliance on those promises; wherefore furnishing Freire with five thousand stand of arms and ammunition, he refused to separate from his ships, and seeing clearly that the insurgents were unable to give any real assistance, resolved to act with reference to the probability of their deserting him in danger. The Portuguese General, disappointed at this refusal, reluctantly consented to join the British army, yet pressed Sir Arthur to hasten to Leiria, lest a large magazine filled, as he affirmed, with

* Sir A. Wellesley's Narrative. Court of Inquiry.

provisions for the use of the British army, should fall into the enemy's hands. After this the two generals separated, and the necessary preparations being completed, the advanced guard of the English army quitted the bank of the Mondego on the 9th, taking the road to Leiria, and the 10th, Sir Arthur Wellesley followed with the main body.

His plan embraced three principal objects :

1. To hold on by the sea-coast, as well for the sake of his supplies as to avoid the drain upon his army, which the protection of magazines on shore would occasion, and also to cover the disembarkation of the reinforcements expected from England.

2. To keep his troops in a mass, that he might strike an important blow.

3. To strike that blow as near Lisbon as possible, that the affairs of Portugal might be quickly brought to a crisis.

He possessed very good military surveys of the ground in the immediate neighborhood of Lisbon, and he was anxious to carry on his operations in a part of the country where he could avail himself of this resource ;* but the utter inexperience of his commissariat staff, and the want of cavalry, rendered his movements slow, and obliged him to be extremely circumspect ; especially as the insurrection, although a generous, was a feeble effort, and its prolongation rather the result of terror than of hope. The blow had been hastily struck in the moment of suffering, and the patriots, conscious of weakness, trembled when they reflected on their own temerity. Bernardin Freire had received arms and equipments complete for five thousand soldiers, yet his army at Leiria did not exceed six thousand men of all arms fit for action, and besides this force there were, in all the provinces north of the Tagus, only three thousand infantry, under the command of the Marquis of Valladeres, half of whom were Spaniards : † hence it appears that nothing could be more insignificant than the insurrection, nothing more absurd than the lofty style adopted by the Junta of Oporto in their communications with the British ministers.

Upon the other side, Junot, who had received information of the English descent in the Mondego as early as the 2d, was extremely embarrassed by the distance of his principal force, and the hostile disposition of the inhabitants of Lisbon. ‡ He also was acquainted with the disaster of Dupont, and exaggerated notions of the essential strength of the Portuguese insurgents were generated in his own mind, and in the minds of his principal officers. The patriots

* Sir A. Wellesley's Narrative. Court of Inquiry.

† Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.

‡ Thiebault.

of the Alemtejo and Algarves, assisted by some Spaniards, and animated by manifestoes and promises assiduously promulgated from the English fleet, had once more assembled at Alcacer do Sal, from whence they threatened the garrisons of St. Ubes, and the French posts on the south bank of the Tagus, immediately opposite to Lisbon. That capital was very unquiet. The anticipation of coming freedom was apparent in the wrathful looks and stubborn manners of the populace, and superstition was at work to increase the hatred and the hopes of the multitude. It was at this time the prophetic eggs, denouncing death to the French and deliverance to the Portuguese, appeared. But less equivocal indications of approaching danger were to be drawn from the hesitations of Junot, who, wavering between his fear of an insurrection in Lisbon and his desire to check the immediate progress of the British army, gave certain proof of an intellect yielding to the pressure of events.

Loison, having seven or eight thousand men, was now in the neighborhood of Estremos; two thousand five hundred men were in the fortresses of Elvas and Almeida, a few hundred were at Abrantes, a thousand in Santarem, and the same number in Peniché. General Thomieres, with one brigade, was in the vicinity of Alcobaça, and the rest of the army was quartered at Lisbon and on a circuit round, including both sides of the river. The Tagus itself was guarded on the north bank by the forts of Cascaes, St. Antonio, St. Julian's, Belem, and the citadel, between which smaller works kept up a continual line of offence against ships entering by the northern passage of the harbor. On the southern bank, Fort Bugio, built upon a low sandy point, crossed its fire with St. Julian's in the defence of the entrance. Upon the heights of Almada or Palmela stood the fort of Palmela, and St. Ubes and Traffaria completed the posts occupied by the French on that side.* The communication between the north and south banks was kept up by the refitted Portuguese ships of war, by the Russian squadron, and by the innumerable boats, most of them very fine and large, with which the Tagus is covered.

Such was the situation of the army on the 3d, when Junot ordered Loison to march by Portalegre and Abrantes, and from thence effect a junction with General Laborde, who, with three thousand infantry, five or six hundred cavalry, and five pieces of artillery, quitted Lisbon upon the 6th, and proceeded by Villa Franca, Rio Mayor, and Candeiros; being charged to observe the movements of the British, and to cover the march of Loison, with whom he expected to form a junction at Leiria. Junot himself remained in Lisbon, thinking to control the inhabitants by his pres-

* Thiebault.

ence.* He embarked all the powder from the magazines, took additional precautions to guard his Spanish prisoners, and put the citadel and forts into a state of siege; but disquieted by the patriots assembled at Alcacer do Sal, he sent General Kellermann with a movable column to disperse them, directing him to scour the country between that place and Setuval, to withdraw the garrison from the latter, to abandon all the French posts on the south of the Tagus except Palmela, and to collect the whole force in one mass on the heights of Almada, where an intrenched camp had been already commenced. But Kellermann had scarcely departed, when two English regiments, the one from Madeira, the other from Gibraltar, arriving off the bar of Lisbon, distracted anew the attention of the French, and increased the turbulence of the populace; and in this state of perplexity the Duke of Abrantes lingered until the 15th, when the progress of Sir Arthur Wellesley forced him to assume the command of the army in the field.

Loison entered Abrantes the 9th, and the same day Laborde arrived at Candeiros, from which point he could with facility either move upon Alcobaca and Leiria, or form a junction with Loison upon the side of Santarem. The 10th, Loison halted at Abrantes, and Laborde moved to Alcobaca, where he was joined by Thomières and the garrison of Peniché. Hence the armies on both sides were now in a state of attraction towards each other indicating an approaching shock; and while the news of Bessières' victory at Rio Seco produced a short-lived exultation in the French camp, intelligence of Joseph's flight from Madrid reached the British army, and increased its confidence of victory.

Sir Arthur's advanced guard entered Leiria, and was there joined by Bernardin Freire and the Portuguese army, which immediately seized the magazine without making any distribution to the British troops, the main body of which only arrived on the 11th; but the whole marched in advance upon the 12th.† Laborde had employed the 11th and 12th seeking for a position in the vicinity of Batalha, and finding the ground too extensive for his force, fell back in the night of the 12th to Obidos, a town with a Moorish castle built on a gentle eminence in the middle of a valley.‡ Occupying this place with his piquets, he placed a small detachment at the windmill of Brilos, three miles in front, and retired the 14th to Roriça, a village six miles to the southward, situated at the intersection of the roads leading to Torres Vedras, Montechique, and Alcoentre, and overlooking the whole valley of Obidos. This posi-

* Thiebault.

† Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.

‡ Thiebault.

tion enabled him to preserve his communication with Loison open; but as it uncovered Peniché, the fourth Swiss regiment, with the exception of the flank companies, was sent to re-garrison that important point, and at the same time three hundred men were detached to the right, by Bombarral, Cadaval, and Segura, to obtain intelligence of Loison.

That General, by a demonstration on the side of Thomar the 11th, had ascertained that Leiria was in the hands of the British, and fell back the same day upon Torres Novas, then following the course of the Tagus, he arrived at Santarem upon the 13th, but in such an exhausted state that he was unable to renew his march until the 15th. Sir Arthur Wellesley's first movement had thus cut the line of communication between Loison and Laborde, caused a loss of several forced marches to the former, and obliged the latter to risk an action with more than twice his own numbers. But as the hostile troops approached each other, the Portuguese chiefs became alarmed; for, notwithstanding the confident language of their public manifestoes and the bombastic style of their conversation, an internal conviction that a French army was invincible pervaded all ranks of the patriots. The leaders, aware of their own deficiency, and incredulous of the courage of the English soldiers, dreaded the being committed in a decisive contest, because a defeat would deprive them of all hope to make terms with the victors: whereas by keeping five or six thousand men together, they could at any time secure themselves by a capitulation. The Junta of Oporto, also, who were already aiming at supreme authority, foresaw that, in the event of a successful battle, it would be more advantageous for their particular views to be provided with an army untouched and entirely disconnected with a foreign general; and Freire, being well instructed in the secret designs of this party, resolved not to advance a step beyond Leiria. However, to cover his real motives, he required the British commander to supply him with provisions, choosing to forget the magazine which he had just appropriated to himself, and as readily forgetting the formal promises of the Bishop of Oporto, who had undertaken to feed the English army.

This extraordinary demand, that an auxiliary army, just disembarked, should nourish the native soldiers, instead of being itself fed by the people, was met by Sir Arthur Wellesley with a strong remonstrance. He easily penetrated the secret motive which caused it, yet feeling that it was important to have a respectable Portuguese force acting in conjunction with his own, he first appealed to the honor and patriotism of Freire, warmly admonishing him that he was going to forfeit all pretension to either by permit-

ting the British army to fight without his assistance. This argument had no effect upon Don Bernardin, and he parried the imputation against his spirit and zeal by pretending that his intention was to operate independently on the line of the Tagus; hence, after some further discussion, Sir Arthur, changing his tone of rebuke to one of conciliation, recommended to him not to risk his troops by an isolated march, but to keep in the rear of the British, and wait for the result of the first battle. This advice was agreeable to Freire, and at the solicitation of Colonel Trant, a military agent, he consented to leave fourteen hundred infantry and two hundred and fifty cavalry under the immediate command of the English General. But the defection of the native force was a serious evil; it shed an injurious moral influence, and deprived Sir Arthur of the aid of troops whose means of gaining intelligence and whose local knowledge might have compensated for his want of cavalry. Nevertheless, continuing his own march, his advanced guard entered Caldas the 15th, on which day also Junot reluctantly quitted Lisbon, with a reserve composed of two thousand infantry, six hundred cavalry, and ten pieces of artillery, carrying with him his grand parc of ammunition and a military chest containing forty thousand pounds.

General Travot was left at Lisbon, with above seven thousand men, of which number two battalions were formed of stragglers and convalescents.* He held both sides of the Tagus, and Palmela, the Bugio fort, and the heights of Almada were occupied by two thousand men, to protect the shipping from the insurgents of the Alemtejo, who, under the orders of the Monteiro Mor, were again gathering at Setuval; a thousand were on board the vessels of war, to guard the Spanish prisoners and the spare powder; two thousand four hundred were in the citadel and supporting the police; a thousand were distributed in the forts of Belem, St. Julian's, Cascaes, and Ericcia, which last is situated to the northward of the Rock of Lisbon, and commands a small harbor a few miles west of Mafra; finally, a thousand were at Santarem, protecting a large dépôt of stores. Thus, if the garrisons of Elvas, Peniché and Almeida be included, nearly one-half of the French army was, by Junot's combinations, rendered inactive, and those in the field were divided into three parts, without any certain point of junction in advance, yet each too weak singly to sustain an action. The Duke of Abrantes seems to have reigned long enough in Portugal to forget that he was merely the chief of an advanced corps, whose safety depended upon activity and concentration.

The French reserve was transported to Villa Franca by water

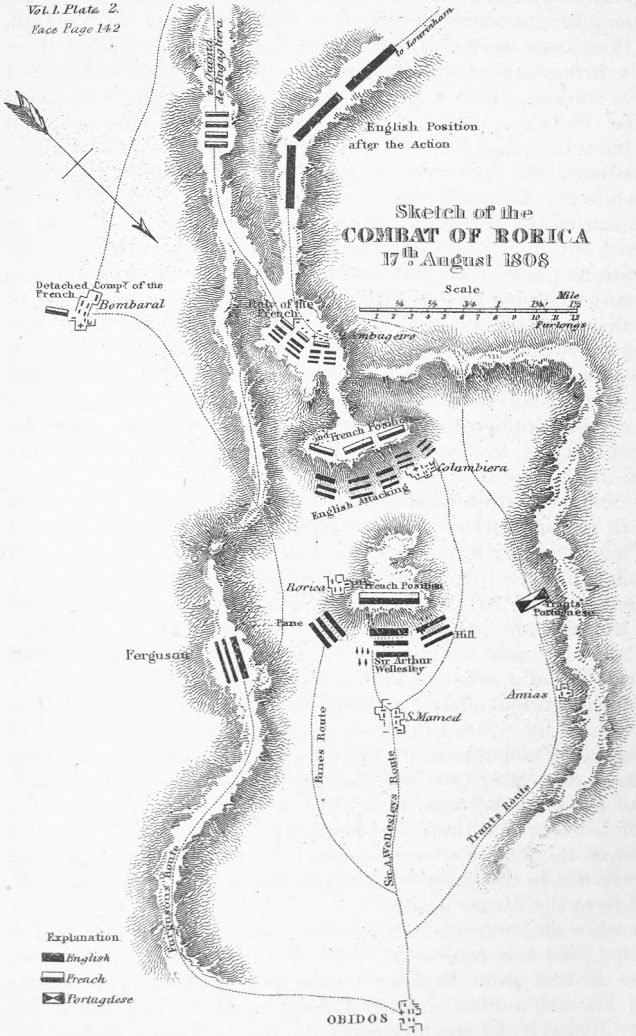
* Thiebault.

from whence it was to march to Otta; but the rope ferry-boat of Saccavem being removed by the natives, it cost twenty-four hours to throw a bridge across the creek at that place, and on the 17th, when the troops were on their march, Junot hastily recalled them to Villa Franca, because of a report that the English had landed near the capital. This rumor proving false, the reserve resumed the road to Otta, under the command of General Thiebault, and Junot himself pushed forward to Alcoentre, where he found Loison, and assumed the personal direction of that General's division. Meanwhile Sir Arthur Wellesley was pressing Laborde. The 25th he had caused the post at Brilos to be attacked, and the piquets to be driven out of Obidos; but two companies of the 95th and two of the 5th battalion, 60th, after gaining the windmill without loss, pursued the retiring enemy with such inconsiderate eagerness that, at the distance of three miles from their support, they were outflanked by two superior bodies of French, and were only saved by the opportune advance of General Spencer.* Two officers and twenty-seven men were killed and wounded in this slight affair, which gave a salutary check to the rashness, without lowering the confidence of the troops, and on the 16th Laborde's position was examined.

The main road from Obidos passed through a valley, which was closed to the southward by some high table land, on which stood the village of Roriça, and the French, being posted on a small plain immediately in front of that place, overlooked all the country as far as Obidos. All the favorable points of defence in front, and on the nearest hills, at each side, were occupied by small detachments, and one mile in the rear a steep ridge, extending about three-quarters of a mile east and west, and consequently parallel to the French position, offered a second line of great strength. The main road led by a steep defile over this ridge, which was called the height of Zambugeira, or Columbeira. Beyond it very lofty mountains, stretching from the sea-coast to the Tagus, like a wall, filled all the space between that river and the ocean, down to the Rock of Lisbon; and the valley leading from Obidos to Roriça was bounded on the left by a succession of ridges, rising like steps, until they were lost in the great mass of the Sierra de Baragueda, itself a shoot from the Monte Junto.

Laborde's situation was truly embarrassing: Loison was still at Alcoentre, and the reserve at Villa Franca, that is, one or two marches distant from Roriça; hence if he retired upon Torres Vedras his communication with Loison would be lost, and to fall back on Montechique was to expose the line of Torres Vedras and

* Sir A. Wellesley's despatch.





Mafra; to march upon Alcoentre and unite with Loison was to leave open the shortest road to Lisbon, and remain at Roriça was to fight three times his own force. Nevertheless, encouraged by the local advantages of his position, and justly confident in his own talents, Laborde resolved to abide his enemy's assault, in the feeble hope that Loison might arrive during the action.

COMBAT OF RORICA.

Early in the morning of the 17th, thirteen thousand four hundred and eighty infantry, four hundred and seventy cavalry, and eighteen guns issued from Obidos, and soon afterwards broke into three distinct columns of battle.

The left, commanded by General Ferguson, was composed of his own and Bowes' brigade of infantry, reinforced by two hundred and fifty riflemen, forty cavalry, and six guns, forming a total of four thousand nine hundred combatants. He marched by the crests of the hills adjoining the Sierra de Baragueda, being destined to turn the right flank of Laborde's position, and to oppose the efforts of Loison, if that General, who was supposed to be at Rio Mayor, should appear during the action.

The right, under Colonel Trant, composed of a thousand Portuguese infantry, and fifty horse of the same nation, moved by the village of St. Amias, with the intention of turning the left flank of the French.

The centre, nine thousand in number, with twelve guns, was commanded by Sir Arthur in person, and marched straight against the enemy by the village of Mahmed. It was composed of Generals Hill's, Nightingale's, Catlin Crawford's, and Fane's brigades of British infantry, four hundred cavalry, two hundred and fifty of which were Portuguese, and there were four hundred light troops of the same nation.

As this column advanced, Fane's brigade, extending to its left, drove back the French skirmishers, and connected the march of Ferguson's division with the centre. When the latter approached the elevated plain upon which Laborde was posted, General Hill, who moved upon the right of the main road, being supported by the cavalry and covered by the fire of his light troops, pushed forward rapidly to the attack; on his left, General Nightingale displayed a line of infantry, preceded by the fire of nine guns, and Crawford's brigade, with the remaining pieces of artillery, formed a reserve. At this moment, Fane's riflemen crowned the nearest hills on the right flank of the French, the Portuguese troops showed the head of a column beyond St. Amias, upon the enemy's left, and General Ferguson was seen descending from the higher grounds

in the rear of Fane. Laborde's position appeared desperate; yet with the coolness and dexterity of a practised warrior, he evaded the danger, and, covered by his excellent cavalry, fell back rapidly to the heights of Zambugeira, and a fresh disposition of the English became indispensable to dislodge him from that formidable post.

Colonel Trant now continued his march to turn the left of the new field of battle; Ferguson and Fane were united, and directed through the mountains to outflank the French right; Hill and Nightingale advanced against the front, which was of singular strength, and only to be approached by narrow paths, winding through deep ravines. A swarm of skirmishers starting forward, soon plunged into the passes, and spreading to the right and left, won their way among the rocks and tangled evergreens that overspread the steep ascent; with still greater difficulty the supporting columns followed, their formation being disordered in the confined and rugged passes, and while the hollows echoed with a continued roll of musketry, the shouts of the advancing troops were loudly answered by the enemy, while the curling smoke, breaking out from the side of the mountain, marked the progress of the assailants, and showed how stoutly the defence was maintained.

Laborde, watching anxiously for the arrival of Loison, gradually slackened his hold on the left, but clung tenaciously to the right in the hope of yet effecting a junction with that General, and the ardor of the 9th and 29th regiments, who led the attack, favored this skilful conduct. It was intended that those battalions should take the right-hand path of two leading up the same hollow, and thus have come in upon Laborde's flank in conjunction with Trant's column; but as the left path led more directly to the enemy, the 29th followed it, the 9th being close behind, and both regiments advanced so vigorously as to reach the plain above long before the flank movements of Trant and Ferguson could shake the credit of the position. The right of the 29th arrived first at the top, under a heavy fire, and ere it could form, Colonel Lake was killed, and some French companies coming in on the flank, gallantly broke through, carrying with them a major and fifty or sixty other prisoners. The head of the regiment, thus pressed, fell back and rallied on the left wing, below the brow of the hill, and being there joined by the 9th, whose Colonel, Stewart, also fell in this bitter fight, the whole pushed forward, and regained the dangerous footing above. Laborde, who brought every arm into action at the proper time and place, endeavored to destroy these regiments before they could be succored, and failing in that, he yet gained time to rally his left wing upon his centre and right; but the 5th regiment, following the right-hand path, soon arrived,

the English gathered thickly on the heights, and Ferguson, who had at first taken an erroneous direction towards the centre, recovered the true line, and was rapidly passing the right flank of the position. The French General commenced a retreat by alternate masses, protecting his movements by vigorous charges of cavalry, and at the village of Zambugeira he attempted another stand; but the English bore on him too heavily, and thus disputing the ground, he fell back to the Quinta de Bugagliera, where he halted until his detachments on the side of Segura rejoined him. After this, taking to the narrow pass of Runa, he marched all night to gain the position of Montechique, leaving three guns on the field of battle, and the road to Torres Vedras open to the victors.*

The loss of the French was six hundred killed and wounded, among the latter Laborde himself; and the British also suffered considerably, for two lieutenant-colonels and nearly five hundred men were killed, taken, or wounded, and as not more than four thousand men were actually engaged, this hard-fought action was very honorable to both sides.†

The firing ceased a little after four o'clock, when Sir Arthur, getting intelligence that Loison's division was at Bombaral, only five miles distant, took up a position for the night in an oblique line to that which he had just forced, his left resting upon a height near the field of battle, and his right covering the road to Lourinham. Believing that Loison and Laborde had effected their junction at the Quinta de Bugagliera, and that both were retiring to Montechique, the English General resolved to march the next morning to Torres Vedras, by which he would have secured an entrance into the mountains. But before night-fall he was informed that General Anstruther's and General Acland's divisions, accompanied by a large fleet of store ships, were off the coast, the dangerous nature of which rendered it necessary to provide for their safety by a quick disembarkation; he therefore changed his plans, and resolved to seek for some convenient post, that, being in advance of his present position, would likewise enable him to cover the landing of these reinforcements. The vigor of Laborde's defence had also an influence upon this occasion, for before an enemy so bold and skilful, no precaution could be neglected with impunity.‡

* Thiebault.

† Appendix, No. 19.

‡ Sir A. Wellesley's Evidence. Court of Inquiry.

CHAPTER V.

Portuguese take Abrantes—Generals Acland and Anstruther land and join the British army at Vimiero—Sir Harry Burrard arrives—Battle of Vimiero—Junot defeated—Sir Hew Dalrymple arrives—Armistice; terms of it—Junot returns to Lisbon; negotiates for a convention—Sir John Moore's troops land—State of the public mind in Lisbon—The Russian Admiral negotiates separately—Convention concluded—The Russian fleet surrenders upon terms—Conduct of the people at Lisbon—The Monteiro Mor requires Sir Charles Cotton to interrupt the execution of the convention—Sir John Hope appointed commandant of Lisbon; represses all disorders—Disputes between the French and English commissioners—Reflections thereupon

WHILE the combat of Rorica was fighting, some Portuguese insurgents attacked Abrantes, and the garrison, being ill commanded, gave way and was destroyed; thus nothing remained for Junot but a battle, and as Sir Arthur marched to Lourinham on the 18th, the French General quitted Cercal with Loison's division, and keeping the east side of the Baragueda ridge, crossed the line of Laborde's retreat, and pushed for Torres Vedras, which he reached in the evening of the same day. The 19th he was joined by Laborde, and the 20th by his reserve, when he re-organized his army, and prepared for a decisive action. Meanwhile Wellesley took a position at Vimiero, a village near the sea-coast, and from thence sent a detachment to cover the march of General Anstruther's brigade, which had, with great difficulty and some loss, been landed on the morning of the 18th on an open sandy beach called the bay of Macceira. The 20th the French cavalry, scouring the neighboring country, carried off some of the women from the rear of the English camp, and hemmed the army round so closely, that no information of Junot's position could be obtained; but in the night General Acland's brigade was disembarked, by which the army was increased to sixteen thousand fighting men, with eighteen pieces of artillery, exclusive of Trant's Portuguese, and of two British regiments, under General Beresford, which were with the fleet at the mouth of the Tagus. Thus the principal mass of the English army was irrevocably engaged in the operations against Junot, while the ministers were still so intent upon Cadiz, that they had sent Anstruther out with an appointment as governor of that city!

Estimating the whole French army at eighteen thousand men, Sir Arthur Wellesley judged that, after providing for the security of Lisbon, Junot could not bring more than fourteen thousand into the field;* he designed, therefore, not only to strike the first blow, but to follow it up so as to prevent the enemy from rallying and renewing the campaign upon the frontier. In this view he had

* Appendix, No. 9.

before quitting the Mondego, written to Sir Harry Burrard an exact statement of his own proceedings and intentions, and recommended that Sir John Moore, with his division, should disembark at the Mondego, and march without delay to Santarem, by which he would protect the left of the army, block the line of the Tagus, and at the same time threaten the French communication between Lisbon and Elvas. And without danger, because Junot would be forced to defend Lisbon against the coast army; or if, relinquishing the capital, he endeavored to make way to Almeida by Santarem, the ground there was so strong that Sir John Moore might easily maintain it against him. Moreover, the Marquis of Valladeras commanded three thousand men at Guarda, and General Freire, with five thousand men, was at Leiria, and might be persuaded to support the British at Santarem.

From Vimiero to Torres Vedras was about nine miles, and although the number and activity of the French cavalry completely shrouded Junot's position, it was known to be strong, and very difficult of approach, by reason of a long defile through which the army must penetrate in order to reach the crest of the mountain; there was, however, a road leading between the sea-coast and Torres Vedras, which, turning the latter, opened a way to Mafra. Sir Arthur possessed very exact military surveys of the country through which that road led, and he projected, by a forced march on the 21st, to turn the position of Torres Vedras, and to gain Mafra with a strong advanced guard, while the main body, seizing some advantageous heights, a few miles short of that town, would be in a position to intercept the French line of march to Montechique.* The army was therefore re-organized during the 20th in eight brigades of infantry and four weak squadrons of cavalry, and every preparation was made for the next day's enterprise; but at that critical period of the campaign the ministerial arrangements, which provided three commanders-in-chief, began to work. Sir Harry Burrard arrived in a frigate off the bay of Maceira, and Sir Arthur, thus checked in the midst of his operations on the eve of a decisive battle, repaired on board the frigate, to make a report of the situation of affairs, and to renew his former recommendation relative to the disposal of Sir John Moore's troops. Burrard, who had previously resolved to bring the latter down to Maceira, condemned this project, and forbade any offensive movement until the whole army should be concentrated, whereupon Sir Arthur returned to his camp.

The ground occupied by the army, although very extensive, and not very clearly defined as a position, was by no means weak

* Sir A. Wellesley's Evidence. Court of Inquiry.

The village of Vimiero, situated in a valley, through which the little river of Maceira flows, contained the parc and commissariat stores. The cavalry and the Portuguese were on a small plain close behind the village, and immediately in its front a rugged isolated height, with a flat top, commanded all the ground to the southward and eastward for a considerable distance. Upon this height Fane's and Anstruther's brigades of infantry, with six guns, were posted; the left of Anstruther's occupied a churchyard which blocked a road leading over the extremity of the height of the village; the right of Fane's rested on the edge of the other extremity of the hill, the base of which was washed by the Maceira.

A mountain, that commenced at the coast, swept in a half circle close behind the right of the hill upon which these brigades were posted, and commanded, at rather long artillery range, all its upper surface. Eight guns, and the first, second, third, fourth, and eighth brigades of infantry, occupied this mountain, which was terminated on the left by a deep ravine that divided it from another strong and narrow range of heights over which the road from Vimiero to Lourinham passed; the right of these last heights also overtopped the hill in front of the village, but the left, bending suddenly backward, after the form of a crook, returned to the coast, and ended in a lofty cliff. There was no water upon this last named ridge, wherefore only the 40th regiment and some piquets were placed there. The troops being thus posted, on the night of the 20th, about twelve o'clock, Sir Arthur was aroused by a German officer of dragoons, who galloped into the camp, and with some consternation reported that Junot, at the head of twenty thousand men, was coming on to the attack, and distant but one hour's march. Undisturbed by this inflated report, he merely sent out patrols, warned the piquets to be on the alert, and before daybreak had his troops, following the British custom, under arms; but the sun rose and no enemy appeared. However, at seven o'clock a cloud of dust was observed beyond the nearest hills, and at eight o'clock an advanced guard of horse was seen to crown the heights to the southward, sending forward scouts on every side. Scarcely had this body been discovered, when a force of infantry, preceded by other cavalry, was descried moving along the road from Torres Vedras to Lourinham, and threatening the left of the British position; column after column followed in order of battle, and it soon became evident that the French were coming to fight, but that the right wing of the English was not their object.

The second, third, fourth, and eighth brigades were immediately directed to cross the valley behind the village, and to take post on the heights before mentioned as being occupied by the piquets only;

as they reached the ground, the second and third were disposed in two lines facing to the left, and consequently forming a right angle with the prolongation of Fane and Anstruther's front. The fourth and eighth brigades were to have furnished a third line, but before the latter could reach the summit the battle commenced. From the flank of all these troops, a line of skirmishers was thrown out upon the face of the descent towards the enemy, the cavalry was drawn up in the plain a little to the right of the village of Vimiero, and the fifth brigade and the Portuguese were detached to the returning part of the crook to cover the extreme left, and to protect the rear of the army. The first brigade, under General Hill, remained on the mountain which the others had just quitted, and formed a support for the centre and a reserve for the whole. The ground between the two armies was so wooded and broken, that after the French had passed the ridge where they had been first descried, no correct view of their movements could be obtained, and the British, being weak in cavalry, were forced to wait patiently until the columns of attack were close upon them.

Junot had quitted Torres Vedras the evening of the 20th, intending to fall on the English army at daybreak, but the difficulty of the defile in his front retarded his march for many hours, and fatigued his troops. When he first came in sight of the position of Vimiero, the British order of battle appeared to him as being on two sides of an irregular triangle, the apex of which, formed by the hill in front of the village, was well furnished with men, while the left face appeared naked, for he could only see the piquets on that side, and the passage of the four brigades across the valley was hidden from him. Concluding, then, that the principal force was in the centre, he resolved to form two connected attacks, the one against the apex, the other against the left face; he thought that the left of the position was an accessible ridge, whereas a deep ravine, trenched as it were along the base, rendered it utterly impervious to an attack, except at the extremity, over which the road from Torres Vedras to Lourinham passed. Junot had nearly fourteen thousand fighting men, organized in four divisions, of which three were of infantry and one of cavalry, with twenty-three pieces of very small artillery; each division was composed of two brigades, and at ten o'clock, all being prepared, he commenced the

BATTLE OF VIMIERO.

Laborde marched with one brigade against the centre, General Brennier led another against the left, and Loison's brigades followed in the same order at a short distance.* Kellermann, with a

* Thiebault. Foy.

reserve composed of grenadiers, moved in one body behind Loison, and the cavalry under Margaron, about thirteen hundred in number, was divided, part being on the right of Brennier, part in the rear of the reserve. The artillery, distributed among the columns, opened its fire wherever the ground was favorable. It was designed that Laborde's and Brennier's attacks should be simultaneous, but the latter, coming unexpectedly upon the ravine before mentioned as protecting the English left, got entangled among the rocks and water-courses, and thus Laborde alone engaged Fane and Anstruther under a heavy and destructive fire of artillery, which played on his front and flank; for the eighth brigade being then in the act of mounting the heights where the left was posted, observing the advance of the French columns against the centre, halted, and opened a battery against their right.*

Junot, perceiving this failure in his combinations, ordered Loison to support Laborde's attack with one brigade of his division, and directed General Solignac, with the other, to turn the ravine in which Brennier was entangled, and to fall upon the extremity of the English line. General Fane seeing Loison's advance, and having a discretionary power to use the reserve artillery, immediately directed Colonel Robe to bring it into action, and thus formed with the divisional guns a most powerful battery in opposition. Meanwhile, Loison and Laborde formed a principal and two secondary columns of attack, one of which advanced against Fane's brigade, while the other endeavored to penetrate by a road which passed between the ravine and the church on the extreme left of Anstruther; but the main column, headed by Laborde in person, and preceded by a multitude of light troops, mounted the face of the hill with great fury and loud cries. The English skirmishers were forced in upon the lines in a moment, and the French masses arrived at the summit, yet shattered by the terrible fire of Robe's artillery, and breathless from their exertions; and in this state, first receiving a discharge of musketry from the fiftieth regiment at the distance of half-pistol shot, they were vigorously charged in front and flank, and overthrown. At the same time the remainder of Fane's brigade repulsed the minor attack, and Colonel Taylor, with the very few horsemen he commanded, passing out by the right, rode fiercely among the confused and retreating troops, and scattered them with great execution; but then Margaron's cavalry came suddenly down upon Taylor, who was there slain, and the half of his feeble squadron cut to pieces.

Kellermann took advantage of this check to throw one half of his reserve into a pine wood flanking the line of retreat, and the other

* Sir A. Wellesley's despatch.

half he had before sent to reinforce the attack on the church. The forty-third regiment were engaged in a hot skirmish amongst some vineyards, when these French grenadiers arrived, at a brisk pace, and beat back the advanced companies; but to avoid the artillery which ransacked their left, they dipped a little into the ravine, and were taken on the other flank by the guns of the eighth and fourth brigades. Then, when the narrowness of the way and the sweep of the round shot was disordering the French ranks, the forty-third, rallying in one mass, came furiously down upon the head of the column, and, after a short, desperate fight, drove it back in confusion, but the regiment suffered very severely.

The French were now discomfited in the centre, the woods and hollows were filled with their wounded and straggling men, and seven guns were lost. They retired up the edge of the ravine, in a direction almost parallel to the British line, leaving the road from Vimiero to Torres Vedras open to their opponents. Sir Arthur Wellesley, however, strictly forbade any pursuit at that moment, partly because the grenadiers in the pine wood flanked the line of the French retreat, and partly because Margaron's horsemen, riding stiffly between the two armies, were not to be lightly meddled with. Meanwhile, Brennier being still hampered in the ravine, General Solignac passed along the crest of the ridge above and came upon General Ferguson's brigade, which was posted at the left of the English position; but where the French expected to find a weak flank, they encountered a front of battle, on a depth of three lines, protected by steep declivities on either side,—a powerful artillery swept away their foremost ranks, and on their right the fifth brigade and the Portuguese were seen marching by a distant ridge towards the Lourinham road, threatening the rear.

Ferguson, instantly taking the lead, bore down upon the enemy. The ridge widened as the English advanced, the regiments of the second line running up in succession, increased the front and constantly filled the ground, and the French, falling fast under the fire, drew back, fighting, until they reached the declivity of the ridge. Their cavalry made several efforts to check the advancing troops, but the latter were too compact to be disturbed by these attempts. Solignac himself was carried from the field severely wounded, and his retiring column, continually out-flanked on the left, was cut off from the line of retreat and thrown into the low ground about the village of Perenza, where six guns were captured. General Ferguson, leaving the 82d and 71st regiments to guard those pieces, was continuing to press the disordered columns, when Brennier, having at last cleared the ravine, came suddenly in upon those two battalions and retook the artillery. But his success was only mo

mentary. The surprised troops rallied upon higher ground, poured in a heavy fire of musketry, and with a shout returning to the charge, overthrew him and recovered the guns. Brennier himself was wounded and made prisoner, and Ferguson having thus completely separated the French brigades from each other, would have forced the greatest part of Solignac's to surrender, if an unexpected order had not obliged him to halt. The discomfited troops then re-formed, under the protection of their cavalry, with admirable quickness, and making an orderly retreat, were soon united to the broken brigades which were falling back from the attack on the centre.

Brennier, who the moment he was taken was brought to Sir Arthur Wellesley, eagerly demanded if the reserve under Kellermann had yet charged? Sir Arthur, ascertaining from other prisoners that it had, was then satisfied that all the enemy's attacks were exhausted, that no considerable body of fresh troops could be hidden among the woods and hollows in his front, and that the battle was won. It was only twelve o'clock; thirteen guns had been taken; the fourth and eighth brigades had suffered very little; the Portuguese, the fifth and the first brigades had not fired a shot; and the latter was two miles nearer to Torres Vedras than any part of the French army, which was moreover in great confusion. The relative numbers before the action were considerably in favor of the English: the result of the action had increased that disparity. A portion of the army had defeated the enemy when entire; a portion, then, could effectually follow up the victory. Sir Arthur therefore resolved with the five brigades on the left to press Junot closely, hoping to drive him over the Sierra de Baragueda and force him upon the Tagus, while Hill, Anstruther and Fane, seizing the defile of Torres Vedras, should push on to Montechique, and cut him off from Lisbon.

If this able and decisive operation had been executed, Junot would probably have lost all his artillery and several thousand stragglers, and then, buffeted and turned at every point, would have been glad to seek safety under the guns of Almeida or Elvas; and even that he could only have accomplished because Sir John Moore's troops were not landed in the Mondego. But Sir Harry Burrard, who was present during the action, although partly from delicacy, and partly from approving of Sir Arthur's arrangements, he had not hitherto interfered, now assumed the chief command. From him the order which arrested Ferguson in his victorious career had emanated, and by him further offensive operations were forbidden, for he resolved to wait in the position of Vimiero until the arrival of Sir John Moore. The Adjutant-General Clinton, and Col

onel Murray, the quartermaster-general, supported Sir Harry's views, and Sir Arthur's earnest representations could not alter their determination.

Burrard's decision was certainly erroneous, yet error is common in an art which at best is but a choice of difficulties; the circumstances of the moment were imposing enough to sway most generals. The French had failed in the attacks, yet they rallied with surprising quickness under the protection of a strong and gallant cavalry.* Sir Harry knew that his own artillery carriages were so shaken as to be scarcely fit for service; the draft horses were few and bad, and the commissariat parc on the plain was in the greatest confusion, for the hired Portuguese carmen were making off with their carriages in all directions; the English cavalry was totally destroyed, and finally, General Spencer had discovered a line of fresh troops on the ridge behind that occupied by the French army. Weighing all these things in his mind, with the caution natural to age, Burrard was reluctant to hazard the fortune of the day upon what he deemed a perilous throw. Thus the Duke of Abrantes, who had displayed all that reckless courage to which he originally owed his elevation, was enabled by this unexpected cessation of the battle to re-form his broken infantry. Twelve hundred fresh troops joined him at the close of the contest, and then, covered by his cavalry, he retreated with order and celerity until he regained the command of the pass of Torres Vedras, so that when the day closed the relative position of the two armies was the same as on the evening before.

One general, thirteen guns, and several hundred prisoners fell into the hands of the victors, and the total loss of the French was estimated at three thousand men—an exaggeration, no doubt, but it was certainly above two thousand, for their closed columns had been exposed for more than half an hour to sweeping discharges of grape and musketry, and the dead lay thickly together. General Thiebault, indeed, reduces the number to eighteen hundred, and asserts that the whole amount of the French army did not much exceed twelve thousand men, from which number he deducts nearly three thousand for the sick, the stragglers, and all those other petty drains which form the torment of a general-in-chief. But when it is considered that this army was composed of men selected and organized in provisionary battalions expressly for the occasion; † that one half had only been in the field for a fortnight, and that the whole had enjoyed a two days' rest at Torres Vedras, it is evident that the number of absentees bears too great a proportion to the

* Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.

† Thiebault.

combatants. A French order of battle found upon the field gave a total of fourteen thousand men present under arms, of which thirteen hundred were cavalry; and this amount agrees too closely with other estimates, and with the observations made at the time, to leave any reasonable doubt of its authenticity or correctness.

The arrangements made by Sir Harry Burrard did not remain in force a long time. Early on the morning of the 22d, Sir Hew Dalrymple disembarked and assumed the chief command. Thus, in the short space of twenty-four hours, during which a battle was fought, the army fell successively into the hands of three men, who, coming from the ocean, with different views, habits, and information, had not any previous opportunity of communing even by letter, so as to arrange a common plan of operations; and they were now brought together at a critical moment, when it was more than probable they must all disagree, and that the public service must suffer from that want of vigor which is inherent to divided councils. For when Sir Hew Dalrymple was appointed to the command, Sir Arthur Wellesley was privately recommended to him, by the minister, as a person who should be employed with more than usual confidence; and this unequivocal hint was backed up with too much force by the previous reputation and recent exploits of the latter, not to produce some want of cordiality.* Sir Arthur could not do otherwise than take the lead in discussing affairs of which he had more than laid the foundation; and Sir Hew would have forfeited all claims to independence in his command, if he had not exercised the right of judging for himself between the conflicting opinions of his predecessors.

After receiving information upon the most important points, and taking a hasty view of the situation of the army—although the wounded were still upon the ground, and the wains of the commissariat were employed in removing them—Sir Hew decided to advance upon the 23d, and gave orders to that effect.† Nevertheless, he entirely agreed in opinion with Sir Harry Burrard, that the operation was a perilous one, which it required the concentration of all his troops, and the application of all his means, to bring to a good conclusion; and for this reason he did not rescind the order directing Sir John Moore to fall down to Maceira. This last measure was disapproved of by Sir Arthur, who observed that the provisions on shore would not supply more than eight or nine days' consumption for the troops already at Vimiero; that the country would be unable to furnish any assistance, and that the fleet could not be calculated upon as a resource, because the first of the gales

* Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.

† Sir H. Dalrymple's Narrative. Court of Inquiry.

common at that season of the year would certainly send it away from the coast, if it did not destroy a great portion of it. Sir Hew thought the evil of having the army separated would be greater than the chance of distress from such events. His position was certainly difficult. The Bishop of Oporto had failed in his promise of assisting the troops with draft cattle—as, indeed, he did in all his promises;* the artillery and commissariat were badly supplied with mules and horses; the cavalry was a nullity, and the enemy was, with the exception of his immediate loss in killed and wounded, suffering nothing from his defeat, which, we have seen, did not deprive him of a single position necessary to his defence. While weighing this state of affairs, he was informed that General Kellermann, escorted by a strong body of cavalry, was at the outposts and demanded an interview. For Junot, after regaining Torres Vedras, had occupied Mafra, and was preparing to fight again, when he received intelligence that Lisbon was on the point of insurrection;† wherefore, sending forward a false account of the action, he followed it up with a reinforcement for the garrison, and called a council of war to advise measures with respect to the English. It is an old and sound remark that “a council of war never fights,” and Kellermann’s mission was the result of the above consultation.

That General, being conducted to the quarters of the commander-in-chief, demanded a cessation of arms, and proposed the groundwork of a convention under which Junot offered to evacuate Portugal without further resistance. Nothing could be more opportune than this proposition, and Sir Hew Dalrymple readily accepted of it, as an advantage which would accrue without any drawback to the general cause of the Peninsula. He knew, from a plan of operations sketched by the chief of the French engineers, Colonel Vincent, and taken by the Portuguese, that Junot possessed several strong positions in front of Lisbon, and that a retreat, either upon Almeida or across the river upon Elvas, was not only within the contemplation of that General, but considered in this report as a matter of course, and perfectly easy of execution. Hence the proposed convention was an unexpected advantage, offered in a moment of difficulty, and the only subject of consideration was the nature of the articles proposed by Kellermann as a basis for the treaty. Sir Hew, being necessarily ignorant of many details, had recourse to Sir A. Wellesley for information, and the latter, taking an enlarged view of the question in all its bearings, coincided as to the sound policy of agreeing to a convention, by which a strong French army would be quietly got out of a country that it had

* Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.

† Thiebault.

complete military possession of;* and by which not only a great moral effect in favor of the general cause would be produced, but an actual gain made, both of men and time, for the further prosecution of the war in Spain. By the convention, he observed,

1. That a kingdom would be liberated, with all its fortresses, arsenals, &c., and that the excited population of the Peninsula might then be pushed forward in the career of opposition to France, under the most favorable circumstances.

2. That the Spanish army of Estremadura, which contained the most efficient body of cavalry in the Peninsula, could be reinforced with the four or five thousand Spanish soldiers who were prisoners on board the vessels in the Tagus; and would be enabled to unite with the other patriot armies at a critical period, when every addition of force must tend to increase the confidence and forward the impulse which the victory of Baylen and the flight of Joseph had given to the Spaniards. Finally, that the sacrifice of lives to be expected in carrying the French positions in Portugal, all the difficulties of reducing the fortresses, and the danger of losing a communication with the fleet, would be avoided by this measure, the result of which would be as complete as the most sanguine could expect from the long course of uncertain and unhealthy operations which must follow a rejection of the proposal.† But, while admitting the utility of the measure itself, he differed with the commander-in-chief as to the mode of proceeding, and a long discussion, in which Sir H. Burrard took a part, followed the opening of Kellermann's mission. Sir Arthur's first objection was, that, in point of form, Kellermann was merely entitled to negotiate a cessation of hostilities. Sir Hew Dalrymple judged that, as the good policy and the utility of the convention were recognized, it would be unwise to drive the French to the wall on a point of ceremony, and therefore accepted the proposition. The basis of a definitive treaty was then arranged, subject to the final approbation of Sir Charles Cotton, without whose concurrence it was not to be binding.

Articles 1st and 2d declared the fact of the armistice, and provided for the mode of future proceedings.

Article 3d indicated the river Sisandre as the line of demarcation between the two armies. The position of Torres Vedras to be occupied by neither.

Article 4th. Sir Hew Dalrymple engaged to have the Portuguese included in the armistice, and their boundary line was to extend from Leiria to Thomar.

Article 5th declared, that the French were not to be considered

* Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.

† Ibid.

as prisoners of war, and that themselves and their property, public and private, were, without any detainer, to be transported to France. To this article Sir Arthur objected, as affording a cover for the abstraction of Portuguese property, whereupon Kellermann said, that it was to be taken in its fair sense of property justly obtained, and upon this assurance it was admitted.

Article 6th provided for the protection of individuals. It guaranteed from political persecution all French residents, all subjects of powers in alliance with France, and all Portuguese who had served the invaders, or become obnoxious for their attachment to them.

Article 7th stipulated for the neutrality of the port of Lisbon as far as the Russian fleet was concerned. At first Kellermann proposed to have the Russian fleet guaranteed from capture, with leave to return to the Baltic, but this was peremptorily refused; indeed, the whole proceeding was designed to entangle the Russians in the French negotiation, that, in case the armistice should be broken, the former might be forced into a co-operation with the latter.

Sir Arthur strenuously opposed this article; he argued, 1. That the interests of the two nations were not blended, and that they stood in different relations towards the British army. 2. That it was an important object to keep them separate, and that the French General, if pressed, would leave the Russians to their fate. 3. That as the British operations had not been so rapid and decisive as to enable them to capture the fleet before the question of neutrality could be agitated, the right of the Russians to such protection was undoubted; and in the present circumstances it was desirable to grant it, because independent of the chances of their final capture, they would be prevented from returning to the Baltic, which in fact constituted their only point of interest when disengaged from the French; but that, viewed as allies of the latter, they became of great weight. Lastly, that it was an affair which concerned the Portuguese, Russians, and British, but with which the French could have no right to interfere. Sir Hew, finding that the discussion of this question became lengthened, and considering that Sir Charles Cotton alone could finally decide, admitted the article merely as a form, without acquiescing in the propriety of it.

Article 8th provided, that all guns of French calibre, and the horses of the cavalry, were to be transported to France.

Article 9th stipulated, that forty-eight hours' notice should be given of the rupture of the armistice.

To this article also Sir Arthur objected; he considered it unnecessary for the interests of the British army, and favorable to the

French ; because, if hostilities recommenced, the latter would have forty-eight hours to make arrangements for their defence, for the passage of the Tagus, and for the co-operation of the Russian fleet. Upon the other hand, Sir Hew thought it was an absolute advantage to gain time for the preparations of the British army, and for the arrival of Sir John Moore's reinforcements.

By an additional article it was provided, that all the fortresses held by the French, which had not capitulated before the 25th of August, should be given up to the British ; and the basis of a convention being thus arranged, General Kellermann returned to his chief, and Colonel George Murray was ordered to carry the proposed articles to the English Admiral.

Previous to his landing, Sir Hew had received none of the letters addressed to him by Sir Arthur Wellesley, he had met with no person during his voyage from whom he could obtain authentic information of the state of affairs, and his time being at first occupied by the negotiations with Kellermann, he was uninformed of many details of importance. Now, the day after Kellermann's departure, Don Bernardin Freire Andrada, the Portuguese commander-in-chief, came to remonstrate against the armistice just concluded ; but, from the circumstance before mentioned, it so happened that Sir Hew was utterly ignorant of the existence of Don Bernardin and his army, at the time the armistice was discussed, and it was therefore difficult for him to manage this interview with propriety, because Andrada had some plausible, although no real, ground of complaint. His remonstrances were, however, merely intended for the commencement of an intrigue, to which I shall hereafter revert.

Colonel Murray soon reached the fleet, and presented the articles of convention to Sir Charles Cotton, but the latter refused to concur therein, declaring that he would himself conduct a separate treaty for the Russian ships. With this answer Colonel Murray returned on the 24th, having first, in reply to a question put by the French officer who accompanied him on board the *Hibernia*, declared that nothing had passed between him and Sir Charles Cotton which ought to preclude further negotiation. Sir Hew Dalrymple was now urged by Sir Arthur Wellesley to give notice, without further explanation, that hostilities would recommence, leaving it to Junot to renew propositions, if he chose to do so, separately from the Russians.* Sir Hew, however, felt himself in honor bound by Colonel Murray's observation to the French officer, and would not take advantage of the occasion ; he likewise felt disinclined to relinquish a negotiation which, from certain circumstances, he deemed upon the point of being crowned with success. He therefore des-

* Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry.