gratulated themselves on the termination of the CHAP. II. pursuit.

1811. March.

So accurate were the calculations by which the movements of the attacking columns were regulated, that they almost simultaneously appeared on the different sides of the mountain, and succeeded in nearly reaching the summit before Mar. 29. they were discovered by the enemy. The latter precipitately retreated without firing a shot, and the whole French army was driven across the Coa. A brigade of infantry, under General Maucune, posted considerably in front of Guarda, with difficulty escaped being cut off.

Driven from Guarda, Massena determined on a final effort to maintain himself within the frontier, by posting his army in a strong position along the banks of the Coa. The right flank extended to Ruivina, guarding the ford of Raponla de Coa, with a detachment at the bridge of Ferrereas. The left was at Subugal, and the eighth corps at Alfayates. The right of the allied army was opposite Subugal, the left at the bridge of Ferrereas; and Trant and Wilson crossed the Coa below Almeida, to threaten the communication of that place with Ciudad Rodrigo and the French army.

1811. April. The enemy was posted so strongly that his position was only approachable by the left flank; and on the morning of the third of April, the light division was directed to cross the Coa, at a ford several miles above Subugal, in rear of the corps of Regnier, while the third and fifth divisions should attack him in front; the latter crossing the river at the bridge of Subugal, the former at a ford a short distance above it. The sixth division remained opposite to Ruivina, and a battalion of the seventh observed their detachment at the bridge of Ferrereas.

Apr. 3.

The day was dark and cloudy, and a deep mist occasionally overspread the horizon, accompanied by storms of rain, which narrowed the scope of vision to the distance of a yard or two. A part of the light division had already crossed the river, when one of these impervious fogs came on. The enemy's piquets were driven in, and the troops advancing in pursuit, came at unawares on the left of the main body of Regnier's corps, which it was intended they should turn.

The consequence was that the advance was driven back on the forty-third regiment; and Regnier, by a partial dissipation of the mist, having ascertained the smallness of the force

opposed to him, directed on it a strong column CHAP. II. of infantry, supported by artillery and horse. This attack encountered a spirited repulse; and Colonel Beckwith's brigade advanced in turn against the enemy's position, where they were attacked by a fresh column of infantry on the left, and by a regiment of cavalry on the right. Under these circumstances the leading battalion would probably have been sacrificed, had not Colonel Beckwith, with great promptitude, retreated behind some stone enclosures, which enabled him to maintain his ground. The combat was then waged with vigour and pertinacity on both sides. Colonel Beckwith's brigade made another charge, drove back the enemy, and had gained possession of a howitzer, when the French cavalry advancing on their flank, again forced them to retire to their post. There they were joined by the other brigade of the light division, and Colonel Beckwith again advanced with his own brigade and the first battalion of the fifty-second. They were once more charged in flank by a fresh column of infantry supported by cavalry, and Colonel Beckwith took post in an enclosure on the top of the height, which enabled him to pro-

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CHAP. II. tect the howitzer, in the capture of which so much gallantry had been displayed.

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In this state of things, when Regnier was disposing his troops for another attack, the head of Picton's division came up and immediately opened fire. At the same moment, the fifth division, under General Dunlop, having forced the bridge, was seen ascending the heights to the enemy's right, and the cavalry appeared on the high ground in rear of the left. Regnier then observing himself to be nearly surrounded, retreated with great precipitation to Alfayates, leaving the howitzer and above three hundred men dead on the field. About an equal number were made prisoners. The loss of the allies in killed, wounded, and missing, amounted to one hundred and sixty one.

Considering the great numerical disparity of the parties in this well-fought engagement, the conduct of the light division was admirable. Under circumstances of disadvantage impossible to be foreseen, they maintained a contest of the most unequal description, and executed their manœuvres in presence of a superior enemy, with the most imposing steadiness and precision. "Although the operations of this day," says Lord Wellington, " were by unavoidable CHAP. II. accidents not performed in the manner I intended they should have been, I consider the action that was fought by the light division-by Colonel Beckwith's brigade principally-to be one of the most glorious that British troops were ever engaged in." Had the retreat of Regnier not been favoured by the fog, the results of the engagement would have been yet more brilliant and decisive.

The cavalry continued the pursuit as far as Alfayates, at which place the whole French army crossed the frontier and entered Spain. Massena hastened to concentrate behind the Agueda: and on the eighth, not a Frenchman remained in Portugal, except the garrison of Almeida, for the blockade of which Lord Wellington made immediate preparations. On the seventh, Sir William Erskine, who had been despatched with six squadrons of cavalry and two troops of horse-artillery, to reconnoitre Almeida, and drive in the enemy's posts, fell, unexpectedly, on a brigade of French infantry at Junça. Nothing could exceed the coolness and courage with which this body received the attacks of the assailants. The French commander formed his troops into a square, on which the cavalry 1811 April.

Apr. 8.

1811. April.

CHAP. II. could make no impression, though supported by the guns, which occasioned great havoc in the ranks. In this manner did the brigade continue its retreat, till it reached Duas Casas, carrying off the commanding officer, who was severely wounded, and affording a fine example of discipline and courage. The cavalry, however, succeeded in securing many prisoners, and, altogether, the loss of this gallant body was considerable.

> The allied army then took up a position on the Duas Casas, with its advanced posts on Gallegos and the Agueda. The militia under Trant and Wilson were at Cinca Villas and Malpartida; and the communication of Almeida, both with Ciudad Rodrigo and with the French army, was cut off.

> Thus terminated the invasion of Portugal;that invasion by which it was boastingly predicted that the British would be driven into the sea, and the conquest of Portugal be decisively achieved. From the moment of its advance from Almeida, the French army of Portugal had encountered a long, unbroken series of disaster and defeat. Massena had been baffled in all his plans by the skill of his opponent. In every

engagement he had been worsted; and at length, CHAP. II. with the loss of nearly half his numbers, had been driven headlong from the kingdom, without the achievement of a single exploit which could serve to mitigate his discomfiture. By the aid of a British army, one of the weakest and most insignificant kingdoms of Europe, had successfully bidden defiance to the arms of France, and vindicated her claims to liberty by the sword. To the people of Portugal, is the honour due of having first given to Europe the spectacle of a mighty armament, led by one of the great captains of Napoleon, retreating, baffled, dispirited, and defeated, from the territory of the kingdom it had vainly attempted to subdue

It is true, that a success so signal was not, and could not have been effected by the single and unaided efforts of the Portuguese nation. The age of miracles has passed-never to return. The Portuguese did all that a people so situated, so animated, and so suffering, could be expected to achieve. But it is to the zealous, ardent, and honest co-operation of England; to the consummate military talent of a British

CHAP. II. general; and to the gallantry and discipline of British soldiers, that a large share of the honour must be awarded.

> The government of France had hitherto treated the efforts of Britain for the liberation of the Peninsula, with scorn and derision. England, they said, invincible on her native element, is insignificant on shore. Her generals are without boldness-without skill-without experience. The career of Wellington, they declared, had been one unvaried series of pertinacious blunder and fortunate escape. He was "un homme borné"-a dull and plodding follower of vicious precedent, incapable of conducting war on an extended scale, or of improving the advantages offered by the blunders of his opponents "en grand general." British soldiers, it was said, though tolerable dischargers of firearms in a stationary position, were laggards in manœuvre, and only formidable from the stupidity which kept them ignorant of their danger, or the intoxication which emboldened them to brave it. Yet it was by these very men, and by the raw Portuguese levies which they disciplined and commanded,-by that very general whose talents

they denied, that Massena, in spite of all his CHAP. II. boasting, had been driven triumphantly from 1811.

Torres Vedras into Spain.

A spectacle was thus exhibited to the nations of the Peninsula which could not fail to exhilarate their hopes, and animate their exertions. Nay, more, Europe was at length taught that proud lesson which led eventually to the overthrow of the most gigantic system of usurpation of which modern history bears record. There was not a province of his mighty empire in which the moral tenure of the tyrant was not weakened. The yoke was loosened from the shoulders of his vassal sovereigns, and they waited but for the occurrence of a favourable moment when they might cast it from them, and assert their claim to independence.

It would be unjust to deny that, as a military movement, the compulsory retreat of Massena was conducted with consummate skill. The French army retreated en masse, their rear covered by a strong body under command of Marshal Ney. It was impossible to exceed the skill and boldness with which that officer, taking advantage of every favourable position, foiled and delayed the pursuit of a force ten times more

CHAP, II. numerous than that which he commanded. Resistance was uniformly made till the very last moment, when it could be continued with safety. All his movements were marked by a promptitude and precision highly admirable; by a fearless confidence, ever bold, yet never degenerating into rashness.

> From the moment, however, when Ney quitted the army, a decrease of vigour and energy was discernible. Worn by privation and fatigue, and looking back on a campaign which presented few features calculated to lighten and redeem the gloom by which it was overspread, the French soldiers no longer felt confidence in their leader. All that was gallant and daring in the retreat, was attributed to Nev; while the timid policy of Massena was made responsible for the misfortunes of the campaign. The knowledge that a difference of opinion existed between these celebrated tacticians, tended still further to excite dissatisfaction. The departure of Ney was regarded as a misfortune by the whole army; and the lingering hope that the campaign might yet terminate in some honourable and distinguished achievement, gave place to forebodings of misfortune. These anticipations were not belied by

the event. Massena, by the want of due vigi- CHAP. II. lance, was driven disgracefully from his position at Guarda; and he at length entered Spain with an army whose moral confidence was gone.

1811.

During the retreat, the loss of the French army may be calculated at about five thousand men: while that of the allies amounted to little more than six hundred.

From the moment they crossed the frontier of Portugal, the invaders commenced a course of barbarous devastation, which continued unbroken till they were driven forth from its territory. The necessities of an army, forced to subsist on such produce as the surrounding country could afford, rendered pillage, to a certain degree, inevitable; and, in such circumstances, it was scarcely to be expected that acts of violence should not occasionally occur. But the gratuitous and wanton cruelty with which those inhabitants were treated, who, trusting to the promises of Massena, remained peaceably in their dwellings, must cast enduring infamy on all, by whom such a course of inhuman outrage was perpetrated or abetted.

"The conduct of the French army," says Lord Wellington, "throughout this retreat, has

1811. been marked by a barbarity seldom equalled, and never surpassed. Even in the towns of Torres Novas, Thomar, and Pernes, in which the head-quarters of some of the corps had been for some months, and in which the inhabitants were induced by promises of good treatment to remain, they were plundered, and many of their houses destroyed on the night the enemy withdrew from their position; and they have since burned every town and village through

which they passed."

The track of the French army to the frontier was marked by desolation. The town of Leyria, with the Bishop's palace, was burned. The Convent of Alcobaça, one of the most ancient and magnificent structures in the kingdom, shared a similar fate. Batalha, a religious edifice of equal beauty and antiquity, was likewise destroyed. In the hearts of these degraded barbarians, all human sympathies seem to have been dried up. The claims of age or sex afforded no protection from their murderous outrage. The bodies of murdered Portuguese were seen lying unburied, by the road, many of them—especially those of priests—mutilated in a manner disgusting to huma-

nity. "This is the mode," says Lord Wel-CHAP. II. lington, in a tone of honourable indignation, "This is the mode in which the promises have been performed, which were held out in the proclamation of the French commander-inchief, in which the inhabitants of Portugal were assured, that he was not come to make war on them, but, with a powerful army of one hundred and ten thousand men, to drive the English into the sea. It is to be hoped that the example of what has occurred in this country, will teach the people of this and other nations what reliance is to be placed on such promises and assurances; and that there is no security for life, or for any thing that renders life valuable, except in decided resistance to the enemy."

But the extent of the demoralization of the French army can be conceived only by those who saw the state of the cantonments in which they had been stationary for several months. There was something revolting, and even degrading, to human nature, in the spectacle of extreme uncleanness which they exhibited. In the houses inhabited by the soldiers, all the instinctive decencies, by which man, even in his mere animal nature, is raised above the brutes,

what has occurred in this country will teach the

Thap. II. had been habitually disregarded.—But on such a subject it is unpleasant to enlarge. Let it suffice that history can produce no instance of civilized and Christian man, reduced to a state of debasement more abject and humiliating, than that of the French army, in this war of unprincipled spoliation.

1811

## CHAPTER III.

SIEGE OF BADAJOS-BATTLE OF BAROSSA.

In England, the precipitate abandonment of CHAP. III. Portugal by the enemy, contributed to revive the hopes of the people, and consolidate the power of the government. Convinced that there was now a fair, though distant, prospect of ultimate success, both Parliament and the country gave their cordial support to the policy of prosecuting the war with a vigour, firmness, and energy, worthy of England, and of the glorious cause of which she stood forth the chief champion. This was the general sense of the nation; and, supported by its voice, the ministry of Mr. Perceval were enabled to overcome all the difficulties by which they were surrounded. These indeed were of no trifling magnitude. The illness of the King occasioned



CHAP. III. the appointment of a regency, which threatened an entire change in the members of the government. In both houses of Parliament the decided preponderance of talent was on the side of the Whigs, and the opposition which government had to encounter was powerful and systematic. With a blindness scarcely reconcilable with their acknowledged astuteness of intellect, or with an unfairness, which the ordinary prejudices of party can but partially excuse, the great Whig leaders endeavoured, by fallacy and misrepresentation, to raise the fears and depress the hopes of the people, at a crisis of difficulty and danger, when the destinies of England hung trembling in the balance. They knew that the honour of their country was, at length, irretrievably committed in the cause of the Peninsula. They knew it to be impossible to withdraw the British army, not only without danger to the national safety, (for the danger might have been braved,) but without disgrace. Yet, knowing this, they did not hesitate to advocate a policy which must have cast a deep tarnish on the honour of their country. They vehemently urged ministers to retire from a contest at once hopeless and absurd. Portugal, they declared,

could not be defended. The retreat to Torres CHAP. III. Vedras was designated as a hopeless abandonment of the whole kingdom to the enemy. When Massena was triumphantly driven beyond the frontier, the country was gravely told that his movement was a mere change of position from the Zezere to the Agueda-a manœuvre to lead the allies to a distance from their resources. while the enemy would enjoy the advantage of removing from a ravaged and desolate country, to one comparatively fertile and unexhausted. The honour of Napoleon, they said, was pledged to effect the subjugation of the Peninsula; and, unfortunately, his power was commensurate with his ambition. Under these circumstances, it was worse than folly to expect that a British army could prevent the consummation of his projects. The resistance of England should be confined to that element on which her power was undisputed and irresistible.

Such was the language of the Opposition; fortunately, it was not in unison either with the judgment or the feelings of the nation at large. It contributed to lessen the popularity of the Whigs, and to weaken the influence which the leaders of that party had maintained over the

CHAP. III. public mind. The Prince Regent, from respect

to his father, expressed his determination to make no immediate change in the servants of the crown. The prime minister, Mr. Perceval, displayed a talent and aptitude for business of the highest order; and the precarious tenure by which the ministry held office, occasioned no diminution of the vigour of their measures. A grant of one hundred thousand pounds was voted by Parliament, for the relief of the suffering Portuguese; and large subscriptions for a similar purpose were made throughout the kingdom. By this generous aid, the lives of thousands, who must otherwise have perished, were preserved; many of them to fight the battles of their country, and contribute to the downfal of that despotism from which they had suffered.

One of the first measures of Lord Wellington, after the territory of Portugal had been freed from its invaders, was to issue a proclamation warning the people to prepare against future efforts of the enemy. He recommended that every man in the kingdom, capable of bearing arms, should become familiarized with their use. That, in each district, places of safety should be prepared, to which the inefficient part

of the population might retire in case of need; CHAP. III. that every one should bury his more valuable effects, keeping the place of deposit secret from all not interested in the concealment; and that such stores of provision, as were not capable of removal or secretion, should be destroyed. If such measures of precaution were adopted, Lord Wellington assured the Portuguese, that the subjection of their kingdom could not be effected by any invading force, however numerous and formidable. The issue of such attempts, he declared, was certain. They would terminate in the independence of Portugal, in the happiness of its inhabitants, and in the eternal honour of those by whose unshrinking firmness and patriotism the freedom of their country had been achieved.

Lord Wellington, having issued this proclamation, and made arrangements for the blockade of Almeida, distributed the remainder of his army in cantonments, and set out for the Alentejo, where operations of immediate moment appeared to demand his presence.

On the defeat of Mendizabel, Soult completed the investment of Badajos, and pushed forward the siege with increased vigour. Parallels were thrown out to the right and left of the Pardale1811.

protection. Unfortunately, the Governor, Gen-

eral Menacho, who had hitherto conducted the

CHAP. III. ras, and enfilading batteries thrown up for their

1811. March.

defence with great spirit, was killed by a cannon-shot, when standing on the ramparts to observe the effect of a sortie. His successor, General Imaz, was a man of less energy; and, from the moment he assumed the command, the vigour of the resistance was evidently decreased. Soult, on the other hand, having received intelligence of the retreat of Massena, was unremitting in his efforts for the reduction of the place. They were successful. On the ninth of March, the breaching battery opened, Mar. 10. and, on the day following, the place was given up, though the Governor was made aware, by a telegraphic despatch, that a strong force was advancing to his relief. On the eleventh, the garrison, nearly eight thousand strong, marched out by the gate of the Trinity, deposited their arms on the glacis, and were made prisoners of war. It was conceded by Mortier that the grenadiers should enjoy the privilege of marching out by the breach; but, to effect this purpose, several hours' labour was found necessary: a sufficient proof of the pusillanimous conduct of the

March.

Governor in surrendering the city. The indig- CHAP. III. nant comment of Lord Wellington, on the unworthy dereliction of their duty by the Spanish leaders, is worthy of record. "Thus," he says, "were Olivença and Badajos given up without any sufficient cause: while Marshal Soult, with a corps which was never supposed to exceed twenty thousand men, besides capturing these two places, made prisoners and destroyed above twenty-two thousand Spanish troops."

On the fall of Badajos, Mortier advanced against Campo Mayer. The town was of little strength, and the works in bad order, and partly dismantled. It was garrisoned by a small detachment of militia, and only five guns were mounted on the ramparts. Under all these disadvantages, however, it held out for eleven days, and did not surrender till a practicable Mar. 23. breach had been effected.

A detachment, under Latour Maubourg, was also sent against Albuquerque. The placewhich was formerly one of great strength, and still capable of resistance-surrendered without firing a shot. The French thus gained possession of seventeen brass guns, of large calibre, which were immediately sent off to Badajos.

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CHAP. III. The satisfaction of Marshal Soult at the successful course of the campaign in Estramadura, must have been considerably diminished by a reverse experienced about the same time by the corps of Victor before Cadiz. In the month of January, the Spanish government, in concert with General Graham, had determined on making a combined attack on the rear of the French entrenchments. In order to remove all feeling of jealousy on the part of the Spaniards, General Graham consented that the chief command should be assumed by General La Pena. The enterprise seemed to promise success, since the , corps remaining before Cadiz did not exceed twelve thousand men,-and the allies would be enabled to attack them with a force numerically superior.

It was accordingly concerted that the expedition should be conveyed by sea to Tariffa; and on being joined by the Spanish force at St. Roque, the combined army should advance against Victor; and, driving him from his lines, destroy the extensive works which had been erected from the bay of Cadiz to the mouth of the Santi Petri. An attempt was likewise to be made by the troops remaining in the Isla de Leon, under General Zayas, to open a communication with CHAP. III. the allied force, and bear part in the operations.

On the twenty-first of February the expedition February. sailed; but the wind becoming violent it was found impossible to land at Tariffa, or any port in the neighbourhood. It was decided, therefore, to proceed to Algesiras, though from that point there was no road practicable for artillery. By the indefatigable exertions of the sailors, however, the guns were conveyed in boats to Tariffa, in spite of the formidable impediments of wind and current.

On the evening of the twenty-seventh, the Feb. 27. whole combined force was assembled at Tariffa; and on the following day continued its advance on Casas Viejas, and Veger, in hope of surprising the detachments by which they were occupied. The enemy retreated with some loss from these places. In the meantime General Zayas had succeeded in throwing a bridge across the Santi Petri, and forming a têté de pont for its protection. On the nights of the third and fourth, the post was attacked by the enemy, but on both occasions they encountered a repulse. On the fifth, the allied army having been joined Mar. 5. by the troops from St. Roque, after a long and

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CHAP. III. fatiguing march, arrived on the low ridge of Barossa, when General Lardizabel, with his division, was directed to advance against the French entrenchments near the mouth of the Santi Petri.

> In the execution of this mission, the Spaniards conducted themselves in a manner worthy of applause. They attacked the enemy with gallantry and success, and forced him, after some resistance, to withdraw. La Pena having thus opened a communication with the Isla de Leon, moved forward, with the main body of the Spaniards, to the heights of Bermeja, to secure the advantage thus acquired, and directed General Graham to advance with the British to his support.

This order, notwithstanding the fatigue of the troops, was promptly obeyed; and General Graham had already commenced his advance, when two divisions of the enemy were suddenly discovered, one of which directed its march on the heights of Barossa, still occupied by the rear-guard, while the other bore directly down on his flank.

The scene of approaching encounter was a rugged and extensive plain, nearly circled by a

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pine-forest, which sweeps from the Santi Petri CHAP. III. round its northern extremity to the sea. The plain is intersected by several ridges of rough and sandy eminences, which stretch directly inland from the shore. The ridge of Barossa is about a league distant from the mouth of the Santi Petri; and the Bermeja height, in a direct line, is nearly equidistant from both of these points. At its termination, near to the sea, stands a ruinous tower.

On discovering the approach of the enemy, General Graham immediately directed his force to counter-march, with the determination of assuming the offensive, at once perceiving that to retreat under such circumstances could not but endanger the safety of the whole army. General Graham, accordingly, formed his troops into two divisions. Of these, the right, commanded by General Dilkes, advanced towards the Barossa heights. The left, under Colonel Wheatley, hastened to clear a wood which intervened on the left and attack the enemy's column in that direction. The latter came first into action. Unchecked by the fire of the British guns, which being judiciously posted, and admirably served, did great execution, the

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CHAP. III. enemy's right wing under General Laval pressed on gallantly to meet the attack which the British were preparing. A warm fire of musquetry was for some time maintained by both parties, the brigade of Colonel Wheatley continuing its advance. At length a decisive charge, led by the eighty-seventh regiment, and three companies of the Coldstream Guards, drove the enemy back in confusion, with the loss of a howitzer and an eagle, which remained in possession of Major Gough of the eighty-seventh. The pursuit was continued across a narrow valley; and a reserve formed beyond it was routed with facility, all attempts to re-form being prevented by the destructive action of the British guns.

> The right wing was not less successful. The enemy had gained the heights of Barossa with little difficulty; the rear-guard and Spanish battalions, by which it was occupied, retiring after some shew of resistance. General Ruffin, by whom this division of the enemy was commanded, confident in his numbers and in the advantage of position, advanced to meet the assailants on the brow of the ascent. A warm engagement ensued. The fire of musquetry and artillery from the heights, occasioned great loss to

the British; but after a severe and sanguinary CHAP. III. contest, the enemy were driven from the heights in complete disorder.

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Thus defeated at all points, Marshal Victor thought only of retreat. The exhausted state of the troops rendered pursuit impossible, and General Graham halted for several hours on the eastern side of the heights which had been the theatre of struggle. The results of this victory were the capture of an eagle and six pieces of artillery, with nearly five hundred prisoners, including two generals, (Ruffin and Rousseau,) who both died of their wounds. The enemy lost nearly a third of his number, upwards of three thousand being killed, wounded, or made prisoners. The victors also suffered severely, considering the smallness of the force engaged. Their loss amounted to about twelve hundred.

During the whole of this brilliant engagement, General Graham received no support from the Spaniards under La Pena. Two battalions, indeed, which were attached to his division, and had remained with the rear-guard on the height till ordered to retire, made every effort to rejoin him, but did not come up till the enemy were in 1811. April.

CHAP. III. full retreat. With a force greatly superior in number to that of Villatte, who, with four thousand men, was posted on the Santi Petri, for the protection of the lines, had La Pena thrown himself between that body and the centre, and pushed forward on Chiclana, the most important consequences must have resulted. The manœuvre would of necessity have been decisive. Victor could only have saved himself by instant and precipitate retreat; and Villatte must either have at once abandoned the whole of the posts on the Santi Petri, or his retreat would have been cut off. This golden opportunity of achieving the entire object of the expedition, either through ignorance or cowardice, was lost by La Pena. During the whole engagement he remained inactive at Bermeja, satisfied with maintaining a position which the enemy were in no condition seriously to attack.

> General Graham was naturally indignant at the disgraceful conduct of the Spanish general. After such a lesson, it was impossible that in any future operations he could place any reliance on the support of such a man. He, therefore, withdrew from his command; and early on the next morning crossed the Santi Petri. La Pena