yond the objects which engrossed the attention of other men. They thought of things present, he of distant results; they dreaded the loss of a town and the momentary forfeiture of prestige, he considered how most surely a great war might be carried on and brought to a successful issue. There is but one parallel in history to firmness like this, a thousand times more rare than the sort of courage which prompts men to face personal danger without flinching. "If you be a great General," said Sylla to Marius, "come and fight me." "If you be a great General," said Marius to Sylla, "compel me to fight you."

Massena was too much master of his art not to desire what Lord Wellington declined to afford. He tried every possible expedient to tempt the English army into an aggressive movement, and then, failing to accomplish that end, he pressed the siege. His first parallel was opened in the night between the 15th and 16th of June, and on the 11th of July the place surrendered. Meanwhile General Mortier, who commanded a corps of Soult's army at Merida, moved towards the Tagus, and was followed by Hill. The two, marching upon parallel lines, crossed the river almost at the same time, and on the 18th faced one another in Lower Beira; while in Upper Beira the main armies stood like pieces on a chess-board, waiting till the minds of the players should be made up in regard to their game.

The fall of Ciudad-Rodrigo inflicted a severe wound on Spanish pride, and vehemently the English General was blamed for it. He cared little for censure which he knew to be undeserved, but adverse events began to multiply upon him and to try his temper. General Craufurd, who lay with a single division in advance of the Coa, suffered himself to be drawn into a battle, and with difficulty escaped across the river. He handled his men well in the face of tremendous odds, but his combat was a mistake, and might have been attended with fatal consequences. Then followed the forward movement of the whole French army, before which Lord Wellington retired, and by and by Almeida was invested. Lord Wellington had taken great pains to strengthen and supply the place. Portuguese troops

formed the garrison, with an English officer at their head, and he (Colonel Cox), equally with his chief, counted on being able to hold out for many weeks. But both had deceived themselves. On the 15th of August the trenches were opened, on the 26th a shell exploded a powder magazine, and on the 28th the garrison mutinied, and insisted upon opening the gates. And so 5000 unwounded men laid down their arms without striking a blow.

The loss of Almeida under such circumstances was a catastrophe on which Lord Wellington had never counted. It seriously deranged his plans, for he had determined to attack Massena while busy with the siege, and if he could not save the place, at all events to carry off the garrison. Massena, on the contrary, gained by his conquest what he was already beginning to need, a supply of provisions, and an excellent base of future operations. It can hardly be said that he made the most of these advantages, for, carried away as it would seem with the desire to possess himself of the English depôts at Coimbra also, he crossed the Mondego at Celerico, and took the road to Viseu. Meanwhile Lord Wellington, retiring upon Alva, there gathered in all his detachments, and anticipating his pursuers, marched into the position of Busaco. It is a range of precipitous heights, intersected here and there with valleys, through one of which runs the road from Viseu to Coimbra, and it extends from right to left about four English miles, having a convent on one flank and a village on the other. There he determined to make a stand. His own troops were beginning to murmur because their General appeared to distrust them, and the Portuguese Government had but imperfectly fulfilled his wish in making a desert of the country in his rear. Now it was to this more than to success in the field that he trusted for saving Portugal, and it was of the utmost consequence that the work of devastation should be done by the Portuguese themselves. For these two reasons, therefore, in order to raise the spirits of his own men, and to gain a day or two in which the Portuguese authorities might perform what they had undertaken to do, he resolved

to accept a battle, should Massena, as he fully expected, commit the mistake of delivering one.

When all were assembled, including Hill's corps, and a Portuguese division which had guarded the passes of the Tagus, Lord Wellington was able to bring into line about 50,000 men. Massena, reinforced by Mortier, had under his orders rather more than 70,000, and if Napoleon's directions had been followed, Soult, with 30,000 more, would have been by this time through Estremadura, threatening Lisbon from the left of the Tagus. But Soult, affecting to consider the reduction of Cadiz as his proper work, paid no heed to Napoleon's instructions, and escaped thereby the mortification of serving under a rival whom he hated. Seventy thousand against 50,000 were, however, long odds, and Massena, looking at the composition of the two hosts, counted upon them as more than enough to render victory secure. Accordingly after some delay, which told in Lord Wellington's favour, he launched his masses on the 27th against the English position. His order of battle was not good. He attacked in two heavy columns so arranged that they were unable to support one another; and each, before it found time to deploy, was crushed by the fire of the English line. The results seem never for a moment to have been doubtful. The French were beaten at all points, and slept that night at the foot of a ridge, in attempting to carry which they had lost between 4000 and 5000 men.

Lord Wellington fought this battle, not unaware that the ground on which he had planted himself could be turned by the left. The same idea appears to have presented itself to Massena's mind after the battle had begun, and the report of a cavalry patrol assured him next day that he could pass safely through a defile on his right into the great Lisbon road, midway between Coimbra and Oporto. He made arrangements to take advantage of the circumstance; and as soon as darkness closed in on the 28th, struck into the defile. The movement would have cost the enemy dear had Lord Wellington's orders been properly obeyed. For he had instructed Colonel Trant to block the mouth of the

defile with a body of Portuguese Militia. But Trant, misled by false intelligence, had deviated from his instructions, and failed to arrive within sight of his proper post till after the head of the French column had taken possession of it. The blunder might have led to serious results had a less far-seeing General been compromised by it. But in the present instance no great harm arose. A glance over the ground where the enemy had bivouacked on the 28th showed Lord Wellington, on the morning of the 29th, how the case stood, and without a moment's delay or hesitation, he put his army in full march to the rear. There was no hurry, no confusion, no dismay, yet the scene was throughout as melancholy as it was striking. In front of Lord Wellington's columns the great mass of the population moved, carrying with them such goods as they were able to transport, and destroying the rest. Men, women, and children were there with cattle and sheep urged onwards at their utmost speed, till the country in rear of the troops, when they looked back upon it, became as it were a desert. On the 8th of October, having been little pressed and seldom engaged except with his cavalry, Lord Wellington entered the lines.

CHAPTER XII.

LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS.

THE force which Lord Wellington carried with him into the lines amounted to 50,000 men. The arrival not long afterwards of 5000 English, and as many Spanish infantry, raised it to 60,000, a considerable army, doubtless, had it been trustworthy in all its parts; yet, even in that case, by no means too large, for the position which it was called upon to hold. But the Portuguese were still far inferior to what they afterwards became, and on Romana's Spaniards, the wreck of a beaten host, little reliance could be placed. Massena followed close with 55,000, all that remained of the 70,000 with which he had opened the campaign. His astonishment, when he beheld the formidable chain of works which barred his onward progress, it would be difficult to describe. Till that moment he had never heard that works of any sort were begun. He expected that before evacuating the country Lord Wellington would risk another battle, and assuming that the battle would be fought upon a fair field, he entertained no misgivings as to the result. The apparition, therefore, of a redoubt on every height, of streams dammed and abbatis laid down, struck him with dismay. Perhaps, indeed, if he had not suffered so severely in the battle of Busaco, the lines as they were at that moment might have been held in less respect; for they were very far indeed from being what in the course of the winter they became. But the memory of recent disaster was too fresh to permit of his incurring out of hand the risk of a similar calamity. So he

halted, put his troops into position, reconnoitred, and threw away his only chance of success.

From that date up to the middle of November the two armies continued to face one another. The English, supplied from the fleet, fared upon the whole well; the French soon began to experience the terrible effects of Lord Wellington's policy. Carrying no stores with them, they ate up in a day or two all the provisions that could be found in the neighbourhood of the camp, and were driven to collect supplies from a distance. Whole battalions were employed in that demoralizing service, with, however, but indifferent success. Then the horses began to die for lack of forage, and the men, ill fed and worse clothed, crowded the hospitals. Meanwhile swarms of partisans gathered in their rear. Their convoys were attacked, their foraging parties harassed, their communications with Spain interrupted, till their brave and skilful chief was forced in the end to acknowledge that the anticipations of evil which had haunted him when first approaching the enterprise, were more than realized.

Though the English army enjoyed all this while as much repose as is consistent with service in the field, it may be doubted whether their leader was ever exposed to greater annoyance from the vacillations of his own Government, and the exceeding short-sightedness, not to use a stronger term, of the Governments of the two Peninsular nations. In London, and indeed throughout England generally, the gloomiest anticipations were formed. Nobody could believe that a handful of men, forced into a corner within 20 miles of Lisbon, would be able many days to hold its ground against the united strength of the French Empire; for the Emperor had at that moment no other war upon his hands, and it was difficult to believe that any exertion would be considered too great for the expulsion of the English from Portugal. Indeed so deeply were the British ministers impressed with this belief, that Lord Liverpool, then Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, wrote to say, that "the re-embarkation of the army would probably begin about September." The Portuguese Government, on the other hand, became clamorous for the resumption of offensive

operations. They denounced the retreat to Torres Vedras as an act of treason, and found the people whose houses had been burned and their property destroyed, willing enough to believe that protection from the English was as intolerable as submission to the French. Lord Wellington's correspondence shows how severely the weakness of the English and the wickedness of the Portuguese Cabinets tried him. For not the least curious incident in a series of mistakes was this, that the same minister who spoke of a speedy retreat from the Continent pressed the British General to lessen the expenses of the war, by sending home the transports without which retreat would be impossible.

If the Portuguese Regency had gone no further than to heap censure on his plan of campaign, Lord Wellington could have afforded to treat their arrogance with contempt; but when he found that with a view to embarrass him, the Portuguese troops were starved, he considered it necessary to speak out. He wrote to Brazil, complaining to the King of the misconduct of his representatives, and threatened the Regency with withdrawing from the country unless they treated him better. As to the Spanish Government, he had long learned that reasoning and remonstrance were alike unavailing in that quarter. Undisciplined mobs were still thrust into situations where they were powerless to effect anything, till by and by Spanish armies, properly so called, ceased to exist. Certainly Lord Wellington's prospects were at this time, in all men's eyes except his own, desperate. He himself never lost heart. "With the sea open to me," he used to write, "and tonnage enough in the Tagus, I can never be in much danger. Every day that we can manage to hold our own in this country, is an immense gain to us, and a great loss to the enemy, for Europe won't bear the oppression with which it is treated for ever, and the first serious check which Buonaparte meets with, will give the signal for a general rising against him. It is not very generous of the Ministers to throw the responsibility of continuing the war upon me; that is what the Government ought to bear, whose servant I am; but I don't care, I am ready to take it, as they will have it so, and have no fear about the result."

Perhaps the greatest inconvenience which Lord Wellington suffered at that time, arose from his want of money. Nations which wage war as England does, and let us hope that she will never be induced to change her system, expect that their troops will pay for all that they require, even in an enemy's country; and the rule is doubly binding when they operate among friendly people. But the English Government is apt to forget that there is no possibility of adhering to this system, if the military chest be empty. "I do not," wrote Lord Wellington to Lord Liverpool, "receive one sixth part of the money which is required to keep so great a machine in motion." "I cannot get on unless more money is sent." "I am in debt to everybody, and cannot command the commonest necessaries, unless I follow the example of the enemy, and take what I require with the strong hand." But this manner of proceeding, besides being entirely opposed to his own sense of right, would have proved to him, as it did to the French, a source of the gravest inconvenience. He therefore set himself to remedy the evil as well as he could; and by establishing a sort of paper currency, and encouraging American ships to bring corn into the Tagus, he managed to keep his army, and even the inhabitants of Lisbon, supplied at a time when, but for his exertions, they must have equally starved.

Another subject gave a good deal of annoyance to Lord Wellington at this time. The Spanish colonies in South America had long desired to open a direct trade with England, and English merchants, indifferent as they are apt to be to other considerations than those of their own interests, encouraged the colonists in that disposition. By little and little, an illicit free trade led to colonial revolt, and then the question between Spain and England became complicated. Lord Wellington's views of the case were as just as they were liberal. He deprecated at such a moment the tacit sanction which his own Government had given to what the laws of the Spanish monarchy forbade, while he resisted the demand of the Spanish Regency, that England should co-operate with them in putting down the insurrection. "Whatever," he says, "may be the relations which are ultimately established between

Spain and her colonies, the general result must be to diminish, if not to extinguish, the foreign commerce of the Peninsula, a circumstance from which it is certain that Great Britain alone can profit. Neither can it be doubted that the colonies may separate from the mother country at any moment they please. It will be an act of madness, therefore, in Spain, if she seek to hinder that separation by force, and it will be equally foolish in England to second, or even to encourage, such an attempt. The latter, however, may, by her influence and advice, prevent matters from arriving at this extremity, but she should attempt nothing more than to dissuade Spain from having recourse to violence."

In dealing with these questions, and others which arose out of them, such as the national antipathy between the Portuguese and the Spaniards, and the impatience of his own Government for action in some shape or another, Lord Wellington's mind was kept continually on the stretch. More than once he seems to have arrived at the conclusion that, in order to stop the mouths of the opposition at home, and of his enemies in Portugal, it would become necessary to assume the offensive. His better judgment, however, prevailed, and he abstained from risking a battle. His reasoning, as expressed in various letters to the Government at home, was this :—" I have no doubt, as matters stand at present, that I am strong enough to beat the French. But by exposing my troops, at this inclement season, to the rains for even three days and nights, I am sure to bring sickness among them. My gain will be that by defeating Massena and Soult I shall free both the northern provinces and Andalusia from the presence of the French. But this it is probable that I shall effect in the common course of events, without risking the loss of a battle, which would compromise us altogether. Besides, looking to what occurred after the last campaign, I do not see that our condition will be materially bettered by the evacuation of these provinces. When Castile and the north of Spain were freed from French troops, they did not raise a man or strike a blow for the common cause. If all this be true, our interests do not require that we should fight the French army,

which we should certainly not be able to drive out of the Peninsula; but that we should give as much occupation as possible to the largest portion of that army, and leave offensive operations to be carried on by the guerillas. So long as the French do not threaten our means of subsistence, or the resources of the Portuguese Government, or anything else which affects our security, it is a matter of indifference to us whether they remain in Spain or Portugal. I believe, indeed, looking to the increased difficulties which they experience in subsisting themselves in the latter country and keeping open their communications, that it is of advantage to us that they should remain where they are. Their numbers diminish from day to day; they do us no harm; we are nearer to our supplies than we have ever yet been; and all the north of Spain is open to the operations of the guerillas."

The soundness of this reasoning could not be called in question, and there was additional ground for remaining on the defensive in the considerations, first, that the Portuguese troops were as yet imperfectly disciplined, and, next, that his attack, if made at all, must be made without artillery. For the enemy's position was, in this respect, as good as his own. Both were alike inaccessible to guns; while victory itself would have carried the conquerors only into a country utterly exhausted. The single contingency, indeed, which Lord Wellington in his lines had reason to dread, was the junction of Soult with Massena; and even in that case he believed himself strong enough to keep both at bay. He therefore restrained the ardour of his men, wrote cheerfully to his own Government, compelled the Portuguese Regency to observe at least the appearance of moderation, and bided his time.

CHAPTER XIII.

MASSENA'S RETREAT—FUENTES D'ONORE.

MASSENA had borne up with wonderful patience against the difficulties of his situation for more than two months. He held on amid sickness and want, in the hope either that Soult would come to his assistance from Andalusia, or that Foy, whom he had sent to Paris with information for the Emperor, would return and bring with him fresh instructions. Neither event befell, and yielding to a necessity which could no longer be resisted, he changed his ground. He could not, indeed, venture as yet to abandon the enterprise upon which he had been thrust. He had no longer the faintest hope of succeeding, but a retreat into Spain without positive orders from Napoleon was a step which he was reluctant to take. He contented himself, therefore, with falling back to Santarem; and throwing a bridge over the Zezere at Punhete, re-opened his communications with Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo. This he managed to effect about the middle of November, though not without incurring great hazard, for his troops were led of necessity through various defiles, amid the entanglement of which a contest would have been very disastrous. But Lord Wellington, seeing the enemy in the toils, abstained from attacking him. He had, after mature deliberation, formed his own plan, and the prospect of an immediate and partial success was insufficient to draw him away from it. Wherefore, following Massena at a respectful distance, and satisfying himself that it was the enemy's intention to linger on where they halted, he fell back again and resumed his old position.

So passed the winter of 1810. Lord Wellington would risk nothing, Massena could attempt nothing. The former continued to strengthen his lines, and threw up a new chain of works on the further side of the Tagus. The latter devoted all his time and energies to provide common necessaries for the troops of which he was at the head. By and by, on the 5th of February, General Foy re-entered the camp with intelligence that no help was to be expected from France. Misunderstandings had arisen between Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia, and Napoleon was already preparing for that march into the North of Europe which he soon afterwards began. Here, then, was the fulfilment of Lord Wellington's prophecy, often repeated, yet nowhere believed. It was the continued resistance of the Peninsular nations which encouraged Alexander to withstand the demands of Napoleon; it was from the camp fires of the English army, as it lay through that long winter on the hills of Torres Vedras, that the torch was carried which set Northern Europe in a flame. Had Lord Wellington been less firm than he was, the feeble Government which he served would have withdrawn him from the Peninsula; and with the final abandonment of their cause by the English the resistance of the Peninsular nations would have ceased. There would have been no Russian war in that case, nor, as far as human sagacity can discover, any chance of freedom for continental Europe during the lifetime of the French Emperor.

Cut off by this information from all hope of support elsewhere, Massena derived small comfort from the assurance that Soult, Drouet, and Dorsenne, had received peremptory orders to concentrate round him. He knew too well the tempers of his brother Marshals to expect hearty co-operation from them, and he was right. Soult refused to march upon Abrantes. He yielded, indeed, so far to the will of his master as to convert the siege of Cadiz into a blockade, and to carry 15,000, instead of 30,000, men into Estremadura. And there he loitered to disperse the bands of Ballasteros and Mendizabel; to reduce Merida and Olivença, and to lay siege to Badajoz. But he never brought a man into communication with Massena, nor ever intended so to do. Drouet

and Dorsenne in like manner came up slowly, and brought no supplies with them. Joseph alone marched briskly upon Alcantara, but no good arose out of the movement. Long before the feasibility of Napoleon's plan could be tested, Massena's powers of endurance gave way, and that retreat began of which it is not too much to say that it decided the issues of the great war in the Peninsula. I must leave the historian to describe in detail how this retreat was conducted. It began on the evening of the 4th of March, and continued without a pause till the 16th. So far as military skill was concerned it was admirably managed. The Duke often spoke of it afterwards, as fully bearing out the great reputation which Massena had acquired elsewhere. "I could never catch him napping. Wherever I least desired him to be, there he surely was, and he chose his ground so well that it always cost time, which in such cases is invaluable, to dislodge him. He made excellent use of his cavalry too, in which he was strong, and once employed a portion of it —the only occasion, by the way, in which I ever saw the dragoon put to his legitimate use—as infantry. But the dismounted dragoons made a poor fight of it. They tried to keep a wooded hill not far from Alcobaça, and a few companies of the Rifle Brigade, the old 95th, you know, soon drove them away. I never had much idea of the dragoon while we had him in our own service, and after the exhibition which he made of himself at Alcobaça, I certainly should not like to see him re-introduced among us."

It was not till the 6th, when he cautiously entered Santarem, that Lord Wellington became convinced that Massena was in full retreat. As soon as that fact became plain to him, he despatched a messenger to Badajoz, urging the Governor to hold out to the last extremity, and assuring him of speedy relief. And a stout column, under the orders of Marshal Beresford, crossed the Tagus on the 8th, and marched towards the beleaguered town. But Don José de Imar, the Governor of Badajoz, proved to be a traitor. On the 10th tidings reached him from Elvas that Beresford was at hand, and on the 11th, before a practicable breach had been effected, he opened his gates. This cruel act proved,

both in its immediate and more remote consequences, extremely inconvenient to Lord Wellington. It exposed Marshal Beresford to great danger, which he escaped only through Soult's mistake, in breaking up the besieging army prematurely; it cost many valuable lives later in the season to repair the mischief which had been done. Lord Wellington, however, as he knew nothing of the treason while it was hatching, so he did not permit the news of its consummation to interfere with his arrangements. He continued the pursuit of Massena, fighting him at Pombal, at Redinha, and again at Fonz d'Arunce, where on the 16th he was compelled, through failure of stores of every kind, to halt till his supplies could overtake him.

If the French behaved gallantly as soldiers during this retreat, their conduct as men cannot be sufficiently reprobated. It seemed, indeed, as if from the date of their entrance into Portugal, they had ceased to think as well as to act like human beings. No doubt the devastation of the country through which they advanced astonished and enraged them, and for excesses committed when driven to seek for food at the point of the bayonet, some faint excuse may be urged; but their wanton outrages in every town and village, their brutal conduct to the women, their slaughter of men and even of infants, stand without a parallel in the records of crime. Not content with plunder, arson, murder, they seemed to take a savage delight in leaving traces of their guilt behind. The very wells they poisoned by casting into them the bodies of the slain, and into many ovens which our men opened in search of bread, they found that dead bodies had been thrust.

Lord Wellington's compulsory halt, which lasted several days, enabled Massena to get his broken masses into something like order. He took up a position on the further side of the Guarda mountains, whence he had it in his power either to connect himself with Joseph by moving towards Alcantara, or to continue his retreat upon Ciudad-Rodrigo. He was thus circumstanced when, on the 29th, the English threading the passes of the hills showed themselves in full march to attack him. He did not await the onset. The

Coa was in his rear, he crossed it, and at Sabugal was brought to action. Through some mismanagement on the part of the English he contrived to slip away, and to escape, with the loss of the whole of his artillery, first to Ciudad-Rodrigo, and by and by to Salamanca.

With Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo both in the enemy's hands, the position of the English army on the Portuguese frontier was no longer what it used to be. Badajoz, likewise, instead of protecting, menaced them from the side of Estremadura. Indeed Lord Wellington felt that, before anything further could be done, he must recover these places, let the cost of life be what it might. With regard to Almeida, and even to Ciudad-Rodrigo, he had good hope. The first was known to be so ill supplied, that a fortnight's blockade would suffice to reduce it; the last, it was understood, had been pretty well emptied of provisions by Massena's troops, as they swept through it. Lord Wellington, therefore, effected the investment of Almeida with one division, and with the rest of the army crossed the Coa, and threatened Ciudad-Rodrigo. Massena, however, had been too much on the alert to leave these places at the enemy's mercy. His first act after reaching Salamanca, was to send supplies to Ciudad-Rodrigo, which arrived on the very day that the English passed the Coa. A halt was accordingly ordered, and for a brief space the French and English armies rested from their labours.

There was rest for others, there was none for Lord Wellington. Unsatisfactory tidings came in from the further side of the Tagus. Beresford, after defeating a French division at Campo Major, had been drawn into a false position on the Guadiana, and was in danger. On the 14th of April Lord Wellington mounted his horse at Villa Formosa. He arrived at Beresford's head-quarters on the 17th; on the 18th he put the corps in march towards Badajoz; and on the 20th he was at Elvas taking account of the resources which it could furnish. The 22nd saw him, in company with Beresford, closely reconnoitring the fortress, and arranging a plan of siege; and on the 25th he was back again on the frontiers of Castile, where his presence was

sorely needed. Generally speaking Lord Wellington's intelligence proved better than that of the French throughout the war. At this particular juncture the enemy seems to have had many spies in the English camp, and the departure of Lord Wellington, as well as the route which he had taken, were immediately communicated to Marshal Massena. He believed that an opportunity was afforded of relieving Almeida, and he hastened to take advantage of it. The rapidity with which the French refitted after every disaster, deserves the highest praise. Soult, escaping from Oporto, was in a condition to take the field again within a fortnight, and Massena had already collected at Salamanca, men, horses, and guns, which rendered him superior to the English in cavalry by three to one, and in infantry by not less than two to one. If, with such odds in his favour, he could bring the English to action, especially during the absence of their great chief, there seemed no reason to doubt that he should overthrow them. And whether overthrowing them or not, he should certainly be able to revictual Almeida, and put it out of danger. But Massena had not reckoned upon the rapidity with which Lord Wellington travelled. A succession of heavy rains, likewise, swelled the rivers, and rendered the roads all but impassable. It was the 30th of April, therefore, before he could reach Ciudad-Rodrigo, and only on the 2nd of May the Aqueda was crossed. It was too late. Lord Wellington, with 28,142 infantry, and 1631 cavalry, took post upon some strong ground, having the Dos Casos with its steep banks in its front, and the Tormes with its banks equally steep in his rear. His left rested on Fort Conception, his right upon the boggy woods of Pozzo Bello. Massena saw that the convoy which he was conducting could not possibly be introduced into Almeida without a struggle. He did not decline the challenge. On the 3rd he attacked the village of Fuentes d'Honore, an advanced work, so to speak, in the English centre, and failing to carry it, threw himself, on the 5th, with great fury upon the boggy wood. A desperate conflict ensued. The English, borne back by superior numbers, changed their whole order of battle, and repelled over and over again every effort to

break through them. Night put an end to the firing, and it was spent by the English in throwing up field-works. Hence, when the morning of the 6th broke, Massena shrank from renewing the contest. He felt that the purpose of his forward movement had been defeated. The provisions which he was escorting for the benefit of the garrison of Almeida his own people had consumed, and the means of procuring more, even for present use, were wanting. He contented himself, therefore, with getting instructions conveyed to General Brennier, who commanded in the beleaguered fortress, to fight his way out of it, after destroying the works; and then marched away, recrossing the Aqueda, and returning to his old quarters at Salamanca.

General Brennier duly received Marshal Massena's instructions, and acted upon them skilfully and bravely. He had before him a good officer too; but General Campbell's pickets appear to have been less on the alert than became them, for about midnight on the 16th, the enemy broke through them, and pushed rapidly for the Aqueda. At the same time a loud explosion announced that the fortifications of Almeida were blown up, and a scene of something like confusion followed. The blockading troops turned out, and followed the enemy, skirmishing with their rear. They could not succeed, however, in bringing them to a stand, and by and by 1400 French infantry passed the river at the Barca del Puerca, and were safe with the 2nd French corps, which lay on the opposite side to receive them.

It was not, however, in Beira alone that hostilities went forward briskly at this time. Marshal Beresford, it will be recollected, had been left by Lord Wellington in Estremadura to overawe Soult and to besiege Badajoz. Blake and Castaños lay at Val Verde, having under their orders about 17,000 ill-armed and undisciplined Spaniards. With these Beresford communicated, and having completed his investment between the 4th and the 8th of May, he began to arm his batteries. They were indifferently supplied, and worse served, for the guns were few in number, and recruits, chiefly Portuguese, worked them. The siege made, therefore, but little progress, and by and by the advance of Soult at the

head of 20,000 men caused it to be suspended. The guns were removed to a place of safety; troops enough were left in the trenches to maintain the blockade, and Beresford, with the rest, marched out to meet the enemy. He was joined on the 15th at Albuera, by Blake and Castaños, and early next morning was attacked by Soult. Little generalship was displayed on either side. The Spaniards soon abandoned the high ground on which they had been placed; the English and Portuguese were in the greatest jeopardy, when the arrival of the Fusilier brigade, which came up at a critical moment from Badajoz, saved the day. These brave men, charging in an echelon of lines, overwhelmed the enemy with their fire, who after repeatedly attempting, but in vain, to deploy, abandoned the field. It was dark when the battle ended, and French and English slept where they had fought, but when morning dawned the French had disappeared. Fifteen hundred English infantry, all that remained out of 7000, stood victorious on the heights which they had won.

Among all his campaigns there was not one about which the Duke, when led on to discuss it, spoke with greater animation than this. Not that he ever said much about his own difficulties, so far as these were occasioned by the neglect of the Government which he served. To the last day of his life, indeed, he seemed to treat matters of this sort as if they had been state secrets; for whenever his friends alluded by chance to the short-comings of ministers, he invariably turned the subject, and that with a degree of tact as well as generosity which was very remarkable. For example, it happened one day at Walmer Castle, that a gentleman present referred indignantly to the Walcheren expedition, regretting that the fine army wasted upon it had not been sent to the North of Portugal. "So you think," was the Duke's answer, "but how should I have been able to feed them? I had difficulty enough in feeding the small force already there, what should I have done if it had been trebled?" In the same spirit he would either set aside or account for the perverse doings of the Portuguese Regency. "They could not see things in the same light that I did; they were naturally looking to the salvation of their own