

leaving only a battalion of grenadiers and some squadrons to watch the thirteenth dragoons and to connect the attacks, countermarched with the remainder of his division, and rapidly gained the rear of the fifth corps as it was mounting the hills on the right of the allies. At the same time the mass of light cavalry suddenly quitted Godinot's column, and crossing the river Albuera above the bridge, ascended the left bank at a gallop, and, sweeping round the rear of the fifth corps, joined Latour Maubourg, who was already in face of Lumley's squadrons. Thus half an hour had sufficed to render Beresford's position nearly desperate. Two-thirds of the French were in a compact order of battle on a line perpendicular to his right, and his army, disordered and composed of different nations, was still in the difficult act of changing its front. It was in vain that he endeavored to keep the Spanish line sufficiently in advance to give room on the summit of the hill for the second division to support it; the French guns opened, their infantry threw out a heavy musketry fire, and their cavalry, outflanking the front, and menacing to charge here and there, put the Spaniards in disorder at all points, they fell fast, and they gave back. Soult, thinking the whole army was yielding, then pushed forward his columns, his reserves mounted the hill behind him, and General Ruty placed all the batteries in position.

At this critical moment General William Stewart arrived at the foot of the height, with Colonel Colborne's brigade, which formed the head, and was the most advanced part of the second division. The Colonel, seeing the confusion above, desired to form in order of battle previous to mounting the ascent, but Stewart, whose boiling courage overlaid his judgment, led up, without hesitation, in column of companies, and having passed the Spanish right, attempted to open out his line in succession as the battalions arrived at the summit. Being under a destructive fire the foremost troops charged, but a heavy rain prevented any object from being distinctly seen, and four regiments of hussars and lancers, which had turned the right flank in the obscurity, came galloping in upon the rear of the line at the instant of its development, and slew or took two-thirds of the brigade. One battalion only (the thirty-first) being still in column, escaped the storm and maintained its ground, while the French horsemen, riding violently over everything else, penetrated to all parts, and captured six guns. In the tumult, a lancer fell upon Beresford; the Marshal, a man of great strength, putting his spear aside cast him from his saddle, and a shift of wind blowing aside the mist and smoke, the mischief was perceived from the plains by General Lumley, who sent four squadrons out upon the lancers and cut many of them off. Penne Villemur's cavalry were also directed

to charge, and galloped forward, but when within a few yards wheeled round and fled.*

During this first unhappy effort of the second division, so great was the disorder, that the Spanish line continued to fire without cessation, although the British were before them. Beresford, finding his exhortations to advance fruitless, seized an ensign and bore him and his colors, by main force, to the front, yet the troops would not follow, and the man went back again on being released. In this crisis, the weather, which had ruined Colborne's brigade, also prevented Soult from seeing the whole extent of the field of battle, and he still kept his heavy columns together. His cavalry, indeed, began to hem in that of the allies, but the fire of the horse-artillery enabled Lumley, covered as he was by the bed of the Aroya and supported by the fourth division, to check them on the plain. Colborne still remained on the height with the thirty-first regiment, the British artillery, under Major Julius Hartman, was coming fast into action, and William Stewart, who had escaped the charge of the lancers, was again mounting the hill with General Houghton's brigade, which he brought on with the same vehemence, but, instructed by his previous misfortune, in a juster order of battle. The weather now cleared, and a dreadful fire poured into the thickest of the French columns convinced Soult that the day was yet to be won.

Houghton's regiments reached the height under a very heavy cannonade, and the twenty-ninth regiment was charged on the flank by the lancers, but Major Way, wheeling back two companies, foiled their attack with a sharp fire. The remaining brigade of the second division then came up on the left, and the Spanish corps of Zayas and Ballesteros at last moved forward. Hartman's artillery was now in full play, and the enemy's infantry recoiled, but soon recovering, renewed the fight with greater violence than before. The cannon on both sides discharged showers of grape at half range, the peals of musketry were incessant, and often within pistol-shot, but the close formation of the French embarrassed their battle, and the British line would not yield them one inch of ground, nor a moment of time to open their ranks. Their fighting was, however, fierce and dangerous. Stewart was twice wounded Colonel Duckworth, of the forty-eight, was slain, and the gallant Houghton, who had received many wounds without shrinking, fell and died in the act of cheering his men. Still the struggle continued with unabated fury. Colonel Inglis, twenty-two officers, and more than four hundred men out of five hundred and seventy that had mounted the hill, fell in the fifty-seventh alone, and the other regiments were scarcely better off; not one-third were standing in any, their ammunition

* Appendix 1, § 4.

failed, and as the English fire slackened, the enemy established a column in advance upon the right flank. The play of the artillery indeed checked them a moment, but in this dreadful crisis Beresford wavered! Destruction stared him in the face, his personal resources were exhausted, and the unhappy thought of a retreat rose in his agitated mind. He had before brought Hamilton's Portuguese into a situation to cover a retrograde movement, and he now sent orders to General Alten to abandon the bridge and village of Albuera, and to assemble with the Portuguese artillery, in such a position as would cover a retreat by the Valverde road. But while the Marshal was thus preparing to resign the contest, Colonel Hardinge boldly ordered General Cole to advance with the fourth division, and then riding to that brigade of the second division which was under the command of Colonel Abercrombie, and which had been only slightly engaged, directed him also to push forward into the fight. The die being thus cast, Beresford acquiesced, Alten received orders to retake the village, and this terrible battle was continued.

The fourth division was composed of two brigades, the one of Portuguese under General Harvey, the other, commanded by Sir William Myers, consisted of the seventh and twenty-third regiments, and was called the fusileer brigade. Harvey's Portuguese being immediately pushed in between Lumley's dragoons and the hill, were charged by some French cavalry, whom they beat off, and meanwhile General Cole led the fusileers up the contested height. At this time six guns were in the enemy's possession, the whole of Werle's reserves were coming forward to reinforce the front column of the French, the remnant of Houghton's brigade could no longer maintain its ground, the field was heaped with carcasses, the lancers were riding furiously about the captured artillery on the upper parts of the hill, and behind all, Hamilton's Portuguese and Alten's Germans, withdrawing from the bridge, seemed to be in full retreat. Cole's fusileers, flanked by a battalion of the Lusitanian legion under Colonel Hawkshawe, soon mounted the hill, drove off the lancers, recovered five of the captured guns and one color, and appeared on the right of Houghton's brigade precisely as Abercrombie passed it on the left.

Such a gallant line, issuing from the midst of the smoke, and rapidly separating itself from the confused and broken multitude, startled the enemy's heavy masses, which were increasing and pressing onwards as to an assured victory: they wavered, hesitated, and then vomiting forth a storm of fire, hastily endeavored to enlarge their front, while a fearful discharge of grape from all their artillery whistled through the British ranks. Myers was killed, Cole, the three Colonels, Ellis, Blakeney, and Hawkshawe, fell wounded, and

the fusileer battalions, struck by the iron tempest, reeled and staggered like sinking ships. But suddenly and sternly recovering, they closed on their terrible enemies, and then was seen with what a strength and majesty the British soldier fights. In vain did Soult, by voice and gesture, animate his Frenchmen; in vain did the hardest veterans, extricating themselves from the crowded columns, sacrifice their lives to gain time for the mass to open out on such a fair field; in vain did the mass itself bear up, and fiercely striving, fire indiscriminately upon friends and foes, while the horsemen hovering on the flank threatened to charge the advancing line. Nothing could stop that astonishing infantry. No sudden burst of undisciplined valor, no nervous enthusiasm weakened the stability of their order; their flashing eyes were bent on the dark columns in their front, their measured tread shook the ground, their dreadful volleys swept away the head of every formation, their deafening shouts overpowered the dissonant cries that broke from all parts of the tumultuous crowd, as slowly and with a horrid carnage it was pushed by the incessant vigor of the attack to the farthest edge of the height. There, the French reserve, mixing with the struggling multitude, endeavored to sustain the fight, but the effort only increased the irremediable confusion, the mighty mass gave way and like a loosened cliff went headlong down the steep. The rain flowed after in streams discolored with blood, and fifteen hundred unwounded men, the remnant of six thousand unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill!

CHAPTER VII.

Continuation of the battle of Albuera—Dreadful state of both armies—Soult retreats to Solano—General Hamilton resumes the investment of Badajos—Lord Wellington reaches the field of battle—Third and seventh divisions arrive—Beresford follows Soult—The latter abandons the castle of Villalba and retreats to Llerena—Cavalry action at Usagre—Beresford quits the army—General Hill reassumes the command of the second division, and Lord Wellington renews the siege of Badajos—Observations.

WHILE the fusileers were striving on the height, the cavalry and Harvey's brigade continually advanced, and Latour Maubourg's dragoons, battered by Lefebvre's guns, retired before them, yet still threatening the fusileers with their right, while with their left they prevented Lumley's horsemen from falling on the defeated infantry. Beresford, seeing that Colonel Hardinge's decision had brought on

the critical moment of the battle, then endeavored to secure a favorable result. Alten's Germans were ordered to retake the village, which they effected with some loss. Blake's first line, which had not been at all engaged, was directed to support them, and Hamilton's and Collins' Portuguese, forming a mass of ten thousand fresh men, were brought up to support the attack of the fusileers and Abercrombie's brigade; and at the same time the Spanish divisions of Zayas, Ballesteros, and España advanced. Nevertheless, so rapid was the execution of the fusileers, that the enemy's infantry were never attained by these reserves, which yet suffered severely; for General Ruty got the French guns all together, and worked them with prodigious activity, while the fifth corps still made head; and when the day was irrevocably lost, he regained the other side of the Albuera, and protected the passage of the broken infantry.

Beresford, being too hardly handled to pursue, formed a fresh line with his Portuguese, parallel to the hill from whence Soult had advanced to the attack in the morning, and where the French troops were now rallying with their usual celerity. Meanwhile the fight continued at the bridge, but Godinot's division and the connecting battalion of grenadiers on that side were soon afterwards withdrawn, and the action terminated before three o'clock.

The serious fighting had endured only four hours, and in that space of time, nearly seven thousand of the allies and above eight thousand of their adversaries were struck down. Three French generals were wounded, two slain, and eight hundred soldiers so badly hurt as to be left on the field. On Beresford's side only two thousand Spaniards and six hundred Germans and Portuguese were killed or wounded, and hence it is plain with what a resolution the pure British fought, for they had only fifteen hundred men left standing! The laurel is nobly won when the exhausted victor reels as he places it on his bleeding front.

The trophies of the French were five hundred unwounded prisoners, a howitzer, and several stand of colors. The British had nothing of that kind to boast of, but the horrid piles of carcasses within their lines told, with dreadful eloquence, who were the conquerors; and all the night the rain poured down, and the river and the hills and the woods on each side resounded with the dismal clamor and groans of dying men. Beresford, obliged to place his Portuguese in the front line, was oppressed with the number of his wounded; they far exceeded that of the sound amongst the British soldiers, and when the latter's piquets were established, few men remained to help the sufferers. In this cruel situation he sent Colonel Hardinge to demand assistance from Blake; but wrath and mortified pride were predominant in that General's breast, and he refused,

saying it was customary with allied armies for each to take care of its own men.

Morning came, and both sides remained in their respective situations, the wounded still covering the field of battle, the hostile lines still menacing and dangerous. The greater multitude had fallen on the French part, but the best soldiers on that of the allies, and the dark masses of Soult's powerful cavalry and artillery, as they covered all his front, seemed alone able to contend again for the victory; the right of the French also appeared to threaten the Badajos road, and Beresford, in gloom and doubt, awaited another attack. On the 17th, however, the third brigade of the fourth division came up by a forced march from Jerumenha, and enabled the second division to retake their former ground between the Valverde and the Badajos roads. On the 18th, Soult retreated.

He left to the generosity of the English General several hundred men too deeply wounded to be removed, but all that could travel he had, in the night of the 17th, sent towards Seville, by the royal road, through Santa Marta, Los Santos, and Monasterio. Protecting his movements with all his horsemen and six battalions of infantry, he filed the army in the morning to his right, and gained the road of Solano. When this flank march was completed, Latour Maubourg covered the rear with the heavy dragoons, and Briché protected the march of the wounded men by the royal road.

The Duke of Dalmatia remained the 19th at Solano. His intention was to hold a position in Estremadura until he could receive reinforcements from Andalusia; for he judged truly that, although Beresford was in no condition to hurt Badajos, Lord Wellington would come down, and that fresh combats would be required to save that fortress. On the 14th, he had commenced repairing the castle of Villalba, a large structure between Almendralejos and Santa Marta, and he now continued this work, designing to form a head of cantonments that the allies would be unable to take before the French army could be reinforced.

When Beresford discovered the enemy's retreat, he despatched General Hamilton to make a show of re-investing Badajos, which was effected at daybreak the 19th, but on the left bank only. Meanwhile the allied cavalry, supported by Alten's Germans, followed the French line of retreat. Soult then transferred his headquarters to Fuente del Maestre, and the Spanish cavalry, cutting off some of his men, menaced Villalba. Lord Wellington reached the field of battle the same day, and, after examining the state of affairs, desired the Marshal to follow the enemy cautiously; then returning to Elvas himself, he directed the third and seventh divi-

sions, which were already at Campo Mayor, to complete the re-investment of Badajos on the right bank.

Meanwhile Beresford advanced by the Solano road to Almen-dralejos, where he found some more wounded men. His further progress was not opposed. The number of officers who had fallen in the French army, together with the privations endured, had produced despondency and discontent; the garrison at Villalba was not disposed to maintain the castle, and under these circumstances the Duke of Dalmatia evacuated it, and continued his own retreat in the direction of Llerena, where he assumed a position on the 23d, and placed his cavalry near Usagre. This abandonment of the royal road to Seville was a well-considered movement. The country through which Soult passed being more fruitful and open, he could draw greater advantage from his superior cavalry; the mountains behind him were so strong he had nothing to fear from an attack, and by Belalcazar and Almaden, he could maintain a communication with La Mancha, from whence he expected Drouet's division. The road of Guadalcanal was in his rear, by which he could draw reinforcements from Cordoba and from the fourth corps, and meanwhile the allies durst not venture to expose their left flank by marching on Monasterio.

From Llerena, a detachment was sent to drive away a Spanish partida corps which had cut his communications with Gaudalcanal, and at the same time Latour Maubourg was directed to scour the country beyond Usagre; this led to an action. The town, built upon a hill, and covered towards Los Santos by a river with steep and rugged banks, had only the one outlet by the bridge on that side, and when Latour Maubourg approached, Lumley retired across the river. The French light cavalry then marched along the right bank with the intention of crossing lower down, and thus covering the passage of the heavy horsemen; but before they could effect this object, General Bron rashly passed the river with two regiments of dragoons, and drew up in line just beyond the bridge. Lumley was, however, lying close behind a rising ground, and when the French regiments had advanced a sufficient distance, Lefebvre's guns opened on them, and the third and fourth dragoon guards charged them in front, while Madden's Portuguese fell on their flank. They were overthrown at the first shock, and fled towards the bridge, which, being choked with the remainder of the cavalry advancing to their support, the fugitives turned to the right and left, and endeavored to save themselves amongst some gardens situated on the banks of the river; they were, however, pursued and sabred until the French on the opposite side, seeing their distress, checked the attack by a fire of carbines and artillery. Some wounded pris-

oners were taken, but a guerilla party which had not joined in the attack suddenly massacred them. However, above forty killed in fair fight, and more than a hundred wounded, attested the vigor of Lumley's conduct in this affair, which terminated Beresford's operations, for the miserable state to which the Regency had reduced the Portuguse army imperatively called for the Marshal's presence elsewhere.* General Hill, who had returned to Portugal, then reassumed the command of the second division amidst the eager rejoicings of the troops, and Lord Wellington directed the renewed siege of Badajos in person.

OBSERVATIONS.

No general ever gained a great battle with so little increase of military reputation as Marshal Beresford. His personal intrepidity and strength, qualities so attractive for the multitude, were conspicuously displayed, yet the breath of his own army withered his laurels, and his triumph was disputed by the very soldiers who followed his car. Their censures have been reiterated, without change and without abatement, even to this hour; and a close examination of his operations, while it detects many ill-founded objections, and others tainted with malice, leaves little doubt that the general feeling was right.

When he had passed the Guadiana and driven the fifth corps upon Guadalcanal, the delay that intervened, before he invested Badajos, was unjustly attributed to him: it was Lord Wellington's order, resulting from the tardiness of the Spanish generals, that paralyzed his operations. But when the time for action arrived, the want of concert in the investment, and the ill-matured attack on San Christoval, belonged to Beresford's arrangements; and he is especially responsible in reputation for the latter, because Captain Squire earnestly warned him of the inevitable result, and his words were unheeded.

During the progress of the siege, either the want of correct intelligence, or a blunted judgement, misled the Marshal. It was remarked that, at all times, he too readily believed the idle tales of distress and difficulties in the French armies, with which the spies generally, and the deserters always, interlarded their information; thus he was incredulous of Soult's enterprise, and that officer was actually over the Morena before the orders were given to commence the main attack of the castle of Badajos. However, the firmness with which Beresford resisted the importunities of the engineers to continue the siege, and the quick and orderly removal of the stores and battering-train, were alike remarkable and praiseworthy. It

* Madden's Memoir, Military Calendar.

would have been happy if he had shown as much magnanimity in what followed.

When he met Blake and Castaños at Valverde, the alternative of fighting or retiring behind the Guadiana was the subject of consideration. The Spanish generals were both in favor of giving battle. Blake, who could not retire the way he had arrived, without danger of having his march intercepted, was particularly earnest to fight, affirming that his troops, who were already in a miserable state, would disperse entirely if they were obliged to enter Portugal. Castaños was of the same opinion. Beresford also argued that it was unwise to relinquish the hope of taking Badajos, and ungenerous to desert the people of Estremadura; that a retreat would endanger Elvas, lay open the Alemtejo, and encourage the enemy to push his incursions further, which he could safely do, having such a fortress as Badajos with its bridge over the Guadiana in his rear. A battle must then be fought in the Alemtejo with fewer troops and after a dispiriting retreat: there was also a greater scarcity of food in the Portuguese than in the Spanish province, and, finally, as the weather was menacing, the Guadiana might again rise before the stores were carried over, when the latter must be abandoned, or the army endangered to protect their passage.

But these plausible reasons were but a mask. The true cause why the English General adopted Blake's proposals was the impatient temper of the British troops. None of them had been engaged in the late battles under Lord Wellington. At Busaco the regiments of the fourth division were idle spectators on the left, as those of the second division were on the right, while the action was in the centre. During Massena's retreat they had not been employed under fire, and the combats of Sabugal and Fuentes Onoro had been fought without them. Thus a burning thirst for battle was general, and Beresford had not the art either of conciliating or of exacting the confidence of his troops. It is certain that if he had retreated, a very violent and unjust clamor would have been raised against him, and this was so strongly and unceremoniously represented to him, by an officer on his own staff, that he gave way. These are what may be termed the moral obstacles of war. Such men as Lord Wellington or Sir John Moore can stride over them, but to second-rate minds they are insuperable. Practice and study may make a good general as far as the handling of troops and the designing of a campaign, but that ascendancy of spirit which leads the wise, and controls the insolence of folly, is a rare gift of nature.

Beresford yielded with an unhappy flexibility to the clamor of the army and the representations of Blake, for it is unquestionable

that the resolution to fight was unwarrantable on any sound military principle. We may pass over the argument founded upon the taking of Badajos, because neither the measures nor the means of the English General promised the slightest chance of success; the siege would have died away of itself in default of resources to carry it on. The true question to consider was, not whether Estremadura should be deserted or Badajos abandoned, but whether Lord Wellington's combinations and his great and well considered design for the deliverance of the Peninsula should be ruined and defaced at a blow. To say that the Alemtejo could not have been defended until the commander-in-chief arrived from the north with reinforcements, was mere trifling. Soult, with twenty or even thirty thousand men, dared not have attempted the siege of Elvas in the face of twenty-four thousand men such as Beresford commanded. The result of the battle of Fuentes Onoro was known in the English and in the French camps before Beresford broke up from Badajos; hence he was certain that additional troops would soon be brought down to the Guadiana; indeed, the third and seventh divisions were actually at Campo Mayor the 23d of May. The danger to the Alemtejo was, therefore, slight, and the necessity of a battle being by no means apparent, it remains to analyze the chances of success.

Soult's numbers were not accurately known, but it was ascertained that he had not less than twenty thousand veteran troops; he had also a great superiority of cavalry and artillery, and the country was peculiarly suitable for these arms. The martial character of the man was also known. Now the allies could bring into the field more of infantry by ten thousand than the French, but they were of various tongues, and the Spanish part, ill armed, starving, and worn out with fatigue, had been repeatedly and recently defeated by the very troops they were going to engage. The French were compact, swift of movement, inured to war, used to act together, and under the command of one able and experienced general. The allied army was unwieldy, each nation mistrusting the other, and the whole without unity of spirit, or of discipline, or of command. On what, then, could Marshal Beresford found his hopes of success? The British troops. The latter were therefore to be freely used. But was it a time to risk the total destruction of two superb divisions and to encounter a certain and heavy loss of men, whose value he knew so well when he calculated upon them alone for victory in such circumstances?

To resolve on battle was, however, easier than to prepare for it with skill. Albuera, we have seen, was the point of concentration. Colonel Colborne's brigade did not arrive until the 14th, and there

was no certainty that it could arrive before the enemy did. Blake did not arrive until three in the morning of the 16th; the fourth division not until six o'clock. Kemmis with three fine British regiments, and Madden's cavalry, did not come at all. These facts prove that the whole plan was faulty; it was mere accident that a sufficient force to give battle was concentrated. Beresford was too late, and the keeping up the investment of Badajos, although laudable in one sense, was a great error; it was only an accessory, and yet the success of the principal object was made subservient to it. If Soult, instead of passing by Villa Franca, in his advance, had pushed straight on from Los Santos to Albuera, he would have arrived the 15th, when Beresford had not much more than half his force in position; the point of concentration would then have been lost, and the allies scattered in all directions. If the French had even continued their march by Solano instead of turning upon Albuera, they must inevitably have communicated with Badajos, unless Beresford had fought without waiting for Blake, and without Kemmis's brigade. Why, then, did the French Marshal turn out of the way to seek a battle, in preference to attaining his object without one? and why did he neglect to operate by his right or left until the unwieldy allied army should separate or get into confusion, as it inevitably would have done? Because the English General's dispositions were so faulty that no worse error could well be expected from him, and Soult had every reason to hope for a great and decided victory; a victory which would have more than counterbalanced Massena's failure. He knew that only one-half of the allied force was at Albuera on the 15th, and when he examined the ground, every thing promised the most complete success.

Marshal Beresford had fixed upon and studied his own field of battle above a month before the action took place, and yet occupied it in such a manner as to render defeat almost certain; his infantry were not held in hand, and his inferiority in guns and cavalry was not compensated for by intrenchments. But were any other proofs of error wanting, this fact would suffice: he had greater strength of infantry on a field of battle scarcely three miles long, ten thousand of his troops never fired a shot, and three times the day was lost and won, the allies being always fewest in number at the decisive point. It is true that Blake's conduct was very perplexing; it is true that General William Stuart's error cost one brigade, and thus annihilated the command of Colonel Colborne, a man capable of turning the fate of a battle even with fewer troops than those swept away from him by the French cavalry: but the neglect of the hill beyond the Albuera, fronting the right of the position, was Beresford's own error and a most serious one; so also were the

successive attacks of the brigades, and the hesitation about the fourth division. And where are we to look for that promptness in critical moments which marks the great commander? It was Colonel Hardinge that gave the fourth division and Abercrombie's brigade orders to advance, and it was their astounding valor in attack, and the astonishing firmness of Houghton's brigade in defence, that saved the day. The person of the general-in-chief was indeed seen everywhere, a gallant soldier! but the mind of the commander was seen nowhere.

Beresford remained master of the field of battle, but he could not take Badajos, that prize was the result of many great efforts and many deep combinations by a far greater man; neither did he clear Estremadura, for Soult maintained position from Llerena to Usagre. What then did he gain? The power of simulating a renewal of the siege, and holding his own cantonments on the left bank of the Guadiana; I say simulating, for, if the third and seventh divisions had not arrived from Beira, even the investment could not have been completed. These illusive advantages he purchased at the price of seven thousand men. With a smaller loss Lord Wellington had fought two general and several minor actions, had baffled Massena and turned seventy thousand men out of Portugal!

Such being the fruit of victory, what would have been the result of defeat? There was no retreat, save by the temporary bridge of Jerumenha, and had the hill on the right been carried in the battle, the Valverde road would have been in Soult's possession, and the line of retreat cut; had it even been otherwise, Beresford, with four thousand victorious French cavalry at his heels, could never have passed the river. Back, then, must have come the army from the north, the lines of Lisbon would have been once more occupied—a French force fixed on the south of the Tagus—Spain ruined—Portugal laid prostrate—England in dismay. Could even the genius of Lord Wellington have recovered such a state of affairs? And yet, with these results, the terrible balance hung for two hours, and twice trembling to the sinister side, only yielded at last to the superlative vigor of the fusileers. The battle should never have been fought. The siege of Badajos could not have been renewed without reinforcements, and, with them, it could have been renewed without an action, or at least without risking an unequal one.

But would even the bravery of British soldiers have saved the day at Albuera, if the French General had not also committed great errors? His plan of attack and his execution of it, up to the moment when the Spanish line fell back in disorder, cannot be

too much admired ; after that, the great error of fighting in dense columns, being persisted in beyond reason, lost the fairest field ever offered to the arms of France. Had the fifth corps opened out while there was time to do so, that is, between the falling back of the Spaniards and the advance of Houghton's brigade, what on earth could have saved Beresford from a total defeat? The fire of the enemy's columns alone destroyed two-thirds of his British troops ; the fire of their lines would have swept away all !

It has been said that Latour Maubourg and Godinot did not second Soult with sufficient vigor. The latter certainly did not display any great energy, but the village was maintained by Alten's Germans, who were good and hardy troops, and well backed up by a great body of Portuguese. Latour Maubourg's movements seem to have been objected to without reason. He took six guns, sabred many Spaniards, and overthrew a whole brigade of the British, without ceasing to keep in check their cavalry. He was, undoubtedly, greatly superior in numbers, but General Lumley handled the allied squadrons with skill and courage, and drew all the advantage possible from his situation, and, in the choice of that situation, none can deny ability to Marshal Beresford. The rising ground behind the horsemen, the bed of the Aroya in their front, the aid of the horse-artillery, and the support of the fourth division, were all circumstances of strength so well combined that nothing could be better, and they dictated Latour Maubourg's proceedings, which seem consonant to true principles. If he had charged in mass, under the fire of Lefebre's guns, he must have been thrown into confusion in passing the bed of the Aroya at the moment when the fourth division, advancing along the slopes, would have opened a musketry on his right flank ; Lumley could then have charged, or retired up the hill, according to circumstances. In this case, great loss might have been sustained, and nothing very decisive could have accrued to the advantage of the French, because no number of cavalry, if unsustained by infantry and artillery, can make a serious impression against the three arms united. It was therefore another error in Soult not to have joined some guns and infantry to his cavalry, when he perceived that his enemy had done so on the other part. Ten guns and half the infantry, uselessly slaughtered in columns on the height above, would have turned the scale of battle below, for it is certain that when the fusileers came up the hill, Houghton's brigade was quite exhausted, and the few men standing were without ammunition ; but if a French battery and a body of infantry had been joined to the French cavalry, the fusileers could not have moved.

On the other hand, seeing that he was not so strengthened, a

repulse might have been fatal not only to himself but to the French infantry on the hill, as their left would have been open to the enterprises of the allied cavalry. If Latour Maubourg had stretched away to his own left, he would, in like manner, have exposed the flank of Soult's infantry, and his movements would have been eccentric, and contrary to sound principles, and (in the event of a disaster to the corps on the hill, as really happened) destructive to the safety of the retreating army. By keeping in mass on the plain, and detaching squadrons from time to time, as favorable opportunities offered for partial charges, he gained, as we have seen, great advantages during the action, and kept his troopers well in hand for the decisive moment; finally, he covered the retreat of the beaten infantry. Still it may be admitted that, with such superior numbers, he should have more closely pressed Lumley.

When Soult had regained the hills at the other side of the Albuera, the battle ceased, each side being, as we have seen, so hardly handled that neither offered to renew the fight. Here was the greatest failure of the French commander; he had lost eight thousand men, but he had still fifteen thousand under arms, his artillery and his cavalry being comparatively untouched. On the side of the allies, only eighteen hundred British infantry were left standing, and the troops were suffering greatly from famine; the Spaniards had been feeding on horse-flesh, and were so attenuated by continual fatigue and misery, that, for several days previous to the battle, they had deserted in considerable numbers even to the French, hoping thus to get food: these circumstances should be borne in mind, when reflecting on their conduct in the battle; under such a commander as Blake, and while enduring such heavy privations, it was a great effort of resolution, and honorable to them, that they fought at all. Their resistance, feeble when compared to the desperate valor of the British, was by no means weak in itself or infirm; nor is it to be wondered at that men so exhausted and so ill managed should have been deaf to the call of Beresford, a strange general, whose exhortations they probably did not understand. When the fortune of the day changed, they followed the fusileers with alacrity, and at no period did they give way with dishonor.

Nevertheless, all circumstances considered, they were not and could not be equal to a second desperate struggle; a renewed attack on the 17th would have certainly ended in favor of the French, and so conscious was Beresford of this, that, on the evening of the 16th, he wrote to Lord Wellington, avowing that he anticipated a certain and ruinous defeat the next day. The resolution with which he maintained the position notwithstanding, was the

strongest indication of military talent he gave during the whole of his operations; had Soult only persisted in holding his position with equal pertinacity, Beresford must have retired. It was a great and decided mistake of the French Marshal not to have done so. There is nothing more essential in war than a confident front; a general should never acknowledge himself vanquished, for the front line of an army always looks formidable, and the adversary can seldom see the real state of what is behind. The importance of this maxim is finely indicated in Livy, where he relates that, after a drawn battle, a god called out in the night, the Etruscans had lost one man more than the Romans! Hereupon the former retired, and the latter remaining on the field, gathered all the fruits of a real victory.

BOOK XIII.

CHAPTER I.

Lord Wellington's sieges vindicated—Operations in Spain—State of Galicia—Change of commanders—Bonnet's operations in the Asturias—Activity of the Partidas—Their system of operations—Mina captures a large convoy at Arlaban—Bessières contracts his position—Bonnet abandons the Asturias—Santocildes advances into Leon—French dismantle Astorga—Skirmish on the Orbigo—General inefficiency of the Gallicians and Asturians—Operations in the eastern provinces—State of Aragon—State of Catalonia—State of Valencia—Suchet marches against Tortosa—Fails to burn the boat-bridge there—Macdonald remains at Gerona—The Valencians and Catalonians combine operations against Suchet—O'Donnell enters Tortosa—Makes a sally and is repulsed—The Valencians defeated near Uldecona—Operations of the seventh corps—Macdonald reforms the discipline of the troops—Marches with a convoy to Barcelona—Returns to Gerona and dismantles the out-works of that place—O'Donnell's plans—Macdonald marches with a second convoy—Reaches Barcelona and returns to Gerona—Marches with a third convoy—Forces the pass of Ordal—Enters Reus and opens the communications with Suchet.

WHILE Marshal Beresford followed Soult towards Llerena, Lord Wellington recommenced the siege of Badajoz; but the relation of that operation must be delayed until the transactions which occurred in Spain during Massena's invasion of Portugal have been noticed, for it is not by following one stream of action that a just idea of this war can be obtained. Many of Lord Wellington's proceedings might be called rash, and others timid and slow, if taken separately; yet, when viewed as parts of a great plan for delivering the whole Peninsula, they will be found discreet or daring, as the circumstances warranted; nor is there any portion of his campaigns that requires this wide-based consideration, more than his early sieges; which, being instituted contrary to the rules of art, and unsuccessful, or when successful, attended with a mournful slaughter, have given occasion for questioning his great military qualities, which were however then most signally displayed.

OPERATIONS IN SPAIN.

In the northern provinces the events were of little interest. Galicia, after the failure of Renouales' expedition and the ship-

wreck that followed, became torpid; the Junta disregarded General Walker's exhortations, and, although he furnished vast supplies, the army, nominally twenty thousand strong, mustered only six thousand in the field; there was no cavalry, and the infantry kept close in the mountains about Villa Franca, while a weak French division occupied the rich plains of Leon.* General Mahi having refused to combine his operations with those of the Anglo-Portuguese army, was thought to be disaffected, and at the desire of the British authorities had been removed to make way for the Duke of Albuquerque: he was however immediately appointed to the command of Murcia, by Blake, in defiance of the remonstrances of Mr. Wellesley, for Blake disregarded the English influence.†

When Albuquerque died, Galicia fell to Castaños, and while that officer was co-operating with Beresford in Estremadura, Santocildes assumed the command. Meanwhile Caffarelli's reserve having joined the army of the north, Santona was fortified, and Bessières, as I have before observed, assembled seven thousand men at Zamora to invade Galicia.

In the Asturias, Bonnet, although harassed, on the side of Potes, by the guerillas from the mountains of Liebaña, and on the coast by the English frigates, remained at Oviedo, and maintained his communications by the left with the troops in Leon. In November, 1810, he defeated a considerable body of insurgents, and in February, 1811, the Spanish General St. Pol retired before him with the regular forces, from the Xalon to the Navia; but this retreat caused such discontent in Galicia that St. Pol advanced again on the 19th of March, and was again driven back.‡ Bonnet then dispersed the partidas, and was ready to aid Bessières' invasion of Galicia; and although the arrival of the allied forces on the Coa in pursuit of Massena stopped that enterprise, he made an incursion along the coast, seized the Spanish stores of English arms and clothing, and then returned to Oviedo. The war was, indeed, so little formidable to the French, that in May Santander was evacuated, and all the cavalry in Castile and Leon joined Massena for the battle of Fuentes Onoro, and yet the Gallician and Asturian regular armies gained no advantage during their absence.

The partidas, who had re-assembled after their defeat by Bonnet, were more active. Porlier, Campillo, Longa, Amor, and Merino cut off small French parties in the Montaña, in the Rioja, in Biscay, and in the Baston de Laredo; they were not, indeed, dangerous in action, nor was it very difficult to destroy them by combined

* Official abstract of General Walker's despatches.

† Official abstract of Mr. Wellesley's despatches, MS.

‡ Mr. Stuart's Papers, MS.

movements, but these combinations were hard to effect, from the little accord amongst the French generals, and thus they easily maintained their posts at Espinosa de Monteres, Medina, and Villarcayo. Campillo was the most powerful after Porlier.* His principal haunts were in the valleys of Mena and Caranza; but he was in communication with Barbara, Honejas, and Curillas, petty chiefs of Biscay, with whom he concerted attacks upon couriers and weak detachments; and he sometimes divided his band into small parties, with which he overran the valleys of Gurieso, Soba, Carrado, and Jorrando, partly to raise contributions, partly to gather recruits, whom he forced to join him. His chief aim was, however, to intercept the despatches going from Bilbao to Santander, and for this purpose he used to infest Liendo between Ovira and Laredo, which he was enabled the more safely to do, because General Barthélemy, the governor of the Montaña, was forced to watch more earnestly towards the hilly district of Liebaña, between Leon and the Asturias. This district was Porlier's stronghold, and that chief, under whom Campillo himself would at times act, used to cross the Deba and penetrate into the valleys of Cabuerniego, Rio Nauza, Cieza, and Buelna, and he obliged the people to fly to the mountains with their effects whenever the French approached; nevertheless the mass were tired of this guerilla system and tractable enough, except in Liebaña.

To beat Campillo once or twice would have been sufficient to ruin him, but to ruin Porlier required great combinations. It was necessary to seize Espinosa, not that of Monteres, but a village in the mountains of Liebaña, from whence the valleys all projected as from a point, and whence the troops could consequently act towards Potes with success. General Barthélemy proposed this plan to Drouet, then with the 9th corps on the upper Douro, whom he desired to co-operate from the side of Leon, while Bonnet did the same from the side of the Asturias; but though partially adopted, the execution was not effectually followed up, the districts of Liebaña and Santander continued to be disturbed, and the chain of partidas was prolonged through Biscay and the Rioja, to Navarre.

In this last province Mina had on the 22d of May defeated at the Puerto de Arlaban, near Vittoria, twelve hundred men who were escorting a convoy of prisoners and treasure to France; his success was complete, but alloyed by the death of two hundred of the prisoners, unfortunately killed during the tumult; and it was stained by the murder of six Spanish ladies, who, for being attached to French officers, were in cold blood executed after the fight.†

* Intercepted letter of General Barthélemy to General Drouet, 1810, MS.

† Mr. Stuart's Papers, MS.

Massena, whose baggage was captured, was to have travelled with this escort, but disliking the manner of the march, he remained in Vittoria until a better opportunity, and so escaped.

These partisan operations, combined with the descents on the coast, the aspect of the war in Estremadura, and the unprotected state of Castile, which was now menaced by Santocildes, were rendered more important by another event to be noticed hereafter. Bessières therefore resolved to contract his position in the north; and first causing Reille and Caffarelli to scour Biscay and the Rioja, he ordered Bonnet to abandon the Asturias. On the 14th of June that General, having dismantled the coast-batteries, sent his sick and baggage by sea to Santander and marched into Leon, where Santocildes, who had now increased the Gallician field army to thirteen thousand men, was menacing Astorga, which place the French evacuated after blowing up some of the works. Serras and Bonnet then united on the Esla, and being supported by three thousand men from Rio Seco, skirmished at the Ponte de Orvigo on the 23d, but had the worst, and General Valletaux was killed on their side; and as Lord Wellington's operations in Estremadura soon drew the French armies towards that quarter, Santocildes held his ground at Astorga until August. Meanwhile two thousand French were thrown into Santona, and General Rognet coming from the side of Burgos, with a division of the Young Guard, made a fruitless incursion against the partidas of Liebaña.

This system of warfare was necessarily harassing to the French divisions actually engaged, but it was evident that neither the Asturias nor Galicia could be reckoned as good auxiliaries to Lord Wellington. Galicia, with its lordly Junta, regular army, fortified towns, rugged fastnesses, numerous population, and constant supplies from England, was of less weight in the contest than five thousand Portuguese militia conducted by Trant and Wilson. The irregular warfare was now also beginning to produce its usual effects; the tree, though grafted in patriotism, bore strange fruit. In Biscay, which had been longest accustomed to the presence of the invaders, the armed peasantry were often found fighting in the ranks of the enemy, and on one occasion did of themselves attack the boats of the *Amelia* frigate to save French military stores!* Turning now to the other line of invasion, we shall find the contest fiercer, indeed, and more honorable to the Spaniards, but the result still more unfavorable to their cause.

OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN PROVINCES.

It will be remembered that Suchet, after the fall of Mequinenza, was ordered to besiege Tortosa, while Macdonald marched against

* Appendix 4, § 1.

Tarragona. Massena was then concentrating his army for the invasion of Portugal, and it was the Emperor's intention that Suchet should, after taking Tortosa, march with half of the third corps to support the Prince of Esling. But the reduction of Tortosa proved a more tedious task than Napoleon anticipated, and as the course of events had now given the French armies of Catalonia and Aragon a common object, it will be well to compare their situation and resources with those of their adversary.

Suchet was completely master of Aragon, and not more by the force of his arms than by the influence of his administration; the province was fertile, and so tranquil in the interior, that his magazines were all filled, and his convoys travelled under the care of Spanish commissaries and conductors. Mina was however in Navarre on his rear, and he communicated on the right bank of the Ebro with the partidas in the mountains of Moncayo and Albaracin; and these last were occasionally backed by the Empecinado, Duran, and others whose strongholds were in the Guadalaxara, and who from thence infested Cuença and the vicinity of Madrid. From Albaracin, Villa Campa continued the chain of partisan warfare and connected it with the Valencian army, which had also a line of operation towards Cuença. Mina, who communicated with the English vessels in the bay of Biscay, received his supplies from Coruña; and the others, in like manner, corresponded with Valencia, from whence the English Consul Tupper succored them with arms, money, and ammunition. Thus a line was drawn quite across the Peninsula which it was in vain for the enemy to break, as the retreat was secure at both ends, and the excitement to renewed efforts constant.

On the other flank of Suchet's position the high valleys of the Pyrenees were swarming with small bands, forming a link between Mina and a division of the Catalonian army stationed about the Seu d'Urgel, which was a fortified castle, closing the passage leading from the plain of that name to the Cerdaña. This division, in conjunction with Rovira and other partisans, extended the irregular warfare on the side of Olot and Castelfollit to the Ampurdan; and the whole depended upon Tarragona, which itself was supported by the English fleet in the Mediterranean. Aragon may therefore be considered as an invested fortress, which the Spaniards thought to reduce by famine, by assault, and by exciting the population against the garrison; but Suchet baffled them; he had made such judicious arrangements, that his convoys were secure in the interior, and all the important points on the frontier circle were fortified and connected with Zaragoza by chains of minor posts radiating from that common centre. Lerida, Mequinenza, and the plain of

Urgel in Catalonia, the fort of Morella in Valencia, were his; and by fortifying Teruel and Alcañiz he had secured the chief passages leading through the mountains to the latter kingdom; he could thus at will invade either Catalonia or Valencia, and from Mequinenza he could by water transport the stores necessary to besiege Tortosa. Nor were these advantages the result of aught but his uncommon talents for war, a consideration which rendered them doubly formidable.

The situation of the French in Catalonia was different. Macdonald, who had assumed the command at the moment when Napoleon wished him to co-operate with Suchet, was inexperienced in the peculiar warfare of the province, and unprepared to execute any extended plan of operations. His troops were about Gerona and Hostalrich, which were in fact the bounds of the French conquest at this period; for Barcelona was a military point beyond their field system, and only to be maintained by expeditions; and the country was so exhausted of provisions in the interior, that the army itself could only be fed by land-convoys from France, or by such coasters as, eluding the vigilance of the English cruisers, could reach Rosas, St. Filieu, and Palamos. Barcelona, like the horse-leech, continually cried for more, and as the inhabitants as well as the garrison depended on the convoys, the latter were enormous, reference being had to the limited means of the French General, and the difficulty of moving; for although the distance between Hostalrich and Barcelona was only forty miles, the road, as far as Granollers, was a succession of defiles, and crossed by several rivers, of which the Congosta and the Tordera were considerable obstacles; and the nature of the soil was clayey and heavy, especially in the defiles of the Trenta Pasos.

These things rendered it difficult for Macdonald to operate in regular warfare from his base of Gerona, and as the stores for the siege of Tarragona were to come from France, until they arrived he could only make sudden incursions with light baggage, trusting to the resources still to be found in the open country, or to be gathered in the mountains by detachments which would have to fight for every morsel. This, then, was the condition of the French armies, that starting from separate bases they had to operate on lines meeting at Tortosa. It remains to show the situation of the Catalan General.

After the battle of Margalef, Henry O'Donnell reunited his scattered forces, and being of a stern unyielding disposition, not only repressed the discontent occasioned by that defeat, but forced the reluctant Migueletes to swell his ranks and to submit to discipline. Being assisted with money and arms by the British agents, and

having free communication by sea with Gibraltar, Cadiz, and Minorca, he was soon enabled to reorganize his army, to collect vast magazines at Tarragona, and to strengthen that place by new works. In July his force again amounted to twenty-two thousand men exclusive of the *partidas*, and of the *somatenes*, who were useful to aid in a pursuit, to break up roads, and to cut off straggling soldiers. Of this number one division under Campo Verde was, as I have before said, in the higher valleys, having a detachment at Olot, and being supported by the fortified castles of Seu d'Urgel, Cardoña, Solsona, and Berga. A second division was on the Llobregat, watching the garrison of Barcelona, and having detachments in Montserrat, Igualada, and Manresa, to communicate with Campo Verde. The third division, the reserve and the cavalry were on the hills about Tarragona, and that place and Tortosa had large garrisons.

By this disposition, O'Donnell occupied Falcet, the Col de Balaguer, and the Col del Alba, which were the passages leading to Tortosa; the Col de Ribas and Momblanch, which commanded the roads to Lerida; San Coloma de Querault and Igualada, through which his connection with Campo Verde was maintained; and thus the two French armies were separated not only by the great spinal ridges descending from the Pyrenees, but by the position of the Spaniards, who held all the passes, and could at will concentrate and attack either Suchet or Macdonald.* But the Catalonian system was now also connected with Valencia, where, exclusive of irregulars, there were about fifteen thousand men under General Bassecour. That officer had in June occupied Cuença, yet having many quarrels with his officers he could do nothing, and was driven from thence by troops from Madrid; he returned to Valencia, but the disputes continued and extended to the Junta or Congress of Valencia, three members of which were by the General imprisoned.† Nevertheless, as all parties were now sensible that Valencia should be defended at Tortosa, Bassecour prepared to march to its succor by the coast road, where he had several fortified posts. Thus, while Suchet and Macdonald were combining to crush O'Donnell, the latter was combining with Bassecour to press upon Suchet; and there was always the English maritime force at hand to aid the attacks, or to facilitate the escape of the Spaniards.

In the above exposition I have called the native armies by the names of their provinces, but in December, 1810, the whole military force being reorganized by the Regency, the armies were designated

* General Doyle's correspondence, MS. Colonel Green's do, MS.

† Official Abstracts of Mr. Wellesley's Despatches, MS. Mr. Stuart's Papers MS.

by numbers. Thus the Catalonian force, formerly called *the army of the right*, was now called the *first army*. The Valencians, together with Villa Campa's division, and the partidas of the Empecinado and Duran, were called the *second army*. The Murcian force was called the *third army*. The troops at Cadiz, at Algeiras, and in the Conde Neibla were called the *fourth army*. The remnants of Romana's old Gallician division which had escaped the slaughter on the Gebora formed the *fifth army*. The new-raised troops of Galicia and those of the Asturias were called the *sixth army*. And the partidas of the north, that is to say, Mina's, Longa's, Campillo's, Porlier's and other smaller bands, formed the *seventh army*.

Such was the state of affairs when Napoleon's order to besiege Tortosa arrived. Suchet was ready to execute it. More than fifty battering guns selected from those at Lerida were already equipped, and his dépôts were established at Mequinenza, Caspe, and Alcañitz. All the fortified posts were provisioned; twelve thousand men under General Musnier, intended for the security of Aragon, were disposed at Huesca and other minor points on the left bank of the Ebro, and at Daroca, Teruel, and Calatayud on the right bank; and while these arrangements were being executed, the troops destined for the siege had assembled at Lerida and Alcañitz, under Generals Habert and Laval, their provisions being drawn from the newly conquered district of Urgel.

From Mequinenza, which was the principal dépôt, there was water-carriage; but as the Ebro was crossed at several points by rocky bars, some of which were only passable in full water, the communication was too uncertain to depend upon, and Suchet therefore set workmen to reopen an old road thirty miles in length, which had been made by the Duke of Orleans during the war of the succession. This road pierced the mountains on the right bank of the Ebro, passed through Batea and other places to Mora, and from thence by Pinel to Tortosa, running through a celebrated defile called indifferently the *Trincheras* and the *Passage of Arms*. When these preliminary arrangements were made, General Habert assembled his division at Belpuig near Lerida, and after making a feint as if to go towards Barcelona, suddenly turned to his right, and penetrating through the district of Garriga, reached Garcia on the left bank of the lower Ebro the 5th of July. Laval at the same time quitted Alcañitz, made a feint towards Valencia by Morella, and then turning to his left, came so unexpectedly upon Tortosa by the right bank of the Ebro, that he surprised some of the outposts on the 2d, and then encamped before the bridge-head. The 4th, he extended his line to Amposta, seized the ferry-boat on

the great road from Barcelona to Valencia, and posted Boussard's cuirassiers, with a battalion of infantry and six guns, at Uldecona, on the Cenja river, to observe Bassecour's Valencians.

During these operations Suchet fixed his own quarters at Mora, and as the new road was not finished, he occupied Miravet, Pinel, and the Trincheras, on its intended line; and having placed flying bridges, with covering works, on the Ebro, at Mora and Xerta, made those places his *dépôt* of siege. He likewise seized the craft on the river, established posts at Rapita, near the mouth of the Ebro, and made a fruitless attempt to burn the boat-bridge of Tortosa, with fire vessels. Following Napoleon's order, Macdonald should at this time have been before Tarragona; but on the 9th, Suchet learned, from a spy, that the seventh corps was still at Gerona, and he thus found himself exposed alone to the combined efforts of the Catalans and Valencians. This made him repent of having moved from Aragon so soon, yet thinking it would be bad to retire, he resolved to blockade Tortosa; hoping to resist both O'Donnell and Bassecour until Macdonald could advance.

The Spaniards, who knew his situation, sallied on the right bank the 6th and 8th, and on the 10th his outposts on the left bank were driven in at Tivisa by a division from Falcet, which the next day fell on his works at Mora, but was repulsed; and the 12th, General Paris pushed back the Spanish line, while Habert took post in force at Tivisa, by which he covered the roads to Xerta and Mora. O'Donoghue, who commanded Bassecour's advanced guard, now menaced Morella, but General Montmarie being detached to its succor, drove him away.

The 30th, O'Donnell having brought up fresh troops to Falcet, made a feint with ten thousand men against Tivisa, and then suddenly entered Tortosa, from whence at mid-day, on the 3d of August, he passed the bridge and fell with the bayonet on Laval's intrenchments. The French gave way at first, but soon rallied, and the Spaniards fearing for their communications regained the town in disorder, having lost two hundred prisoners besides killed and wounded.

This operation had been concerted with General Caro, who, having superseded O'Donoghue, was now marching with the Valencians by the coast-road towards Uldecona. Suchet therefore, judging that the intention of the Spaniards was to force him away from the lower Ebro before Macdonald could pass the Llobregat, resolved first to strike a sudden blow at the Valencians, and then turn upon the Catalans. In this view he contracted his quarters on the Ebro, and united at Uldecona, on the 13th, eleven battalions with eight hundred horsemen. Caro was then in a strong position

covering the two great routes to Valencia, but when the French, after driving in his advanced guard from Vinaros, came up, his Valencians would not stand a battle, and being followed beyond Peniscola separated and retreated in disorder by different roads. Whereupon Suchet returned to Mora, and there found an officer of Macdonald's army, who brought information that the seventh corps was at last in the plains of Reus, and its communications with the third corps open.

OPERATIONS OF THE SEVENTH CORPS.

When Macdonald succeeded Augereau he found the troops in a state of insubordination, accustomed to plunder, and excited to ferocity by the cruelty of the Catalans, and by the conduct of his predecessor; they were without magazines or regular subsistence, and lived by exactions:* hence the people, driven to desperation, were more like wild beasts than men, and the war was repulsive to him in all its features. It was one of shifts and devices, and he better understood methodical movements; it was one of plunder, and he was a severe disciplinarian; it was full of cruelty on all sides, and he was of a humane and just disposition. Being resolved to introduce regular habits, Macdonald severely rebuked the troops for their bad discipline and cruelty, and endeavored to soothe the Catalans, but neither could be brought to soften in their enmity; the mutual injuries sustained were too horrible and too recent to be forgiven. The soldiers, drawn from different countries, and therefore not bound by any common national feeling, were irritated against a general who made them pay for wanton damages, and punished them for plundering; and the Catalans, attributing his conduct to fear, because he could not entirely restrain the violence of his men, still fled from the villages, and still massacred his stragglers with unrelenting barbarity.†

While establishing his system it was impossible for Macdonald to take the field, because, without magazines, no army can be kept in due discipline; wherefore he remained about Gerona, drawing with great labor and pains his provisions from France, and storing up the overplus for his future operations. On the 10th of June, however, the wants of Barcelona became so serious, that leaving his baggage under a strong guard at Gerona, and his recruits and cavalry at Figueras, he marched with ten thousand men and a convoy to its relief, by the way of the Trenta Pasos, Cardedieu, and Granollers. The road was heavy, the defiles narrow, the rivers swelled, and the manner of march rather too pompous for the na-

* Vacani. Victoires et conquêtes des Français.

† Vacani.

ture of the war, for Macdonald took post in order of battle on each side of the defiles, while the engineers repaired the ways; in everything adhered to his resolution of restoring a sound system; but while imitating the Jugurthine Metellus, he forgot that he had not Romans, but a mixed and ferocious multitude under his command, and he lost more by wasting of time, than he gained by enforcing an irksome discipline. Thus when he had reached Barcelona, his own provisions were expended, his convoy furnished only a slender supply for the city, and the next day he was forced to return with the empty carts in all haste to Gerona, where he resumed his former plan of action, and demolished the forts beyond that city.

In July, he collected another convoy and prepared to march in the same order as before, for his intent was to form magazines in Barcelona sufficient for that city and his own supply, during the siege of Tarragona; but meanwhile Suchet was unable to commence the siege of Tortosa, in default of the co-operation of the seventh corps; and Henry O'Donnell, having gained time to re-organize his army and to re-establish his authority, was now ready to interrupt the French Marshal's march, proposing, if he failed, to raise a fresh insurrection in the Ampurdan, and thus give further occupation on that side. He had transferred a part of his forces to Caldas, Santa Coloma, and Bruñolas, taking nearly the same positions that Blake had occupied during the siege of Gerona; but the French detachments soon obliged him to concentrate again behind the defiles of the Congosta, where he hoped to stop the passage of the convoy. Macdonald, however, entered Hosalrich on the 16th, forced the Trenta Pasos on the 17th, and although his troops had only fifty rounds of ammunition he drove three thousand men from the pass of Garriga on the 18th, reached Barcelona that night, delivered his convoy, and returned immediately.

The French soldiers now became sickly from the hardships of a march rendered oppressive by the severity of their discipline, and many also deserted;* yet others who had before gone off returned to their colors, reinforcements arrived from France, and the Emperor's orders to take the field were becoming so pressing, that Macdonald, giving Baraguay d'Hilliers the command of the Ampurdan, marched on the 8th of August with a third convoy for Barcelona, resolved at last to co-operate with Suchet. Instructed by experience, he however moved this time with less formality, and having reached Barcelona the 11th, deposited his convoy, appointed Maurice Mathieu governor of that city, and on the 15th forced the pass of Ordal, and reached Villa Franca with about sixteen thousand men under arms. O'Donnell, still smarting from

* Vacani.

the affair at Tortosa, retired before him to Tarragona without fighting, but directed Campo Verde to leave a body of troops under General Martinez in the mountains about Olot, and to move himself through Montserrat to the district of Garriga, which lies between Lerida and Tortosa; meanwhile the seventh corps passed by Braffin and Valls into the plain of Reus, and as we have seen opened the communication with Suchet, but to how little purpose shall be shown in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

O'Donnell withdraws his troops from Falcet and surrounds the seventh corps—Macdonald retires to Lerida—Arranges a new plan with Suchet—Ravages the plains of Urgel and the higher valleys—The people become desperate—O'Donnell cuts the French communication with the Ampurdan—Makes a forced march towards Gerona—Surprises Swartz at Abispal—Takes Filieu and Palamos—Is wounded and returns to Tarragona—Campo Verde marches to the Cerdaña—Macdonald enters Solsona—Campo Verde returns—Combat of Cardoña—The French retreat to Guisona, and the seventh corps returns to Gerona—Macdonald marches with a fourth convoy to Barcelona—Makes new roads—Advances to Reus—The Spaniards harass his flanks—He forages the Garriga district and joins the third corps—Operations of Suchet—General Laval dies—Operations of the partidas—Plan of the secret Junta to starve Aragon—General Chlopiski defeats Villa Campa—Suchet's difficulties—He assembles the notables of Aragon and organizes that province—He defeats and takes General Navarro at Falcet—Bassecour's operations—He is defeated at Uldecona.

As the Spanish General knew that the French could at Reus find provisions for only a few days, he withdrew his division from Falcet, and while Campo Verde, coming into the Garriga, occupied the passes behind them, and other troops were placed in the defiles between Valls and Villa Franca, he held the main body of his army concentrated at Tarragona, ready to fall upon Macdonald whenever he should move. This done, he became extremely elated, for like all Spaniards he imagined that to surround an enemy was the perfection of military operations. Macdonald cared little for the vicinity of the Catalan troops, but he had not yet formed sufficient magazines at Barcelona to commence the siege of Tarragona, nor could he, as O'Donnell had foreseen, procure more than a few days' supply about Reus; he therefore relinquished all idea of a siege, and proposed to aid Suchet in the operation against Tortosa, if the latter would feed the seventh corps; and pending Suchet's decision he resolved to remove to Lerida.

The 25th of August, leaving seven hundred sick men in Reus,

he made a feint against the Col de Balaguer, but soon changing his direction marched upon Momblanch and the Col de Ribas: his rear-guard, composed of Italian troops, being overtaken near Alcover, offered battle at the bridge of Goy, but this the Spaniards declined, and they also neglected to secure the heights on each side, which the Italians immediately turned to account and so made their way to Pixamoxons. They were pursued immediately, and Sarsfield coming from the Lerida side disputed the passage of Pixamoxons; but Macdonald, keeping the troops from Tarragona in check with a rear-guard, again sent his Italians up the hills on the flanks while he pushed his French troops against the front of the enemy, and so succeeded; for the Italians quickly carried the heights, the rear-guard was very slightly pressed, the front was unopposed, and in two hours the army reached Momblanch, whence after a short halt it descended into the plains of Urgel.

Suchet, being informed of this march, came from Mora to confer with Macdonald, and they agreed that the seventh corps should have for its subsistence the magazines of Monson and the plains of Urgel, which had not yet delivered its contributions. In return Macdonald lent the Neapolitan division to guard Suchet's convoys down the Ebro, and promised that the divisions of Severoli and Souham should cover the operations of the third corps during the siege of Tortosa, by drawing the attention of the Catalan generals to the side of Cardona.

The seventh corps was now quartered about Tarega, Cervera, Guisona, and Agramunt, and Severoli was detached with four thousand men over the Segre to enforce the requisitions about Talarn. He drove four hundred Swiss from the bridge of Tresp, and executed his mission, but with such violence that the people, becoming furious, assassinated the stragglers, and laid so many successful schemes of murder, that Macdonald was forced reluctantly to renew the executions and burnings of his predecessors.* Indeed, to feed an army forcibly when all things are paid for, will, in a poor and mountainous country, create soreness, because the things taken cannot be easily replaced; but with requisitions severity is absolutely necessary. In rich plains the inhabitants can afford to supply the troops, and will do so to avoid being plundered; but mountaineers, having scarcely anything besides food, and little of that, are immediately rendered desperate, and must be treated as enemies or left in quiet.

While Severoli was ravaging Tresp and Talarn, General Eugenio marched with another Italian detachment towards Castelfolli, which had a French garrison, and Macdonald removed his own

* Vacani.

quarters to Cervera. Meanwhile O'Donnell, having replaced his division at Falcet to observe Suchet, distributed his other forces on the line of communication through San Coloma de Querault, Igualada, Montserrat, and Cardona; he thus cut off all connection between Macdonald and the Ampurdan, and enabled Campo Verde closely to follow the operations of the seventh corps, and that General seeing the French army separated, fell first upon the headquarters at Cervera, but being unsuccessful, marched against Eugenio, and was by him also repulsed near Castelfollit. Eugenio, distinguished alike by his valor and ferocity, then returned with his booty to Agramunt, and afterwards invading Pons, spoiled and ravaged all that district without hindrance. The provisions obtained were heaped up in Lerida and Balaguer; but while Macdonald was thus acting in the plain of Urgel, O'Donnell formed and executed the most skilful plan which had yet graced the Spanish arms.

We have seen that Baraguay d'Hilliers was left with eighteen or twenty thousand men in the Ampurdan, but these troops were necessarily scattered; seven hundred were at Palamos, San Filieu, and other small ports along the coast; twelve hundred under General Swartz were quartered in Abispal, one short march from Gerona, and two hundred were at Calonjé, connecting Abispal with Palamos; the rest were in Figueras, Rosas, Olot, Castelfollit, Gerona, and Hostalrich, and several thousand were in hospital. O'Donnell, having exact knowledge of all this, left a small garrison in Tarragona, placed the Baron d'Errolles at Montserrat, Colonel Georget at Igualada, and Obispo at Martorel, while with six thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry he marched himself through the mountains, by San Culgat to Mattaro on the sea-coast; then crossing the Tordera below Hostalrich, he moved rapidly by Vidreras to Llagostera, which he reached the 12th of September. His arrival was unknown to Macdonald, or Maurice Mathieu, or Baraguay d'Hilliers, for though many reports of his intentions were afloat, most of them spread by himself, no person divined his real object; by some he was said to be gone against a French corps, which, from the side of Navarre, had entered the Cerdaña; by others that he was concentrating at Manresa, and many concluded that he was still in Tarragona.

Having thus happily attained his first object, O'Donnell proceeded in his plan with a vigor of execution equal to the conception. Leaving Campo Verde with a reserve in the valley of Aro, he sent detachments to fall on Calonjé and the posts along the coast, the operations there being seconded by two English frigates; and while this was in progress, O'Donnell himself, on the 14th, marched vio-

lently down from Casa de Silva upon Abispal. Swartz, always unfortunate, had his infantry and some cavalry under arms in an entrenched camp, and accepted battle; but after losing two hundred men and seeing no retreat, yielded, and all the French troops along the coast were likewise forced to surrender. The prisoners and spoils were immediately embarked on board the English vessels and sent to Tarragona.

Until this moment Baraguay d'Hilliers was quite ignorant of O'Donnell's arrival, and the whole Ampurdan was thrown into confusion; for the Somatenes, rising in all parts, cut off the communications with Macdonald, whose posts on the side of Calaf and Cervera were at the same time harassed by Errolles and Obispo; nevertheless, although a rumor of Swartz's disaster reached him, Macdonald would not credit it, and continued in the plain of Urgel. Baraguay d'Hilliers was therefore unable to do more than protect his own convoys from France, and would have been in a dangerous position if O'Donnell's activity had continued; but that General having been severely wounded, the Spanish efforts relaxed, and Napoleon, whose eyes were everywhere, sent General Conroux in the latter end of October with a convoy and reinforcement of troops from Perpignan to Gerona. O'Donnell, troubled by his wound, then embarked; and Campo Verde, who succeeded to the command, immediately sent a part of the army to Tarragona, left Rovira, and Claros, and Manso, to nourish the insurrection in the Ampurdan, and took post himself at Manresa, from whence he at first menaced Macdonald's post at Calaf; but his real object was to break up that road, which he effected, and then passed suddenly through Berga and Cardona to Puigcerda, and drove the French detachment, which had come from Navarre to ravage the fertile district of Cerdaña, under the guns of Fort Louis.

This excursion attracted Macdonald's attention; he was now fully apprised of Swartz's misfortune, and he hoped to repair it by crushing Campo Verde, taking Cardona, and dispersing the local Junta of Upper Catalonia, which had assembled in Solsona; wherefore on the 18th he put his troops in motion, and the 19th, passing the mountains of Portellas, entered Solsona; but the Junta and the inhabitants escaped to Cardona and Berja, and up the valleys of Oleana and Urgel. Macdonald immediately sent columns in all directions to collect provisions and to chase the Spanish detachments, and this obliged Campo Verde to abandon the Cerdaña, which was immediately foraged by the troops from Fort Louis. It only remained to seize Cardona, and on the 21st the French marched against that place; but Campo Verde, by a rapid move-

ment, arrived before them, and was in order of battle with a considerable force when Macdonald came up.

COMBAT OF CARDONA.

This town stands at the foot of a rugged hill, which is joined by a hog's-back ridge to the great mountain spine, dividing Eastern from Western Catalonia. The Cardona river washed the walls, a castle of strength crowned the height above, and though the works of the place were weak, the Spanish army, covering all the side of the hill between the town and the castle, presented such an imposing spectacle, that the French General resolved to avoid a serious action. But the French and Italians marched in separate columns, and the latter under Eugenio, who arrived first, attacked contrary to orders; yet he soon found his hands too full, and thus, against his will, Macdonald was obliged also to engage to bring Eugenio off. Yet neither was he able to resist Campo Verde, who drove all down the mountain, and followed them briskly as they retreated to Solsona.

Macdonald lost many men in this fight, and on the 26th returned to Guisona. It was now more than two months since he had left the Ampurdan, and during that time he had struck no useful blow against the Spaniards, nor had he, in any serious manner, aided Suchet's operations; for the Catalans continually harassed that General's convoys, from the left of the Ebro, while the seventh corps, besides suffering severely from assassinations, had been repulsed at Cardona, had excited the people of the plain of Urgel to a state of rabid insurrection, and had lost its own communications with the Ampurdan. In that district the brigade of Swartz had been destroyed, the ports of Filieu and Palamos taken, and the Catalans were everywhere become more powerful and elated than before. Barcelona also was again in distress, and a convoy from Perpignan destined for its relief dared not pass Hostalrich. Macdonald therefore resolved to return to Gerona by the road of Manresa, Moya, and Granollers, and having communicated his intention to Suchet, and placed his baggage in Lerida, commenced his march the 4th of November.

Campo Verde, getting intelligence of this design, took post to fight near Calaf, yet when the French approached, his heart failed, and he permitted them to pass. The French General therefore reached Manresa the 7th, and immediately despatched parties towards Vich and other places to mislead the Spaniards, while with his main body he marched by Moya and the Gariga pass to Granollers, where he expected to meet Baraguay d'Hilliers with the convoy from Barcelona; but being disappointed in this, he returned

by the Trenta Pasos to Gerona the 10th, and sent his convalescents to Figueras.

The vicinity of Gerona was now quite exhausted, and fresh convoys from France were required to feed the troops, while the posts in the Ampurdan were re-established and the district re-organized. Macdonald's muster-rolls presented a force of fifty-one thousand men, of which ten thousand were in hospital, six thousand in Barcelona, and several thousand distributed along the coast and on the lines of communication, leaving somewhat more than thirty thousand disposable for field operations. Of this number fourteen thousand were placed under Baraguay d'Hilliers to maintain the Ampurdan, and when the convoys arrived from France the French Marshal marched, with the remaining sixteen thousand, for the fourth time, to the succor of Barcelona. His divisions were commanded by Souham and Pino, for Severoli had been recalled to Italy to organize fresh reinforcements; but following his former plan, this march also was made in one solid body, and as the defiles had been cut up by the Spaniards, and the bridge over the Tordera broken, Macdonald set his troops to labor, and in six hours opened fresh ways over the hills on the right and left of the Trenta Pasos, and so, without opposition, reached the more open country about Granollers and Moncada. The Spaniards then retired by their own left to Tarasa and Caldas, but Macdonald continued to move on in a solid body upon Barcelona; for as he was resolved not to expose himself to a dangerous attack, so he avoided all enterprise. Thus, on the 23d, he would not permit Pino to improve a favorable opportunity of crushing the Catalans in his front, and on the 24th, after delivering his convoy and sending the carts back to Belgarde, instead of pursuing Campo Verde to Tarasa, as all the generals advised, he marched towards the Llobregat;* and as Souham and Pino remained discontented at Barcelona, their divisions were given to Frere and Fontanes.

Macdonald moved on the 27th towards Tarragona, but without any design to undertake the siege; for though the road by Ordal and Villa Franca was broad and good, he carried no artillery or wheel-carriages. The Spaniards, seeing this, judged he would again go to Lerida, and posted their main body about Montserrat and Igualada; but he disregarded them, and after beating Sarsfield from Arbos and Vendril, turned towards the pass of Massarbones, which leads through the range of hills separating Villa Franca from the district of Valls. The Catalans had broken up both that and the pass of Christina leading to the Gaya, yet the French General again made new ways, and on the 30th spread his troops over the

* Vacani.