have caused some disorder; but they could not have driven either Hill or Beresford over the river again; because the third division was close at hand to reinforce the sixth, and the brigade of the seventn, left at San Barbe, could have followed by the bridge of Ustaritz, thus giving the allies the superiority of numbers. The greatest danger was, that Paris, reinforced by Pierre Soult's cavalry, should have returned and fallen upon Morillo or the brigade left at Urcurray, while Soult, reinforcing D'Erlon with fresh divisions brought from the other side of the Nive, attacked Hill and Beresford in front. It was to prevent this that Hope and Alten, whose operations are now to be related, pressed the enemy on the left bank.

Hope having twelve miles to march from St. Jean de Luz before he could reach the French works, put his troops in motion during the night; and about eight o'clock passed between the tanks in front of Barrouilhet with his right, while his left, descending from the platform of Bidart, crossed the valley and moved by the heights of Biaritz. The French outposts retired fighting, and Hope then sweeping on a half circle to his right and being preceded by the fire of his guns and many skirmishers, arrived in front of the entrenched camp about one o'clock. His left rested on the lower Adour, his centre menaced a strong advanced work on the ridge of Beyris beyond Anglet; his right was in communication with Alten, who with a shorter distance to move had halted about Bussussary and Arcangues until Hope's fiery crescent closed on the French camp—then he advanced, but with the exception of a slight skirmish at the fortified house there was no resistance. Three divisions, some cavalry, and the unattached brigades, equal to a fourth division, sufficed therefore to keep six French divisions in check on this side. But when evening closed the allies fell back towards their original positions under heavy rain and with great fatigue, to Hope's wing; for even the royal road was knee-deep of mud and his troops were twenty-four hours under arms. The whole day's fighting cost about eight hundred men for each side, the loss of the allies being rather greater on the left bank of the river than on the right.

Wellington's wings were now separated by the Nive, and Soult resolved to fall upon one of them with his whole force united; but he was misled by the prisoners, who told him the third and fourth divisions were at Lormenthoa. This induced him to make his counter-stroke on the other bank of the Nive; the more readily because there he could concentrate his force with less difficulty, and the allies were most extended. The garrison of Bayonne, eight thousand strong, partly troops of the line partly national

guards, were to occupy the entrenched camp of Mousserolles; ten gun-boats on the upper Adour were to watch that river as high as the confluence of the Gave de Pau; D'Erlon was to file his four divisions over the bridge of boats between the fortress and Mousserolles, to gain the camp of Marac and take post behind Clausel on the other side of the Nive.* Thus nine divisions of infantry and Villatte's reserve, a brigade of cavalry, and forty guns, in all sixty thousand combatants, including conscripts, were to assail a quarter where the allies, although stronger by one division than was imagined, had yet only thirty thousand infantry with twenty-four pieces of cannon.†

Soult's first design was to burst with his whole army on the table-land of Bussussary and Arcangues, and then to act as circumstances should dictate;‡ and he augured so well of his chances that he desired the minister of war to expect good news for the next day. Indeed the situation of the allies, although better than he knew of, gave him some right to anticipate success; for on no point was there any expectation of this formidable counter-attack. Wellington was on the right of the Nive, preparing to assault the heights where he had seen the French the evening before; Hope's troops, with exception of Wilson's Portuguese now commanded by General Campbell and posted at Barrouilhet, had retired to their cantonments; the first division was at St. Jean de Luz and Ciboure, more than six miles distant from the outposts; the fifth division was between those places and Bidart, and all exceedingly fatigued. The light division had orders to retire from Bussussary to Arbonne, four miles, and part of the second brigade had already marched; but fortunately Kempt, somewhat suspicious of the enemy's movements, kept the first brigade in front until he could see what was going on: he thus saved the position.

The extraordinary difficulty even for single horsemen of moving through the country, the numerous enclosures and copses which denied any distinct view, the recent success in crossing the Nive, and a certain haughty confidence, the sure attendant of a long course of victory, seem to have rendered the English general at this time somewhat negligent of his own security. His army was not disposed as if a battle was expected. The general position, composed of two distinct parts, was indeed strong; the ridge of Barrouilhet could only be attacked along the royal road on a narrow front between the tanks which he had directed to be entrenched; but only one brigade was there, and a road, opened with difficulty

* Imperial Muster Rolls, MSS.
† Original Morning States.
‡ Soult, MSS.

by the engineers, supplied a bad flank communication with the light division. This Barrouilhet ridge was prolonged to the platform of Bussussary, but in its winding bulged too near the enemy's works in the centre to be safely occupied in force, and behind it was a deep valley or basin extending to Arbonne. On the other side of this basin was the ridge of Arcangues, the position of battle for the centre; from thence three tongues of land shot out to the front, and the valleys between them, as well as their slopes, were covered with copse-woods almost impenetrable. The church of Arcangues, a private mansion and parts of the village, furnished rallying points of defence for the piquets, which were necessarily numerous because of the extent of front; and at this time the left-hand tongue was occupied by the fifty-second regiment, which had also posts in the great basin separating the Arcangues position from that of Barrouilhet. The central tongue was held by the piquets of the forty-third, with supporting companies placed in succession towards Bussussary, where there was an open common which must be passed in retreat to reach the church of Arcangues. The third tongue was guarded partly by the forty-third partly by the riflemen; but the valley between was not occupied, and the piquets on the extreme right extended to an inundation, across a narrow part of which, near the house of the Senator Garrat, there was a bridge: the facility for attack was there however small. One brigade of the seventh division continued this line of posts to the Nive, holding the bridge of Urdains, the rest of the division was behind San Barbe and belonged rather to Ustaritz than to this front. The fourth division was several miles behind the right of the light division.

If Soult had, as he first designed, burst with his whole army upon Bussussary and Arcangues, it would have been impossible for the light division, scattered as it was over such an extent of difficult ground, to have stopped him for half an hour, and there was no support within several miles, no superior officer to direct the concentration of the different divisions. Wellington had indeed ordered all the line to be entrenched; but the works were commenced on a great scale, and, as commonly happens, when danger does not spur, the soldiers labored so carelessly, that beyond a few abattis, the tracing of some lines and redoubts, and the opening of a road of communication, the ground remained in its natural state. The French would therefore quickly have gained the broad open hills beyond Arcangues, and separating the fourth and seventh from the light division, have cut them off from Hope. Soult, however, in the course of the night, for some unknown reason, changed his project, and at daybreak Reille marched with

Boyer's and Maucune's divisions, Sparre's cavalry, and from twenty to thirty guns against Hope by the main road. He was followed by Foy and Villatte; but Clausel assembled his troops under cover of the ridges near the fortified house in front of Bussussary, and one of D'Erlon's divisions approached the bridge of Urdains.

Combat of the 10th.—Heavy rain fell in the night, yet the morning broke fair, and soon after dawn, the French infantry were observed, by the piquets of the forty-third, to push each other about as if at gambols, yet lining by degrees the nearest ditches; a general officer was also seen behind a farm-house close to the sentinels, and at the same time heads of columns could be perceived in the rear. Thus warned, some companies were thrown on the right into the basin, to prevent the enemy from penetrating that way to the small plain between Bussussary and Arcangues. Kempt was with the piquets, and immediately placed the reserves of his brigade in the church and mansion-house of Arcangues; meanwhile, the French breaking forth with loud cries and a rattling of musketry, fell at a running pace upon the piquets of the forty-third, both on the tongue and in the basin; and a cloud of skirmishers, descending on their left, penetrated between them and the fifty-second regiment, and sought to turn both. The right tongue was in like manner assailed, and at the same time the piquets at the bridge, near Garrat's house, were driven back.

This assault was so strong and rapid, the enemy so numerous, the ground so extensive, that it would have been impossible to have reached the small plain beyond Bussussary in time to regain the church of Arcangues if any serious resistance had been attempted; wherefore delivering their fire, at pistol-shot distance, the piquets fell back in succession, and never were the steadiness and intelligence of veteran soldiers more eminently displayed. For though it was necessary to run at full speed to gain the small plain before the enemy, who was constantly outflanking the line of posts by the basin—though the ways were so deep and narrow that no formation could be preserved, the fire of the French being thick and close, and their cries vehement, as they rushed on in pursuit—the instant the open ground at Bussussary was attained, the apparently disordered crowd of fugitives turned in good order, defying and deriding the fruitless efforts of their adversaries. The fifty-second, half a mile to the left, though only slightly assailed, fell back also to the main ridge; for though the closeness of the country did not permit Colonel Colborne to observe the strength of the enemy, he could see the rapid retreat of the forty-third, and thence judging how serious the affair was, so well did the regiments of the light division un-

derstand each other's qualities, withdrew his outposts to secure the main position. And in good time he did so.

On the right hand tongue, the troops were not so fortunate; for whether they delayed their retreat too long, or that the country was more intricate, the enemy moving by the basin, reached Bussussary before the rear arrived, and about a hundred of the forty-third and riflemen were thus intercepted. The French were in a hollow road and careless, never doubting that the officer of the forty-third, Ensign Campbell, a youth scarcely eighteen years of age, would surrender; but with a shout, he broke sword in hand through them, leaving twenty of the forty-third and thirty of the riflemen with their officers prisoners.

D'Armagnac pushed close up to the little bridge of Urdains, and Clausel assembled his three divisions by degrees at Bussussary keeping up a constant fire of musketry, but the position was safe. The mansion-house on the right, covered by abattis and not easily accessible, was defended by a rifle battalion and the Portuguese; the church and church-yard were occupied by the forty-third, supported with two mountain guns, the front being protected by a declivity of thick copse-wood, filled with riflemen, and only to be turned by narrow, hollow roads leading on each side to the church. On the left, the fifty-second, supported by the remainder of the division, spread as far as the great basin separating them from Barrouilhet, towards which some small posts were pushed: but there was still a great interval between Alten's and Hope's positions.

Clausel brought up twelve guns to the ridge of Bussussary and threw shot and shells into the church-yard of Arcangues; four or five hundred infantry then made a rush forward, but a heavy fire from the forty-third sent them back over the ridge where their guns were posted. The practice of the latter would have been murderous, if this musketry had not made the French gunners withdraw their pieces a little behind the ridge, which caused their shot to fly wild and high; Kempt, thinking the distance too great, was at first inclined to stop the fire; but the moment it lulled, the French gunners pushed their pieces forward again, and their shells knocked down eight men in an instant; when the musketry recommenced, the shells again flew high. The riflemen in the village and mansion held the enemy equally at bay, and the action, hottest where the fifty-second fought, continued all day. It was not very severe; but French and English writers, misled perhaps by an inaccurate phrase in the public despatch, have represented it as a desperate attack, by which the light division was driven into its entrenchment; whereas the piquets only were forced back; there

were no entrenchments save those made at the moment by the soldiers in the church-yard, and the French can hardly be said to have seriously attacked. The real battle was at Barrouilhet.

There Reille, advancing with two divisions, about nine o'clock, drove back the outposts from Anglet, and then fell on the main position; but moving by a narrow ridge, and confined on each side by the tanks, he could only throw two brigades into action on the main road, and the rain of the preceding night had rendered all the bye-roads so deep, it was mid-day before the line of battle was filled. This delay saved the allies; for the attack was so unexpected, that the first division and Lord Aylmer's brigade were in St. Jean de Luz, Bidart and Guetary when the fighting commenced; the latter did not reach the position before eleven o'clock, and the foot-guards did not arrive until three in the afternoon, when the fight was done: all the troops were exceedingly fatigued, only ten guns could be brought into play, and from some negligence, part of the infantry were at first without ammunition. Hope directed the piquets in person, and resisted the enemy until Campbell's Portuguese first, and then Robinson's British brigades, and Bradford's Portuguese came up. Meanwhile, the French skirmishers spread along the whole valley facing Biaritz, their principal effort being by the great road and against the platform of Barrouilhet, round the mayor's house, where the ground was so thick of hedges and coppice-wood, that a most confused fight took place. The assailants, cutting ways in the hedges, poured through in smaller or larger bodies as the openings allowed, and were immediately engaged with the defenders; at some points they were successful, at others beaten back, and few knew what was going on to the right or left of where they stood. By degrees, Reille engaged both his divisions, and some of Villatte's reserve also entered the fight; but then Aylmer's brigade arrived on the allies' side, which enabled Greville's brigade of the fifth division, hitherto kept in reserve, to relieve Robinson, who had lost many men and was dangerously wounded.

At this time, a very notable action was performed by the ninth regiment, under Colonel Cameron, who was on the extreme left of Greville; Robinson was then shifted in second line towards the right; Bradford, at the mayor's house, some distance to the left of the ninth, and the space between was occupied by a Portuguese battalion. In front of Greville was a thick hedge; but immediately opposite the ninth, a coppice-wood was possessed by the enemy, whose skirmishers were continually gathering in masses, and rushing out as if to assail the line; they were as often driven back, yet the ground was so broken, that nothing could be seen beyond the

flanks. When some time had passed in this manner, Cameron, who had received no orders, heard a sudden firing along the main road close to his left, and found that a French regiment, which must have passed unseen in small bodies through the Portuguese, between the ninth and the mayor's house, was rapidly filing into line on his rear.* The fourth regiment was then in close column at a short distance; its commander, Colonel Piper, was directed by Cameron to face about, march to the rear, and bring up his left shoulder, by which he would infallibly fall in with the French regiment; but whether Piper misunderstood the order, took a wrong direction, or mistook the enemy for Portuguese, he passed them; no firing was heard; the adjutant of the ninth hurried to the rear, and returned with intelligence that the fourth regiment was not to be seen, and the enemy's line was nearly formed. Cameron, leaving fifty men to answer the skirmishing fire, which now increased from the copse, immediately faced about, and marched in line against the new enemy, under a fire, slow at first, but increasing vehemently as the distance lessened; yet when the ninth, coming close up, sprung forwards to the charge, the adverse line broke and fled to the flanks in the utmost disorder. Those who made for their own right brushed the left of Greville's brigade, and even carried off an officer of the royals in their rush; yet the greatest number were made prisoners, and Cameron having lost eighty men and officers, resumed his former ground.

The action now subsided for a time, but a third and more vigorous attack was soon made. The French again passed the tanks, seized the out-buildings of the mayor's house, and broke into the coppice-wood in front of it. They were quickly driven from the out-buildings by the royals; yet the tumult was great, and the coppice was filled with men of all nations, intermixed and fighting in a perilous manner. Robinson's brigade was again very hardly handled, a squadron of French cavalry, wheeling suddenly round the wood, cut down many of Campbell's Portuguese; and on the right, the colonel of the eighty-fourth having rashly entered a hollow road where the French occupied the high banks on each side, was killed with a great number of his men. Sir John Hope, conspicuous from his gigantic stature and heroic courage, was seen wherever danger pressed, rallying and encouraging the troops; at one time, he was in the midst of the enemy; his clothes were pierced with bullets, and he received a severe wound in the ankle, yet he would not quit the field, and by his intrepidity restored the battle. The final result was the repulse of Reille's division; yet Villatte still menaced the right flank; and Foy, taking possession of the

* Note by Cameron, MSS.

narrow ridge connecting Bussussary with the platform of Barrouilhet, threw his skirmishers into the great basin leading to Arbonne, connected his right with Reille's left, and menaced Hope's flank at Barrouilhet. This was about three o'clock, and Soult, whose columns were now all up, was going to renew the battle, when Clausel reported that a large body of fresh troops, apparently coming from the other side of the Nive, was menacing D'Armagnac from the heights above Urdains. Unable to account for this, and seeing the guards and Germans moving up fast from St. Jean de Luz and all the unattached brigades already in line, the French marshal hesitated, suspended his attack, and ordered D'Erlon, who had two divisions in reserve, to detach one to the support of D'Armagnac; before these dispositions could be completed, the night fell.*

The fresh troops seen by Clausel were the third, fourth, sixth, and seventh divisions. Wellington discovering, at daybreak on the 10th, that the French had abandoned the heights on the front of Hill, directed that officer to occupy them, to push parties close up to the entrenched camp of Mousseroles, and spread his cavalry up the Adour. The cannonade on the left bank of the Nive then drew him to that side, and he made the third and sixth divisions repass the river, directing Beresford to lay another bridge of communication near Villefranque, to shorten the line of movement. When he saw how the battle stood, he drew the seventh division towards the left from the hill of San Barbe, placed the third division at Urdains, and brought up the fourth division to an open heathy ridge, about a mile behind Arcangues. From thence Ross's brigade moved into the basin on the left of Colborne, to cover Arbonne; and Cole prepared to march with his whole division if the enemy penetrated in force between Hope and Alten. These dispositions were completed about two o'clock, and thus Clausel was held in check at Bussussary, and Soult's renewed attack on Barrouilhet prevented.

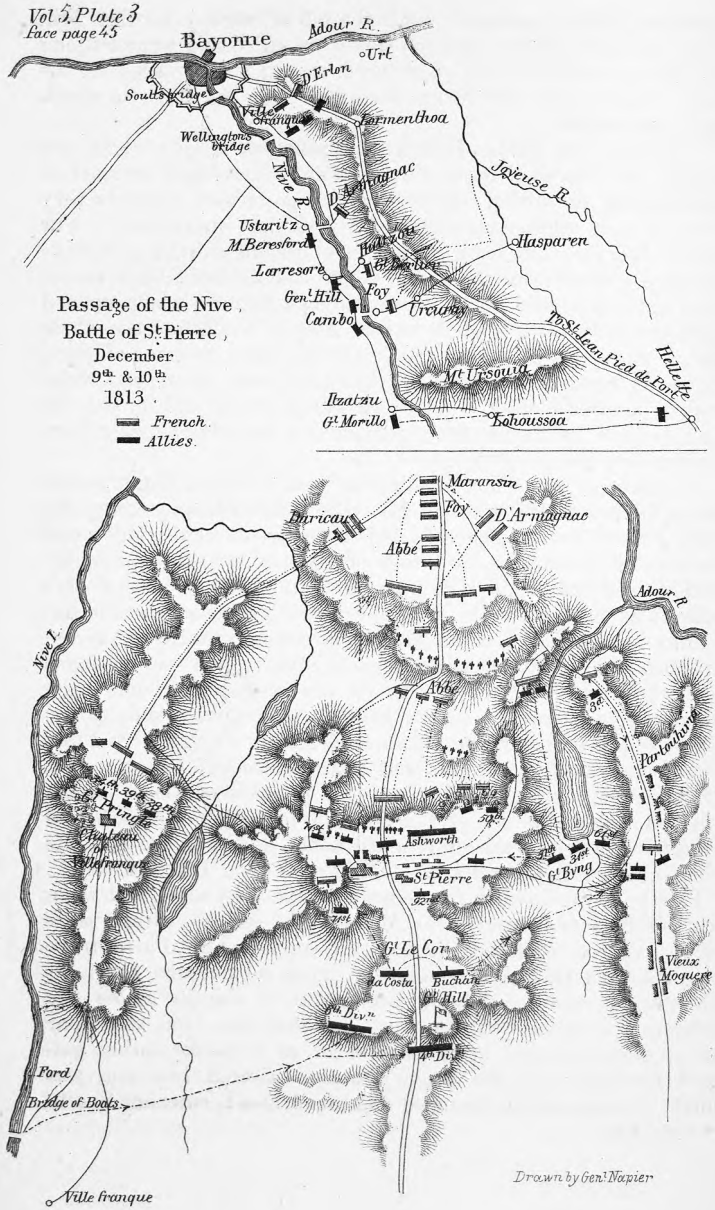
In the battle the Anglo-Portuguese lost more than twelve hundred killed and wounded, two generals were amongst the latter, and three hundred men were made prisoners. The French had one general, Villatte, wounded, and lost two thousand men; but when the action terminated, two regiments of Nassau and one of Frankfort, under Colonel Kruse, came over to the allies. These men were not deserters. Their prince had abandoned Napoleon in Germany, and had sent secret instructious to his troops to do so likewise; and in good time, for orders to disarm them reached Soult the next morning. The contending generals, one hoping to

* Soult's MSS.

profit, the other to prevent mischief, immediately transmitted notice of the event to Catalonia, where several regiments of the same nations were serving. Wellington failed, for reasons to be hereafter mentioned, but Suchet disarmed his Germans with reluctance, thinking they could be trusted; and the Nassau troops at Bayonne were perhaps less influenced by patriotism than by an old quarrel, for when attached to the army of the centre, they had forcibly foraged Soult's district, and carried off the spoil in defiance of his authority, which gave rise to bitter disputes at the time.

Combat of the 11th.—In the night of the 10th Reille withdrew from behind the tanks to Pucho; Foy and Villatte likewise drew back along the connecting ridge towards Bussussary, and united with Clausel and D'Erlon. Thus, on the morning of the 11th, the whole French army, with the exception of D'Armagnac, who remained in front of Urdains, was concentrated, for Soult at first expected a counter-attack. The French deserters said, indeed, that Clausel had selected two thousand grenadiers to assault Arcangues, but the day passed there with only a slight skirmish. Not so on the side of Barrouilhet. A thick fog impeded the view, and Wellington, desirous to ascertain what the French were about, directed the ninth regiment, at ten o'clock, to open a skirmish beyond the tanks towards Pucho, and to push the action, if the French augmented their force. Cameron did so, and the fight was becoming warm, when Colonel Delancy, a staff-officer, rashly directed the ninth to enter the village, an error sharply corrected; for the fog cleared up, and Soult, who had twenty-four thousand men at that point, directed a counter attack so strong and sudden, that Cameron was instantly forced to fly, and only saved his regiment with the aid of some Portuguese troops hastily brought up by Hope. The fighting then ceased, and Wellington went to the right, leaving orders to re-establish the former outposts on the connecting ridge towards Bussussary.

Hope had taken ground on Soult's right with four regiments when Cameron first attacked, and the French Marshal, hitherto undecided, being aroused by these insults, directed Daricau to attack Barrouilhet by the connecting ridge and Boyer to fall on by the main road between the tanks. The allies, expecting no battle, had dispersed to gather fuel, for the weather was wet and cold; the front line was thus composed entirely of Portuguese, and in a moment the French penetrated in all directions. They outflanked the right, passed the tanks and drove the allies back in heaps. However, the ninth regiment plied Boyer's flank with fire, Aylmer's brigade came up, and Soult finally withdrew his troops; yet he retained all his posts of the preceding evening, and con-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Face page 45
Bayonne
Adour R.
Urt
D'Erlon
Souths Bridge
Villa Crimina
Wellingtons bridge
Nive R.
Larmenthoa
Joyeuse R.
D'Armagnac
Ustaritz
M.Beresford
Larresore
Hasparen
Gen.l Hill
Foy
Cambo
Urcuray
St.Jean Pied de Port
Mt Ursouia
Ilzatzu
Gl Morillo
Echoussoa
Passage of the Nive,
Battle of St.Pierre,
December
9th & 10th
1813.
French.
Allies.
Maransin
Foy
D'Armagnac
Barricau
Abbe
Adour R
Nive R.
Abbe
Partouharre
Ashworth
St.Pierre
Gl Byng
Gl Le Cor
Vieux Moguere
Buchan
Gl Hill
Ford
Bridge of Boats
Ville franque
Drawn by Genl Napier

tinued a galling cannonade until the fall of night. In this fight about six hundred men on each side were killed and wounded, and the fifth division was now so reduced, that it was replaced by the first Soult then sent Sparre's cavalry over the Nive to check Hill's horsemen.

Combat of the 12th.—Heavily the rain fell in the night, and though the morning broke fair neither side seemed inclined to recommence hostilities. The advanced posts were however very close to each other and about ten o'clock they quarrelled.* For Soult, observing the fresh regiments of the first division close to his posts, expected an attack and reinforced his front; this movement induced a like error in an English battery, which opened upon the advancing French troops, and in an instant the whole line of posts was engaged. Soult brought up a number of guns, the firing continued without an object for many hours, and three or four hundred men of a side were killed and wounded; but the main body of the French remained quiet on the ridge between Barrouilhet and Bussussary.

As early as the 10th, Wellington had expected Soult would finally fall upon Hill, and had given Beresford orders to carry the sixth division to that general's assistance by the new bridge; and the seventh division by the bridge of Ustaritz, without waiting for further instructions, if Hill was assailed. Now seeing Soult's tenacity at Barrouilhet he drew the seventh division towards Arbonne; but Beresford had made his movement towards the Nive; and this, with the march of the seventh division and some changes in the position of the fourth division, caused Soult to believe the allies were gathering to attack his centre on the morning of the 13th—and it is remarkable that the deserters at this period told him the Spaniards had re-entered France, although orders to that effect were not given until next day. Convinced now that his bolt was shot on the left of the Nive, he placed two divisions and Villatte's reserve in the entrenched camp, and marched with the other seven to Mousseroles intending to fall upon Hill next day.

That general's cavalry scouts were on the Gambouri, and when Sparre's horsemen arrived at Mousseroles on the 12th, Pierre Soult advanced from the Bidouze and, supported by Paris, drove the allies from Hasparen. Colonel Vivian, commanding the English cavalry, ordered Major Brotherton to charge across the bridge at this place with the fourteenth dragoons; but the affair was so desperate, that when that officer, so noted for daring, galloped forward, only one brave trooper followed him and was killed. Brotherton was wounded and taken, and Lieutenant South-

* Soult, MSS.

well, whose horse had fallen on the allies' side of the bridge, was also borne off a prisoner, though Vivian, feeling his order had been rash, made a strong effort to rescue both. Morillo had relieved the British brigade at Urcuray the 11th, but this cavalry movement induced Hill to send it back on the 12th; yet he again recalled it at sunset, for he had descried Soult's columns passing the Nive by the boat bridge above Bayonne. It was at this time that Wellington, feeling the want of numbers, brought a Gallician division to St. Jean de Luz, and some Andalusians to Itzassu; the former to support Hope, the latter to protect the upper Nive from Paris and Pierre Soult, who could be easily reinforced with the national guards: to prevent plunder he fed them from the British magazines, but they could not arrive in time to aid Hill, whose situation was very critical.

His position of battle was only two miles wide, yet the ground defended by it between the two rivers was nearly four miles. His left, composed of the twenty-eighth, thirty-eighth, and thirty-ninth regiments, under General Pringle, occupied a wooded broken ridge, crowned by the Chateau of Villefranque, and covered the pontoon-bridge, but was separated from the centre by a stream and chain of ponds in a deep marshy valley. The centre was on both sides of the high road near the hamlet of St. Pierre. It occupied a crescent-shaped height, much broken with rocks and close brushwood on the left, but on the right streaked with thick hedges, one of which, a hundred yards in front of the line, was impassable; the seventy-first regiment was on the left, the fiftieth next, the ninety-second on the right. Ashworth's Portuguese were in advance, just beyond St. Pierre, having skirmishers in a small wood, to cover their right; twelve guns, under Ross and Tullock, massed in front, looked down the great road; and, half a mile in rear, Lecor's Portuguese division and two guns were in reserve. General Byng had the right wing, composed of the third, fifty-seventh, thirty-first, and sixty-sixth regiments, the third being on a height running nearly parallel with the Adour, called indifferently the ridge of Partouhiria, or Old Moguerre, from a village of that name on the summit. This regiment was pushed in advance to a point where it could only be approached by crossing the lower part of a swampy valley, separating Moguerre from the heights of St. Pierre; but the remainder of the brigade was kept by Byng below, where it was well covered by a mill-pond, which nearly filled the valley.

One mile in front of St. Pierre was a range of counter-heights belonging to the French, the basin between being broad, open, and commanded in every part by the fire of the allies; and in all parts

the country was too heavy and enclosed for cavalry Nor could the enemy approach in force, except on a narrow front of battle, and by the high road, until within cannon-shot, where two narrow lanes branched off to the right and left, and crossing the swampy valleys on each side led, the one to the height where the third regiment was posted, the other to Pringle's position.

In the night of the 12th, rain swelled the Nive, and carried away the allies' bridge of communication; thus, on the morning of the 13th, Hill was completely cut off from the rest of the army. Seven French divisions of infantry, furnishing thirty-five thousand combatants, were approaching him in front; and an eighth, under Paris, reinforced with the cavalry of Pierre Soult, menaced him in rear.* To meet those in his front he had less than fourteen thousand, and only fourteen guns in position; to oppose Paris there were four thousand Spaniards with Vivian's cavalry at Urcuray, for the Andalusians had not yet arrived.

Battle of St. Pierre —Day broke with a heavy mist, under cover of which Soult formed his order of battle. D'Erlon, having D'Armagnac's, Abbé's and Daricau's infantry, Sparre's cavalry, and twenty-two guns, marched in front; he was followed by Foy and Maransin; but the remainder of the French were in reserve, for the roads would not allow of any other order. The mist hung heavily, and the French masses, at one moment shrouded in vapor, at another dimly seen or looming sudden and large and dark at different points, appeared like thunder-clouds gathering before the storm. At half-past eight Soult pushed back the British piquets in the centre, the sun burst out at that moment, the sparkling fire of the light troops spread wide in the valley, and crept up the hills on either flank; and the bellowing of forty pieces of artillery, shook the banks of the Nive and the Adour. Daricau was directed against Pringle, D'Armagnac taking Old Moguerre as the point of direction, was to force Byng's right; Abbé assailed St. Pierre, where W. Stewart commanded; for Hill had taken his station on a commanding mount in the rear, from whence he could see and direct all the movements of battle.

Abbé, a man noted for vigor, made his attack with great violence, and gained ground so rapidly with his light troops on the left of Ashworth's Portuguese, that Stewart sent the seventy-first and two guns from St. Pierre to their aid; the French skirmishers likewise won the small wood on Ashworth's right, and half of the fiftieth was detached to that quarter. The wood was thus retaken and the flanks of Stewart's position secured; but his centre was very much weakened; the fire of the French artillery was concentrated against

* Appendix 28, sec. 4, Vol. IV.

it; and Abbé pushed the attack there with such a power, that in despite of the musketry on his flanks and a crashing cannonade in his front, he gained the top of the position, driving back also the remainder of Ashworth's Portuguese and the other half of the fiftieth regiment, which had remained in reserve.

General Barnes, who had the ninety-second regiment in hand behind St. Pierre, immediately brought it on with a strong counter-attack; whereupon, the French skirmishers fell back on each side, leaving two regiments in column to meet the charge of the ninety-second. It was rough and pushed home; the French mass wavered and gave way; but Abbé replaced it, and Soult, redoubling the heavy play of his guns from the height he occupied, sent forward a battery of horse artillery, which, galloping into the valley, opened its fire close to the allies with destructive activity. The cannonade and musketry now rolled like a prolonged peal of thunder; and the second French column, regardless of Ross's guns, though they tore the ranks in a horrible manner, advanced so steadily up the high road, that the ninety-second, yielding to the tempest, slowly regained its position behind St. Pierre. The Portuguese guns limbered up to retire, and the French skirmishers reached the impenetrable hedge in front of Ashworth's right. Barnes, seeing hard fighting only could save the position, made the Portuguese guns resume their fire, while the wing of the fiftieth and the caçadores gallantly held the small wood on the right; but he was soon wounded, most of his and Stewart's staff were hurt, and the matter seemed desperate; for the light troops, overpowered by numbers, were all driven in, except those in the wood, the artillery-men were falling at their guns, Ashworth's line crumbled away rapidly before the musketry and cannonade, the ground was strewed with the dead in front, and many wounded were crawling to the rear.

If the French light troops could then have penetrated through the thick hedge in front of the Portuguese, defeat would have been inevitable on this point, for the main column of attack still steadily advanced up the main road; and a second column launched on its right was already victorious, because Colonel Peacock of the seventy-first had shamefully withdrawn that gallant regiment out of action, and abandoned the Portuguese. Pringle was indeed fighting strongly against Daricau's superior numbers on the hill of Villefranque; but on the extreme right, Colonel Bunbury of the third regiment had also abandoned his strong post to D'Armagnac, whose leading brigade was thus rapidly turning Byng's other regiments on that side. And now Foy's and Maransin's divisions, hitherto retarded by the deep roads, were coming into line to support Abbé, and at a moment when the troops opposed to him

were deprived of their reserve. For when Hill beheld the retreat of the third and seventy-first regiments, descending in haste from his mount, he met and turned the latter back to renew the fight; and then in person, leading one brigade of Le Cor's reserve division to the same quarter, sent the other against D'Armagnac on the hill of Old Moguerre: thus at the decisive moment the French reserve was augmented, and that of the allies thrown as a last resource into action. However, the right wing of the fiftieth and Ashworth's caçadores, both spread as skirmishers, never lost the small wood in front; upholding the fight there and towards the high road with such unflinching courage, that the ninety-second regiment had time to re-form behind the hamlet of St. Pierre. Then its gallant colonel, Cameron, once more led it down the road with colors flying and music playing, resolved to give the shock to whatever stood in the way. At this sight, the British skirmishers on the flanks, suddenly changing from retreat to attack, rushed forward and drove those of the enemy back on each side; yet the battle seemed hopeless, for Ashworth was badly wounded, his line shattered to atoms; and Barnes, who had not quitted the field for his former hurt, was now shot through the body.

A small force was the ninety-second compared with the heavy mass in its front, and the French soldiers seemed willing enough to close with the bayonet;* but an officer at their head suddenly turned his horse, waved his sword, and appeared to order a retreat, for they faced about and retired across the valley to their original position; in good order, however, and scarcely pursued by the allies, so exhausted were the victors. This retrograde movement, though without panic or disorder, was produced partly by the advance of the ninety-second and the returning rush of the skirmishers, partly by the state of affairs immediately on the right of the French column, where the seventy-first, indignant at their colonel's conduct, had returned to the fight with such alacrity, and were so well aided by Le Cor's Portuguese, Hill and Stewart each leading an attack in person, that the hitherto victorious French were overthrown there also, just as the ninety-second came with such a brave show down the main road.

This double action in the centre being seen from the hill of Villefranque, Daricau, already roughly handled by Pringle, fell back in confusion; and on the right, Buchan's Portuguese, detached by Hill to recover the Old Moguerre ridge, crossed the valley, and ascending under a heavy flank fire from Soult's guns, rallied the third regiment; in happy time, for D'Armagnac's first brigade, having already passed the flank of Byng's regiments at the mill-

* Memoir on the battle, by Colonel Pringle, R. E.

pond, was actually in rear of the allies' lines. It was now twelve o'clock, and while the fire of the light troops in the front and the cannonade in the centre continued, the contending generals restored their respective orders of battle. Soult's right had been quite repulsed by Pringle, his left was giving way before Buchan, and the difficult ground forbad his sending immediate succor to either; moreover, in the exigency of the moment, he had called down D'Armagnac's reserve to sustain Abbé's retiring columns. However, that reserve and Foy's and Maransin's divisions were in hand to renew the fight in the centre, and the allies could not, unsuccored, have sustained a fresh assault; for their ranks were wasted with fire, nearly all the staff had been killed or wounded, and three generals had quitted the field badly hurt.

In this crisis, Hill, seeing Buchan was successfully engaged on the Partouhiria ridge, and Byng's regiments masters of their ground in the mill-pond valley, drew the fifty-seventh from the latter place to reinforce his centre. At the same time, the bridge above Villefranque being now restored, the sixth division, which had been marching since daybreak, appeared in order of battle on the mount from whence Hill had descended to rally the seventy-first. It was soon followed by the fourth division, and that by the third division: two brigades of the seventh division were likewise in march. With the first of these troops came Wellington, who had hurried from Barrouilhet when the first sound of the cannon reached him; yet he arrived only to witness the close of the battle: the crisis was past; Hill's glory was complete. Soult, according to the French method, made indeed a demonstration against the centre to cover his new dispositions, but he was easily repulsed, and Buchan drove D'Armagnac headlong off the Partouhiria ridge. The sixth division then appeared behind St. Pierre; and though the French still held the high road and a hillock rising between it and the mill-pond, they were quickly dispossessed; for Wellington now took the offensive with Byng's brigade and with the troops on the high road, where the generals and staff had been so cut down that the Aid-de-camp Currie, who carried the order to advance, could find no superior officer to deliver it to, and led the attack himself.

Byng found the enemy on the hill stronger than he expected, but the impetus of victory was in full force, and he soon planted the colors of the thirty-first on the summit; the allies' front was thus cleared, and two guns of the horse battery, sent down early in the fight by Soult, were taken. The battle then abated to a skirmish, under cover of which the French endeavored to carry off their wounded, and rally stragglers; but at two o'clock, Wellington

ordered a general advance, and they retreated fighting, being closely plied with musketry on the side of the Nive until dark. They, however, maintained their ground on the side of the Adour, and Sparre's cavalry passing out that way, joined Pierre Soult. During the action, he and Paris had skirmished with Morillo and Vivian at Urcuray, but only thirty men were hurt, and when Soult's failure was known, the French generals retired to Bonloc.

Baffled by the unexpected result of the battle, Soult left D'Erlon's three divisions in front of the camp of Mousseroles, sent two others over the Nive to Marac, and, passing the Adour himself during the night with Foy's division, spread it along the right bank of that river as far as the confluence of the Gave de Pau. He had designed to act with great masses, but the restricted nature of the ground had forced him to fight in detail; his loss was certainly three thousand, making a total in the five days' fighting of six thousand, two generals, Villatte and Maucomble, being wounded; the British estimate made the loss much greater, and one French writer raises it to ten thousand, including probably the Nassau and Frankfort regiments.* But the same writer says, the allies lost sixteen thousand; whereas Hill had only three generals and fifteen hundred men killed and wounded, and the whole loss in the five days was five thousand and nineteen, five hundred being prisoners; but the generals Hope, Robinson, Barnes, Lecor, and Ashworth were wounded.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. The French marshal's plan was conceived with genius, but the execution was in contrast with the conception. What a difference between the sudden concentration of his whole army on the platforms of Arcangues and Bussussary, from whence he could have fallen with the roll of an avalanche upon any point of the allies' line—what a difference between that and the petty attack of Clausel, which a thousand men of the light division sufficed to arrest at the village and church of Arcangues; yet that was certainly the weak part of the English general's cuirass: the spear pushed home there would have drawn blood. The movements of the third, fourth and seventh divisions were made more with reference to the support of Hill than to sustain an attack from Soult's army; and it is evident that Wellington, trusting to the effect of his victory on the 10th of November, had treated the French more contemptuously than he could have justified by arms without the aid of fortune. What induced Soult to alter his first design has not been made known; but for three hours after Clausel first attacked the piquets

* La Pene.

at Arcangues, there were not troops enough to stop three French divisions, much less a whole army. And this point being nearer to the bridge by which D'Erlon passed the Nive, the concentration of the troops could have been made sooner than at Barrouilhet, where the want of unity in the attack caused by the difficulty of the roads ruined the French combinations.

So unexpectant were the allies of an attack, that the battle at Barrouilhet, which might have been fought by them with seventeen thousand men, was actually fought by ten thousand; nor were those brought into action at once; for Robinson's brigade and Campbell's Portuguese, favored by the narrow openings between the tanks, resisted Reille for two hours and gave time for the rest of the fifth division and Bradford's brigade to arrive. But if Foy and Villatte had been able to assail the flank at the same time by the ridge coming from Bussussary, the battle would have been won by the French, although three divisions under Clausel, and two under D'Erlon, remained hesitating before Urdains and Arcangues, where their cannonade and skirmishing were the marks and signs of indecision.

2. On the 11th, the inertness of the French during the morning may be accounted for by the defection of the German regiments, the necessity of disarming and removing those that remained, the care of the wounded, and the time required to re-examine the allies' position, and ascertain what changes had taken place during the night. The attack in the afternoon was well judged. The increase of troops in Soult's front, and the works constructed at the church of Arcangues, indicated that no decisive success could be expected on the left of the Nive, and that the line of attack was to be changed to the right bank; it was however necessary to draw Wellington's reserves from the right of the Nive previous to assailing that quarter, and to be certain they had come; which could only be done by repeating the attacks at Barrouilhet. The same cause operated on the 12th; for it was not until the fourth and seventh divisions were seen by him on the side of Arbonne that Soult knew his wile had succeeded. Yet again the execution was below the conception. For the bivouac fires on the ridge of Bussussary were extinguished in the evening, and then others were lighted on the side of Mousseroles, thus plainly indicating the march, which was also begun too early, since the leading division was seen by Hill to pass the bridge of boats before sunset.

These were serious errors, yet the French marshal's generalship cannot be thus fairly tested; there are many circumstances tc prove, that when he complained to the emperor of contradictions and obstacles, he alluded to military as well as to political and

financial difficulties. It is human nature to dislike disturbance of habits; and soldiers are never pleased at first with a general who introduces and rigorously exacts a system of discipline differing from what they have been accustomed to: its utility must be proved ere it will find favor in their eyes. Now Soult suddenly assumed the command of troops who had been long serving under various generals, and were used to much license in Spain; and they were, men and officers, under the austere command of one who from natural character as well as the exigency of the times, demanded ready and exact obedience, and a regularity which habits of a different kind rendered onerous. All the French writers and Soult's own reports furnish proofs that his designs were frequently thwarted or disregarded by his subordinates when circumstances promised impunity. His greatest and ablest military combinations were certainly rendered abortive by the errors of his lieutenants in the first operations to relieve Pampeluna; and their manifest negligence enabled Wellington to force the passage of the Bidassoa. Complaint and recrimination were rife after the defeat on the 10th of November, and on the 19th the bridge-head of Cambo was destroyed contrary to the instructions. These things, joined to the acknowledged jealousy and disputes prevalent amongst the French generals employed in Spain, would indicate that the discrepancy between the conception and execution of the operations in front of Bayonne was not the error of the commander-in-chief: perhaps Joseph's faction, so inimical to Soult, was still powerful in the army.

3. Wellington has been blamed for putting his troops in a false position; and no doubt he undervalued, it was not the first time, the military genius and resources of his able adversary when he exposed Hill to the action of the 13th. But the passage of the Nive itself, the rapidity with which he moved his divisions from bank to bank, and the confidence with which he relied upon the valor of his troops, so far from justifying the censures which have been passed upon him by French writers, emphatically mark his mastery in the art. The stern justice of sending the Spaniards back into Spain after the battle of the Nivelle is apparent; but the magnanimity of that measure can only be understood by considering his situation at the time. The battle of the Nivelle was delivered on political grounds. Yet of what avail would his gaining it have been if he had remained inclosed as it were in a net between the Nive, the sea, Bayonne, and the Pyrenees; unable to open communications with the disaffected in France; and having the beaten army absolutely forbidding him to forage or even to look beyond the river on his right. The invasion of France was

not his own operation, it was the project of the English cabinet and the allied sovereigns; both were urging him to complete it, and to pass the Nive and free his flanks was indispensable if he would draw any profit from his victory of the 10th of November. He could not pass it with his whole army unless he resigned the sea-coast and his communications with Spain; and he had to operate with a portion only, which it was desirable to make as strong as possible; yet at that crisis he divested himself of twenty-five thousand Spanish soldiers!

Was this done in ignorance of the military glory awaiting him beyond the spot where he stood!

"*If I had twenty thousand Spaniards paid and fed,*" he wrote to Lord Bathurst, "*I should have Bayonne. If I had forty thousand I do not know where I should stop. Now I have both the twenty thousand and the forty thousand, but I have not the means of paying and supplying them, and if they plunder they will ruin all.*"

Requisitions, which the French expected as a part of war, would have enabled him to run this career; but he looked further; he had promised the people protection and his greatness of mind was disclosed in a single sentence. "*I must tell your lordship that our success and everything depend upon our moderation and justice.*" Rather than infringe on either, he sent the Spaniards to the rear and passed the Nive with the British and Portuguese only, thus violating the military rule which forbids a general to disseminate his troops before an enemy in mass. But genius begins where rules end, and a great general always seeks moral power in preference to physical force. Wellington's choice was between a shameful inactivity or a dangerous enterprise. Trusting to the influence of his reputation, to his previous victories, to the ascendancy of his troops in the field, he chose the latter and the result justified his boldness. He surprised the passage of the Nive, laid his bridges, and but for the rain of the night before, which ruined the roads and retarded Hill's march, he would have won the heights of St. Pierre the same day: Soult could not then have withdrawn his divisions from the right bank without being observed. Still it was an error to have the troops on the left bank so unprepared for battle; it was perhaps another error not to have occupied the valley or basin between Hope and Alten; and surely it was negligence not to entrench Hill's position on the 10th, 11th, and 12th. Yet so brave, so hardy, so unconquerable were his soldiers he was succcessful at every point: and that proves his generalship: Hannibal crossed the Alps and descended upon Italy, not in madness, but because he knew himself and his troops.

4. It is agreed by French and English that the battle of St. Pierre was one of the most desperate of the whole war. Wellington said he had never seen a field so thickly strewn with dead; nor can the vigor of the combatants be well denied, where five thousand men were killed or wounded in three hours, upon a space of one mile square. How then did it happen, valor being so conspicuous on both sides, that less than fourteen thousand Anglo-Portuguese, with fourteen guns, were enabled to withstand thirty-five thousand French, with twenty-two guns?* The analysis of this fact shows upon what nice calculations and accidents war depends. If Hill had not observed the French passing their bridge on the evening of the 12th, and their bivouac fires in the night, Barnes' brigade, with which he saved the day, would have been at Urcuray, and the enemy could not have been stopped. But Soult could only bring his troops into line in succession, so that in fact sixteen thousand French, with twenty-two guns, actually fought the battle; Foy and Maransin did not engage until after the crisis had passed. On the other hand, the proceedings of Peacocke and Bunbury, for which they were deservedly compelled to quit the service, forced Hill to carry his reserve away from the decisive point, at that critical period which always occurs in a well-disputed field, and which every great general watches for with the utmost anxiety. This was no error, it was a necessity, and the military qualities of the troops rendered it successful.

5. The French officer who rode at the head of the second attacking column, might be a brave man, doubtless he was; he might be an able man, but he had not the instinct of a general. On his right flank the vigorous counter-attack of the allies was indeed successful, but the battle was to be won in the centre; his column was heavy, undismayed, and only one weak battalion, the ninety-second, was before it; a short exhortation, a decided gesture, a daring example, and it would have overborne the small body in its front; and then Foy, Maransin, and the half of D'Armagnac's division would have followed in the path thus marked out: instead of this he weighed chances and retreated. How different was the conduct of the British generals, two of whom and nearly all their staff fell at this point, resolute not to yield a step at such a critical period;† how desperately did the fiftieth and Portuguese fight to give time for the ninety-second to rally and re-form behind St. Pierre; how gloriously did that regiment come forth again to charge, with their colors flying and their national music playing, as if going to a review. This was to understand war. The man who in that mo-

* Appendix 29, sec. 4, Vol. IV.
† Captain Pringle, R. E.

ment and immediately after a repulse, thought of such military pomp, was by nature a soldier.

6. Hill's employment of his reserve was a fine stroke. He saw that the misconduct of the two colonels would cause the loss of his position more surely than any direct attack upon it, and with military decision, he descended at once to the spot, playing the soldier as well as the general, rallying the seventy-first, and leading the reserve himself; trusting, meanwhile, with a noble and well-placed confidence, to the courage of the ninety-second and the fiftieth to sustain the fight at St. Pierre. He knew, indeed, the sixth division was then close at hand, and the battle might be fought over again; but like a thorough soldier, he was resolved to win his own fight with his own troops if he could: and he did so after a manner that, in less eventful times, would have rendered him the hero of a nation.

CHAPTER III.

(Plan 2, page 80.)

Respective situations and views of Lord Wellington and Soult—Partisan warfare—The Basques of the Val de Baygorry excited to arms by the excesses of Mina's troops—General Harispe takes command of the insurgents—Clausel advances beyond the Bidouze river—General movements—Partisan combats—Excesses committed by the Spaniards—Lord Wellington reproaches their generals—His vigorous and resolute conduct—He menaces the French insurgents of the valleys with fire and sword and the insurrection subsides—Soult hems the allies right closely—Partisan combats continued—Remarkable instances of the habits established between the French and British soldiers of the light division—Shipwrecks on the coast.

Bayonne, although a mean fortress, was at this period truly designated by Napoleon as one of the great bulwarks of France. Covered by an entrenched camp, which the deep country and inundations rendered nearly impregnable while held by an army, it could not be assailed; and to pass it would have left the enemy free to cut off the allies' communications with the sea-coast and Spain. To force Soult to abandon Bayonne and adopt a new front of operations was therefore Wellington's design, and the passage of the Nive and the five days' fighting effected the first step towards its accomplishment. Those events had cut Soult's direct communication with St. Jean Pied de Port—gave access to a fertile country for the cavalry, menaced the navigation of the Adour by which Soult obtained his supplies, and opened a way for intercourse with the malcontents of France. It was however

only a step, for the country beyond the Nive was of the same deep clay, and traversed by many rivers, flooding with every shower in the mountains and offering in their courses to the Adour successive barriers, behind which Soult could oppose Wellington's right and still be connected with St. Jean Pied de Port. He would thus hem in the allies as before, because the wide operations necessary to force those rivers and tear the French army from Bayonne, could not be undertaken until fine weather hardened the roads, and the winter had been peculiarly inclement.

To nourish their own armies and circumvent their adversaries in that respect were the objects of both generals. Soult aimed to make Wellington retire into Spain, Wellington to make Soult abandon Bayonne, or so reduce his force that the entrenched camp might be stormed. The French general's recent losses forbad extended positions except during the wet season—three days' fine weather made him tremble—and his camp was still too unfinished for a small force. The bad roads and want of transport threw his army upon water-carriage for subsistence, and his great magazines were therefore established at Dax on the Adour and at Peyrehorade on the Gave de Pau, the latter being twenty-four miles from Bayonne. These places he fortified to resist sudden incursions, and he threw a bridge across the Adour at the port of Landes, just above its confluence with the Gave de Pau. But the navigation of the Adour below that point, especially at Urt, the stream being confined there, could be interrupted by the allies who were now on the left bank; whereupon he ordered Foy to pass the Adour at Urt and construct a fortified bridge. Wellington menaced Foy with a superior force, he recrossed the river, and the navigation was then carried on at night by stealth, or guarded by the French gun-boats and exposed to the fire of the allies; provisions became scarce and the supply would have failed, if the French coasting-trade, now revived between Bordeaux and Bayonne, had been interrupted by the navy, but this was still unheeded.

Soult, embarrassed by Foy's failure, reinforced him with Boyer's and D'Armagnac's divisions, which were extended to the Port de Landes; then leaving Reille with four divisions in the entrenched camp, he completed the garrison of Bayonne and transferred his head-quarters to Peyrehorade. Clausel with two divisions of infantry and the light cavalry took post on the Bidouze; being supported with Trielhard's heavy dragoons, and having his left in communication with General Paris, and with St. Jean Pied de Port, where there was a garrison of eighteen hundred men besides national guards. Pushing advanced posts to the Joyeuse and the Aran,

streams which unite to fall into the Adour near Urt, he also occupied Hellette, Mendionde, Bonloc, and the Bastide de Clerence. A bridge-head was constructed at Peyrehorade; Hastingues was fortified on the Gave de Pau; Guiche, Bidache, and Came, on the Bidouze; and the works of Navarens were augmented. Soult thus threw himself on a new line against the allies' right. Wellington made corresponding dispositions; for having strengthened his works at Barrouilhet, he shifted some of Hope's troops towards Arcangues, and placed the sixth division at Villefranque, which permitted Hill to extend his right up the Adour to Urt. The third division was also posted near Urcuray, the light cavalry on the Joyeuse, and a chain of telegraphs was established from the right of the Nive by the hill of San Barbe to St. Jean de Luz. Freyre's Gallicians were in reserve about St. Pé, Morillo was sent to Itzassu; where, supported by the Andalusians and by Freyre, he guarded the valley of the upper Nive and watched Paris beyond the Ursouia mountain.

Such was the general state of affairs the 1st of January, but previously the minor events had become complicated. The allies had seized the island of Holriague in the Adour; Foy kept possession of the islands of Berens and Broc higher up the river; Wellington's bridges of communication on the Nive were destroyed by floods; and Morillo, with a view to plunder, for he had not orders to move, obtained from Victor Alten two squadrons of the eighteenth hussars under pretence of exploring the enemy's position towards Mendionde and Maccay. Their commander, Major Hughes, reinforced with some Spanish caçadores, having crossed the bridge of Mendionde, commenced a skirmish; but Morillo retreated without notice during the action, the caçadores fled in a shameful manner, and the British cavalry escaped with difficulty, having had one captain killed, two others, a lieutenant, and Hughes himself, badly wounded. This disaster was falsely reported at the time as the result of the hussars' bad conduct; and they had in like manner been previously, from the same source, misrepresented at headquarters as more licentious than others at Vittoria; whereas they had fought as well and plundered less than many who were praised for orderly demeanor.

About the same time Mina, pressed for provisions, invaded the Val de Baygorry and the Val des Osses, and committed the greatest enormities, plundering and burning, and murdering men, women and children without distinction. The people of these valleys, distinguished amongst the Basques for their warlike qualities, immediately took arms under the command of one of their principal men, named Etchevery; and being reinforced with two hundred

and fifty men from St. Jean Pied de Port, surprised one of Mina's battalions and attacked the rest with great vigor. This event gave Soult hopes of exciting such a war as the Basques had carried on during the French revolution; and he had for two months been expecting the arrival of Harispe, whose courage and talents have been frequently noticed in this history, and who being the head of an ancient Basque family, had great local influence. If Harispe had come as expected in November, Wellington being then unknown to the people, a formidable warfare would have commenced in the mountains; now the English general's attention to all complaints, his proclamation, and the sending the Spaniards away for misconduct, had, in conjunction with the love of gain, that master passion with all mountaineers, tamed the Basque spirit and disinclined them to exchange ease and profit for turbulence and ravage. Nevertheless Mina's murdering incursion and Morillo's licentious conduct, awakened the warlike propensities of the Val de Baygorry Basques, and Harispe was enabled to make a levy with which he immediately commenced active operations.

Soult, to aid Harispe, to widen his own cantonments and restrict those of the allies, resolved to drive the latter altogether from the side of St. Jean Pied de Port and fix Clausel's left at Hellette, the culminant point of the great road to that fortress.* To effect this, he caused Clausel on the 3d to establish two divisions of infantry at the heights of La Costa, near the Bastide de Clerence beyond the Joyeuse. Buchan's Portuguese brigade was thus forced to retreat upon Briscons; and Paris, advancing to Bonloc, connected his right with Clausel's left at Ayherre, while the light cavalry menaced all the line of outposts. Informed of this movement by telegraph, Wellington, thinking Soult was seeking a general battle on the side of Hasparen, made the fifth division and Lord Aylmer's brigade relieve the light division, which marched to Arauntz; the fourth division then passed the Nive at Ustaritz; the sixth division made ready to march from Villefranque by the high road of St. Jean Pied de Port towards Hasparen, as a reserve to the third, fourth and seventh divisions; and the latter was concentrated beyond Urcuray the 4th, its left in communication with Hill at Briscons, the right supported by Morillo, who advanced from Itzassu.

Wellington meant to fall on at once, but the swelling of the small rivers prevented him, and on the fifth, he ascertained the true object and dispositions of the enemy. However, having twenty-four thousand infantry, a division of cavalry, and five brigades of artillery in hand, he resolved to attack Clausel on the heights of La Costa. Le Cor's Portuguese marched against the

* Clausel's Reports and Orders, MSS.

French right, the fourth division marched against their centre, the third division, supported by cavalry, against their left; the remainder of the cavalry and the seventh division, the whole under Cotton, were posted at Hasparen, to watch Paris. Soult was in person at the Bastide de Clerence, and a general battle seemed inevitable; but Wellington's intent was merely to drive Clausel from the Joyeuse; and Soult, who thought that the whole allied army was in movement, withdrew fighting to the Bidouze: thus the affair terminated with a slight skirmish on the evening of the 6th. The allies then resumed their old positions on the right of the Nive, the Andalusians went back to the Bastan, and Carlos D'España's Gallicians came to Ascain in their place.

Clausel finding nothing serious was designed, sent his horsemen to drive away Hill's detachments, which had taken advantage of the great movements to forage on the lower parts of the Joyeuse and Aran rivers. Soult seeing his adversary so sensitive to a demonstration beyond the Bidouze, then resolved to maintain those two rivers, and, in that view, reduced his defence of the Adour to a line drawn from the confluence of the Aran to Bayonne, which enabled him to reinforce Clausel with Foy's division and all the light cavalry. Meantime Harispe, having Paris and Dauture's brigade placed under his orders to support his mountaineers, fixed his quarters at Hellette, and commenced an active partisan warfare. On the 8th, he fell upon Mina in the Val des Osses, and drove him with loss into Baygorry; the 10th, returning to Hellette, he surprised Morillo's foragers, with some English dragoons, on the side of Maccaye, and took a few prisoners; the 12th, he again attacked Mina, and drove him up into the Alduides. During these affairs beyond the Nive, an ineffectual effort was made to launch some armed craft on the Adour, where Soult had increased his flotilla to twenty gun-boats for the protection of his convoys, yet they were still compelled to run past Urt, under Hill's battery.

While the French marshal was engaged on the Bidouze and Joyeuse rivers, his entrenched camp at Bayonne might have been stormed; but as it could only be held under the fire of the fortress, and nothing was prepared for a siege, the allies remained quiet; for the weather, again become terrible, would not permit a general movement against Harispe in the high country, and to avoid irritating the mountaineers, by a counter partisan warfare, he was unmolested. Wellington now dreading the effects likely to result from Mina's and Morillo's excesses, for the Basques were beginning to speak of vengeance, put forth his authority again in repression. Rebuking Morillo for his unwarranted advance upon

Mendionde, and for the misconduct of his troops, he ordered him to keep the latter constantly under arms. This was resented generally by the Spanish officers, and especially by Morillo, whose savage, untractable, and bloody disposition, since so horribly displayed in South America, prompted him to encourage violence; he asserted falsely that his troops were starving; declared that a settled design to ill-use the Spaniards existed, and that the British soldiers were suffered to commit every crime with impunity. The English general, in reply, explained himself both to Morillo and to Freyre, who had alluded to the libels about San Sebastian, with a clearness and resolution that showed how hopeless it would be to strive against him.

"He had not," he said, "lost thousands of men to enable the Spaniards to pillage and ill-treat the French peasantry; he preferred a small army obedient to a large one disobedient and undisciplined. If his measures to enforce good order deprived him of the Spanish troops, the fault would rest with those who suffered their soldiers to commit disorders. Professions without corresponding actions would not do; he was determined to enforce obedience one way or another, and would not command insubordinate troops. The question between them was whether they should or should not pillage the French peasants. His measures were taken to prevent it, and the conduct which called them forth was more dishonoring to the Spaniards than the measures themselves. For libels he cared not, he was used to them, and he did not believe the union of the two nations depended upon such things; but if it did, he desired no union founded upon such an infamous interest as pillage. He had not lost twenty thousand men in the campaign to enable Morillo to plunder, and he would not permit it. If the Spaniards were resolved to do so, let them march their great armies into France under their own generals; he would meanwhile cover Spain itself, and they would find they could not remain in France for fifteen days. They had neither money nor magazines, nothing to maintain an army in the field, the country behind was incapable of supporting them; and were he scoundrel enough to permit pillage, France, rich as it was, could not sustain the burthen. Even with a view to living on the enemy by contributions, it would be essential to prevent plunder; and yet in defiance of all these reasons he was called an enemy by the Spanish generals, because he opposed such conduct, and his measures to prevent it were considered dishonoring! Something also he could say against it in a political point of view, but it was unnecessary, because careless whether he commanded a large or a small army, he was resolved that it should obey him and should not pillage.

"General Morillo expressed doubts of his right to interfere with the Spaniards. It was his right and his duty, and never before did he hear that to put soldiers under arms was a disgrace. It was a measure to prevent evil and misfortunes. Mina could tell by recent experience what a warfare the French peasants could carry on, and Morillo was openly menaced with a like trial. It was in vain for that general to palliate or deny the plundering of his division, after having acknowledged to General Hill that it was impossible to prevent it, because the officers and soldiers received by every post, letters from their friends, congratulating them upon their good luck in entering France, and urging them to seize the opportunity of making fortunes. General Morillo asserted that the British troops were allowed to commit crimes with impunity. Neither he nor any other man could produce an instance of injury done, where proof being adduced, the perpetrators had escaped punishment. Let him inquire how many soldiers had been hanged, how many stricken with minor chastisements, and made to pay for damages done. But had the English troops no cause of complaint against the Spaniards? Officers and soldiers were frequently shot and robbed on the high roads, and a soldier had been lately murdered between Oyarzun and Lesaca; the English stores and convoys were plundered by the Spanish soldiers, a British officer had been put to death at Vittoria, and others were ill-treated at Santander."

A sullen obedience followed this correspondence for the moment; but the plundering system was soon renewed, and the inhabitants of Bidarray as well as those of the Val de Baygorry were provoked to action. Wellington, incensed by their activity, then issued a proclamation, calling upon them to take arms openly and join Soult, or stay peaceably at home, declaring he would otherwise burn their villages, and hang all the inhabitants. Thus, notwithstanding the outcries against the French for this system of repressing the partida warfare in Spain, it was considered by the English general justifiable and necessary. The threat, however, sufficed; the Basques set the pecuniary advantages derived from the British troops, and the misery of an avenging warfare, against the evils of Spanish plunder, and generally disregarded Harispe's appeals to their patriotism. Soult also, expecting reinforcements, seeing little to be gained by insurrection, and desirous to resume the offensive, ordered Harispe to leave only the troops absolutely necessary for the defence of St. Jean Pied de Port and its entrenched camp, with a few Basques as scouts in the valleys, to concentrate his force at Mendionde, Helette and La Houssoa, hem in the right of the allies, and make incursions beyond the upper Nive. This

was on the 14th; the 23d, Harispe, knowing Morillo was to forage on the side of Bidarray, fell on him, and though the supporting troops repulsed his first attack, he finally pushed all back with some loss. About the same time, one of Hill's posts, near the confluence of the Aran with the Adour, was surprised by some French, who remained until fresh troops forced them to repass the river again. This was in retaliation for the surprise of a French post a few days before by the sixth division, which was attended with circumstances repugnant to the friendly habits long established between the French and British troops at the outposts. The value of such a generous intercourse old soldiers well understand, and some illustrations of it at this period may be quoted. On the 9th of December, the forty-third was assembled on an open space within twenty yards of the enemy's out-sentry; yet the latter continued to walk his beat for an hour, relying so confidently on the customary system, that he placed his knapsack on the ground to ease his shoulders. When the order to advance was given, one of the soldiers, having told him to go away, helped him to replace his pack, and the firing then commenced. Next morning, the French in like manner warned a forty-third sentry to retire. A more remarkable instance happened, however, when Wellington, desirous of getting to the top of a hill occupied by the enemy near Bayonne, ordered some riflemen to drive the French away; seeing them stealing up too close, as he thought, he called out to fire; but with a loud voice one of those old soldiers replied, "*no firing!*" and holding up the butt of his rifle, tapped it in a peculiar way. At the well-understood signal, which meant "*we must have the hill for a short time*," the French, who, though they could not maintain, would not have relinquished the post without a fight if they had been fired upon, quietly retired. And this signal would never have been made, if the post had been one capable of a permanent defence, so well do veterans understand war and its proprieties.

The English chief now only waited for practicable roads to take the offensive, with an army superior in every point of view to Soult's; for that marshal's numbers were about to be reduced, his conscripts were deserting, and the inclemency of the weather was filling his hospitals; but the bronzed veterans of his adversary, impassive to fatigue, patient to endure, fierce in execution, were free from serious maladies, and able to plant their colors wherever their general listed. All the country was, however, a vast quagmire; it was with difficulty provisions, or even orders, could be conveyed to the different quarters, and a Portuguese brigade on the right of the Nive was several days without food, from the swelling of the rivulets which stopped the commissariat mules. At the sea-side

the troops were better off, yet with a horrible counterpoise; for on that iron-bound coast, storms and shipwrecks were so frequent, that scarcely a day passed but some vessel, sometimes many together, were seen embayed and drifting towards the reefs, which shoot out like needles for several miles. Once in this situation, there was no human help! a faint cry might be heard at intervals, but the tall ship floated slowly and solemnly onwards until the first rock arrested her; a roaring surge then dashed her to pieces, and the shore was strewed with broken timbers and dead bodies. December and January were thus passed by the allies, but February saw Wellington break into France the successful invader of that mighty country. Yet neither his nor Soult's military operations can be understood without a previous description of political affairs, which shall be given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

Political state of Portugal—Political state of Spain—Lord Wellington advises the English government to prepare for a war with Spain, and to seize St. Sebastian as a security for the withdrawal of the British and Portuguese troops—The seat of government and the new Cortes are removed to Madrid—the Duke of San Carlos arrives secretly with the treaty of Valancay—It is rejected by the Spanish Regency and Cortes—Lord Wellington's views on the subject.

Portugal.—When Beresford quitted Lisbon to rejoin the army, the vexatious conduct of the government was renewed with greater violence; and its ill-will was vented upon the English residents, whose goods were arbitrarily seized, and their persons imprisoned, without regard to justice or international law. The supply and reinforcing of the army were the pretences for these exactions, yet the army was neither supplied nor recruited; for though Beresford's new regulations produced nine thousand trained soldiers, they were, in contempt of the subsidizing treaty, retained in the dépôts.* At first, this was attributed to want of means for marching, and Wellington then obtained shipping to convey them; but the regency still withheld the greatest number, alleging in excuse, the ill-conduct of the Spaniards relative to the military convention established between the two countries.

This convention had been concluded in 1812, to enable the Portuguese troops to establish hospitals, and draw certain resources from Spain, upon fixed conditions; one of these was, that supplies might be purchased, half with ready money, half with bills on the Portuguese treasury; yet in December, 1813, the Spanish envoy

* Mr. Stuart, MSS.