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ous of some hostile indications towards the village of Val Carlos, had sent the fifty-seventh regiment down there, and gave notice to Cole who had meanwhile made new dispositions. Ross's brigade was now at Espinal, two miles in advance of Viscayret, six miles from the pass of Ibañeta, eleven from Byng's position, and somewhat nearer to Morillo: Anson's brigade was close behind Ros, Stubbs' Portuguese behind Anson, and the artillery was at Linzoain. In this state of affairs Soult, throwing out a multitude of skirmishers and pushing forward his supporting columns and guns as fast as the steepness of the road and difficult nature of the ground would permit, endeavored to force Byng's position; but the latter fought strongly, the French fell fast among the rocks, and their rolling musketry pealed in vain for hours along that cloudy field of battle, elevated five thousand feet above the plains. Their numbers however continually increased in front, and the national guards from Yropil, reinforced by Clausel's detachments, skirmished with the Spanish battalions at the foundry of Orbaiceta and threatened to turn the right: Val Carlos was at the same time menaced from Arnegui, and Reille, ascending the rock of Airola, turned Morillo's left.

About mid-day Cole arrived at Altobiscar, yet his troops were still distant and the French neglected the Val Carlos to gather more thickly on Byng's front; he indeed resisted their efforts, but Reille made progress along the summit of the Airola ridge and Morillo fell back towards Ibañeta. Reille was then nearer to that pass than Byng was, when Ross's brigade, coming up the pass of Mendichuri, suddenly appeared on the Lindouz just as the French were closing upon Atalosti and cutting the communication with Campbell. That officer's piquets had been attacked early in the morning by the national guards of Val de Baygorry, but he soon discovered it was only a feint and therefore moved by his right towards Atalosti when he heard the firing on that side. His march was secured by the Val d'Ayra, which separated him from the ridge of Airola along which Reille was advancing; but noting that general's strength, and seeing Ross's brigade laboring up the steeps of Mendichuri, he judged it ignorant of what was going on above. Wherefore sending advice of the enemy's proximity and strength to Cole, he offered to pass the Atalosti and join in the battle if he could be furnished with transport for his sick, and provisions on the new line of operations. But ere this reached Cole, the head of Ross's column, composed of a wing of the twentieth and a company of Brunswickers, was on the summit of the Lindouz, where most unexpectedly it encountered Reille's advanced guard. Ross, an eager hardy soldier, called aloud to charge, and

Captain Tovey of the twentieth running forward with his company, crossed a slight wooded hollow and full against the front of the sixth French light infantry dashed with the bayonet.* Brave men fell on both sides, but numbers prevailing, these daring soldiers were pushed back again by the French. Ross, however, gained his object, the remainder of his brigade had come up and the pass of Atalosti was secured, yet with a loss of one hundred and forty of the twentieth and forty-one Brunswickers.

Previous to this vigorous action, Cole seeing the French in Val Carlos and the valley of Orbaiceta, on both flanks of Byng whose front was not the less pressed, had ordered Anson to reinforce the Spaniards at the foundry, and Stubbs to enter Val Carlos in support of the fifty-seventh. He now recalled Anson to assist in defence of Lindouz, and then learning from Campbell how strong Reille was, caused Byng, with a view to a final retreat, to relinquish his advanced position at Altobiscar and take a second nearer Ibañeta. This movement uncovered the road leading down to the foundry of Orbaiceta, but it concentrated all the troops; and at the same time Campbell, although he could not enter the line of battle because Cole was unable to supply his demands, by a very skilful display of his Portuguese induced Reille to think their numbers considerable.

During these movements the skirmishing of the light troops continued; yet a thick fog coming up the valley prevented Soult from making dispositions for a general attack with his six divisions; and when night fell Cole still held the great chain of the mountains, having had only three hundred and eighty men killed and wounded. His right was, however turned by Orbaiceta, he had but ten or eleven thousand bayonets to oppose to thirty thousand, and his line of retreat, being for four or five miles down hill and flanked all the way by the Lindouz, was uneasy and unfavorable. Wherefore putting the troops silently in march after dark he threaded the passes and gained the valley of Urros. Anson's brigade followed as a rear-guard in the morning, Campbell retired from the Alduides by the pass of Urtiaga to Eugui in the valley of Zubiri, the Spanish battalion retreated from Orbaiceta by the narrow way of Navala and rejoined Morillo near Espinal. The Magistral ridge was thus abandoned, yet the general result was unsatisfactory to Soult; he acknowledged a loss of four hundred men, he had not gained ten miles, and the distance to Pampeluna was not less than twenty-two with strong defensive positions in the way: and there increasing numbers of intrepid enemies were to be expected.

His combinations, contrived for greater success, had been

* Appendix 25.

thwarted partly by fortune, partly by errors of execution which all generals expect, and the experienced are most resigned as knowing them to be inevitable. Fortune was felt in the fog, which rose before he could thrust forward his heavy masses of troops entire. The failure in execution was Reille's tardy movement; his orders were to gain with all expedition the Lindouz, which tied together the heads of the Alduides, Carlos, Roncevalles, and Urros valleys. There he would have commanded the Mendichuri, Atalosti, Ibañeta and Sahorgain passes; and by moving along the Magistral crest could menace the Urtiaga, Renacabal, and Bellate passes, endangering Campbell's and Hill's lines of retreat.* But when he should have ascended the Airola he halted to incorporate two newly arrived conscript battalions and to issue provisions; the hours thus lost would have sufficed to seize the Lindouz before Ross had got through the Mendichuri. The fog would still have stopped the spread of Soult's columns to the extent designed; but fifteen or sixteen thousand men placed on the flank and rear of Byng and Morillo, would have separated them from the fourth division and forced the latter to retreat beyond Viscayret.† Soult thought two British divisions, besides Byng's brigade and Morillo's Spaniards, were opposed to him; he was probably misled by wounded men hastily questioned, who would declare they were of the second and fourth divisions because Byng's brigade belonged to the former; but there were, including the fourth division, only eleven thousand bayonets in the fight.

On the 26th Clausel followed Cole, and Reille was directed to move along the Magistral crest and seize the passes in Hill's rear; who would be thus crushed between him and D'Erlon, or thrown on the side of San Estevan. D'Erlon could then reach the valley of Zubiri, and Reille descending that of Lanz would prevent Picton joining Cole. This would compel those generals to retreat on separate lines, and the whole French army could issue in order of battle from the mouths of the valleys on Pampeluna. All the French columns were in movement at daybreak, but every hour brought its obstacle. The mist still hung heavily on the mountaintops and bewildered Reille's guides, who refused to lead him along the crests; hence at ten o'clock, having no other resource, he moved down the pass of Mendichuri upon Espinal, and fell into the rear of the cavalry and artillery which followed Clausel's divisions. Soult, although retarded also by the fog and the difficulties of the ground, overtook Cole's rear-guard in front of Viscayret; and his leading troops struck hotly on some British light companies incorporated under Colonel Wilson of the forty-eighth.

* Pellet's Campagne des Pyrenees.

† Soult's secret despatch, MSS.

One French squadron passing the flank fell on the rear, but Wilson faced about and beat it off, without ceasing to fight the infantry; and thus skirmishing Cole reached the heights of Linzoain one mile beyond Viscayret. There Picton came up without troops, but brought intelligence that Campbell was at Eugui, and the third division at Zubiri, having come over the ridge from Olague. The junction of all these troops was now secure, the loss of the day was less than two hundred, and nothing had been left behind. However, the French continued together in front, and at four o'clock seized some heights on Cole's left; whereupon, retiring to the ridge separating the valley of Urroz from that of Zubiri he offered battle.

Disquieted by intelligence from D'Erlon, by Reille's failure, and by Campbell, who in coming from Eugui made a distant display of his Portuguese on the same ridge, Soult put off his attack until next morning, and in the night a junction of all the allies was effected. This was a great failure on the French side; Cole was unsupported for five hours, his troops had been incessantly marching and fighting for two days and a night; and every action, by augmenting the wounded and causing confusion in the rear would have increased the difficulty of retreat. Reille's false march had marred the primary combinations, the evening reports said D'Erlon had also gone wrong, and it was therefore evident that by rough fighting only could the main object be attained.* Soult felt his error, and it is said his language indicated a secret anticipation of failure: he was yet too steadfast to yield, and next morning resumed his march, having renewed his orders to D'Erlon, whose operations must now be noticed.

That general had three divisions of infantry, furnishing eighteen thousand combatants. On the morning of the 25th he assembled two of them behind some heights near the passes of Maya, having caused the national guards of Baygorry to make previous demonstrations towards the lateral passes of Arriette, Yspeguay, and Lorient. The disposition of Hill's force had not been changed; but Stewart, deceived by the movements of the national guards, looked towards Silveira's post on the right rather than his own front, and his division was not well posted or prepared. The ground to be defended was very strong; yet however rugged a mountain position may be, if it is too extensive and the troops are not disposed with judgment, the inequalities constituting its defensive strength favor an assailant.

There were three passes to defend. Aretesque on the right, Lessessa in the centre, and Maya on the left. From these passes

* La Pene, Campagne 1813, 1814.

two roads led to Elisondo in parallel directions; one down the valley through the town of Maya, receiving in its course the Erazu road; the other along the Atchiola mountain. Pringle's brigade was charged to defend the Aretesque, and Cameron's brigade the Maya and Lessessa passes. The Col or neck, broad on the summit, was three miles wide, and on each flank lofty rocks and ridges rose one above another; those on the right blending with the Goramendi mountains; those on the left with the Atchiola, near the summit of which the eighty-second regiment belonging to the seventh division was posted.

Cameron's brigade, encamped on the left, had a clear view of troops coming from Urdax; but at Aretesque a great round hill one mile in front masked the movements of an enemy coming from Espelette. This hill was not occupied at night, and in the daytime only by some Portuguese cavalry videttes. The nearest guard was a picquet of eighty men, posted on the front slope of the Col and with no immediate support; but four light companies were encamped a mile down the reverse slope, which was more rugged and difficult than that towards the enemy. The rest of Pringle's brigade was disposed at various distances from two to three miles in the rear; and the signal for assembling on the position was to be the fire of four Portuguese guns from the rocks above the Maya pass. Thus, of six British regiments, furnishing more than three thousand fighting men, half only were in line of battle and chiefly massed on the left of a position, wide open and of an easy ascent from the Aretesque side: they were ill-posted, and their general, Stewart, deceived as to the real state of affairs, was at Elisondo when the attack commenced.

COMBAT OF MAYA.

(Plan 11.)

Captain Moyle Sherer, commanding the picquet at the Aretesque pass, was told by his predecessor that at dawn a glimpse had been obtained of cavalry and infantry in movement along the hills in front: some peasants also announced the approach of the French. At nine o'clock Major Thorne, a staff-officer, having patrolled round the great hill in front of the pass, discovered enough to make him order up the light companies in support of the picquet; and they had just formed on the neck, with their left at the rock of Aretesque, when D'Armagnac's division coming from Espelette mounted the great hill in front. Abbé followed, and Maransin with a third division advanced from Ainhua and Urdax against the

Maya pass, designing also to turn it by a narrow way leading up the Atchiola mountain. D'Armagnac's men pushing forward in several columns forced the piquet back with great loss upon the light companies, who sustained his vehement assault with infinite difficulty. The alarm guns were then heard from the Maya pass, and Pringle hastened to the front; but his regiments moving hurriedly from different camps were necessarily brought into action one after the other. The thirty-fourth came up first at a running pace, by companies, not in mass, and breathless from the length and ruggedness of the ascent; the thirty-ninth and twenty-eighth followed, yet not immediately nor together; and meanwhile D'Armagnac, closely supported by Abbé, with domineering numbers and valor combined, maugre the desperate fighting of the piquet of the light companies and of the thirty-fourth, had established his columns on the broad summit of the position.

Cameron sent the fiftieth from the left to the assistance of the over-matched troops, and that fierce and formidable old regiment charging the head of an advancing column drove it clear out of Lessessa in the centre. But the French were so many, that checked at one point they assembled with increased force at another; nor could Pringle restore the battle with the thirty-ninth and twenty-eighth regiments; they were cut off from the others, and though fighting desperately, forced back to a second and lower ridge crossing the main road to Elizondo. D'Armagnac followed them, but Abbé continued to press the fiftieth and thirty-fourth, whose natural line of retreat was towards the Atchiola road on the left, because the position trended backward from Aretesque towards that point and because Cameron's brigade was there. That officer, still holding the pass of Maya with the left wings of the seventy-first and ninety-second, then brought their right wings and the Portuguese guns into action, and thus maintained the fight; but so dreadful was the slaughter, especially of the ninety-second, that it is said the advancing enemy was actually stopped by the heaped mass of dead and dying;* and then the left wing of that noble regiment, coming down from the higher ground, smote wounded friends and exulting foes alike, as mingled together they stood or crawled before its wasting fire.

It was in this state of affairs that General Stewart reached the field of battle. Lessessa and Aretesque were lost, Maya was still held by the left wing of the seventy-first; but seeing Maransin's men gathered on one side and Abbé's on the other he abandoned it to take a position on a rocky ridge covering the lateral road over Atchiola; then he called down the eighty-second from the summit

* Appendix 25.

of that mountain, and sent for aid to the seventh division. He was wounded, yet fought stoutly, for he was a gallant man; but during this retrograde movement Maransin suddenly thrust the head of his division across the front of the British line and connected his left with Abbé, throwing as he passed a destructive fire into the wasted remnant of the ninety-second, which even then gave way but sullenly, for the men fell until two-thirds of the whole had gone to the ground. Still the survivors fought and the left wing of the seventy-first coming from Maya also entered into the action, yet finally, one after the other, all the regiments were forced back, the first position was lost and the Portuguese guns were taken.

Abbé then followed D'Armagnac, leaving Maransin to deal with Stewart, who was pushed back, notwithstanding the strength of his new position until six o'clock, when the remnant of his force was in default of ammunition compelled to defend the highest crags with stones: he was just going to abandon the mountain when a brigade of the seventh division led by General Barnes arrived from Echallar, and charging drove the French back to the Col de Maya.* Stewart thus remained master of Atchiola, and D'Erlon, probably thinking greater reinforcements had come up, recalled D'Armagnac and Abbé and concentrated his forces: he had lost fifteen hundred men and a general, but had taken four guns and killed or wounded fourteen hundred British soldiers.†

This disastrous fight of Maya was exaggerated by French writers, and has been by an English author misrepresented as a surprise caused by the negligence of the cavalry.‡ Stewart was surprised, his troops were not; and never did soldiers fight better, seldom so well; the stern valor of the ninety-second would have graced Thermopylæ. The Portuguese cavalry patrols, if any went out, which is uncertain, might have neglected their duty, and doubtless the front should have been scoured in a more military manner; but the infantry piquets and the light companies so happily ordered up by Thorne were ready; and no man wondered to see the French columns crown the great hill in front of the pass. Stewart, expecting no attack at Maya, had gone to Elisondo, leaving orders for the soldiers to cook; from his erroneous views therefore the misfortune sprung and from no other source.§ Having deceived himself as to the point of attack he did not take military precautions; his position was only half occupied, his troops were brought into action wildly, and he caused the loss of his guns by a misdirection as to the road. He was a brave, energetic, zealous, inde-

* French official Report, MSS.

† British official Return.

‡ Southey.

§ General Stewart's Reports.

fatigable man, and of a magnanimous spirit; but he possessed neither the calm reflective judgment nor the intuitive genius which belongs to nature's generals.

It is difficult to understand why Count D'Erlon, when he had carried the right of the position, followed two weak regiments with two divisions; leaving only one division to attack five regiments posted on the strongest ground and having hopes of succor from Echallar. Certainly if Abbé had acted with Maransin, Stewart, so hardly pressed by the latter alone, must have passed the Echallar road in retreat before Barnes's brigade arrived.* Soult had directed D'Erlon to operate by his left to connect the whole army on the summit of the great chain of the Pyrenees; he should therefore have used his whole force to crush the troops on the Atchiola before they could be succored from Echallar—or, leaving Maransin there, have marched by the Maya road upon Ariscun to cut Silveira's line of retreat—he remained upon the Col de Maya for twenty hours after the battle! and Hill meanwhile concentrated his whole force, now augmented by Barnes' brigade, and would have fallen upon him from the rocks of Atchiola next day, if intelligence of Cole's retreat had not come through the Alduides. This rendered the recovery of the Col de Maya useless, and Hill, withdrawing his troops during the night, posted the British brigades which had been engaged, together with one Portuguese brigade of infantry and a battery on the heights in rear of Irueta, fifteen miles from the scene of action; the other Portuguese brigade remained in front of Elizondo, and thus he covered the road of San Estévan on his left, that of Berderez on his right, and the pass of Vellate in the rear. Such was the commencement of Soult's operations to restore the fortunes of France. Three considerable actions fought on the same day had each been favorable. At St. Sebastian the allies were repulsed; at Roncevalles they abandoned the passes; at Maya they were defeated; but the decisive blow had not yet been struck.

Wellington heard of the fight at Maya on his way back from St. Sebastian after the assault, with the false addition that D'Erlon was beaten. As early as the 22d he knew Soult was preparing a great offensive movement; yet the immovable attitude of the French centre, the skilful disposition of their reserve, twice as strong as he at first supposed, together with the preparations made to throw bridges over the Bidassoa at Biriadou, were all calculated to mislead and did mislead him. Soult's complicated combinations to bring D'Erlon's divisions finally into line on the crest of the great chain were also impenetrable; the English general could not

* Soult's despatch, MSS.

believe his adversary would throw himself with only thirty thousand men in the valley of the Ebro, unless sure of aid from Suchet; but that general's movements indicated a determination to remain in Catalonia. Soult thought Pampeluna in extremity and knew Sebastian was not so; Wellington knew Pampeluna was not in extremity, and previous to the assault thought Sebastian was; hence the operations against his right, their full scope not known, appeared a feint, and he judged the real effort would be to throw bridges over the Bidassoa and raise the siege of San Sebastian. In the night correct intelligence of the Maya and Roncevalles affairs arrived. Soult's project was then developed, and Graham was ordered to turn the siege into a blockade, to embark his guns and stores, be ready to join Giron on a position of battle marked out near the Bidassoa. Cotton was ordered to move the cavalry up to Pampeluna, O'Donnell was to hold his Spanish troops in readiness, and Wellington having arranged fresh lines of correspondence, proceeded to Estevan.

While the embarkation of the guns and stores was going on it was essential to hold the posts at Vera and Echallar; D'Erlon's object was not then pronounced; and once in possession of those places he could approach San Sebastian by the roads leading over the Pena de Haya, a rocky mountain behind Lesaca; or by the defiles of Zubietta and Goyzueta leading round that mountain from the valley of Lerins. Wherefore in passing through Estevan on the morning of the 26th, Wellington directed Pack to guard the bridges over the Bidassoa; but when he reached Irueta, saw the state of Stewart's division and heard that Picton had marched from Olague, he directed all the troops within his reach upon Pampeluna, indicating the valley of Lanz as the general line of movement.* Of Picton's position and intentions nothing positive was known; but Wellington, supposing him to have joined Cole at Linzoain as indeed he had, judged their combined forces would be sufficient to check Soult until assistance came from the centre or from Pampeluna, and he so advised Picton the evening of the 26th.

In consequence of these orders the seventh division abandoned Echallar in the night of the 26th, and the sixth division quitted San Estevan at daylight the 27th. Hill halted on the heights of Irueta until the evening of the 27th, but marched during the night through the pass of Vellate upon the town of Lanz. The light division, quitting Vera also on the 27th, retired by Lesaca to the summit of the Santa Cruz mountain, overlooking the valley of Lerins; there it halted to cover the pass of Zubietta until Longa's Spaniards blocked the roads leading over the Pena de Haya to

* Manuscript notes by the Duke of Wellington.

protect the embarkation of the guns on that flank. That object effected, the division was to thread the passes, reach Lecumberri on the great road of Irurzun, and so connect Graham with the army round Pampeluna; for Wellington designed, if unable to cover that fortress, to throw his army back upon its left on a new line covering the approaches to San Sebastian. These movements spread fear and confusion far and wide. All the narrow valleys and roads were crowded with baggage, commissariat stores, artillery and fugitive families; and reports of the most alarming nature were as usual rife; each division, ignorant of what really happened to the other, dreaded that some of the numerous misfortunes related might be true; none knew what to expect or where they were to meet the enemy, and one universal hubbub filled the wild regions through which the French army was now working its fiery path towards Pampeluna.

D'Erlon's inactivity gave great uneasiness to Soult, who repeated the order to push forward by his left whatever might be the force opposed, and thus stimulated, he advanced to Elizondo on the 27th; but thinking the sixth division was still at San Estevan, again halted. Next day, when Hill retreated, he followed through the pass of Vellate, and his further progress belongs to other combinations.

Picton having assumed command in the Val Zubiri the 26th, retired before dawn the 27th and without the hope or intention of covering Pampeluna. Soult followed in the morning, having first sent scouts towards the ridges where Campbell's troops had appeared the evening before. Reille marched by the left bank of the Guy river, Clausel by the right bank, the cavalry and artillery closed the rear, the whole in compact order: the narrow valley was thus gorged with troops, a hasty bicker of musketry alone marking the separation of the hostile forces. The garrison of Pampeluna made a sally, and O'Donnell in great alarm spiked some of his guns, destroyed his magazines, and would have suffered a disaster if Carlos d'España had not fortunately arrived at the moment and checked the garrison. Great now was the danger. Cole, first emerging from the valley of Zubiri, had passed Villalba, three miles from Pampeluna, in retreat;* Picton was at Huarte, and O'Donnell's Spaniards were in confusion; in fine, Soult was all but successful when Picton suddenly turned on some steep ridges, which, under the names of San Miguel, Mont Escava and San Christoval, crossed the mouths of the Zubiri and Lanz valleys and screened Pampeluna.

Posting his own division on the right of Huarte, he prolonged

* Plan 10, page 346.

his line to the left with Morillo's Spaniards, called upon O'Donnell to support him, and directed Cole to occupy some heights between Oricain and Arletta. But that general having with a surer eye observed a salient hill near Zabaldica, one mile in advance and commanding the road to Huarte, demanded and obtained permission to occupy it instead of the heights first appointed. Two Spanish regiments of the blockading troops were still there, and towards them Cole directed his course. Soult had also marked this hill. A detachment issuing from the mouth of the Val de Zubiri was in full career to seize it, and the hostile masses were rapidly approaching the summit on either side when the Spaniards, seeing the British so close, vindicated their own post by a sudden charge. This was for Soult the stroke of fate. His double columns, just then emerging exultant from the narrow valley, were suddenly stopped by ten thousand men under Cole, who crowded the summit of the mountain in his front; and two miles further back stood Picton with a greater number, for O'Donnell had now taken post on Morillo's left. To advance by Villalba and Huarte was impossible, to stand still was dangerous; the army, contracted to a span in front and cleft in its whole length by the river Guy, was compressed on each side by the mountains, which in that part narrowed the valley to a quarter of a mile. It was a moment of difficulty, but Soult, like a great and ready commander, instantly shot the head of Clausel's columns to his right across the ridge, separating the Val de Zubiri from the Val de Lanz; and at the same time threw one of Reille's divisions of infantry and a body of cavalry across the mountains on his left, beyond the Guy river, as far as the village of Elcano, to menace Picton's right at Huarte.* His remaining divisions were established at Zabaldica in the Val de Zubiri, close under Cole's right, and Clausel seized Sauroren close under that general's left.

While Soult was thus forming his line of battle, Wellington, who had quitted Hill's quarters in the Bastan early on the 27th, † was descending the valley of Lanz, unable to learn anything of Picton's movements or position; and in this state of uncertainty he reached Ostiz a few miles from Sauroren, where he found Long with the light cavalry which had furnished the posts of correspondence in the mountains. There learning that Picton had abandoned Linzoain, and was moving on Huarte, he left his quarter-master-general with instructions to stop all the troops coming down the valley of Lanz, until the state of affairs at Huarte should be ascertained. But at racing speed he made for Sauroren himself, and entering that village, saw Clausel coming along the crest of the mountain, and knew

* Soult's Correspondence, MSS.

† Wellington's MSS.

the allied troops in the valley of Lanz were intercepted. Pulling up his horse, he wrote on the parapet of the bridge of Sauroren, fresh instructions to turn everything from that valley on to a road which, through Lizasso and Marcalain, led behind the hills to Oricain in the rear of Cole's position: lord Fitzroy Somerset, the only staff-officer who had kept up with him, galloped with these orders out of Sauroren by one road, the French light cavalry dashed in by another, and the English general rode alone up the mountain to reach his troops. One of Campbell's Portuguese battalions first descried him and raised a joyful cry; then the shrill clamor, caught up by the next regiments, soon swelled as it run along the line into that stern appalling shout which the British soldier is wont to give upon the edge of battle, and which no enemy ever heard unmoved. Suddenly he stopped at a conspicuous point, for he desired both armies should know he was there, and a double spy who was present pointed out Soult, who was so near that his features could be distinguished. Attentively Wellington fixed his eyes upon that formidable man, and as if speaking to himself said, "*Yonder is a great commander, but he is cautious, and will delay his attack to ascertain the cause of these cheers; that will give time for the sixth division to arrive and I shall beat him.*" And the French general made no serious attack that day!

Cole's position was the foremost ridge of a mass of mountains filling the space between the Guy and the Lanz rivers, as far back as Huarte and Villalba. Highest in the centre, it was boldly defined towards the enemy; but the trace was irregular, the right being thrown back towards the village of Arletta so as to flank the road to Huarte; which was also swept by some guns placed on a lower range, connecting the right of Cole with Picton and Morillo. Overlooking Zabaldica and the Guy, was the bulging hill vindicated by the Spaniards; it was on the right of the fourth division and distinct, but connected with the centre of the range and considerably lower. The left of the position was extremely rugged and steep, overlooking the Lanz river and the road to Villalba. Ross's brigade of the fourth division was posted on that side, having in front a Portuguese battalion whose flank rested on a small chapel. Campbell was on the right of Ross. Anson was on the highest ground, partly behind and partly on the right of Campbell. Byng was on a second mass of hills in reserve, and the Spanish hill was reinforced by a battalion of the fourth Portuguese regiment.

This front of battle being less than two miles, was well filled. The Lanz and Guy torrents washed the flanks, and two miles further down broke through the crossing ridges of San Miguel and Christoval to meet
 et behind them and form the Arga river; on the

ridges thus cleft Picton's line was formed, nearly parallel to Cole's, but on a more extended front. His left was at Huarte, his right with a battery, stretched to the village of Goraitz, covering more than a mile of ground on that flank; Morillo prolonged his left along the crest of San Miguel to Villalba, and O'Donnel continued the line to San Christoval. Carlos d'España's division maintained the blockade, and the British cavalry under Cotton, coming up from Tafalla and Olite, took post, the heavy brigades on some open ground behind Picton, the hussar brigade on his right; this second line entirely barred the openings of the two valleys leading down to Pampeluna.

Soult's position was also a mountain filling the space between the two rivers. It was even more rugged than the allies' mountain, and they were only separated by a narrow valley. Clausef's three divisions leaned to the right on the village of Sauroren, which was down in the valley of Lanz, close under the chapel height where the left of the fourth division was posted. His left was prolonged by two of Reille's divisions, who also occupied the village of Zabaldica in the valley of Zubiri under the right of the allies. The remaining division of this wing and a division of cavalry were, as before stated, thrown forward on the mountains at the other side of the Guy river, menacing Picton, and seeking for an opportunity to communicate with the garrison of Pampeluna. Some guns were pushed in front of Zabaldica, but the elevation required to send the shot upward rendered their fire ineffectual, and the greatest part of the artillery remained therefore in the narrow Val de Zubiri.

Combat of the 27th.—Soult's first effort was to gain the Spaniards' hill and establish himself near the centre of the allies' line of battle; this attack though vigorous had been valiantly repulsed about the time Wellington arrived, and he immediately reinforced the post with the fortieth British regiment. There was then a general skirmish along the front, under cover of which Soult carefully examined the whole position, and the firing continued on the mountain side until evening; then a terrible storm, the usual precursor of English battles in the Peninsula, brought on premature darkness and terminated the dispute. This also was the state of affairs at daybreak on the 28th, but a signal alteration took place before the great battle of that day commenced, and the movements of the wandering divisions by which this change was effected must be traced.

The Lanz covered the left of the allies and the right of the French; but the heights occupied by either army were prolonged beyond that river, the continuation of the allies' ridge sweeping forward so as to look into the rear of Sauroren; the continuation of

the French heights retiring more abruptly than the forward inclination of the opposing ridge. They were both steep and high, yet lower and less rugged than the heights on which the armies stood opposed; for there rocks piled on rocks stood out like castles, difficult to approach, and so dangerous to assail that the hardened veterans of the Peninsula only would have dared the trial. Now the road by which the sixth division moved on the 27th, after threading the Doña Maria pass, sent one branch to Lanz, another by Letassa to Ostiz, a third by Lizasso to Marcalain where many ways met. The first and second fell into the road which from the Bellate pass descends the Lanz valley to Sauroren; the third, passing behind the prolongation of the hostile positions, also fell into the valley of Lanz, but near Oricain one mile behind Cole's left.

It was by Marcalain Wellington expected the sixth and seventh divisions, but the rapidity with which Soult seized Sauroren caused a delay of eighteen hours. For the sixth division, having reached Olague in the valley of Lanz at one o'clock on the 27th, halted there until four, and then, following the orders brought by Lord Fitzroy Somerset, marched by Lizasso to gain the Marcalain road; but the great length of these mountain marches, and the heavy storm which terminated the action at Zabaldica, sweeping with equal violence in this direction prevented the troops from passing Lizasso that night. The march was renewed at daylight, and meanwhile Hill reached the town of Lanz, where he rallied Long's cavalry and his own artillery and moved likewise upon Lizasso. At that place he met the seventh division coming from San Estevan, and having restored Barnes's brigade to Lord Dalhousie, took a position on a ridge covering the road to Marcalain. The seventh division being on his right was then in military communication with the sixth division, and thus Wellington's left covered the great road leading from Pampeluna by Irurzun to Tolosa. These important movements, which were not completed until the evening of the 28th, brought six thousand men into the allies' line of battle, and fifteen thousand more into military communication with their left: yet D'Erlon remained planted in his position of observation near Elizondo without a movement!

Wellington considering the nearness of the sixth division, and the certainty of Hill's junction, imagined Soult would not venture an attack; and truly that marshal, disquieted about D'Erlon of whom he only knew that he had not followed his instructions, viewed the strong position of his adversary with uneasy anticipations. Again with anxious eyes he took cognizance of all its rugged strength, and seemed dubious and distrustful of his fortune. He could not operate with advantage by his own left beyond the Guy river,

because the mountains there were too rough, and Wellington having shorter lines of movement could meet him with all arms combined; the French artillery also unable to emerge from the Val de Zubiri, would have been exposed to a counter attack. He crossed the Lanz river and ascended the prolongation of the allies' ridge, which, as he had possession of the bridge of Sauroren, was for the moment his own ground. From thence he could see the left and rear of Cole's position, and down the valley as far as Villalba; but the country beyond the ridge towards Marcalain was too broken to discern the march of the sixth division.* He knew however from the deserters that Wellington expected four fresh divisions from that side, that is to say, the second, sixth, and seventh British, and Silveira's Portuguese division, which always marched with Hill. This knowledge and the nature of the ground determined his attack. The valley of Lanz, growing wider as it descended, offered the means of assailing the allies' left in front and rear at one moment; and the same combination would cut off the reinforcements expected from the side of Marcalain. One of Clausel's divisions occupied Sauroren, the other two were on each side of that village; that on the right hand was ordered to throw flankers on the ridge from whence Soult was taking his observations, to move in one body to a convenient distance down the valley, and then, wheeling to its left, assail the rear of the allies' left flank while the other two divisions assailed his front. Cole's left, which did not exceed five thousand men, would thus be enveloped by sixteen thousand, and Soult expected to crush it notwithstanding the strength of the ground. Reille's two divisions advancing on the side of Zabaldica, were each to send a brigade against the Spanish hill now occupied by the fortieth regiment; the right of this attack was to be connected with the left of Clausel; the remaining brigades were closely to support the assailing masses; the divisions beyond the Guy were to keep Picton in check; and Soult, having no time to lose, ordered his lieutenants to throw their troops at once into action.

First battle of Sauroren.—It was fought on the fourth anniversary of the battle of Talavera

About mid-day the French gathered at the foot of the position, and their skirmishers spread over the face of the mountain working upward like a conflagration; but the columns of attack were not all prepared when Clausel's division, too impatient to await the general signal of battle, threw out its flankers on the ridge beyond the river and pushed down the valley of Lanz in one mass. With a rapid pace it turned Cole's left, and was preparing to wheel up on his rear, when a Portuguese brigade of the sixth division, sud-

* Soult, MSS.

denly appearing on the ridge beyond the river, drove the French flankers back and instantly descended with a rattling fire upon the right and rear of the column in the valley. Nearly at the same instant the main body of the sixth division, emerging from behind the same ridge near the village of Oricain, formed in order of battle across the front. It was the counter-stroke of Salamanca! The French while striving to encompass the left of the allies were themselves encompassed; for two brigades of the fourth division turned and smote them on their left, the Portuguese smote them on their right; and while thus scathed on both flanks with fire they were violently shocked and pushed back with a mighty force by the sixth division—not in flight, however, but in fighting fiercely and strewing the ground with their enemies' bodies as well as with their own.

Clausel's second division, seeing this dire conflict, with a hurried movement assailed the chapel height to draw off the fire from the troops in the valley, and gallantly did the French soldiers throng up the craggy steep; but the general unity of the attack was ruined; neither their third division nor Reille's brigades had yet received the signal, and the attacks which should have been simultaneous were made in succession, running from right to left as the necessity of giving aid became apparent. It was however a terrible battle and well fought. One column darting out of the village of Sauroren, silently, sternly, without firing a shot, worked up to the chapel under a tempest of bullets, which swept away whole ranks without abating the speed and power of the mass. The seventh *caçadores* shrunk abashed and that part of the position was won; but soon they rallied on Ross's brigade, and the whole mass charging the French with a loud shout dashed them down the hill. Heavily stricken they were, yet undismayed, for re-forming below they again ascended to be again broken and cast down. But the other columns of attack were now bearing upwards through the smoke and flame with which the skirmishers had covered the face of the mountain, and the tenth Portuguese regiment, fighting on the right of Ross's brigade yielded to their fury. Thus a column crowned the heights and wheeling against the exposed flank of Ross forced that gallant officer also to go back, and his ground was instantly occupied by those with whom he had been engaged in front. The fight then raged close and desperate on the crest of the position, charge succeeded charge, and each side yielded and rallied by turns; yet this astounding effort of French valor availed not. Wellington brought Byng's brigade forward at a running pace, and sent the twenty-seventh and forty-eighth British, of Anson's brigade, from the higher ground in the centre against

the crowded masses, rolling them backward in disorder, and throwing them one after the other violently down the mountain side; and with no child's play, for the two British regiments fell upon the enemy three separate times with the bayonet, and lost more than half their own number.

During this battle on the mountain top, the British brigades of the sixth division, strengthened by a battery of guns, gained ground in the valley of Lanz and arrived on the same front with the left of the victorious troops about the chapel. Wellington, seeing the momentary disorder of the enemy, then ordered Madden's Portuguese brigade, which had never ceased its fire against the right flank of the French column, to assail the village of Sauroren in the rear; but the state of the action in other parts and the exhaustion of the troops soon induced him to countermand this movement. Meanwhile Reille's brigades, connecting their right with the left of Clausei's third division, had environed the Spanish hill, had ascended it unchecked, and at the moment the fourth division was so hardly pressed made the regiment of El Pravia give way on the left of the fortieth. A Portuguese battalion rushing forward covered the flank of that invincible regiment, which waited in stern silence until the French set their feet upon the broad summit; but then when their glittering arms appeared over the brow of the mountain the charging cry was heard, the crowded mass was broken to pieces, and a tempest of bullets followed its flight. Four times this assault was renewed, and the French officers were seen to pull up their tired men by the belts, so fierce and resolute they were to win; yet it was the labor of Sisyphus, the vehement shout and shock of the British soldier always prevailed; and at last, with thinned ranks, tired limbs, hearts fainting and hopeless from repeated failures, they were so abashed that three British companies sufficed to bear down a whole brigade. And while the battle was thus being fought on the mountain, the French cavalry beyond the Guy river passed a rivulet and with a fire of carbines forced the tenth hussars to yield some rocky ground on Picton's right; yet the eighteenth hussars, having better fire-arms than the tenth, renewed the combat, killed two officers and drove the French over the rivulet again.

Such were the leading events of this sanguinary struggle, which Wellington, fresh from the fight, with homely emphasis called "*bludgeon work*." Two generals and eighteen hundred men had been killed or wounded on the French side, following their official reports; a number far below the estimate made at the time by the allies, whose loss amounted to two thousand six hundred. But these discrepancies between hostile calculations ever occur, and

there is little wisdom in disputing where proof is unattainable; but the numbers actually engaged were of French twenty-five thousand, of the allies twelve thousand; and if the strength of the latter's position did not save them from the greater loss their steadfast courage is to be the more admired.

On the 29th the armies rested in position without firing a shot, but the wandering divisions on both sides were now entering the line.

Hill, having sent all his baggage artillery and wounded men to Berioplano behind the Christoval ridge, still occupied his strong ground between Lizasso and Arestegui, covering the Marcalain and Irurzun roads and menacing that leading from Lizasso to Olague in rear of Soult's right: this communication with Oricain was maintained by the seventh division, and the light division was approaching his left. On Wellington's side the crisis was over. He had vindicated his position with only sixteen thousand combatants; and now including the troops of blockade he had fifty thousand, twenty thousand being British in close military combination: thirty thousand were in hand, and Hill was well placed for retaking the offensive. Soult's situation was proportionably difficult. He had sent his artillery, part of his cavalry and his wounded men back to France immediately after the battle; the two former to join Villatte on the lower Bidassoa. Thus relieved he awaited D'Erlon's arrival by the valley of Lanz, and that general reached Ostiz a few miles above Sauroren at mid-day on the 29th, bringing intelligence, obtained indirectly during his march, that Graham had retired from the Bidassoa and Villatte had crossed that river. This made Soult think his operations had disengaged St. Sebastian, and he instantly devised a new scheme, dangerous indeed but conformable to the critical state of affairs. Judging it hopeless to renew the battle, he was averse to retire when he had been reinforced with eighteen thousand fresh men; he was yet unable to remain, because his supplies, derived from distant magazines by slow and small convoys, were unequal to the consumption.* Two-thirds of the British troops the greatest part of the Portuguese and all the Spaniards were, he supposed, in his front under Wellington, or on his right flank under Hill, and other reinforcements were probably on the march; wherefore he resolved to prolong his right with D'Erlon's corps, and cautiously drawing off the rest of his army place himself between the allies and the Bastan, in military connexion with his reserve and closer to his frontier magazines. Thus posted and able to combine all his

* Soult, MSS.

troops in one operation, he expected to relieve San Sebastian entirely, and profit from the new state of affairs.

In this view, one division of cavalry passed over the position from the Val de Zubiri to that of Lanz and joined D'Erlon, who was ordered to march early on the 30th by Etulain upon Lizasso, and to send scouting parties towards Letassa and Irurzun, and on all the roads leading upon Pampeluna.* During the night the other division of cavalry and La Martiniere's infantry, both at Elcano on the extreme left of the French army, retired over the mountains by Illurdos to Eugui, in the upper part of the Val de Zubiri, having orders to cross the separating ridge there, to enter the valley of Lanz and join D'Erlon. Reille, marching by the crest of the position from Zabaldica to the village of Sauroren, was gradually to relieve Clausel, who was to assemble his troops behind Sauroren towards Ostiz, thus following D'Erlon and to be himself followed by Reille. Clausel, to cover these movements and maintain his connexion with D'Erlon, placed two regiments on the heights beyond the Lanz river; but he was to hold on to Reille rather than D'Erlon until the former had completed his dangerous flank march across Wellington's front.

In the night Soult heard from deserters, that three divisions were to make an offensive movement towards Lizasso on the 30th, and when daylight came he was convinced the men spoke truly; because from a point beyond Sauroren, he discerned columns descending the ridge of Christoval and the heights above Oricain, others in march on a wide sweep apparently to turn Clausel's right. These were Morillo's Spaniards, Campbell's Portuguese and the seventh division; the former rejoining Hill to whom they belonged, the others adapting themselves to a new line of battle which shall be presently explained.

At six o'clock in the morning, Foy's division of Reille's corps was in march from Zabaldica towards Sauroren, where Maucune had already relieved Conroux; the latter, belonging to Clausel, was moving up the valley of Lanz, and Clausel, with exception of the two flanking regiments before mentioned, had concentrated his remaining divisions between Olabe and Ostiz. In this state of affairs Wellington opened his batteries from the chapel heights and sent down skirmishers against Sauroren. Very soon this bickering of musketry spread towards the right, becoming brisk between Cole and Foy, while it subsided at Sauroren; but Soult relying on the great strength of his position, ordered Reille to maintain it until evening and went off at a gallop to join D'Erlon.† His design was

* Plan 10, page 846.

† Soult's Report, MSS.

to fall with superior numbers upon the divisions he supposed to be turning his right and crush them, a daring project and well conceived; but he had to deal with a man whose rapid perception and rough stroke rendered the game dangerous.

Combat of Buenza.—Soul found D'Erlon, who had entered the Ulzema valley, making dispositions to attack Hill between Buenza and Arestegui; and the latter having only ten thousand fighting men, including Long's cavalry, occupied a very extensive mountain ridge. His right was strongly posted on rugged ground, but the left prolonged towards Buenza, was insecure; and D'Erlon, who had not less than twenty thousand sabres and bayonets was followed by La Martiniere's division of infantry now coming from Lanz: Soul's combination was therefore extremely powerful. The light troops were already engaged when he arrived, and the same soldiers, on both sides, who had so strenuously combated at Maya the 25th were again opposed in fight. D'Armagnac was to make a false attack upon Hill's right; Abbé, emerging by Lizasso, was to turn the left and gain the summit of the ridge in the direction of Buenza; Maranzin followed Abbé, and the cavalry supported and connected the two attacks. The action was brisk at both points but D'Armagnac, pushing his feint too far, became seriously engaged and was beaten by Da Costa and Ashworth's Portuguese, aided by a part of the twenty-eighth British regiment. Nor were the French at first more successful on the other flank, being repeatedly repulsed; Abbé however finally turned the position, gained the summit of the mountain and rendered it untenable. Hill lost four hundred men and retired to the heights of Yguaras behind Arestegui and Berasin, thus drawing towards Marcalain with his right and throwing back his left. There, uniting with Campbell and Morillo, he again offered battle, but Soul, whose principal loss was in D'Armagnac's division, had gained his main object; he had turned Hill, obtained a fresh line of retreat, and a shorter communication with Villatte by the pass of Doña Maria; and withal, the great Irurzun road to Toloza, distant only one league and a half, was in his power.* His first thought was to seize it and march through Lecumberri upon Toloza, or Andoain and Ernani. There was nothing to oppose him except the light division, whose movements shall be noticed hereafter; but neither he nor Hill knew of its presence; and Soul thought himself strong enough to force a way to San Sebastian, there to unite with Villatte and the artillery, which was now on the lower Bidassoa.

This project was feasible. La Martiniere's division, coming from Lanz, was not far off; Clausel's three divisions were momen-

* Soul's despatch, MS.

tarily expected, and the rest of Reille's during the night. On the 31st therefore, at least fifty thousand French would have broken into Guipuscoa, thrusting aside the light division in their march and menacing Graham in reverse while Villatte attacked him in front. The country about Lecumberri was however very strong for defence, and Wellington would have followed; yet scarcely in time; for though he foresaw the movement he was ignorant of Soult's strength; he thought D'Erlon's force to be originally two divisions of infantry, and now only reinforced with a third division; whereas it was three divisions originally, and was now reinforced by a fourth division of infantry and two of cavalry. But this error did not prevent him seizing with the rapidity of a great commander the decisive point of operation, and giving a counter-stroke which Soult, trusting to the strength of Reille's position, little expected.

When La Martiniere's division and the cavalry abandoned the mountains above Elcano, Wellington seeing that Zabaldica was also evacuated, ordered Picton, reinforced with two squadrons of cavalry and a battery of artillery, to enter the valley of Zubiri and turn the French left, while the seventh division swept over the hills beyond the Lanz river upon their right. The march of Campbell and Morillo insured the communication with Hill; and that general was to point his columns upon Olague and Lanz, threatening the French rear, but meeting with D'Erlon was forced back to Eguaros. Cole was to assail Foy's position, yet, respecting its great strength, the attack was to be regulated by the effect produced on the flanks. Byng's brigade and the sixth division, the latter having a battery of guns and some squadrons of cavalry attached, were combined to assault Sauroren. O'Donnel's Spaniards followed the sixth division; Fane's horsemen were stationed at Berioplano with an advanced post at Irurzun; the heavy cavalry remained behind Huarte, and Carlos d'España maintained the blockade.

Second battle of Sauroren.—These movements were begun at daylight. Picton's advance on the right was rapid; he gained the Val de Zubiri and threw his skirmishers at once on Foy's flank. At the same time General Inglis, one of those veterans who purchase every step of promotion with their blood, advancing on the left with only five hundred men of the seventh division, broke at one shock the two French regiments covering Clausel's right, and drove them down into the valley of Lanz,—he lost indeed one-third of his own men, but instantly spreading the remainder in skirmishing order along the descent, opened a biting fire upon the flank of Conroux's division, then moving up the valley from Sauroren, and sorely amazed and disordered by this sudden fall of two regi-

ments from the top of the mountain into the midst of the column. Foy was still on the crest of position between Zabaldica and Sauroren at the moment of this attack, but too far off to give aid; his own light troops were engaged with Cole's skirmishers, and Inglis had been so sudden, that before the evil could be well perceived it was past remedy. Wellington instantly pushed the sixth division, now commanded by Pakenham, to the left of Sauroren; and he also shoved Byng's brigade headlong down from the chapel height against that village, which was defended by Maucune. Byng's assault was simultaneously enforced from the opposite direction by Madden's Portuguese; and the chapel battery sent its bullets crashing through the houses, or booming up the valley towards Conroux's column, which Inglis, closely supported by the seventh division, never ceased to vex.

The village and bridge of Sauroren and the strait beyond were now covered with a pall of smoke, the musketry pealed frequent and loud, and the tumult and affray echoing from mountain to mountain filled all the valley. Byng with hard fighting carried Sauroren, fourteen hundred prisoners were made, and the French divisions thus vehemently assailed in front and flank were entirely broken. Part retreated up the valley towards Clausel who was now beyond Ostiz; part fled up the mountain side to seek refuge with Foy, who had remained on the summit a helpless spectator of this rout; and though he rallied the fugitives in great numbers he had soon to look to himself; for his skirmishers were driven up the mountain by Cole's men, and his left was infested by Picton's detachments. Thus pressed, he abandoned his strong position and fell back along the summit of the ridge separating the two valleys, where the woods enabled him to effect his retreat without much loss: yet he dared not descend into either valley, and thinking himself entirely cut off, sent advice of his situation to Soult and retired into the Alduides by the pass of Urtiaga. Meanwhile Wellington, pressing up the valley of Lanz drove Clausel as far as Olague, where he was joined by La Martiniere and took a position in the evening covering the roads of Lanz and Lizasso: then the English general, whose pursuit had been damped by hearing of Hill's action, also halted near Ostiz.

The allies lost nineteen hundred men killed and wounded or taken in the two battles of this day; of these nearly twelve hundred were Portuguese, the soldiers of that nation having borne the brunt of both fights. On the French side the loss was enormous. Conroux's and Maucune's divisions were completely disorganized; Foy, augmented to eight thousand men by the fugitives, was entirely separated from the main body; more than

two thousand men had been killed or wounded, many were dispersed in the woods and ravines, and three thousand prisoners were taken. This blow, joined to former losses, reduced Soult's fighting men to thirty-five thousand of which fifteen thousand under Clausel and Reille were dispirited by defeat. Hill's force, increased to fifteen thousand by the junction of Morillo and Campbell, was in his front; thirty thousand were on his rear in the valley of Lanz or on the hills at each side; for Picton, finding no enemies in the Val de Zubiri, had crowned the heights in conjunction with Cole.

Wellington had detached some of O'Donnel's Spaniards to Marcalain when he heard of Hill's action, but he was not yet aware of the true state of affairs on that side. His operations were founded upon the notion that Soult was in retreat towards the Bastan; and he designed to follow closely, pushing his own left forward to support Graham on the Bidassoa—yet, always underrating D'Erlon's force, he thought La Martiniere had retreated by the Roncevalles road; and as Foy's column was numerous and two divisions had been broken at Sauroren, he judged the force immediately under Soult to be weak and made dispositions accordingly. The sixth division and the thirteenth light dragoons were to march by Eugui to join Picton, who was directed upon Linzoin and Roncevalles. Cole was to descend into the valley of Lanz. Hill, supported by the Spaniards at Marcalain, was to press Soult closely, always turning the French right but directing his own march upon Lanz, from whence he was to send Campbell to the Alduides. The seventh division, which had halted on the ridges between Hill and Wellington, was to suffer the former to cross its front and then march for the pass of Doña Maria.

Wellington expecting Soult would rejoin Clausel and make for the Bastan by the pass of Vellatte, intended to confine and press him closely in that district; but the French marshal was in a worse position than his adversary imagined, being too far advanced towards Buenza to return to Lanz; in fine he was between two fires and had no retreat save by the pass of Doña Maria. Wherefore calling in Clausel, and giving D'Erlon, whose divisions were in good order and undismayed, the rear-guard, he commenced his march at midnight towards the pass. Mischief was gathering around him. Graham had twenty thousand men ready to move against Villatte, and between him and Hill was the light division under Charles Alten. That general was as before said, on the Santa Cruz mountain the 27th, but had marched in the evening of the 28th to gain Lecumberri on the great Irurzun road; yet from

some error or failure of orders, for the difficulty of communication was great, he commenced his descent into the valley of Lerins too late. His leading brigade got down with some difficulty and reached Leyza beyond the great chain by the pass of Zubieta; but darkness caught the other brigade and the troops were dispersed in that frightful wilderness of woods and precipices. Many made faggot torches and thus moving about, the lights served indeed to assist those who carried them, yet misled and bewildered others who saw them at a distance,—the heights and the ravines were alike studded with these small fires, and the soldiers calling to each other, filled the whole region with their clamor. Thus they continued to rove and shout until morning showed the face of the mountain covered with tired and scattered men and animals, who had not gained half a league of ground beyond their starting-place; and it was many hours ere they could be collected to join the other brigade at Leyza.

Alten, thus isolated for three days, sent officers in all directions to obtain tidings, and in the evening renewed his march to Areysa, where he halted without suffering fires to be lighted lest the enemy should discover him; but at night he moved again and reached Lecumberri on the 30th. At that place the noise of Hill's battle at Buenza was heard, and the light division again found itself within the system of operations directed by Wellington in person; if Soult had continued his movement on Irurzun it would have been in great danger; but now, he being in retreat to Doña Maria, the light division was a new and terrible power placed in his adversary's hands.

It has been shown how Foy was cut off and driven to the Alhudes, how the French artillery and part of their cavalry were again on the Bidassoa; whence Villatte had not moved though he had skirmished with Longa on the heights of Lesaca. Soult was thus isolated, without other resources than his own firmness and ability. His retreat by Doña Maria was however open as far as San Estevan, and from thence he could ascend the Bidassoa to Elizondo and gain France by the Col de Maya; or go down the river towards Vera by Sumbilla and Yanzi, from which roads led over the mountains to the passes of Echallar: there was also a third mountain-road leading direct from Estevan to Zagaramurdi and Urdax, but too rugged for wounded men and baggage. The road to Elizondo was good; that down the Bidassoa was a terrible defile, so contracted about the bridges of Yanzi and Sumbilla that a few men only could march abreast. Soult had therefore to dread, that Wellington would by Vellatte reach Elizondo before him and block the passage there,—that Graham seizing the rocks at Yanzi, would

bar that passage and by detachments cut off the line of Echallar. Then, confined to the narrow mountain-way from San Estevan to Zagaramurdi, he would be followed hard by Hill, assailed in rear and flank during the march, and perhaps be headed at Urdax by troops moving through Vellate, Elizondo and the Col de Maya.

His object being to gain Doña Maria, he, as before stated, moved in the night of the 30th, while Wellington, not knowing the real state of affairs, halted in the valley of Lanz to let Hill pass his front and re-enter the Bastan, upon which valley Byng had already moved. When Soult's real strength became known, the seventh division was sent to aid Hill; but Wellington followed Byng by the pass of Vellate; and thinking Alten might be at Zubieta, directed him to head the French if possible at San Estevan, at Sumbilla, at any point he could attain. Longa was also ordered to come down to Yanzi in aid of Alten, Graham was warned to hold his corps in hand, and both Picton and Pakenham had their routes changed for a time.

Com'at of Doña Maria.—At ten o'clock in the morning Hill overtook Soult's rear-guard, between Lizasso and the Puerto. The seventh division, coming from the hills above Olague, was already ascending the mountain on his right, and the French only gained the wood on the summit of the pass under the fire of Hill's guns; there however they turned and throwing out skirmishers made strong battle. Stewart, leading the second division and now for the third time engaged with D'Erlon's troops, was again wounded and his first brigade was repulsed; Pringle succeeding to the command renewed the fight with the second brigade and broke the enemy; the seventh division did the same on the right and some prisoners were taken: but a thick fog prevented further pursuit and the loss of the French in the action is unknown, probably less than that of the allies, which was short of four hundred men.

The seventh division remained on the mountain, Hill fell back to Lizasso, and then, following his orders, moved by a short rugged way between the passes of Doña Maria and Vellate, over the great chain to Almandoz to join Wellington, who had now descended into the Bastan by Vellate. Byng had previously reached Elizondo, and captured a convoy of provisions and ammunition left there by D'Erlon under guard of a battalion, which he sharply engaged, took several hundred prisoners, and then pushed for the Col de Maya. Wellington now occupied the hills through which the road leads from Elizondo to San Estevan, and was full of hope to strike a terrible blow; for Soult, after passing Doña Maria, had halted in San Estevan, although by his scouts he knew the convoy had been taken at Elizondo. He was in a deep narrow valley,—

three British and one Spanish division were behind the mountains overlooking the town,—the seventh division was at Doña Maria,—the light division and Graham's Spaniards were marching to block the Vera and Echallar exits from the valley,—Byng was at Maya,—Hill was moving by Almandoz. A few hours gained and the French must surrender or disperse. Wellington gave strict orders to prevent the lighting of fires, the straggling of soldiers, or any other indication of the presence of troops; and he placed himself amongst some rocks at a commanding point, from whence he could observe every movement of the enemy. Soult seemed tranquil and four of his *gens-d'armes* were seen to ride up the valley in a careless manner. Some of the staff proposed to cut them off;* the English general, anxious to hide his own presence, forbade this, but the next moment three marauding English soldiers entered the valley and were instantly carried off by the *gen-d'armes*; half an hour afterwards the French drums beat to arms and their columns began to move out of San Estevan towards Sumbilla. Thus the disobedience of three plundering knaves, unworthy of the name of soldiers, deprived one consummate commander of the most splendid success, and saved another from the most terrible disaster.

Soult walked from the prison, but his chains still hung about him. The way was narrow, wounded men borne on their comrades' shoulders and followed by baggage, filed in long procession; † Clausel had the rear-guard, but on the morning of the 1st he was still near San Estevan when Cole's skirmishers and O'Donnell's Spaniards, thronging on the heights along his flank, opened a fire which he could not return. Then troops and baggage got intermingled, many men fled up the hills, and the commanding energy of Soult, whose personal exertions were conspicuous, could scarcely prevent a general dispersion; baggage fell at every step into the hands of the pursuers, the boldest were dismayed, and worse would have awaited them in front, if Wellington had been on other points well seconded by his generals.

Instead of taking the first road leading from Sumbilla to Echallar, the head of the French passed onward towards that leading from the bridge near Yanzi; the valley narrowed to a mere cleft in the rocks as they advanced, the Bidassoa was on their left, there was a tributary torrent to cross, and the bridge was defended by a Spanish caçadore battalion, detached from the heights of Vera by General Barceñas. The front was thus as much disordered as the rear, and had Longa or Barceñas reinforced the caçadores, those only of the French who being near Sumbilla could take the road

* Notes by the Duke of Wellington, MSS.

† August.

to Echallar would have escaped; but the Spanish generals kept aloof and D'Erlon won the defile. Reille's divisions were still to pass, and when they came up a new enemy had appeared. This was the light division. The order to intercept the French being received the evening of the 31st, Alten, repassing the defiles of Zubieta, again descended into the deep valley of Lerins and reached Elgoriaga about mid-day the 1st of August. He had then marched twenty-four miles, was little more than a league from Estevan, about the same distance from Sumbilla, and the French movement along the Bidassoa was discovered; but instead of marching on Sumbilla he clambered up the great mountain of Santa Cruz and made for the bridge of Yanzi. Very sultry was the weather, the mountain steep and hard to overcome, many men fell and died convulsed and frothing at the mouth, while others, whose spirit and strength had never before been quelled, leaned on their muskets and muttered in sullen tones that they yielded for the first time.

Towards evening, after marching nineteen consecutive hours and over forty miles of mountain roads, the head of the column reached the edge of a precipice near the bridge of Yanzi. Below, within pistol-shot, Reille's divisions were seen hurrying forward along the horrid defile and a fire of musketry commenced, slightly from the British on the high rock, more vigorously from some low ground near the bridge of Yanzi, where the riflemen had ensconced themselves in the brushwood: but the scene which followed shall be described by an eye-witness. "We overlooked the enemy at stone's throw, and from the summit of a tremendous precipice.* The river separated us, but the French were wedged in a narrow road with inaccessible rocks on one side and the river on the other. Confusion impossible to describe followed, the wounded were thrown down in the rush and trampled upon, the cavalry drew their swords and endeavored to charge up the pass of Echallar, but the infantry beat them back, and several, horses and all, were precipitated into the river; some fired vertically at us while the wounded called out for quarter, and others pointed to them, supported as they were on branches of trees, on which were suspended great coats clotted with gore and blood-stained sheets taken from different habitations to aid the sufferers."

On these miserable supplicants brave men could not fire; and so piteous was the spectacle that it was with averted aim the British soldier shot at the sound men; although the latter plied their muskets in passing, and some in their veteran hardhood even dashed across the bridge of Yanzi to make a counter-attack! It

* Cooke's Memoirs.

was a soldier-like but a vain effort, the night found the British in possession of the bridge; and though the great body of the French escaped by the road to Echallar, their baggage was all cut off with many prisoners by the troops hanging on the rear in pursuit from San Estevan.

Heavy was the French loss; that of the allies was about a hundred men, of which sixty-five were British, principally of the fourth division. Wellington was justly discontented with the result. Neither Longa nor Alten had fulfilled their mission. The former excused himself as being too feeble to oppose the mass Soult led down the valley; yet the rocks were so precipitous the French could not have reached him; the resistance of the Spanish *caçadores* was Longa's condemnation. Fatuity seemed to prevail in many quarters. If Barceñas had sent his whole brigade instead of a weak battalion, the small torrent could not have been forced by D'Erlon; if Longa had been at the bridge of Yanzi the French must have surrendered, for the perpendicular rocks on their right forbade even an escape by dispersion; if Alten, instead of marching down the valley of Lerins as far as Elgoriaga, had crossed the Santa Cruz mountain by the road used the night of the 28th, he would have been much earlier at the bridge of Yanzi; and then belike Longa and Barceñas would also have come down. Alten's instructions prescribed Sumbilla and San Estevan as the first points to head the French; judging them too strong at Sumbilla he marched upon Yanzi; and if he had passed the bridge there and seized the road to Echallar with one brigade, while the other plied the flank with fire from the left of the Bidassoa, he would have struck a great blow: it was for that his soldiers had made such a prodigious exertion.

During the night Soult rallied his divisions about Echallar, and on the morning of the 2d occupied the "*Puerto*" of that name. His left was on the rocks of Zagaramurdi; his right on the rock of Ivantelly, communicating with the left of Villatte, who was in position on the ridges between Soult and the head of the great Rhune mountain. Clausel's three divisions, now reduced to six thousand men, took post on a strong hill between the "*Puerto*" and town of Echallar. This position was momentarily adopted to save time, to examine the country, and to make Wellington discover his views, but the latter would not suffer the affront. He had sent Picton and Pakenham to reoccupy the passes of Roncesvalles and the Alduides,—Hill had reached the Col de Maya,—Byng was at Urdax,—the fourth, seventh, and light divisions remained in hand, and with these he resolved to fall upon Clausel, whose position was dangerously advanced.