

the entire responsibility. But the loss of two precious weeks could not be atoned for, and the consequences in due course developed themselves.

We gather from Lord Wellington's correspondence, that the idea of dislodging the enemy from Andalusia presented itself strongly at this time to his mind. It appears certain that if the force from Sicily had been punctual in its arrival, he would have invaded that province. He even directed General Cook, who was in command at Gibraltar, to keep the enemy before Cadiz on the alert, and as early as the 16th of August he began to make preparations for marching through the Sierra Morena. It is equally clear that Marshal Soult, the ablest of Napoleon's Generals then in Spain, contemplated the probability of such an enterprise with dismay. Joseph, on the other hand, was bent on recovering Madrid. He commanded Soult to raise the siege of Cadiz, and to move towards Valencia, in order to join him. Suchet received similar orders, and, though not without reluctance, obeyed them, so that by the 25th of August three French corps were in march to form a junction. Meanwhile the beaten army of Portugal had rallied, and being reinforced by Caffarelli, returned upon its steps. The Spaniards were driven out of Valladolid, and strong French patrols of cavalry crossing the Douro, occasioned much anxiety, up to the gates of Salamanca. Before he could strike at Soult, Lord Wellington saw that it would be necessary to chase these intruders away, in order to render secure the transit by Salamanca, Ciudad-Rodrigo, and Almeida, which still constituted, and must for some time continue to constitute, the real line of his communication with Lisbon. He therefore told off two divisions for the protection of Madrid, and desiring Hill to press Drouet hard in Estremadura, he set off with the rest of the army towards the North.

There befell during Lord Wellington's stay in Madrid one or two events, which, illustrating as they do the character of the man, seem to demand at least passing notice. He found that he was already the subject of Spanish song; and now at the request of the municipal authorities he consented to sit to a Spanish artist. The songs had been composed

chiefly by Senor Morette, a musician of considerable eminence, who resided in Cadiz. They were extravagantly laudatory in terms, but the music was good; and nothing seemed to please the gallant Marquis more than to sit and listen to them. Indeed, he not unfrequently called for them, reminding his fellow-guests of some warrior chief in ages long past, to whom the enumeration of his own glorious deeds by the bard who followed his standard, was the most grateful tribute that could be paid. It would seem, however, that our modern chief was not always in the same good humour. Dr McGregor had remained behind after the battle of Salamanca to provide for the wants of the sick and wounded, which he did zealously. He arrived in Madrid some time after the first burst of exultation had subsided, and proceeding to make his report to the commander of the forces, found him sitting to the artist who had been selected to paint his portrait. The Marquis listened in silence till McGregor began to describe how he had ordered up purveyors and commissariat officers from the rear with supplies, and then the suppressed volcano burst out. The Marquis sprang to his feet, and demanded in an angry tone what right Dr McGregor had to do that. The Doctor's assurance that nothing else could have saved many valuable lives seemed to make no impression upon his auditor. Neither was the Marquis mollified by a reference which McGregor with doubtful discretion made to the outcry which had been raised in England when the wounded were abandoned after the battle of Talavera. "I shall be glad to know," exclaimed the angry Marquis, "who commands this army, you or I. I establish one route, one line of communication, and you establish another, and order the commissariat and supplies to move by that! As long as you live, Sir, never do so again; never do anything without my orders." "But, my Lord, the case was urgent: there was no time to get your orders." "That don't signify. Never act again without orders, be the consequences what they may."

So spoke the great man in his anger: unreasonably, as angry men always do; yet such fits never lasted long with him, and on the present occasion he soon showed, in his

own peculiar way, that he was conscious of his error. He sat down; and almost before the painter could resume his task, said to McGregor in a tone more than usually kind, "Come and dine with me to-day. You'll meet the Guerilla chief, El Medico; who knows but you may get something out of him, in your own profession, worth remembering?"

Let me not quit this subject without observing that the Spanish portrait, though well begun, was never finished. The artist, delighted with the expulsion of the French from Madrid, worked at it for a while enthusiastically. But so much were he and his employers disgusted by the subsequent evacuation of the city, that they refused to go on with it. In its unfinished state it now hangs in the hall at Strathfieldsay.

In pursuance of the plan which he had carefully matured, Lord Wellington quitted Madrid; and, gathering up General Clinton's division and his cavalry posts as he went along, he arrived on the 7th of September at Valladolid. The French quitted the place when they heard of his approach. They fell back in excellent order, and after a few marches halted and offered him battle. This he evaded, rather than declined. He was in hourly expectation of being joined by the army of Galicia, of which the estimated strength was 20,000 men; and comparatively worthless as Spanish soldiers were, 20,000 of them could effect something. The French, on the other hand, appeared nowise bent upon forcing on a collision. Not being attacked, they retired, and thus from day to day both parties marched till they arrived within a few miles of Burgos. There the French halted, and took up a position which seemed to cover that place just as the army of Galicia, 11,300 strong, arrived in Lord Wellington's lines.

There was no further reason why he should hesitate to strike. He made arrangements therefore for fighting a battle on the 17th, but the dawn of day disclosed the fact that the enemy were gone. They had seen the fires of the Spanish troops during the night, and immediately retreated. Lord Wellington followed, and soon found himself with the river Arlanza in his front; the fords over which, as well as the

roads leading up to them, lay under the guns of the castle. It took some hours to surmount this first difficulty, and greater forthwith presented themselves. He could not afford to leave Burgos in his rear; he had no siege-train at hand, nor any other means wherewith to approach the place in regular form. He determined, therefore, after a close reconnoissance, to trust to the valour of his troops, and to risk an assault. Everything was done which under such circumstances courage and skill could effect, but to no purpose. Having no corps of practical engineers to help him, he drove mines, which exploded either too soon or uselessly. The fire of his field guns made little impression, and every attempt to carry the main work by escalade failed. The siege began on the 18th of September, and on the 18th of October the last assault was delivered, in which not fewer than 274 officers and men fell, raising the total loss during the month to 1565.

Lord Wellington had drawn the cord tight, well-nigh to breaking. In his front lay General Souham, at the head of what had formerly been Marmont's and Caffarelli's armies, which in point of numbers thus united equalled, if they did not surpass, his own army. Tidings came in from General Hill, that Joseph, Soult, and Suchet were united, and that with an enormous force they were in full march upon Madrid. Now Hill was too weak to risk a battle with any prospect of success, and defeat would have uncovered at once the line of Lord Wellington's communications. But to protect that line, and at the same time to draw back in the direction of the main army, appeared to be impossible. Lord Wellington so circumstanced had no power of choice. He desired Hill to abandon the line of the Tagus, and to march upon the Adaja, where he promised to meet him. This done, he himself waited only till night set in, and then began his movement to the rear. There was but one bridge over the Arlanza, and upon that the guns of the castle looked down. To get horses and carriages across in the stillness of the night without attracting attention seemed no easy matter. He gave orders that horsemen should ride in loose order, and at a walk. He wrapped the wheels of

his guns and carriages in straw, and enjoined perfect silence in the ranks. For a time all went well, and a considerable portion of the army got across unnoticed; but by and by a body of Spanish horsemen chose to dash across the bridge at a gallop, and the noise which they made roused the sleeping garrison. A fire was immediately opened upon the bridge, and all who subsequently traversed it, did so subject to the crash from time to time of round shot among them.

It is not difficult to write all this, it is easy to read it when written, but to get everything ready for such a start at such a time and under such circumstances taxed even Lord Wellington's energies to the uttermost. His sick and wounded always gave him great anxiety, and never more so than at the present moment. The thought of leaving them behind was terrible. Let the truth however be told, for no man ever lived who could better afford to be described as he was. The failure before Burgos fretted him. He was dissatisfied with himself and with everybody else, and spoke harshly to all who approached him. Dr McGregor, among others, came in for his own share of sharp words, which the Highland pride of the chief of the medical staff bore with difficulty. This was early in the day preceding the commencement of the retreat, and McGregor returned to his own quarters, sick and sulky. By and by a message came that Lord Wellington desired to see him that evening; but the Doctor was still in high dudgeon, and feeling really unwell, he made the most of his malady, and refused to attend. At an early hour next morning, however, he proceeded to Lord Wellington's house, and found that about three o'clock the Marquis had mounted his horse, and ridden off to the front.

McGregor followed. The English army was under arms, in the expectation, as it appeared, of being attacked; and Lord Wellington stood on a hill with a numerous staff about him, searching the French lines with his telescope. No sooner was McGregor's name pronounced, than the Marquis put up his telescope, and taking the Doctor by the arm, led him out of the crowd. What followed can best be told in the words of one of the actors in the scene. He

said, "We can't keep Madrid. Hill is overpowered, and marching to join me; and I must be off this very night. But what is to become of the sick and wounded? I fear they are very numerous, and there are many wounded who can't be moved. What do you propose to do?" I replied, "I was happy to inform him that our sick and wounded were not numerous; that seeing how his mind was occupied with the siege, I had taken it upon me to get carts from the commissariat, and to employ them and the mules which brought up provisions in removing the sick and wounded to Valladolid." "Very well indeed," was his reply; "but how many have we in Burgos?" "Not more than 60, and these mostly too bad to move." "Admirable. I shall be off to-night. Let nobody know this from you, and make your own arrangements."

Did the Marquis remember, then, what had passed between him and Doctor McGregor, when they discussed at Madrid a question somewhat similar; or was he, like all really great men, able and willing to contradict himself when an occasion arose which demanded that sacrifice?

The retreat from Burgos to the Portuguese frontier was one of those operations which try to the uttermost both the skill of the commander and the endurance of the men. The commander had to provide not for his own safety alone, but for that of two corps besides which were approaching him from opposite quarters; the men, marching and halting at uncertain intervals, suffered severely from fatigue, from exposure, and from want of provisions. Constant vigilance was necessary in the rear, constant circumspection everywhere. A halt for two nights and a day upon some strong ground above the Carrion, enabled the brigade of Guards to come up from Corunna; and now Hill, with his corps in full march from Madrid, must be approached as near as was compatible with keeping open the communication with Ciudad Rodrigo. The point of junction originally settled was Ruedo, a little town standing about midway between the rivers Adaja and Douro. And towards it Hill, after burning his pontoons and heavy baggage, made his way. He threaded the passes of the Guadiana with Soult at his heels. But he was yet a few miles on the farther

side of the Adaja when a courier from Lord Wellington met him with instructions to turn off towards Alba on the Tormes. Then began a series of movements which, involving, as they did, the passage of deep rivers, and the attack and defence of bridges, and the attempts on one side to seize, and on the other to protect, roads and passes of vital importance, well deserve to be followed in detail by all students of the art of war. For the purposes of the general reader it may suffice to say, that at every turn the enemy were baffled; that Souham, often striving, never succeeded in placing himself by Lord Wellington's left upon the line of his communications; that Soult could not cut in between Lord Wellington and General Hill; and that on the same ground, where a few months previously Marmont had been defeated, Wellington and Hill, united, offered battle with 64,000 against 90,000 men. But the enemy declined the challenge. Joseph, Soult, Jourdan, Souham, were all in Lord Wellington's front, and to Soult appears to have been entrusted the responsibility of directing their combined operations. He adhered to what had been the original plan of campaign, persisting in the attempt to get between the English and their base. He entirely failed.

Lord Wellington, after standing under arms till two o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th of November, took advantage of a fog, and moving rapidly, headed the column which Soult had sent to his own left. From that hour the English were masters of the situation. It rested with them either to halt and fight, or to continue their retreat as they might prefer, and Lord Wellington, for obvious reasons, chose the latter alternative.

A great feat had been performed. The army was extricated from a situation of extraordinary peril and difficulty, without the loss of a gun, and with comparatively few casualties. It suffered, indeed, in discipline, as retiring armies always do; and the seeds of disease were sown. Throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th, cold rains fell continually. These, besides soaking the men through and through, swelled every stream, and rendered the roads, which wound chiefly through a forest of oak-trees, well nigh impassable. Moreover the commissariat quite broke down, and hungry soldiers

cannot always be restrained from committing irregularities. The woods happened to be full of swine, and the men kept up a tantalizing fire of musketry upon the animals, as often as they showed themselves. This was the more inconvenient that the enemy pressed upon the rear of the columns, and it was not always possible to determine whether or not a serious engagement had taken place. On the whole, however, the retreat was conducted, if not in perfect order, certainly without serious loss. As often as the French advance came up with the English rear, it was driven back; indeed, but for the unfortunate capture of Sir Edward Paget, Lord Wellington's second in command, who, being short-sighted, and crippled by the loss of his right arm, was unable to escape from a body of French cavalry on which he fell, there would have been no cause to speak of the movement as, in any sense of the term, disastrous. At last, on the 19th, the Agueda was gained, and the army began to pass. In the course of the 20th the whole of the divisions were across, and by and by the pleasant order was given to go into cantonments between that river and the Coa.

There was nothing to stay that arrangement. The enemy, like the English, had outmarched their supplies, and grew slack in the pursuit. They finally established themselves below Valladolid and Toledo, while Lord Wellington, sending Hill towards the Tagus, that he might occupy Coria, Palencia, and Bejar, placed his people under cover, and fixed his own head-quarters at Frenada.



## CHAPTER XIX.

WINTER QUARTERS—OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN OF 1813—  
BATTLE OF VITTORIA.

TIDINGS of the failure before Burgos and of the retreat to the Portuguese frontier spread far and wide. They startled the allied powers in the north of Europe. They re-awakened the fears and the hostility to the war of the English opposition in both Houses of Parliament. They frightened a timid administration in London; and induced the disaffected in the Spanish Cortes to renew their intrigues with Joseph. Lord Wellington carried off his own mortification with excellent skill. He wrote and spoke of past events as mere accidents in a great struggle; and generously took upon himself faults which might have been charged upon others. His arguments had their weight with all reasonable people; but that which best served his purpose and the purpose of the home Government, was the destruction of the French army in Russia, and the return of Napoleon, at this critical moment, alone and a fugitive to Paris. Now then, at last, a belief began to be entertained that the power of France was not irresistible; and the predictions of their own hero, long treated as the outpourings of enthusiasm, were remembered with respect by the English people. As to himself, he saw that a crisis in affairs was come; and he did his best to take advantage of it. He vigorously applied himself to improve the equipment of his army. A baggage and pontoon train were organized. Tents were issued for the shelter of his men, and improved cooking utensils were

served out to them. Finally in the depth of winter he made a journey to Cadiz, and once more came face to face with the Spanish Government. His reception was even more enthusiastic and apparently more cordial than it had been on a former occasion. Every suggestion which he made was assented to at once. Spanish armies were no longer to act independently; the whole being consolidated into three corps, were to be fed and otherwise provided for at the expense of Spain, but to take their orders only from Lord Wellington. Liberal of promises, the Spanish Government, as usual, violated every pledge when the moment of action came. "I am sorry to inform you," wrote Lord Wellington, within a month of returning to Frenada, "that my intentions are entirely thwarted by the Government, which has broken all its engagements entered into with me, and ratified in its letter of the 1st of January." The conclusion of the whole matter was, that however willing he might be to employ Spanish troops, and to assign to them their proper part in a war in which they ought to have been principals, he was forced to arrange his plans for the next campaign as if no such bodies as Spanish armies had been in existence.

The reader of Napier's history of this memorable war may not be unapt to imagine that the six years over which it extended, were years of unremitting toil and suffering and danger to all who lived through them. Of toil and suffering, and danger too, the troops had from time to time enough; but every season of repose, and especially the winter, brought great enjoyment in its train, into which no one entered more heartily than Lord Wellington himself. I shall take occasion, by and by, to show how he encouraged field sports among his officers, and how he himself shared in them. For the present we will confine our attention to in-door gaieties, to the balls which went forward, and the theatrical performances, of which two may be described as fair specimens of many.

If Lord Wellington favoured one of the divisions of his army more than the rest, it was the Light Division. Trained under Sir John Moore at Hythe, and brought by Craufurd

to perfection in the field, the regiments composing it were models of all that good infantry ought to be; the men well drilled, well disciplined, excellent marchers, and vigilant at the outposts: the officers punctiliously attentive to the minutest details of duty, yet full withal of life and spirits. Among other accomplishments several of these young men possessed a decided talent for acting, and this winter they brought it into play. The division was quartered in Gallego, a small town distant about a league from Frenada. There they found a half-ruined chapel, which, I am sorry to say, they fitted up as a theatre. It is fair to add, however, that the priest offered no objection, and that the people of the town were delighted at the arrangement. The scenes were painted by officers; dresses and decorations provided; and twice or thrice a week, "His Majesty's servants" represented to crowded and applauding audiences the pieces most in vogue in that day. It was Lord Wellington's custom to ride over, and be present from time to time at these performances. Nor were balls and other pleasantries wanting. A few English ladies had followed their husbands into the field, who, with such Spanish or Portuguese belles as could be looked up, supplied partners to the minority. The majority danced, as a celebrated Presbyterian divine has suggested that all gentlemen should do, with one another. At these entertainments, likewise, Lord Wellington was a frequent guest, and heartily he appeared to enjoy the fun.

The great festival of all was, however, one which deserves to be more accurately described. Instructions reached Lord Wellington early in January, 1813, to invest General Cole with the ensignia of the Bath, and he readily assented, on the suggestion of his younger friends, to make the ceremony as imposing and interesting as possible. The officers of the Light Division were called into counsel, and a plan of operations was arranged. It was settled that the investiture should take place in Ciudad-Rodrigo, and that the ceremony should be followed by a grand dinner and a ball. Now Ciudad-Rodrigo happened to be still in a very dilapidated condition. The Hotel de Ville existed, but it was stripped of furniture; and of the better class of private

houses, all had been plundered, and not a few were in ruins. The ingenuity of the managing committee succeeded in overcoming these difficulties. In the palace of San Ildefonso, standing not far off, which had by a sort of miracle escaped the fury of the spoiler, rich damask hangings were found. Some of these were removed to the large room in the Hotel de Ville, and so arranged as to give to that apartment the aspect of a brilliantly-appointed tent. Into another room chairs, tables, and couches were conveyed, borrowed, like the curtains, from the palace of San Ildefonso. From Almeida, 25 miles off, glass and crockery were brought up. Lord Wellington lent his plate, as did every one who had a spoon or fork to offer, and the better to provide against accidents, it was arranged that the necessary preparations for the feast should go forward in Lord Wellington's kitchen at Frenada. Interested and amused with the zeal of his young men, Lord Wellington put himself into their hands. His cooks laboured from early dawn, his plate was packed and sent off, and at three o'clock in the afternoon of a clear frosty winter's day, he mounted his horse, *en grand tenue*, with all his orders glittering on his breast. He had 17 miles to ride, and accomplished the distance in two hours. At half past five the investiture took place, at six the invited guests sat down to dinner, the ball began about nine, and the brilliancy of the scene when Lord Wellington entered, struck him with undisguised astonishment. Every person present seemed to be in the highest possible glee. The band of the 52nd discoursed eloquent music. About 40 ladies distributed among 200 gentlemen or more, found their dancing powers taxed severely. The Marquis threw himself into the humours of the occasion like a school-boy; he danced almost every dance, and narrowly escaped a somewhat ludicrous catastrophe.

The wine both at dinner and supper had circulated freely, and about two in the morning a number of Spanish officers, roused by its effects into enthusiasm, insisted upon carrying Lord Wellington round the room in a chair. He suggested that they should begin with the person of highest rank present, and named the Prince of Orange. The Prince was

immediately seized, and General Vandeleur, coming up with a view to remonstrate, was seized in like manner. Each was placed in an arm-chair, and hoisted on the shoulders of four bearers. The inevitable consequences soon followed. The bearers had not taken many steps before they with their burthens came down, and amid the shouts of laughter that followed, Lord Wellington made his escape. He mounted his horse, and under the light of a full moon, rode back to his quarters at Frenada.

It was thus that more than fifty years ago, under the greatest captain whom England has ever produced, English soldiers intermixed gaiety with the work of war, and that Lord Wellington himself put his cares aside, in order to promote their amusements, and to take part in them. And indeed, at this stage in the contest, his cares, though harassing enough, were become light in comparison with those of the enemy. Joseph, the intrusive King, felt day by day that his power was passing from him. Napoleon, while investing him with supreme military command, deprived the boon of half its value by withdrawing corps after corps of French troops from the Peninsula. And the directions which he gave for disposing what remained in defensive warfare, proved, when the attempt was made to act upon them, impracticable. The result was a complete reversal of circumstances between the French and English commanders. Lord Wellington knew that his hour was come, and made ready to loosen, once and for ever, the grasp which he had so long held upon Portugal.

He was at this time at the head of 87,000 effective troops, of whom 40,000 were English, 27,000 Portuguese, and 20,000 Spaniards. These he kept in hand for his grand swoop, and they were supported at various points by other armed bodies, which, including the English in Catalonia and the garrisons in Gibraltar and Cadiz, raised the total strength of the allies to about 200,000 men. The French, on the other hand, still showed a muster-roll of 230,000 on paper, but of these, including the reserves at Bayonne, not more than 197,000 were with their colours; and from week to week, as the pressure in the North became more severe, even that

number suffered diminution. About 110,000 were in Lord Wellington's immediate front, scattered loosely between Madrid and Pampeluna; the rest were either with Marshal Suchet in Valencia and Catalonia, or so disposed in fortified posts as to keep open the communications with France. They all suffered from what was then a radical defect in the French military system, for they lived from hand to mouth.

His knowledge of these facts, and of the scattered order in which the enemy lay, enabled Lord Wellington, before opening the campaign, to harass and distract them by various feints, and to fix their attention on all the lines, except that which he intended to follow. This done, he waited only till the rains of the early summer ceased, and then, when the rivers were reduced to the lowest level, he bore down upon their communications with France.

In all his wars Lord Wellington never performed an exploit more brilliant than this long march from the Agueda to the Ebro. Over and over again the enemy endeavoured to stop him. They showed themselves in force on strong positions which crossed his path. But on each occasion he appeared to sweep them aside; for they never waited to give battle. Once, and only once, near Valladolid, Joseph seemed disposed to try the issues of a conflict. He had 55,000 men in hand, with a numerous cavalry; and his information respecting the English represented them as not greatly superior to himself. But out-mancœuvred and circumvented, he abandoned that design, and after a little hesitation gave up also the line of the Pesuerga river. He describes himself in his correspondence as more than half-disposed to retire at this time into Navarre. This course might have protracted the struggle, because in Navarre Suchet could have joined him. But the thought of leaving open the great road into France by Bayonne frightened him, and he persevered in keeping to the eastern provinces. So likewise the recollection of what Burgos had effected in the last campaign invited him to halt there. But he resisted this temptation also, and causing the citadel to be blown up, went on his way till he had placed the Ebro between him and his pursuers.

Lord Wellington had anticipated some resistance at Burgos, and came prepared for it; but an explosion, heard while the heads of his columns were yet a good way off, told its own tale. The place was in ruins. He would have passed it by without a halt, but that the troops had outmarched their supplies, and it was necessary to pause for a day or two, in order that the commissariat mules might overtake them. They came in due time, and then onwards, and still onwards, the tide of war rolled. At last the heads of the columns touched the right bank of the Ebro, where all persons, both in the English and in the French army, anticipated a pause,—but there was no pause. Over the rough channel of that rolling river the pursuers broke, and Joseph, driven like a stag to bay, turned to defend himself.

Anticipating no such issue, Joseph, as soon as he gained the farther bank of the Ebro, had scattered his troops wherever the means of subsistence appeared to be most abundant. The burst of the English across that barrier took him by surprise; and his marches to concentrate again were as fatiguing to the men as they proved perplexing to the Generals of division. With great difficulty he got into position on the night of the 19th, and stood with the little river Zadora in his front, on a line which measured from La Puebla de Arganzon on the left, to Vittoria and the village of Gamara Major on the right, not less than two leagues and a half. But this was not all. His line ran in a direction parallel with the road through Vittoria to Bayonne. His enormous baggage was all accumulated in Vittoria itself; and such was the rugged nature of the country round about, that his cavalry, in which the main portion of his strength lay, proved useless to him. All these defects of arrangement became apparent to Lord Wellington in the course of the reconnaissance which he made on the 20th, and with the early dawn of the 21st he came down upon them.

Lord Wellington's plan of battle was masterly. He threw the left of his army on the enemy's right, engaging at the same time both the left and the centre, and driving back the division which held Gamara, made himself master of the great road from Vittoria to Bayonne. Now along that

road the whole of Joseph's divisions, if unable to hold their ground, must necessarily march, and they did so march from Puebla downwards, only to encounter obstacles, which proved fatal to an orderly retreat. Vittoria itself, choked up with wagons and baggage-animals, could not be entered. The fugitives made a *détour*, and endeavoured to go round the town, but there the left of the English army met them, and so in the end they all turned away, rushing *pêle-mêle* along the Pampeluna road. It was the most complete rout that had been witnessed since the war began. Nineteen hundred prisoners, 151 pieces of cannon, the military chest, and much of the plunder of Spain, fell into the hands of the victors. Indeed, Joseph himself narrowly escaped capture; for being pursued by some English Huzzars, he had barely time to get out of his carriage, mount a trooper's horse, and gallop away.

The amount of fatigue which Lord Wellington went through during the progress of these operations, only a constitution cast, like his, in a mould of iron, could have endured. From the hour when he crossed the Douro till the battle of Vittoria came to an end, he was in the saddle day by day, from early dawn till dark. His meals he eat by the way-side, as they were brought up to him, and many hours of each night he spent in writing. He seemed to watch and to direct every movement of every corps in his army. Whenever a height presented itself whence an extensive view might be expected, he made for it, and he was up at the fords of all the rivers often before his men began to try them. It was remarked of him also, that not at any former period had his good humour been more entirely sustained. No mistake escaped him, no blunder passed unreprieved; but reproof itself was administered rather as a duty than to indulge temper. Even his treatment of Captain Ramsay, one of the bravest and most efficient artillery officers in the army, though severe, was just. Captain Ramsay had been placed by Lord Wellington himself, during the progress of the battle of Vittoria, in a position from which he was enjoined on no account to remove, except by orders of the Commander-in-Chief. It was a spot, to all appearance, out of the range



of the contest, and Ramsay, as brave men under such circumstances are prone to do, chafed over his own inaction. By and by things seemed to go hard with a portion of the English line, whereupon a general of division rode up to Ramsay and asked in an excited tone, "What he was doing there?" "Nothing," was the reply; "the Marquis placed me here, and here I suppose I must remain." "The Marquis could not mean you to remain idle here, when your guns are so much wanted elsewhere; follow me." Unfortunately for himself, Ramsay obeyed. He galloped off, entered into action, and did good service; but the French were not long afterwards turned at Vittoria and fled along the Pampeluna road. The direction of their retreat was communicated to Lord Wellington, with these words in addition, "and we've nothing up to stop them!" "Nothing up!" exclaimed the Marquis, "what has become of Ramsay and his guns? I placed him exactly where I knew the enemy would defile, is he not there?" The whole story was told to the Marquis exactly as it befell, but he refused to be pacified. Ramsay was not put in arrest, nor tried by a court-martial; his past brilliant and useful career averted that calamity; but the command of the battery was taken from him, and he was sent home. He never got over the blow. Being restored to his command in 1815, he went with his guns to Belgium, and fell in the crowning victory at Waterloo.

Being on the subject of Lord Wellington's general bearing throughout the progress of this campaign, I may as well describe what occurred between him and the chief of his medical staff, before the campaign began. On the day before the army broke up, Dr McGregor waited upon the Marquis to explain the arrangements which he had made for the care of the sick and wounded. The Marquis listened attentively, and when the Doctor came to an end, objected to certain details and suggested others. Dr McGregor returned to his quarters, thinking no more about the matter. But that same night, just before retiring to bed, he received a letter in the Marquis's hand-writing, which covered two folio sheets, and stated in full Lord Wellington's reasons for all that he had

suggested! And that at a time when the mind of the writer must have been engrossed with a thousand other subjects, some of them perhaps more important than even this. Such, however, was the Duke. He liked to carry men's judgment with him. He was not content, even when his will was law, to give orders without making clear their reasonableness. And this it was, without doubt, which, added to his promptitude and decision, won for him the entire confidence of all who served under him.

## CHAPTER XX.

## SIEGE OF SAN SEBASTIAN—BATTLES OF THE PYRENEES.

THE battle of Vittoria may be said to have relieved the north and west of the Spanish Peninsula from the presence of the invader. Clausel, who was moving up the Ebro, heard of the disaster while yet two days' march from Joseph, and retreated into France. Foy, who was coming from France, halted near Tolosa; and collecting as many fugitives as he could, endeavoured there to make a stand. But Sir Thomas Graham with the left column of the allied army fell upon him, and drove him away. There remained now only three garrisons to deal with, that of San Sebastian at the mouth of the Urumea; that of Pampeluna, south-eastward in a gorge of the mountains; and that of Santona, midway between Passages and the Bidassoa. The reduction of San Sebastian as speedily as possible was felt to be expedient; because Lord Wellington had already established his communications with England, through Santander, Passages, and other harbours on the west coast; and to leave the enemy in possession of a stronghold whence these harbours could be even partially commanded would have been unwise. About Pampeluna and Santona he was less anxious. He contented himself, therefore, with putting both in a state of blockade; while he directed Sir Thomas Graham with one English division, and some corps of Portuguese and Spanish troops, to press the siege of San Sebastian.

In order to protect these operations it was necessary to observe the enemy, who, recently placed under the command

of Marshal Soult, were in position on the French side of the Bidassoa. Now the distance between San Sebastian and Pampeluna cannot be less than 60 English miles. The two places are separated from each other by the Pyrenees, almost all the great valleys of which run north and south, with steep and often impassable ridges intervening, and very few lateral glens coming in from east to west. It was a country difficult to guard, and Lord Wellington did his best with it. He spread his troops by divisions, and here and there by brigades, among the heads of the great valleys, and trusted to the vigilance of his officers and the bravery of his men to do the rest. Neither failed in the hour of need; yet the season of watchfulness was to him one of great anxiety, because the separate divisions and brigades could come to the support of one another only by routes circuitous and beset with danger. He had however no alternative. He did not consider it prudent to leave two strong fortresses in his rear, and was, moreover, far from desirous of precipitating an invasion of France. His correspondence with the English Government on that subject is indeed very interesting. It shows that this master of the art of war was still the advocate of peace; and that the pressure applied to force him into a rash enterprise was resisted till the course of events justified its wisdom. And then he yielded.

Sir Thomas Graham pushed on the siege of San Sebastian with all the means at his disposal. The outworks were carried, the main wall breached, and at midnight on the 25th of July the assault was delivered. It failed, and most of the ammunition being expended, as well as a good many guns and mortars disabled, a pause became necessary. Meanwhile Marshal Soult had not been idle, and on the same day which witnessed the repulse of the English stormers at San Sebastian, he began a series of daring movements with a view to relieve both that place and Pampeluna. After skilfully threatening the English left, he drew off towards their right, and fell upon it with great fury. Lord Wellington had established his head-quarters in Lazaca, where he was within reach of San Sebastian, yet at a point from which he could hold the