

CHAPTER VI.

OPERATIONS IN THE WESTERN PROVINCES—
IN ANDALUSIA, AND VALENCIA.

CHAP. VI. ON the separation of Marmont and Soult, it
 1811. was agreed that Dorsenne, with the army of the
 September. North, should enter Galicia, by a rapid move-
 ment, seize Corunna by a *coup-de-main*, fortify
 Lugo, and thus once more obtain military pos-
 session of the province. In pursuance of this
 project, Dorsenne, abandoning the Asturias,
 moved towards Astorga, where the Gallician
 army under General Abadia had taken post.
 An attack was ordered, the Spaniards retreated
 after a feeble resistance, and Dorsenne continued
 his advance into the province. In the mean-
 while, Lord Wellington, having collected his
 army on the Coa, blockaded Ciudad Rodrigo.
 Marmont, alarmed for the safety of so important
 a fortress, recalled Dorsenne, with the view of

raising the blockade, and throwing copious supplies into the place. CHAP. VI.

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By compelling the enemy to concentrate their forces, for the relief of Ciudad Rodrigo, Lord Wellington gained two important objects. He relieved Galicia, and drew the corps of Souham from Navarre, where it had been sent for the purpose of keeping down the strong Guerilla parties, from which great loss and annoyance were experienced. It was with a view to such benefits, rather than any immediate hope of reducing the fortress, for the siege of which he was not yet prepared, that Lord Wellington had formed the blockade. On learning the approach of Marmont, he therefore prepared to abandon it, and occupy a defensive position, which would enable him to ascertain the force of the enemy, and regulate his future movements as circumstances might direct.

As a point of support, therefore, by which he might be enabled to keep out a strong advanced corps to the latest moment, he caused the heights in front of Guinaldo to be strengthened by field-works, and posted his troops in readiness to concentrate in the position, whenever such a measure should become necessary. The division of Gen-

CHAP. VI. eral Picton was placed in advance on the heights of El Bodon, between Guinaldo and Pastores. The light division was on the right of the Agueda, near Martiago, its right resting on the mountains which divide Castile and Estramadura. The left of the army, under General Graham, who had succeeded Sir Brent Spencer as second in command, was on the Lower Azava. Don Carlos d'España, and Don Julian Sanchez observed the lower Agueda; and Sir Stapleton Cotton, with the cavalry, was on the upper Azava, in the centre. General Foy, having collected a body of troops in upper Estramadura, the fifth division was posted in rear of the right, to observe the road leading from Perales, and the fourth division remained at Guinaldo.

On the twenty-second September, the armies of Marmont and Dorsenne effected a junction at Tamames, about three leagues distant from Ciudad Rodrigo. Their combined force amounted to sixty thousand men, of which six thousand were cavalry. That of the allies, including four thousand cavalry, did not exceed forty thousand men. On the twenty-third, the enemy appeared in the plain near the city, but again retired. On the day following, they came on in great force,

and escorted a large convoy of waggons, cars, and loaded mules, into the town.

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During these operations, the allied army remained passive in its positions; and the enemy, of course, were left in considerable uncertainty as to the intentions of Lord Wellington. These, however, Marmont took speedy measures to ascertain. On the morning of the twenty-fifth, a body of French cavalry, consisting of about thirty squadrons, supported by a division of infantry, and twelve pieces of artillery, was observed in motion, along the great road leading from Ciudad Rodrigo to Guinaldo, on the left of El Bodon. To delay the progress of this formidable column, and give time for the coming up of other troops, Lord Wellington moved the brigade of General Colville, consisting of the fifth, seventy-seventh, and ninety-fourth regiments, to a height at some distance on the left, commanding the road to Guinaldo. This brigade had scarcely taken its position, when the enemy's artillery came up, and a brisk cannonade was maintained on both sides. The cavalry made a furious attack on the Portuguese guns, and succeeded in driving the gunners from their posts. This, however, was but the success of a moment. The fifth regiment

CHAP. VI. was ordered forward, and maintaining a brisk
1811. fire as they advanced, charged with the bayonet,
September. when within a few yards of the enemy. By
this singular manœuvre, the guns were regained.
The fifth, maintaining their advantage, pursued
the cavalry down the declivity of the height,
and across the ravine.

Though repulsed in this attack, the French cavalry, led by General Montbrun, again executed a charge of the boldest character, on the part of the position occupied by the fifth and seventy-seventh. These regiments suffered them to approach within a few paces, when firing a volley with great effect, the French instantly retreated in great confusion. In another part of the field a few squadrons of British and German dragoons, shewed gallant front to the enemy, and, notwithstanding the overwhelming superiority of numbers by which they were opposed, continued to skirmish with great effect.

It was not, however, the plan of Lord Wellington to commit his army by any serious engagement. The divisions had previously received orders to dispute the ground, but to retire when pressed, on Guinaldo. But the necessity of a retrogressive movement became in-

stantly apparent, by the discovery that a column hitherto hid by the nature of the ground, was in the act of turning the right of the position. The heights, therefore, were abandoned, and the troops, formed in square, were put in motion on Guinaldo.

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Nothing to a military eye could be finer than the scene which ensued. The battalions were repeatedly charged on their march by the enemy's cavalry, whom they repulsed with a gallantry and steadiness impossible to be surpassed. At one time, the fifth and seventy-seventh were charged on three faces of the square at the same moment. For upwards of two miles these regiments, and the twenty-first Portuguese, under Colonel Bacellar, continued their retreat in all the regularity of a parade movement, though entirely enveloped by the French squadrons. The chief loss sustained was from the Horse-artillery, which came up, and, firing on solid masses of infantry, did considerable execution.

Lord Wellington, having gained the object for which the position of Guinaldo had been fortified, would have immediately retired, had not an unforeseen circumstance prevented it.

CHAP. VI. By some mistake, the light division did not receive orders to retreat till all support had been withdrawn; and General Crawford, apprehensive that in crossing the Agueda at Robleda he might be intercepted, and ignorant that Perales was occupied by a strong corps of the enemy, determined to retreat along the right bank of the river. Orders, therefore, were instantly sent to General Crawford, to retrace his steps, and cross by the ford of Robleda, and the divisions of Picton and Cole remained in Guinaldo to cover his junction.

In the meantime, dispositions were made to receive the enemy, should he think proper to attack the position. Fuente Guinaldo stands on a high ridge, nearly three miles in length, stretching from the Agueda across an extensive plain, by which it is bounded on the left. To secure this flank, two divisions were stationed at Nava d'Aver. The heights were occupied by the third and fourth divisions, and the brigade of General Pack. A division was posted on the right of the Agueda to face Perales, and counteract any attempt of the enemy to pass the river in rear of the position.

Sep. 26.

The morning of the twenty-sixth, which was

expected to bring battle, passed over quietly. CHAP. VI.
 Marmont contented himself with making an ex-
 hibition of his force,—causing it to execute a va-
 riety of manœuvres, the rapidity and precision of
 which attracted the admiration of all who wit-
 nessed them. During the time thus occupied,
 the light division joined the army; and Lord
 Wellington, at nightfall, unwilling to court bat-
 tle in a position assumed for a mere temporary
 object, put his army in retreat towards Alfayates,
 and stationed his rear-guard at Aldea de Ponte.

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On the twenty-seventh this village was at-
 tacked by the enemy, who twice succeeded in
 gaining possession of it. Twice, also, they were
 driven back by the gallantry of the fourth divi-
 sion, who ultimately remained masters of the
 disputed post. At night, the army were again
 in motion, and fell back to a position on the
 heights behind Soito, where an inflexion of the
 Coa gave protection to both flanks.

Sep. 27.

In this position Lord Wellington determined
 to offer battle. The manœuvres of the enemy
 had hitherto been marked by the greatest confi-
 dence and boldness. They betrayed throughout
 an evident feeling of superiority, and something
 even of contemptuous disregard for an opponent

CHAP. VI. whose policy had hitherto been wholly defensive. It was clearly the intention of Marmont to drive the allies across the Coa; but the army had already reached the ground which Lord Wellington had selected to give a decisive check to his progress. The natural defences of this position were strong. The flanks being covered by the Coa could not be turned; but it presented no avenue of retreat. The success of the enemy at any one point of attack must have proved fatal to the army; and the selection of such ground at once proved to Marmont, notwithstanding his immense superiority, how little apprehension was entertained by Lord Wellington of the result of a battle.

It did not, however, accord with the views of Marmont to accept the challenge thus offered.

Oct. 1. He retired to Ciudad Rodrigo, where his army separated; part, under Dorsenne, returning to the north; and the remainder, still retaining its designation as the Army of Portugal, moved towards the pass of Banos and Placentia. The allied army then went into cantonments, and head-quarters were established at Frenada.

But perhaps the most splendid achievement of the campaign was performed by General Hill.

That officer remained in the neighbourhood of Portalegre, covering the province of Alentejo against any incursion by the garrison of Badajoz, while Castanos was employed recruiting the Estramaduran army, which had been so miserably sacrificed by the imbecility of Mendizabel. On learning that Castanos had already embodied a considerable number of recruits, Marshal Soult directed Girard, with about four thousand foot, and a thousand horse, to march to Caceres, and scour the neighbourhood, in order to disperse these newly collected levies. The presence of this force was productive of much inconvenience. It narrowed the limits and resources of Castanos, whose troops (in the miserable state of the Spanish government and commissariat) depended solely for assistance on what the neighbouring country might afford. A movement, therefore, was concerted, by which a signal blow might be struck against Girard, and the province relieved from the burden under which it laboured.

The execution of this enterprise was intrusted to General Hill, who, on the twenty-second of October, with such force as was deemed sufficient for the service, set out from Portalegre to

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Oct. 22.

- CHAP. VI. ward the Spanish frontier. On the day following he reached Albuquerque, where he learned that the cavalry of Girard had fallen back from Aliseda to Arroyo del Puerco. On the twenty-
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- Oct. 25. fifth, the Spaniards, under the Conde de Penne Villemur, drove the enemy from Arroyo del Puerco. The French cavalry then fell back to Malpartida, which Girard occupied as an advanced post, his main body still remaining at Caceres.
- Oct. 26. On reaching Malpartida, at daybreak on the twenty-sixth, General Hill learned that the enemy had retired during the night, followed by a party of Spanish cavalry. It was soon after ascertained that Girard had quitted Caceres; but as the direction he had taken was uncertain, General Hill remained at Malpartida to watch his movements.
- Oct. 27. Having ascertained that the enemy had marched on Torre Mocha, the allies were put in motion on the morning of the twenty-seventh, by Aldea de Cano, and Casa de St. Antonio. As this was a shorter route than the one followed by Girard, General Hill was not without hopes of being enabled to intercept and bring him to action. On the march, however, he learned that the enemy had quitted Torre Mocha in the

morning, and moved to Arroyo de Molinos, leaving a rear-guard at Albala. Satisfied, from this information, that Girard was ignorant of his movements, General Hill, on the same evening, made a forced march to Alcuesca, where he halted in bivouac, taking every precaution to avoid discovery by the enemy's patrols.

About two in the morning the troops moved on from Alcuesca in one column towards Arroyo de Molinos, a village situated at the foot of a mountain crescent, generally inaccessible, which sweeps round it, and embraces a diameter of about two miles. There were three roads which it was necessary to occupy in order to cut off the enemy's retreat. That leading to Truxillo, which winds round the eastern horn of the crescent; that to Merida, which diverges at right angles from the route by which the allies were advancing, and that leading to Medellin.

Though the distance from Alcuesca was little more than a league, it was nearly seven o'clock before the troops had defiled from the mountains, and formed under cover of a low ridge about half a mile from Arroyo de Molinos. General Hill then divided his force into three columns. The left column, consisting of the seventy-first

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CHAP. VI. and ninety-second regiments, supported by the
fiftieth, and three pieces of Portuguese artillery,
1811. under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart,
October. was directed to carry the village at the point of
the bayonet.

The right column, consisting of Colonel Wilson's brigade, and the Portuguese brigade of Colonel Ashworth, under Major-General Howard, was instructed to move to the right, to cut off the retreat of the enemy towards Medellin, and finally to attack their left and rear.

The cavalry, under Sir William Erskine, was placed between the two columns of infantry, ready to act in front, or move round either of them, as occasion might require. Unfortunately, the British cavalry, mistaking the road in the darkness, were delayed in their advance; and the Spanish horse, under Penne Villemur, enjoyed the honour of first encountering the enemy;—the Spanish infantry remained in reserve, and bore no part in the engagement.

The route of these columns lay through a plain thinly covered with cork wood and evergreen oak; and, as day dawned, a violent storm of rain and mist came on, under cover of which the troops continued their ad-

vance. On the left, Colonel Stewart moved rapidly on the village, which they succeeded in gaining unperceived, though the enemy were in motion, and a brigade had marched an hour before for Medellin. The seventy-first and ninety-second then charged through the street, driving every thing before them at the point of the bayonet, and leaving the fiftieth regiment, by which they were closely followed, to secure the prisoners. The enemy's infantry, on escaping from the town, immediately formed into two squares, with the cavalry on the left, and opened fire on the seventy-first and ninety-second regiments. The former took post behind a wall and immediately opened fire; while the ninety-second formed line on the right flank of the French, supported by two Portuguese guns, which shortly after came up and did great execution. The ninety-second, which had hitherto been directed to reserve their fire, then received orders to charge; but the French, without waiting their approach, retreated rapidly, and in great confusion towards the mountain in their rear.

At this moment the column of General Howard approached, and the cavalry crossing the head of the retreating column, succeeded in separating

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CHAP. VI. the French horse from the infantry, and, by repeated charges, threw it into confusion. General Howard, finding it impossible to get between the enemy and the mountain, made a rapid movement round its base, and, ascending at a point opposite to that chosen by the enemy, encountered them on the shoulder of the hill.

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No resource then remained to the enemy, but to disperse or surrender. All order was at an end; the soldiers, throwing away their arms, fled, panic-stricken, towards the steepest parts of the ridge. Of the fugitives many were made prisoners; and General Morillo, with the Spanish infantry, one British, and one Portuguese battalion, continued the pursuit for eight leagues. General Girard, with a few hundred men, mostly without arms, escaped in the direction of Serena.

In this brilliant affair fifteen hundred of the enemy, including General Brun and the Duke d'Aremberg, were made prisoners, and the whole of their artillery, baggage, stores, and ammunition were taken, at an expense, on the part of the British, of sixty-four killed and wounded, and of only seven on that of the Portuguese. The loss of the Spaniards was likewise very trifling.

General Hill returned to his cantonments at CHAP. VI. Portalegre, where he remained till the end of 1811. December. He then made a rapid movement on December. Merida, in hope of surprising a detachment of the enemy, under General Dombrowsky, which occupied that town. About three leagues from Merida, however, he fell in with a foraging Dec. 29. party, which, though briskly pursued, succeeded in effecting its retreat, and gave the alarm. The enemy, thus informed of his approach, immediately abandoned the town, leaving a considerable magazine of flour; and General Hill immediately directed his march against Drouet, who had taken post with part of his corps at Almandrelejo. On reaching that town, however, he found that Drouet had retired towards the south; and, having cleared this portion of the province from the enemy, General Hill placed his troops in cantonments in Merida, and its vicinity.

In Cadiz, and its vicinity, nothing of importance took place till the close of the year. The Cortes, occupied with matters of speculative policy, had done nothing to promote the interests, or acquire the confidence of the country. What Spain wanted, was a leader of skill, enterprise, and

CHAP. VI. genius, to give unity to her exertions, and consolidate those resources which had hitherto been wasted and misapplied. But this truth, obvious to all reasonable men, was not appreciated by the Cortes or the government. After the abandonment of Portugal by Massena, it was proposed that the frontier provinces should be placed under command of Lord Wellington. On a motion to this effect, a debate took place in the Cortes; and the proposition, being somewhat wounding to Spanish pride, was negatived by a large majority.

Ballasteros, who had been appointed to the command in Andalusia, remained in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar; and, adopting a desultory system of warfare, occasioned great annoyance to the enemy. Soult, who had already made several ineffectual efforts to crush so annoying an opponent, at length despatched General Godinot with a force of about eight thousand men to execute this service. Ballasteros, by a variety of skilful manœuvres, avoided engaging a force superior to his own, and when pressed by the enemy sought shelter beneath the guns of Gibraltar.

In the meanwhile, a detachment from Cadiz,

under Colonel Skerret, and a Spanish force under Copons, were sent to occupy Tariffa, as a diversion in favour of Ballasteros. Tariffa was important in other respects. It afforded a secure point from which the allies might annoy the rear of the corps before Cadiz, and cut off their supplies. Godinot, therefore, on receiving intelligence of its occupation, immediately advanced against it. On the eighteenth, his artillery, with a considerable escort, moved towards Tariffa by the pass of La Pena; but as the road lay along the shore, the British ships of war assailed the column with so heavy a fire as to force it to return.

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Oct. 10.

Ballasteros now assumed the offensive; and, attacking the rear-guard of the enemy, drove it back in confusion, and succeeded in making many prisoners. A more important advantage soon followed. General Semele had taken post at Bornos, on the right bank of the Guadalete, with two thousand foot, some horse, and three pieces of artillery. Ballasteros, by a night-march, came unexpectedly on this force, and, putting them to the route, succeeded in capturing about one hundred prisoners, with the whole of the artillery and baggage. The unfortunate result of his opera-

Nov. 5.

CHAP. VI. tions so affected the mind of General Godinot,
 1811. that on reaching Seville, whither he had been
 December. recalled by Soult, he put a period to his existence.

The views of Soult were then directed towards Tariffa; and General Leval, with about ten thousand men and eighteen guns, was directed to reduce it. On the nineteenth of December that officer appeared before the place, and on the following night it was completely invested, though not without considerable opposition on the part of the garrison.

Tariffa was a place of little strength; its only defence being an uncovered wall, flanked imperfectly by small projections. It communicated, however, with an island, on which were two half-moon batteries and a martello tower; and a secure point of embarkation was thus afforded, should it be found necessary to abandon the town. The garrison consisted of twelve hundred British under Colonel Skerret, and about nine hundred Spaniards, commanded by Don Francisco Copons.

Dec. 24. On the night of the twenty-fourth, the besiegers broke ground within four hundred yards of the place, and continued to push on their ap-

proaches, though annoyed by the fire from the town, which did considerable execution. On the twenty-ninth, two batteries were completed; one of which opened fire on the gun-boats at anchor in the bay, the other on the town. On the thirtieth, General Leval sent a summons to the governor, which drew from Copons a bombastic reply. On the thirty-first, a practicable breach had been effected, and preparations on both sides were made for the assault. On the following morning a strong body of the enemy were seen advancing towards the breach. Colonel Gough, of the eighty-seventh, then drew his sword, and directed the band of his regiment to play the Irish air Garry Owen. The soldiers immediately cheered, and opened a very destructive fire on the advancing column. The forty-seventh, in particular, who lined a wall descending from the south-east tower, did great execution. The French halted for a moment, as if stunned,—then, rushing forward, gained the bottom of the breach. Unable to effect an entrance they hurried off under the wall to the right, and made an effort to gain the portcullis. Defeated in this, and finding themselves cut up by a flanking fire of artillery, and overwhelmed by

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Jan. 1.

CHAP. VI. showers of musquetry and hand-grenades, they hastily retreated, with the loss of five hundred of their number.

1812.

January.

After this failure, no further attempt was made against the town; and Leval having buried his artillery, which the state of the roads rendered it impossible to remove, on the night of the fourth of January withdrew from the town by order of Marshal Soult, who, alarmed by the movements of General Hill, was concentrating his army at Seville.

The loss of the enemy was estimated to amount to two thousand five hundred men,—a number exceeding that of the garrison. This calculation, perhaps, exceeded the truth; but their loss was unquestionably very great; and the French, for the first time, learned what was to be expected from British soldiers when defending stone-walls. The siege lasted seventeen days; during seven of which the breach was open.

In Valencia, Suchet, having been joined by considerable reinforcements from the army in Catalonia, made preparations for the passage of the Guadalaviar. General Blake had strongly entrenched himself on the right bank of that river, with a force of twenty thousand

troops of the line, six thousand militia, and one hundred pieces of cannon. His infantry occupied a line extending from the sea to Manisses; his cavalry were placed on the left towards Ribaroja.

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 December.

During the night of the twenty-fifth of December, two bridges were thrown across the Guadalaviar, in front of Ribaroja, where the country was no longer intersected by that labyrinth of canals which gave great strength to the other parts of the position. At Mislata, a third bridge was constructed for the cavalry and artillery.

Dec. 25.

Early on the twenty-sixth, three divisions of French infantry crossed the bridges in face of the Spanish cavalry, which was driven back in confusion on Torrente. The Murcian division at Manisses, observing the French columns on their left, became apprehensive of being surrounded, and, abandoning their posts, fled in great disorder towards Coterroja, on the road to Murcia. They were pursued by General Harispe, who made some prisoners, though unable to come up with the main-body.

Dec. 26.

At other points, the assailants were less successful. The division of Palombini, which pass-

CHAP. VI. ed at Mislata, were unable to penetrate the canals by which they were surrounded, and were driven back in confusion on the Guadalaviar. The troops, however, rallied; and General Habert coming up to their support, they were enabled to maintain their ground, till Blake, who beheld one division of his army already cut off, gave up the contest, and retired within the defences of the city.

1811.

December.

Valencia stands on the southern bank of the Guadalaviar, and is surrounded by a wall flanked by towers, to which some works had been added requiring regular attack. It was, moreover, covered by a strong line of retrenchments, in which the suburbs were included; and no expense had been spared in accumulating an ample supply of arms, guns, and ammunition, for the defence of works so extensive.

1812.

Jan. 1.

Suchet immediately prepared for the regular siege of Valencia. On the night of the first of January, trenches were opened against the eastern extremity of the line, near Mont Olivete; but the chief attack was directed against the salient part of the line, which covered the suburb of St. Vincente.

The works of the besiegers were pushed on

with great vigour ; and, on the morning of the fifth, the garrison, dispirited by their recent misfortunes, abandoned the defence of their lines, and retired into Valencia. The French then bombarded the city ; and on the eighth, Blake consented to capitulate. The garrison, amounting to upwards of eighteen thousand troops of the line, including twenty-three general officers, were made prisoners ; three hundred and ninety-three pieces of artillery, and a large quantity of stores and ammunition, fell into possession of the victors.

CHAP. VI.

1812.

January.

Jan. 8.

Thus did Suchet conclude a campaign, illustrated by a series of successes more brilliant than any which were destined to grace the French arms in the Peninsula. In every point of view, the conquest of Valencia was of vast importance : it gave the richest province of Spain into the grasp of the French ; it enabled the armies of Arragon and Catalonia to connect their operations with those of Soult ; it gave strength and consolidation to the French power in the interior provinces ; it gave a great though temporary downfall to the hopes of the Spanish nation, which beheld the annihilation of its last effective army. Napoleon, to

CHAP. VI. mark his sense of the distinguished services of
1812. Suchet, bestowed on him the title of Duke
d'Albufera, and the rank of Marshal of France.
This elevation was accompanied by a grant of
the royal domain of Albufera, in the neighbour-
hood of Valencia, to be held as an unalienable
fief of the empire.

The conduct of Blake, in the operations which led to the surrender of Valencia, has subjected his integrity to vehement though unreasonable suspicion. He cannot be held as having betrayed that cause which he had supported throughout the war with zeal and steadiness, if not with judgment. That he committed several flagrant errors, is unquestionable. He intrusted the defence of the river, from Manisses to Ribaroja, solely to his cavalry; he shut up his army in Valencia, instead of retiring into Murcia; and thus sacrificed the hopes of his country in a futile attempt to hold a town which was in no respect calculated for a protracted defence. Valencia might have furnished a national guard, which, with the addition of a few thousand regular troops, would have been sufficient to garrison the city. Had Blake then manœuvred in the rear of the besieging army, or boldly

thrown himself into Catalonia, it is probable CHAP. VI.
 he would have arrested the tide of Marshal 1812.
 Suchet's success, even in the fulness of its flood.

But Blake, with all his faults, must be admitted to have been a man of high courage and unshaken patriotism. His chief failing was one he held in common with the great mass of his countrymen—a presumptuous self-confidence; and to this the long train of disaster, which unfortunately marked his career, may be attributed.

CHAPTER VII.

SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

CHAP. VII. WHILE the army remained in cantonments, the ever active mind of Lord Wellington was engaged in devising measures by which the supply of his army might be improved. It had been found by experience, that the transport of the country, even in conjunction with the numerous commissariat mules attached to each division, was inadequate to the requisite conveyance of stores and provisions. The waggon of the natives were of the rudest mechanism, and in many instances of little use. Lord Wellington, therefore, gave orders for the construction of a certain number, on a more improved model, to be attached to the army, under the denomination of the Commissariat Waggon Train.

Upwards of six hundred of these vehicles, each

capable of conveying a load of eight hundred weight, were constructed during the winter at Lisbon, Oporto, and Almeida, and were formed into divisions and sub-divisions, with conductors, artificers, and other subordinate persons attached to each. By this judicious arrangement, the army became possessed of a wheel transport of its own, and the necessary requisitions on the inhabitants were rendered less burdensome and vexatious. CHAP. VII.
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But this was not all. By the exertions of the engineer officers, the Douro was rendered navigable to the confluence of the Agueda, a point about forty miles higher than boats had ever previously been able to proceed. A great distance of land carriage was thus saved, at a moment when the whole means of transport, at command, were required for the conveyance of the battering-train to be employed in the approaching siege.

In the meanwhile, Marmont, satisfied from the facility with which he had succeeded in re-victualling Ciudad Rodrigo, that it was in no immediate danger of attack from Lord Wellington, remained tranquil in his cantonments on the Tagus. The activity of General Hill, in the