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NOTICE.

1. There are no good materials for an accurate map of the Peninsula, but the small one furnished in this volume, together with the sketches in each volume, more accurate than might be supposed, will give a clear general notion of the operations.

2. The additional manuscript authorities consulted for this volume, are the official correspondence of Lord William Bentinck; some notes by Lord Hill; the journal and correspondence of Sir Rufane Donkin; a journal of Colonel Oglander, twenty-sixth regiment; a memoir by Sir George Gipps, royal engineers; and a variety of communications by other officers. Lastly, authenticated copies of the official journals and correspondence of most of the marshals and generals who commanded armies in Spain; which were, at my request, supplied by the French War-Office, with a prompt liberality indicative of that military frankness and just pride, which ought and does characterize the officers of Napoleon's army. I have also been enabled to correct my former accounts of the assaults of Fort Gayetano at Salamanca, and those of Burgos, from the professional papers since published by the engineers.

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HISTORY

OF THE

PENINSULAR WAR.

BOOK XVIII.

CHAPTER I.

Numbers of the French in the Peninsula shown—Joseph commander-in-chief—His dissensions with the French generals—His plans—Opposed by Soult, who recommends different operations, and refuses to obey the King—Lord Wellington's plans described—His numbers—Colonel Sturgeon skilfully repairs the bridge of Alcantara—The advantage of this measure—The navigation of the Tagus and the Douro improved and extended—Rash conduct of a commissary on the Douro—Remarkable letter of Lord Wellington to Lord Liverpool—Arrangements for securing the allies' flanks and operating against the enemy's flanks described—Marmont's plans—His military character—He restores discipline to the army of Portugal—His measures for that purpose and the state of the French army described and compared with the state of the British army and Wellington's measures.

In the foregoing book, the political state of the belligerents, and those great chains which bound the war in the Peninsula to the policy of the American as well as of the European nations, have been shown; the minor events of the war have also been narrated, and the point where the decisive struggle was to be made has been indicated; thus naught remains to tell save the particular preparations of each adverse general ere the noble armies were dashed together in the shock of battle.

Nearly three hundred thousand French still trampled upon Spain, above two hundred and forty thousand were with the eagles, and so successful had the plan of raising native soldiers proved, that forty thousand Spaniards well organized marched under the King's banners.

In May, the distribution of this immense army, which however,

according to the French custom, included officers and persons of all kinds attached to the forces, was as follows:—

Seventy-six thousand, of which sixty thousand were with the eagles, composed the armies of Catalonia and Aragon, under Suchet, and they occupied Valencia, and the provinces whose name they bore.*

Forty-nine thousand men, of which thirty-eight thousand were with the eagles, composed the army of the north, under Caffarelli, and were distributed on the grand line of communication from St. Sebastian to Burgos; but of this army, two divisions of infantry, and one of cavalry with artillery, were destined to reinforce Marmont.

Nineteen thousand, of which seventeen thousand were with the eagles, composed the army of the centre, occupying a variety of posts in a circle round the capital, and having a division in La Mancha.

Sixty-three thousand, of which fifty-six thousand were with the eagles, composed the army of the south, under Soult, occupying Andalusia and a part of Estremadura; but some of these troops were detained in distant governments by other generals.

The army of Portugal, under Marmont, consisted of seventy thousand men, fifty-two thousand being with the eagles, and a reinforcement of twelve thousand men were in march to join this army from France. Marmont occupied Leon, part of Old Castile, and the Asturias, having his front upon the Tormes, and a division watching Galicia.

The numerous Spanish *juramentados* were principally employed in Andalusia and with the army of the centre, and the experience of Ocaña, of Badajos, and many other places, proved that for the intrusive monarch they fought with more vigor than their country men did against him.

In March Joseph had been appointed commander-in-chief of all the French armies, but the generals as usual resisted his authority. Dorsenne denied it altogether; Caffarelli, who succeeded Dorsenne, disputed even his civil power in the governments of the north; Suchet evaded his orders, Marmont neglected them, and Soult firmly opposed his injudicious military plans. The King was distressed for money, and he complained that Marmont's army had consumed or plundered in three months the whole resources of the province of Toledo and the district of Talavera, whereby Madrid and the army of the centre were famished.† Marmont retorted by complaints of the wasteful extravagance of the King's military ad-

* Appendix 8, § 1.

† Joseph's Correspondence, MS.

ministration in the capital. Thus dissensions were generated when the most absolute union was required.

After the fall of Badajos Joseph judged that the allies would soon move, either against Marmont in Castile, against himself by the valley of the Tagus, or against Soult in Andalusia. In the first case he designed to aid Marmont with the divisions of the north, with the army of the centre, and with fifteen thousand men to be drawn from the army of the south. In the second case, to draw the army of Portugal and a portion of the army of the south into the valley of the Tagus, while the divisions from the army of the north entered Leon. In the third case, the half of Marmont's army, reinforced by a division of the army of the centre, was to pass the Tagus at Arzobispo and follow the allies. But the army of the centre was not ready to take the field, and Wellington knew it; Marmont's complaint was just, waste and confusion prevailed at Madrid, and there was so little military vigor that the Empecinado, with other partida chiefs, pushed their excursions to the very gates of that capital.

Joseph finally ordered Suchet to reinforce the army of the centre, and then calling up the Italian division of Palombini from the army of the Ebro, directed Soult to keep Drouet, with one-third of the army of the south, so far advanced in Estremadura as to have direct communication with General Trielhard in the valley of the Tagus; and he especially ordered that Drouet should pass that river if Hill passed it. It was necessary, he said, to follow the English army, and fight it with advantage of numbers; to do which required a strict co-operation of the three armies, Drouet's corps being the pivot. Meanwhile Marmont and Soult, being each convinced that the English General would invade their separate provinces, desired that the King would so view the coming contest, and oblige the other to regulate his movements thereby. The former complained, that having to observe the Gallicians, and occupy the Asturias, his forces were disseminated, and he asked for reinforcements to chase the partidas, who impeded the gathering of provisions in Castile and Leon. But the King, who overrated the importance of Madrid, designed rather to draw more troops round the capital; and he entirely disapproved of Soult besieging Tarifa and Carthagena; arguing that if Drouet was not ready to pass the Tagus, the whole of the allies could unite on the right bank, and penetrate without opposition to the capital, or that Lord Wellington would concentrate to overwhelm Marmont.

The Duke of Dalmatia would not suffer Drouet to stir, and Joseph,* whose jealousy had been excited by the Marshal's power

* Joseph's Correspondence, MS.

in Andalusia, threatened to deprive him of his command. The inflexible Duke replied that the King had already virtually done so by sending orders direct to Drouet; that he was ready to resign, but he would not commit a gross military error. Drouet could scarcely arrive in time to help Marmont, and would be too weak for the protection of Madrid, but his absence would ruin Andalusia, because the allies, whose force in Estremadura was very considerable, could in five marches reach Seville, and take it on the sixth; then communicating with the fleets at Cadiz, they would change their line of operations without loss, and unite with thirty thousand other troops, British and Spanish, who were at Gibraltar, in the Isla, in the Niebla, on the side of Murcia, and under Ballesteros in the Ronda. A new army might also come from the ocean, and Drouet, once beyond the Tagus, could not return to Andalusia in less than twelve days; Marmont could scarcely come there in a month; the force under his own immediate command was spread all over Andalusia; if collected it would not furnish thirty thousand sabres and bayonets, exclusive of Drouet, and the evacuation of the province would be unavoidable.

The French misfortunes, he said, had invariably arisen from not acting in large masses, and the army of Portugal, by spreading too much to its right, would ruin this campaign, as it had ruined the preceding one. "Marmont should leave one or two divisions on the Tormes, and place the rest of his army in position, on both sides of the pass of Baños, the left near Placentia, and the right extending towards Somosierra, which could be occupied by a detachment. Lord Wellington could not then advance by the valley of the Tagus without lending his left flank; nor to the Tormes without lending his right flank. Neither could he attack Marmont with effect, because the latter could easily concentrate, and according to the nature of the attack secure his retreat by the valley of the Tagus, or by the province of Avila, while the two divisions on the Tormes, reinforced by two others from the army of the north, would act on the allies' flank." For these reasons Soult would not permit Drouet to quit Estremadura, yet he promised to reinforce him, and so to press Hill that Graham, whom he supposed still at Portalegre, should be obliged to bring up the first and sixth divisions. In fine, he promised that a powerful body of the allies should be forced to remain in Estremadura, or Hill would be defeated, and Badajos reinvested. This dispute raged during May and the beginning of June, and meanwhile the English General, well acquainted from the intercepted letters with these dissensions, made his arrangements so as to confirm each general in his own peculiar views.

Soult was the more easily deceived, because he had obtained a Gibraltar newspaper, in which, so negligent was the Portuguese government, Lord Wellington's secret despatches to Forgas, containing an account of his army, and of his first designs against the south, were printed; and it must be remembered that the plan of invading Andalusia was only relinquished about the middle of May. Hill's exploit at Almaraz menaced the north and south alike, but that General had adroitly spread a report, that his object was to gain time for the invasion of Andalusia, and all Wellington's demonstrations were calculated to aid this artifice and impose upon Soult. Graham indeed returned to Beira with the first and sixth divisions and Cotton's cavalry; but as Hill was at the same time reinforced, and Graham's march sudden and secret, the enemy were again deceived in all quarters. For Marmont and the King, reckoning the number of divisions, thought the bulk of the allies was in the north, and did not discover that Hill's corps had been nearly doubled in numbers, though his division seemed the same, while Soult, not immediately aware of Graham's departure, found Hill more than a match for Drouet, and still expected the allies in Andalusia.

Drouet, willing rather to obey the King than Soult, drew towards Medellin in June, but Soult, as we have seen, sent the reinforcements from Seville by the road of Monasteria, and thus obliged him to come back. Then followed those movements and counter-movements in Estremadura which have been already related, each side being desirous of keeping a great number of their adversaries in that province. Soult's judgment was thus made manifest, for Drouet could only have crossed the Tagus with peril to Andalusia, whereas, without endangering that province, he now made such a powerful diversion for Marmont, that Wellington's army in the north was reduced below the army of Portugal, and much below what the latter could be raised to, by detachments from the armies of the north and of the centre. However, in the beginning of June, while the French generals were still disputing, Lord Wellington's dispositions were completed; he had established at last an extensive system of gaining intelligence all over Spain, and as his campaign was one which posterity will delight to study, it is fitting to show very exactly the foundation on which the operations rested.

His political and military reasons for seeking a battle have been before shown, but this design was always conditional; he would fight on advantage, but he would risk nothing beyond the usual chances of combat. While Portugal was his, every movement which obliged the enemy to concentrate was an advantage, and his

operations were ever in subservience to this vital condition. His whole force amounted to nearly ninety thousand men, of which about six thousand were in Cadiz, but the Walcheren expedition was still to be atoned for: the sick were so numerous amongst the regiments which had served there, that only thirty-two thousand, or a little more than half of the British soldiers, were under arms. This number, with twenty-four thousand Portuguese, made fifty-six thousand sabres and bayonets in the field; and it is to be remembered that now and at all times the Portuguese infantry were mixed with the British either by brigades or regiments; wherefore in speaking of English divisions in battle the Portuguese battalions are always included; and it is to their praise, that their fighting was such as to justify the use of the general term.

The troops were organized in the following manner:

Two thousand cavalry and fifteen thousand infantry, with twenty-four guns, were under Hill, who had also the aid of four garrison Portuguese regiments, and of the fifth Spanish army. Twelve hundred Portuguese cavalry were in the *Tras os Montes* under General d'Urban, and about three thousand five hundred British cavalry and thirty-six thousand infantry, with fifty-four guns, were under Wellington's immediate command, which was now enlarged by three thousand five hundred Spaniards, infantry and cavalry, under Carlos d'España and Julian Sanchez.

The bridge of Almaraz had been destroyed to lengthen the French lateral communications, and Wellington now ordered the bridge of Alcantara to be repaired to shorten his own. The breach in that stupendous structure was ninety feet wide, and one hundred and fifty feet above the water line. Yet the fertile genius of Colonel Sturgeon furnished the means of passing this chasm with heavy artillery, and without the enemy being aware of the preparations made until the moment of execution. In the arsenal of Elvas he secretly prepared a network of strong ropes, after a fashion which permitted it to be carried in parts, and with the beams, planking and other materials, it was transported to Alcantara on seventeen carriages. Straining beams were then fixed in the masonry, on each side of the broken arch, cables were stretched across the chasm, the net-work was drawn over, tarpaulin blinds were placed at each side, and the heaviest guns passed in safety. This remarkable feat produced a new and short internal line of communication, along good roads, while the enemy, by the destruction of the bridge at Almaraz, was thrown upon a long external line, and very bad roads.

Hill's corps was thus suddenly brought a fortnight's march nearer to Wellington than Drouet was to Marmont, if both marched

as armies with artillery ; but there was still a heavy drag upon the English General's operations. He had drawn so largely upon Portugal for means of transport, that agriculture was seriously embarrassed, and yet his subsistence was not secured for more than a few marches beyond the Agueda. To remedy this he set sailors and workmen to remove obstructions in the Douro and the Tagus ; the latter, which in Philip the Second's time had been navigable from Toledo to Lisbon, was opened to Malpica, not far from Alcantara, and the Douro was opened as high as Barca de Alba, below which it ceases to be a Spanish river. The whole land transport of the interior of Portugal was thus relieved ; the magazines were brought up the Tagus, close to the new line of communication by Alcantara on one side ; on the other, the country vessels conveyed provisions to the mouth of the Douro, and that river then served to within a short distance of Almeida, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Salamanca. Still danger was to be apprehended from the American privateers along the coast, which the Admiralty neglected, and the navigation of the Douro was suddenly suspended by the overheated zeal of a commissary, who being thwarted by the delays of the boatmen, issued, of his own authority, an edict, establishing regulations, and pronouncing pains and penalties upon all those who did not conform to them. The river was immediately abandoned by the craft, and the government endeavored by a formal protest to give political importance to this affair, which was peculiarly vexatious, inasmuch as the boatmen were already so averse to passing the old points of navigation, that very severe measures were necessary to oblige them to do so.

When this matter was arranged, Wellington had still to dread that if his operations led him far into Spain, the subsistence of his army would be insecure ; for there were many objects of absolute necessity, especially meat, which could not be procured except with ready money, and not only was he unfurnished with specie, but his hopes of obtaining it were nearly extinguished by the sweep Lord William Bentinck had made in the Mediterranean money market ; moreover the English ministers chose this period of difficulty to interfere, and in an ignorant and injurious manner, with his mode of issuing bills to supply his necessities. His resolution to advance could not be shaken, yet before crossing the Agueda, having described his plan of campaign to Lord Liverpool, he finished in these remarkable words :

“ I am not insensible to losses and risks, nor am I blind to the disadvantages under which I undertake this operation. My friends in Castile, and I believe no officer ever had better, assure me that we shall not want provisions even before the harvest will be reaped ;

that there exist concealed granaries which shall be opened to us ; and that if we can pay for a part, credit will be given to us for the remainder ; and they have long given me hopes that we should be able to borrow money in Castile upon British securities. In case we should be able to maintain ourselves in Castile, the general action and its results being delayed by the enemy's manœuvres, which I think not improbable, I have in contemplation other resources for drawing supplies from the country, and I shall have at all events our own magazines at Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo. *But with all these prospects I cannot reflect without shuddering upon the probability that we shall be distressed ; nor upon the consequences which may result from our wanting money in the interior of Spain.*"

In the contemplated operations Lord Wellington did not fail to look both to his own and his enemy's flanks. His right was secured by the destruction of the forts, the stores and boats at Almaraz ; for the valley of the Tagus was exhausted of provisions, and full of cross rivers which required a pontoon train to pass, if the French should menace Portugal seriously in that line ; moreover he caused the fortress of Monte Santos, which covered the Portuguese frontier between the Tagus and Ciudad Rodrigo, to be put in a state of defence, and the restoration of Alcantara gave Hill the power of quickly interfering. On the other side, if Marmont, strengthened by Caffarelli's division, should operate strongly against the allies' left, a retreat was open either upon Ciudad Rodrigo, or across the mountains into the valley of the Tagus. Such were his arrangements for his own interior line of operations, and to menace his enemy's flanks his measures embraced the whole Peninsula.

1st. He directed Silveira and d'Urban, who were on the frontier of Tras os Montes, to file along the Douro, menace the enemy's right flank and rear, and form a link of connection with the Gallician army, with which Castaños promised to besiege Astorga, as soon as the Anglo-Portuguese should appear on the Tormes. Meanwhile Sir Home Popham's expedition was to commence its operations, in concert with the seventh Spanish army, on the coast of Biscay, and so draw Caffarelli's divisions from the succor of Marmont.

2d. To hinder Suchet from reinforcing the King, or making a movement towards Andalusia, the Sicilian expedition was to menace Catalonia and Valencia, in concert with the Murcian army.

3d. To prevent Soult overwhelming Hill, Wellington trusted, 1st, to the garrison of Gibraltar, and to the Anglo-Portuguese and Spanish troops in the Isla de Leon ; 2d, to insurrections in the kingdom of Cordoba, where Echevaria, going from Cadiz by the

way of Ayamonte, with three hundred officers, was to organize the partidas of that district, as Mendizabel had done those of the northern parts; 3d, to Ballesteros's army; but he ever dreaded the rashness of this general, who might be crushed in a moment, which would have endangered Hill and rendered any success in the north nugatory.

It was this fear of Ballesteros's rashness that caused Wellington to keep so strong a corps in Estremadura, and hence Soult's resolution to prevent Drouet from quitting Estremadura, even though Hill should cross the Tagus, was wise and military. For though Drouet would undoubtedly have given the King and Marmont a vast superiority in Castile, the general advantage would have remained with Wellington. Hill could at any time have misled Drouet by crossing the bridge of Alcantara, and returning again, when Drouet had passed the bridge of Toledo or Arzobispo. The French general's march would then have led to nothing, for either Hill could have joined Wellington by a shorter line, and Soult, wanting numbers, could not have taken advantage of his absence from Estremadura; or Wellington could have retired within the Portuguese frontier, rendering Drouet's movement to Castile a pure loss; or reinforcing Hill by the bridge of Alcantara, he could have gained a fortnight's march and overwhelmed Soult in Andalusia. The great error of the King's plan was that it depended upon exact co-operation amongst persons who, jealous of each other, were far from obedient to himself, and whose marches it was scarcely possible to time justly, because the armies were separated by a great extent of country, and their lines of communication were external, long, and difficult, while their enemy was acting on internal, short, and easy lines. Moreover the French correspondence, continually intercepted by the partidas, was brought to Wellington, and the knowledge thus gained by one side and lost by the other caused the timely reinforcing of Hill in Estremadura, and the keeping of Palombini's Italian division from Madrid for three weeks; an event which in the sequel proved of vital consequence, inasmuch as it prevented the army of the centre moving until after the crisis of the campaign had passed.

Hill's exploit at Almaraz, and the disorderly state of the army of the centre, having in a manner isolated the army of Portugal, the importance of Galicia and the Asturias, with respect to the projected operations of Lord Wellington, was greatly increased. For the Gallicians could either act in Castile upon the rear of Marmont, and so weaken the line of defence on the Douro; or, marching through the Asturias, spread insurrection along the coast to the Montaña de Santander, and there join the seventh army.

Hence the necessity of keeping Bonnet in the Asturias, and watching the Gallician passes, was become imperative; and Marmont, following Napoleon's instructions, had fortified the different posts in Castile, but his army was too widely spread, and, as Soult observed, was extended to its right instead of concentrating on the left near Baños.

The Duke of Ragusa had resolved to adopt the Tormes and Douro as his lines of defence, and never doubting that he was the object of attack, watched the augmentation of Wellington's forces and magazines with the utmost anxiety. He had collected considerable magazines himself, and the King had formed others for him at Talavera and Segovia; yet he did not approach the Agueda, but continued to occupy a vast extent of country for the convenience of feeding them until June. When he heard of the restoration of the bridge of Alcantara, and of magazines being formed at Caceres, he observed that the latter would be on the left of the Guadiana if Andalusia were the object; and although not well placed for an army acting against himself, were admirably placed for an army which, having fought in Castile, should afterwards operate against Madrid, because they could be transported at once to the right of the Tagus by Alcantara, and could be secured by removing the temporary restorations. Wherefore, judging that Hill would immediately rejoin Wellington, to aid in the battle, that, with a prophetic feeling he observed, would be fought near the Tormes, he desired Caffarelli to put the divisions of the army of the north in movement; and he prayed the King to have guns and a pontoon train sent from Madrid, that Drouet might pass at Almaraz and join him by the Puerto Pico.

Joseph immediately renewed his orders to Soult, and to Caffarelli, but he only sent two small boats to Almaraz; and Marmont, seeing the allied army suddenly concentrated on the Agueda, recalled Foy from the valley of the Tagus, and Bonnet from the Asturias. His first design was to assemble the army at Medina del Campo, Valladolid, Valdesillas, Toro, Zamora, and Salamanca, leaving two battalions and a brigade of dragoons at Benevente to observe the Gallicians. Thus the bulk of the troops would line the Duero, while two divisions formed an advanced guard, on the Tormes, and the whole could be concentrated in five days. His ultimate object was to hold the Tormes until Wellington's whole army was on that river, then to assemble his own troops on the Duero, and act so as to favor the defence of the forts at Salamanca until reinforcements from the north should enable him to drive the allies again within the Portuguese frontier; and he warned Caffarelli that the forts could not hold out more than

fifteen days after they should be abandoned by the French army.

Marmont was a man to be feared. He possessed quickness of apprehension and courage, moral and physical, scientific acquirements, experience of war, and great facility in the moving of troops; he was strong of body, in the flower of life, eager for glory, and although neither a great nor a fortunate commander, such a one as might bear the test of fire. His army was weak in cavalry, but admirably organized, for he had labored with successful diligence to restore that discipline which had been so much shaken by the misfortunes of Massena's campaign, and by the unceasing operations from the battle of Fuentes Onoro to the last retreat from Beira. Upon this subject a digression must be allowed, because it has been often affirmed, that the bad conduct of the French in the Peninsula was encouraged by their leaders, was unmatched in wickedness, and peculiar to the nation. Such assertions springing from morbid national antipathies it is the duty of the historian to correct. All troops will behave ill when ill-governed, but the best commanders cannot at times prevent the perpetration of the most frightful mischief; and this truth, so important to the welfare of nations, may be proved with respect to the Peninsular war, by the avowals of the generals on either side, and by their endeavors to arrest the evils which they deplored. When Dorsenne returned from his expedition against Galicia, in the latter end of 1811, he reproached his soldiers in the following terms: "The fields have been devastated, and houses have been burned; these excesses are unworthy of the French soldier, they pierce the hearts of the most devoted and friendly of the Spaniards, they are revolting to honest men, and embarrass the provisioning of the army. The General-in-Chief sees them with sorrow, and orders: that besides a permanent court-martial, there shall be at the head-quarters of each division, of every arm, a military commission, which shall try the following crimes, and on conviction, sentence to death, without appeal; execution to be done on the spot, in presence of the troops:

"1st. Quitting a post to pillage. 2d. Desertion of all kinds. 3d. Disobedience in the face of the enemy. 4th. Insubordination of all kinds. 5th. Marauding of all kinds. 6th. Pillage of all kinds.

"*All persons, military or others, shall be considered as pillagers, who quit their posts or their ranks to enter houses, &c., or who use violence to obtain from the inhabitants more than they are legally entitled to.*

7th. persons shall be considered deserters who shall be found with-

out a passport beyond the advanced posts, and frequent patrols day and night shall be sent to arrest all persons beyond the outposts.

"Before the enemy, when in camp or cantonments, roll-calls shall take place every hour, and all persons absent without leave twice running shall be counted deserters and judyed as such. The servants and sutlers of the camp are amenable to this as well as the soldier."*

This order Marmont, after reproaching his troops for like excesses, renewed with the following additions :

"Considering that the disorders of the army have arrived at the highest degree, and require the most vigorous measures of repression, it is ordered:

"1st. All non-commissioned officers and soldiers found a quarter of a league from their quarters, camp, or post without leave, shall be judged pillagers and tried by the military commission.

"2d. The gens d'armes shall examine the baggage of all sutlers and followers, and shall seize all effects that appear to be pillaged, and shall burn what will burn, and bring the gold and silver to the Paymaster-General under a 'procès verbal,' and all persons whose effects have been seized as pillage to the amount of one hundred livres shall be sent to the military commission, and on conviction suffer death.

"3d. All officers who shall not take proper measures to repress disorders under their command shall be sent in arrest to head-quarters, there to be judged."

Then appointing the number of baggage animals to each company, upou a scale which coincides in a remarkable manner with the allowances in the British army, Marmont directed the overplus to be seized and delivered, under a legal process, to the nearest villages, ordering the Provost-General to look to the execution each day, and report thereon. Finally, he clothed the Provost-General with all the powers of the military commissions; and proof was soon given that his orders were not mere threats, for two captains were arrested for trial, and a soldier of the twenty-sixth regiment was condemned to death by one of the provisional commissions for stealing church vessels.

Such was the conduct of the French, and touching the conduct of the English, Lord Wellington, in the same month, wrote thus to Lord Liverpool :

"The outrages committed by the British soldiers, belonging to this army, have become so enormous, and they have produced an effect on the minds of the people of the country so injurious to the cause, and likely to be so dangerous to the army itself, that I request your lord-

* Intercepted papers, MS.

[The text in this section is extremely faint and illegible, appearing to be a series of lines of text.]



ship's early attention to the subject. I am sensible that the best measures to be adopted on this subject are those of prevention, and I believe there are few officers who have paid more attention to the subject than I have done, and I have been so far successful, as that few outrages are committed by the soldiers who are with their regiments, after their regiments have been a short time in this country."

"But in the extended system on which we are acting, small detachments of soldiers must be marched long distances, through the country, either as escorts, or returning from being escorts to prisoners, or coming from hospitals, &c., and notwithstanding that these detachments are never allowed to march excepting under the command of an officer or more, in proportion to its size, and that every precaution is taken to provide for the regularity of their subsistence, there is no instance of the march of one of these detachments that outrages of every description are not committed, and I am sorry to say with impunity."

"The guard-rooms are therefore crowded with prisoners, and the offences of which they have been guilty remain unpunished, to the destruction of the discipline of the army, and to the injury of the reputation of the country for justice. I have thought it proper to lay these circumstances before your lordship. I am about to move the army further forward into Spain, and I assure your lordship that I have not a friend in that country, who has not written to me in dread of the consequences which must result to the army and to the cause from a continuance of these disgraceful irregularities, which I declare I have it not in my power to prevent."

To this should have been added, the insubordination, and the evil passions, awakened by the unchecked plunder of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos. But long had the English General complained of the bad discipline of his army, and the following extracts from a letter dated a few months later, show that his distrust at the present time was not ill-founded. After observing that the constitutions of the soldiers were so much shaken from disorders acquired by their service at Walcheren, or by their own irregularities, that a British army was almost a moving hospital, more than one-third, or about twenty thousand men being sick, or attending upon the sick, he thus describes their conduct :

"The disorders which these soldiers have are of a very trifling description ; they are considered to render them incapable of serving with their regiments, but they certainly do not incapacitate them from committing outrages of all descriptions on their passage through the country, and in the last movements of the hospitals the soldiers have not only plundered the inhabitants of their property, but the hospital stores which moved with the hospital, and have sold the plunder

And all these outrages are committed with impunity, no proof can be brought on oath before a court-martial that any individual has committed an outrage, and the soldiers of the army are becoming little better than a band of robbers." "I have carried the establishment and authority of the Provost-Marshal as far as either will go; there are at this moment not less than one Provost-Marshal and nineteen assistant Provost-Marshals, attached to the several divisions of cavalry and infantry and to the hospital stations, to preserve order, but this establishment is not sufficient, and I have not the means of increasing it."

The principal remedies he proposed were, the admitting less rigorous proof of guilt, before courts-martial; the forming a military police, *such as the French and other armies possessed*; the enforcing more attention on the part of the officers to their duties; the increasing the pay and responsibility of the non-commissioned officers, and the throwing upon them the chief care of the discipline. But in treating this part of the subject he broached an opinion which can scarcely be sustained even by his authority. Assuming, somewhat unjustly, that the officers of his army were, from consciousness of like demerit, generally too lenient in their sentences on each other for neglect of duty, he says, "I am inclined to entertain the opinion that in the British army duties of inspection and control over the conduct and habits of the soldiers, the performance of which by somebody is the only effectual check to disorder and all its consequences, are imposed upon the subaltern officers of regiments, which duties British officers, being of the class of gentlemen in society, and being required to appear as such, have never performed, *and which they will never perform*. It is very necessary, however, that the duties should be performed by somebody, and for this reason, and having observed the advantage derived in the guards from the respectable body of non-commissioned officers in those regiments, who perform all the duties required from subalterns in the marching regiments, I had suggested to your lordship the expediency of increasing the pay of the non-commissioned officers in the army."

Now it is a strange assumption, that a gentleman necessarily neglects his duty to his country. When well taught, which was not always the case, gentlemen by birth generally performed their duties in the Peninsula more conscientiously than others, and the experience of every commanding officer will bear out the assertion. If the non-commissioned officers could do all the duties of subaltern officers, why should the country bear the useless expense of the latter? But in truth the system of the guards produced rather a medium goodness, than a superior excellence; the system of Sir

John Moore, founded upon the principle that the officers should thoroughly know, and be responsible for the discipline of their soldiers, better bore the test of experience. All the British regiments of the light division were formed in the camps of Shorn-Cliff by that most accomplished commander; very many of the other acknowledged good regiments of the army had been instructed by him in Sicily; and wherever an officer, formed under Moore, obtained a regiment, whether British or Portuguese, that regiment was distinguished in this war for its discipline and enduring qualities; courage was common to all.

CHAPTER II.

Campaign of 1812—Wellington advances to the Tormes—Marmont retires—The allies besiege the forts of Salamanca—General aspect of affairs changes and becomes gloomy—The King concentrates the army of the centre—Marmont returns to the Tormes and cannonades the allies on the position of San Christoval—Various skirmishes—Adventure of Mr. Mackay—Marmont retires to Monte Rubia—Crosses the Tormes with a part of his army—Fine conduct of General Bock's German cavalry—Graham crosses the Tormes, and Marmont retires again to Monte Rubia—Observations on this movement—Assault on San Vincente fails—Heroic death of General Bowes—Siege suspended for want of ammunition—It is renewed—Cajetano is stormed—San Vincente being on fire surrenders—Marmont retires to the Duero followed by Wellington—The French rear-guard suffers some loss between Rueda and Tordesillas—Positions of the armies described—State of affairs in other parts described—Procrastination of the Gallician army—General Bonnet abandons the Asturias—Coincidence of Wellington's and Napoleon's views upon that subject—Sir Home Popham arrives with his squadron on the coast of Biscay—His operations—Powerful effect of them upon the campaign—Wellington and Marmont alike cautious of bringing on a battle—Extreme difficulty and distress of Wellington's situation.

CAMPAIGN OF 1812.

ON the 13th of June, the periodic rains having ceased, and the field magazines being completed, Wellington passed the Agueda and marched toward the Tormes in four columns, one of which was composed of the Spanish troops. The 16th he reached the Valmusa stream, within six miles of Salamanca, and drove a French detachment across the Tormes. All the bridges, save that of Salamanca, which was defended by the forts, had been destroyed, and there was a garrison in the castle of Alba de Tormes, but the 17th the allies passed the river above and below the town, by the deep fords of Santa Marta and Los Cantos, and General Henry Clinton invested the forts the same day with the sixth division. Marmont, with two divisions and some cavalry, retired to Fuente

el Sauco, on the road of Toro, followed by an advanced guard of the allies. Salamanca instantly became a scene of rejoicing, the houses were illuminated, and the people, shouting, singing, and weeping for joy, gave Wellington their welcome, while his army took a position on the mountain of San Christoval, about five miles in advance.

SIEGE OF THE FORTS AT SALAMANCA.

Four eighteen-pounders had followed the army from Almeida, three twenty-four pound howitzers were furnished by the field artillery, and the battering train used by Hill at Almaraz had passed the bridge of Alcantara the 11th.* These were the means of offence, but the strength of the forts had been under-rated; they contained eight hundred men, and it was said that thirteen convents and twenty-two colleges had been destroyed in their construction.† San Vicente, so called from the large convent it inclosed, was the key-fort. Situated on a perpendicular cliff overhanging the Tormes, and irregular in form, but well flanked, it was separated by a deep ravine from the other forts, which were called St. Cajetano and La Merced. These were also on high ground, smaller than San Vicente, and of a square form, but with bomb-proofs and deep ditches, having perpendicular scarps and counterscarps.

In the night of the 17th, Colonel Burgoyne, the engineer directing the siege, commenced a battery for eight guns at the distance of two hundred and fifty yards from the main wall of Vincente, and as the ruins of the destroyed convents rendered it impossible to excavate, earth was brought from a distance; but the moon was up, the night short, the enemy's fire of musketry heavy, the workmen of the sixth division were inexperienced, and at daybreak the battery was still imperfect. Meanwhile an attempt had been made to attach the miner secretly to the counterscarp, and, when the vigilance of a trained dog baffled this design, the enemy's piquet was driven in, and the attempt openly made, yet it was rendered vain by a plunging fire from the top of the convent.

On the 18th, eight hundred Germans, placed in the ruins, mastered all the enemy's fire, save that from loop-holes, and Colonel May, who directed the artillery service, then placed two field pieces on a neighboring convent, called San Bernardo, overlooking the fort; however, these guns could not silence the French artillery.

In the night the first battery was armed, covering for two field-

* Jones's Sieges.

† Wellington's Secret Despatch, MS.

pieces as a counter-battery was raised a little to its right, and a second breaching battery for two howitzers was constructed on the Cajetano side of the ravine.

At daybreak on the 19th seven guns opened, and at nine o'clock the wall of the convent was cut away to the level of the counter-scarp. The second breaching battery, which saw lower down the scarp, then commenced its fire; but the iron howitzers proved unmeet battering ordnance, and the enemy's musketry being entirely directed on this point, because the first battery, to save ammunition, had ceased firing, brought down a captain and more than twenty gunners. The howitzers did not injure the wall, ammunition was scarce, and as the enemy could easily cut off the breach in the night, the fire ceased.

The 20th, at mid-day, Colonel Dickson arrived with the iron howitzers from Elvas, and the second battery being then reinforced with additional pieces, revived its fire against a re-entering angle of the convent a little beyond the former breach. The wall here was soon broken through, and in an instant a huge cantle of the convent, with its roof, went to the ground, crushing many of the garrison, and laying bare the inside of the building; carcasses were immediately thrown into the opening to burn the convent, but the enemy undauntedly maintained their ground and extinguished the flames. A lieutenant and fifteen gunners were lost this day on the side of the besiegers, and the ammunition being nearly gone, the attack was suspended until fresh stores could come up from Almeida.

During the progress of this siege, the general aspect of affairs had materially changed on both sides. Lord Wellington had been deceived as to the strength of the forts, and intercepted returns of the armies of the south and of Portugal now showed to him that they also were far stronger than he expected; at the same time he heard of Ballesteros's defeat at Bornos, and of Slade's unfortunate cavalry action of Llera. He had calculated that Bonnet would not quit the Asturias, and that General was in full march for Leon; Caffarelli also was preparing to reinforce Marmont, and thus the brilliant prospect of the campaign was suddenly clouded. But on the other hand, Bonnet had unexpectedly relinquished the Asturias after six days' occupation; three thousand Gallicians were in that province, and in communication with the seventh army, and the maritime expedition under Popham had sailed for the coast of Biscay.

Neither was the King's situation agreeable. The partidas intercepted his despatches so surely, that it was the 19th ere Marmont's letter announcing Wellington's advance, and saying that Hill

also was in march for the north, reached Madrid. Soult detained Drouet, Suchet refused to send more than one brigade towards Madrid, and Caffarelli, disturbed that Palombini should march upon the capital instead of Burgos, kept back the divisions promised to Marmont. Something was, however, gained in vigor, for the King, no longer depending upon the assistance of the distant armies, gave orders to blow up Mirabete and abandon La Mancha on one side, and the forts of Somosierra and Buitrago on the other, with a view to unite the army of the centre.

A detachment of eight hundred men under Colonel Noizet, employed to destroy Buitrago, was attacked on his return by the Empecinado with three thousand, but Noizet, an able officer, defeated him, and reached Madrid with little loss. Palombini's march was then hastened, and imperative orders directed Soult to send ten thousand men to Toledo. The garrison of Segovia was reinforced to preserve one of the communications with Marmont, that Marshal was informed of Hill's true position, and the King advised him to give battle to Wellington, for he supposed the latter to have only eighteen thousand English troops, but he had twenty-four thousand, and had yet left Hill so strong that he desired him to fight Drouet if occasion required.

Meanwhile Marmont, who had remained in person at Fuente el Saucó, united there, on the 20th, four divisions of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, furnishing about twenty-five thousand men of all arms, with which he marched to the succor of the forts. His approach over an open country was descried at a considerable distance, and a brigade of the fifth division was immediately called off from the siege, the battering train was sent across the Tormes, and the army, which was in bivouac on the Salamanca side of St. Christoval, formed in order of battle on the top. This position of Christoval was about four miles long, and rather concave, the ascent in front steep, and tangled with hollow roads and stone inclosures, belonging to the villages, but the summit was broad, even, and covered with ripe corn; the right was flanked by the upper Tormes, and the left dipped into the country bordering the lower Tormes; for in passing Salamanca, that river makes a sweep round the back of the position. The infantry, the heavy cavalry, and the guns crowned the summit of the mountain, but the light cavalry fell back from the front to the low country on the left, where there was a small stream and a marshy flat. The villages of Villares and Monte Rubio were behind the left of the position; the village of Cabrerizos marked the extreme right, though the hill still trended up the river. The villages of Christoval, Castellanos, and Moresco, were nearly in a line along the foot of the heights in

front; the last was somewhat within the allies' ground, and nothing could be stronger than the position, which completely commanded all the country for many miles; but the heat was excessive, and there was neither shade, nor fuel to cook with, nor water nearer than the Tormes.

About five o'clock in the evening the enemy's horsemen approached, pointing towards the left of the position, as if to turn it by the lower Tormes, whereupon the British light cavalry made a short forward movement, and a partial charge took place; but the French opened six guns, and the British retired to their own ground near Monte Rubio and Villares. The light division, which was held in reserve, immediately closed towards the left of the position, until the French cavalry halted, and then returned to the centre. Meanwhile the main body of the enemy bore, in one dark volume, against the right, and halting at the very foot of the position, sent a flight of shells on to the lofty summit; nor did this fire cease until after dark, when the French General, after driving back all the outposts, obtained possession of Moresco, and established himself behind that village and Castellanos, within gun-shot of the allies.

The English General slept that night on the ground amongst the troops, and at the first streak of light the armies were again under arms. Nevertheless, though some signals were interchanged between Marmont and the forts, both sides were quiet until towards evening, when Wellington detached the sixty-eighth regiment from the line to drive the French from Moresco. This attack, made with vigor, succeeded, but the troops being recalled just as daylight failed, a body of French coming unperceived through the standing corn, broke into the village as the British were collecting their posts from the different avenues, and did considerable execution. In the skirmish an officer of the sixty-eighth, named Mackay, being suddenly surrounded, refused to surrender, and, singly fighting against a multitude, received more wounds than the human frame was thought capable of sustaining, yet he still lives to show his honorable scars.

On the 22d, three divisions and a brigade of cavalry joined Marmont, who having now nearly forty thousand men in hand, extended his left and seized a part of the height in advance of the allies' right wing, from whence he could discern the whole of their order of battle and attack their right on even terms. However, General Graham advancing with the seventh division dislodged this French detachment with a sharp skirmish before it could be formidably reinforced, and that night Marmont withdrew from his dangerous position to some heights about six miles in his rear.

It was thought that the French General's tempestuous advance to Moresco with such an inferior force on the evening of the 20th, should have been his ruin. Lord Wellington saw clearly enough the false position of his enemy, but he argued that if Marmont came up to fight, it was better to defend a very strong position than to descend and combat in the plain, seeing that the inferiority of force was not such as to insure the result of the battle being decisive of the campaign; and in case of failure a retreat across the Tormes would have been very difficult. To this may be added, that during the first evening there was some confusion amongst the allies before the troops of the different nations could form their order of battle. - Moreover, as the descent of the mountain towards the enemy was by no means easy, because of the walls and avenues, and the two villages which covered the French front, it is probable that Marmont, who had plenty of guns, and whose troops were in perfect order and extremely ready of movement, could have evaded the action until night. This reasoning, however, will not hold good on the 21st. The allies, whose infantry was a third more and their cavalry three times as numerous and much better mounted than the French, might have poured down by all the roads passing over the position at daybreak; then Marmont, turned on both flanks and followed vehemently, could never have made his retreat to the Douro through the open country; but on the 22d, when the French General had received his other divisions, the chances were no longer the same.

Marmont's new position was skilfully chosen; one flank rested on Cabeza Velloso, the other at Huerta, the centre was at Aldea Rubia. He thus refused his right and abandoned the road of Toro to the allies, but he covered the road of Tordesillas, and commanded the fort of Huerta with his left, and he could in a moment pass the Tormes, and operate by the left bank to communicate with the forts. Wellington made corresponding dispositions, closing up his left towards Moresco, and pushing the light division along the salient part of his position to Aldea Lengua, where it overhung a ford, which was, however, scarcely practicable at this period. General Graham with two divisions was placed at the fords of Santa Marta, and the heavy German cavalry under General Bock crossed the Tormes to watch the ford of Huerta. By this disposition the allies covered Salamanca, and could operate on either side of the Tormes on a shorter line than the French could operate.

The 23d, the two armies again remained tranquil, but at break of day on the 24th, some dropping pistol shots, and now and then a shout, came faintly from the mist which covered the lower ground beyond the river; the heavy sound of the artillery succeeded, and

the hissing of the bullets, as they cut through the thickened atmosphere, plainly told that the French were over the Tormes. After a time the fog cleared up, and the German horsemen were seen in close and beautiful order retiring before twelve thousand French infantry, who in battle array were marching steadily onwards. At intervals, twenty guns, ranged in front, would start forward and send their bullets whistling and tearing up the ground beneath the Germans, while scattered parties of light cavalry, scouting out, capped all the hills in succession, and peering abroad, gave signals to the main body. Wellington immediately sent Graham across the river by the fords of Santa Marta with the first and seventh divisions and Le Marchant's brigade of English cavalry; then concentrating the rest of the army between Cabrerizos and Moresco, he awaited the progress of Marmont's operation.

Bock continued his retreat in the same fine and equable order, regardless alike of the cannonade and of the light horsemen on his flanks, until the enemy's scouts had gained a height above Calvarisa Abaxo, from whence, at the distance of three miles, they for the first time perceived Graham's twelve thousand men, and eighteen guns, ranged on an order of battle, perpendicular to the Tormes. From the same point also Wellington's heavy columns were to be seen, clustering on the height above the fords of Santa Marta, and the light division was descried at Aldea Lengua, ready either to advance against the French troops left on the position of Aldea Rubia, or to pass the river to the aid of Graham. This apparition made the French General aware of his error, whereupon hastily facing about, and repassing the Tormes, he resumed his former ground.

Wellington's defensive dispositions on this occasion were very skilful, but it would appear that, unwilling to stir before the forts fell, he had again refused the advantage of the moment; for it is not to be supposed that he misjudged the occasion, since the whole theatre of operation was distinctly seen from St. Christoval, and he had passed many hours in earnest observation; his faculties were indeed so fresh and vigorous, that after the day's work he wrote a detailed memoir upon the proposal for establishing a bank in Portugal, treating that and other financial schemes in all their bearings, with a master hand. Against the weight of his authority, therefore, any criticism must be advanced.

Marmont had the easiest passage over the Tormes, namely, that by the ford of Huerta; the allies had the greatest number of passages and the shortest line of operations. Hence if Graham had been ordered vigorously to attack the French troops on the left

bank, they must have been driven upon the single ford of Huerta, if not reinforced from the heights of Aldea Rubia.* But the allies could also have been reinforced by the fords of Santa Marta and those of Cabrerizos, and even by that of Aldea Lengua, although it was not good at this early season. A partial victory would then have been achieved, or a general battle would have been brought on, when the French troops would have been disadvantageously cooped up in the loop of the Tormes, and without means of escaping if defeated. Again, it is not easy to see how the French General could have avoided a serious defeat if Wellington had moved with all the troops on the right bank, against the divisions left on the hill of Aldea Rubia; for the French army would then have been separated, one part on the hither, one on the further bank of the Tormes. It was said at the time that Marmont hoped to draw the whole of the allies across the river, when he would have seized the position of Christoval, raised the siege and maintained the line of the Tormes. It may, however, be doubted that he expected Wellington to commit so gross an error. It is more likely that holding his own army to be the quickest of movement, his object was to separate the allies' force in the hopes of gaining some partial advantage to enable him to communicate with his forts, which were now in great danger.

When the French retired to the heights at Aldea Rubia on the night of the 23d, the heavy guns had been already brought to the right of the Tormes, and a third battery to breach San Cajetano was armed with four pieces, but the line of fire being oblique, the practice, at four hundred and fifty yards, only beat down the parapet and knocked away the palisades. Time was however of vital importance; the escalade of that fort and La Merced was ordered, and the attack commenced at ten o'clock, but in half an hour failed with a loss of one hundred and twenty men and officers. The wounded were brought off the next day under truce, and the enemy had all the credit of the fight, yet the death of General Bowes must ever be admired. That gallant man, whose rank might have excused his leading so small a force, being wounded early, was having his hurt dressed when he heard that the troops were yielding, and returning to the combat fell.

The siege was now per force suspended for want of ammunition, and the guns were sent across the river, but were immediately brought back in consequence of Marmont having crossed to the left bank. Certain works were meanwhile pushed forward to cut off the communication between the forts and otherwise to straiten them, and the miner was attached to the cliff on which La Merced stood.

* Plan 1, page 27.

The final success was not however influenced by these operations, and they need no further notice.

The 26th, ammunition arrived from Almeida, the second and third batteries were rearmed, the field pieces were again placed in the convent of San Bernardo, and the iron howitzers, throwing hot shot, set the convent of San Vincente on fire in several places. The garrison again extinguished the flames, and this balanced combat continued during the night, but on the morning of the 27th, the fire of both batteries being redoubled, the convent of San Vincente was in a blaze, the breach of San Cajetano was improved, a fresh storming party assembled, and the white flag waved from Cajetano. A negotiation ensued, but Lord Wellington, judging it an artifice to gain time, gave orders for the assault; then the forts fell, for San Cajetano scarcely fired a shot, and the flames raged so violently at San Vincente that no opposition could be made.

Seven hundred prisoners, thirty pieces of artillery, provisions, arms, and clothing, and a secure passage over the Tormes, were the immediate fruits of this capture, which was not the less prized that the breaches were found to be more formidable than those at Ciudad Rodrigo. The success of a storm would have been very doubtful if the garrison could have gained time to extinguish the flames in the convent of San Vincente, and as it was the allies had ninety killed; their whole loss since the passage of the Tormes was nearly five hundred men and officers, of which one hundred and sixty men, with fifty horses, fell outside Salamanca, the rest in the siege.

Marmont had allotted fifteen days as the term of resistance for these forts, but from the facility with which San Vincente caught fire, five would have been too many if ammunition had not failed. His calculation was therefore false. He would however have fought on the 23d, when his force was united, had he not on the 22d received intelligence from Caffarelli, that a powerful body of infantry, with twenty two-guns, and all the cavalry of the north, were actually in march to join him. It was this which induced him to occupy the heights of Villa Rubia on that day to avoid a premature action, but on the evening of the 26th, the signals from the forts having indicated that they could still hold out three days, Marmont, from fresh intelligence, no longer expected Caffarelli's troops, and resolved to give battle on the 28th.* The fall of the forts, which was made known to him on the evening of the 27th, changed this determination; the reasons for fighting on such disadvantageous ground no longer existed, and hence, withdrawing his garrison from

* French Confidential Official Reports, MS.

the castle of Alba de Tormes, he retreated during the night towards the Duero, by the roads of Tordesillas and Toro.

Wellington ordered both the works at Alba and the forts at Salamanca to be destroyed, and following the enemy by easy marches, encamped on the Guarena the 30th. The next day he reached the Trabancos, his advanced guard being at Nava del Rey. On the 2d, he passed the Zapardiel in two columns, the right marching by Medina del Campo, the left following the advanced guard towards Rueda. From this place the French rear-guard was cannonaded and driven upon the main body, which was filing over the bridge of Tordesillas. Some were killed and some made prisoners, not many; but there was great confusion, and a heavy disaster would have befallen the French if the English General had not been deceived by false information that they had broken the bridge the night before. For as he knew by intercepted letters that Marmont intended to take a position near Tordesillas, this report made him suppose the enemy was already over the Duero, and hence he had spread his troops, and was not in sufficient force to attack during the passage of the river.

Marmont, who had fortified posts at Zamora and Toro, and had broken the bridges at those places and at Puente Duero and Tudela, preserving only that of Tordesillas, now took a position on the right of the Duero.* His left was at Simancas, on the Pisuerga, which was unfordable, and the bridges at that place and Valladolid were commanded by fortified posts. His centre was at Tordesillas and very numerous, and his right was on some heights opposite to Pollos. Wellington indeed caused the third division to seize the ford at the last place, which gave him a command of the river, because there was a plain between it and the enemy's heights; but the ford itself was difficult and insufficient for passing the whole army. Head-quarters was therefore fixed at Rueda, and the forces were disposed in a compact form, the head placed in opposition to the ford of Pollos and the bridge of Tordesillas, the rear occupying Medina del Campo and other points on the Zapardiel and Trabancos rivers, ready to oppose the enemy if he should break out from the Valladolid side. Marmont's line of defence, measured from Valladolid to Zamora, was sixty miles, from Simancas to Toro above thirty; but the actual line of occupation was not above twelve; the bend of the river gave him the chord, the allies the arc, and the fords were few and difficult. The advantage was therefore on the side of the enemy; but to understand the true position of the contending generals, it is necessary to know the secondary coincident operations.

* Plan 2, page 48.

While the armies were in presence at Salamanca, Silveira had filed up the Duero, to the Esla river, menacing the French communications with Benevente. D'Urban's horsemen had passed the Duero below Zamora on the 25th, and cut off all intercourse between the French army and that place; but when Marmont fell back from Aldea Rubia, d'Urban re-crossed the Duero at Fresno de la Ribera to avoid being crushed, yet immediately afterwards advanced beyond Toro to Castromonte, behind the right wing of the enemy's new position. It was part of Wellington's plan, that Castañõs, after establishing the siege of Astorga, should come down by Benevente with the remainder of his army, and place himself in communication with Silveira. This operation, without disarranging the siege of Astorga, would have placed twelve or fifteen thousand men, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, behind the Esla, and with secure lines of retreat; consequently able to check all the enemy's foraging parties, and reduce him to live upon his fixed magazines, which were scanty. The usual Spanish procrastination defeated this plan.

Castañõs, by the help of the succors received from England, had assembled fifteen thousand men at Ponteferrada, under the command of Santocildes, but he pretended that he had no battering guns, until Sir Howard Douglas actually pointed them out in the arsenal of Ferrol, and showed him how to convey them to the frontier. Then Santocildes moved, though slowly, and when Bonnet's retreat from the Asturias was known, eleven thousand men invested Astorga, and four thousand others marched to Benevente, but not until Marmont had called his detachment in from that place. The Spanish battering train only reached Villa Franca del Bierzo on the 1st of July. However, the guerilla chief Marquinez appeared about Palencia, and the other partidas of Castile, acting on a line from Leon to Segovia, intercepted Marmont's correspondence with the King. Thus the immense tract called the *Campo de Tierras* was secured for the subsistence of the Gallician army; and to the surprise of the allies—who had so often heard of the enemy's terrible devastations, that they expected to find Castile a desert—those vast plains and undulating hills were covered with ripe corn or fruitful vines, and the villages bore few marks of the ravages of war.

While the main body of the Gallicians was still at Ponteferrada, a separate division had passed along the coast road into the Asturias, and, in concert with part of the seventh army, had harassed Bonnet's retreat from that kingdom; the French General indeed forced his way by the eastern passes, and taking post on the 30th of June at Reynosa and Aguilar del Campo, chased the neighboring