

which they made alarmed the garrison. A fire was consequently opened from the guns which were directed on the bridge, and the first discharge was most destructive; but the gunners then lost the range and direction, and their farther fire served only to quicken the speed of the carriages. Every thing was brought away in this retreat except the three disabled guns, and the eight pieces of the enemy which had been taken in the horn work. The loss of the allies during the siege amounted to 24 officers and 485 men killed; 68 officers and 1487 men wounded and missing. The enemy did not begin to follow till late on the ensuing day; 10,000 of their troops encamped that day on the south of Burgos, and on the morrow at noon, they came up in force with the retreating army. Sir Stapleton Cotton detained them for above three hours at the passage of the Hormaza, in front of Celada del Camino; they were twice charged there by Major-General Anson's brigade with great success, and the rear-guard continued to fall back in the best order, till the Guerrillas on their left were driven in and came flying upon them, four or five of the enemy's squadrons being mixed with them in pursuit. In the confusion which ensued, the French were mistaken for Spaniards, and favoured by that mistake, they fell upon the flank and rear of the allies. Some loss was sustained, and Lieutenant-Colonel Pell of the 16th dragoons was taken prisoner, having had his horse shot. A very superior body of cavalry, in which the enemy were strong, now came up, and the allied cavalry fell back hastily, lest they should be surrounded; but having crossed a wide and deep ditch by a narrow bridge, the brigades of Major-Generals Bock and Anson charged their pursuers when only part had filed over: in this they were repulsed, hardly pressed, and forced upon the infantry rear-guard of German light troops under Colonel Halkett: that officer formed his troops in four squares, and the men

CHAP.
XLII.
1812.

October.

Retreat
from Bur-
gos.

CHAP.

XLII.

1812.

*October.**The allies
cross the
Pisuerga.**Disorders
during the
retreat.*

behaving, as that legion ever did, admirably, repulsed the enemy in several charges, and checked the pursuit. The right of the army crossed the Pisuerga that afternoon at Torquemada, and the left at Cordovilla, where head-quarters were established that night.

The army continued its march on the 24th towards the Carrion. Throughout the north of Castille, which is a great wine country, the wine is stowed either in caves dug in the hill sides, or excavated in the earth, the soil from the excavation being formed into a mound over them, and the entrance appearing like the chimney of a subterraneous dwelling. These cellars were now filled with new wine; the soldiers broke into them during the night, and it was not without the greatest exertions that the officers in the morning could put their battalions in march. The enemy, however, after their yesterday's repulse were less pressing; and the whole army having that day marched twenty miles, took up its ground behind the Carrion with its right at Dueñas and its left at Villa Muriel; and here the brigade of guards which had disembarked at Coruña joined them. The retreating army did not exceed 20,000 men; the French displayed above thirty; they were confident also in the superiority of their cavalry, in that country the most efficient force; and as it is their national character to be easily elated, they might well be elated now, at having baffled Lord Wellington before so poor a fortress as the castle at Burgos, and compelled him who had driven Massena out of Portugal, and routed Marmont at Salamanca, to retreat before them. English soldiers are neither lightly elated, nor soon cast down; they keep their courage on a retreat, for that never gives way; but they become disdainful of control, when they have no opportunity of wreaking their wrathful feelings upon the enemy who is in pursuit, and insubordination is then the sin which most

easily besets them. This was already felt, though as yet they had suffered little, and though the retreat was so deliberately made, and with so firm a face toward the enemy, that the men lost none of their confidence in their Commander.

CHAP.

XLII.

1812.

October.

The army halted on the 25th, and measures were taken for impeding the pursuit. A battalion of the royals was posted at Palencia to cover the operations for destroying the bridges over the Carrion at that old city ; but the French assembled there in such force, that the commanding officer being attacked and overpowered, found it necessary to retire upon Villa Muriel, and the bridges were left uninjured for the pursuers to pass. Two other bridges over the same river at Villa Muriel and at Dueñas were mined, that they might be exploded on the enemy's approach, and one in like manner over the Pisuerga at Tariago. The two former were successfully exploded, that at Villa Muriel under a fire of grape-shot from the enemy ; but they discovered a ford there, and passed over a considerable body both of horse and foot. A false report that the enemy had already crossed at Tariago, delayed the commencement of the work there ; the French came up before it was completed ; it was exploded prematurely, and consequently to no effect ; their cavalry galloped over and made the party prisoners. This enabled them to push a corps on the right into contact with the posts on the Carrion ; their passing at Palencia made it necessary for Lord Wellington to change the front of his army, and this second success rendered his farther retreat difficult, and even precarious. Major-Generals Pringle and Barnes were therefore ordered to attack those who had crossed the Pisuerga ; the Spanish troops co-operated in this, and the enemy were driven across the river with considerable loss. Neither could they maintain themselves upon the Carrion after having forded at Villa Muriel ; the Spaniards who were employed to dislodge

CHAP.

XLII.

1812.

*October.**Oct. 26.**The allies
halt.**Oct. 27.*

them, faltered in the charge, and Alava, while leading them on and in the act of encouraging them, fell badly wounded; the fall of this gallant leader did not inspire them with more courage, but the Brunswickers were then ordered to advance; those brave men ran into the village without firing a shot; the Spaniards took heart and followed them, and the French withdrew; and the fifth division under General Oswald advancing against their main body, compelled it to recross.

The next day the allies retreated sixteen miles without molestation, and crossed the Pisuerga at Cabezon del Campo; the bridge there was barricadoed and mined, and the army halted in its rear. The ruined bridges at Dueñas and Villa Muriel had impeded Souham's movements, so that he did not approach till evening; he then halted his whole army on the right bank of the Pisuerga. The morning of the 27th was foggy, but when the mist cleared, their whole force was seen encamped at about three miles distance. They brought up two brigades of artillery and cannonaded the town, with little other harm than that of severely wounding Lieutenant-Colonel Robe of the artillery. Being opposed to a superior fire, they made no farther attempt in front, but made considerable detachments to their right, through Cigales, with a view of getting possession of the bridge at Valladolid, and thus interposing in the rear of the retreating army. Lord Wellington had an opportunity of seeing their whole force from a high ground, and saw that they were in very great strength. On the 28th, they extended their right still farther, and endeavoured in the morning to force the bridge over the Douro at Simancas, which was defended by Colonel Halkett, with his brigade of the 7th division, while the Earl of Dalhousie, with the remainder of the division, defended the bridge at Valladolid. Halkett being hard pressed, blew up the bridge, and disappointed them of their passage

there ; at the same time he sent the Brunswick Oels regiment to Tordesillas, whither the enemy detached troops in the evening, and where also the bridge over the Douro was destroyed in time. Lord Wellington sent orders to the Brunswickers to take post on its ruins, in such manner as to prevent them from repairing it ; and breaking up from the Pisuerga, he crossed the Douro on the 29th, by the bridges of Puente Douro, and Tudela, both which, and that at Quintanilla also, were blown up, and subsequently those at Toro and Zamora. The pursuers that evening displayed more enterprise than they had hitherto shown ; they passed a body of men in the night of the 29th, by swimming the Douro near Tordesillas, and these gallant fellows falling upon the guard who had been left in a tower on the south end of the bridge, and looked for no attack on that side, surprised and overpowered them, and immediately fell to work to restore the communication. Lord Wellington was apprised of this in time, or it would have frustrated all his former precautions ; he marched his army early on the morrow, and posted them on the heights, between Rueda and Tordesillas, immediately opposite and near the bridge : the bridge by this time had been nearly repaired, but the French had made no attempt to pass ; and in that position, which he strengthened with batteries, Lord Wellington remained from the 30th till the 6th of November, the enemy meantime extending along the river from Toro to Valladolid. He thus obtained the double object of resting the troops, and gaining time for Sir Rowland Hill's movements ; for, . . . though his first view had been in falling back upon the Douro to afford Sir Rowland a point upon which to retire when he should no longer be able to maintain an advanced position in front of Madrid, against the very superior force which would be brought against him, . . . having seen the strength of Souham's army, it had

CHAP.
XLII.

1812.

October.

CHAP. XLII. become necessary to order Sir Rowland to break up from the Xarama, for the purpose of securing his own retreat.

1812.

October.

Sir Rowland Hill retreats from the Xarama.

Sir Rowland was an officer upon whom Lord Wellington might always rely with the most perfect confidence. He expected such orders, and receiving them on the 29th, intended to begin his march on the following morning; but the mine which should have destroyed the Puente Larga, on the Xarama, failed; and the enemy, who had collected a large body between that bridge and Aranjuez, immediately made an attack upon the allied post there. They were repulsed by Colonel Skerrett with considerable loss on their part, and that of some forty men on ours: this affair delayed the march of Sir Rowland's right till the evening, the enemy however made no subsequent attempt to molest him, farther than by picking up such stragglers as fell behind for the sake of plundering and drinking; and these were numerous. The army marched all night and reached Madrid on the following morning. That capital presented a melancholy scene: it was known that these allies could make no attempt to defend it, and that their retreat would be followed by the entrance of the enemy; and two days before, when the Military and Provisional Government were about to transfer their authority to the *Ayuntamiento*, that body dissolved itself, regardless of its duty. Upon this, the Regidor D. Pedro Baranda, who had been on the point of resigning his office, came bravely and honourably forward to take himself the charge from which they had shrunk, and summoning persons to his aid who had been in authority when the French withdrew, began to take measures for averting the evils which there was so much cause to apprehend. The letters in the post-office were sent off to Avila, lest they should be seized by the enemy, and many persons brought into danger by their contents. And to prevent the

State of Madrid.

excesses which must be expected, if on the entrance of the enemy the prisons should be thrown open, the alcaydes were called upon to deliver in a list of those persons who were imprisoned for disloyalty to the national cause, and they were set at liberty while there yet existed an authority which could restrain them from acts of immediate vengeance.

CHAP.
XLII.

1812.

November.

There were large depôts of provisions in the Retiro and in the convent of Monserrate, which the allied army had no means of carrying with them in their retreat, and orders were therefore given that they should be burnt. The municipality requested that they might rather be disposed of either by sale, or as a loan, for the inhabitants and the hospitals; it was not at the commissary's discretion to accede to this proposal; but instead of destroying the stores, the people in the immediate vicinity were invited to help themselves there. It seemed, indeed, in this retreat, that in the economy of an army the English had yet every thing to learn: the troops were at this time scantily provided with food, their line of supply had been along the valley of the Tagus, the arrangements for changing its direction failed, and before the men effected their junction with Lord Wellington's army, the sweet acorns which they found in the wood formed no slight part of their subsistence. The works at the Retiro were destroyed before the troops withdrew from Madrid, and the artillery there was rendered useless: their departure resembled that of the French in this respect, that they were accompanied by a considerable number of Spaniards, for whom it would have been dangerous to place themselves at the mercy of the Intrusive Government; but such persons were objects of commiseration and respect to their countrymen, not of contempt and execration.

*The allies
withdrew
from Ma-
drid.*

While the allies retired leisurely towards the pass of the Guadarrama, a French officer presented himself on the after-

*The French
enter.*

CHAP.

XLII.

1812.

November.

noon of November 1, at the bridge of Toledo, announcing on the part of General Drouet, that King Joseph would enter on the morrow with his army, and requiring that a deputation should go out to meet and welcome him. On the morrow, accordingly, the *Ayuntamiento* went forth accompanied by some of the parish priests, of the titular nobility, and of those who held office under the Intruder. Baranda briefly represented the peaceable conduct of the inhabitants, and expressed to Joseph's minister of the Interior, that his only wish was to retire to his own house, where he might consult his own health and look after his own affairs. This permission was easily obtained, as the French presently re-established the former functionaries; but on the 6th, the municipality were informed that circumstances rendered it necessary for the troops to leave the capital for some days; and that, in the meantime, they must take upon themselves the charge of preserving tranquillity. Baranda was then summoned from his short retirement, and required again to act as President of the *Ayuntamiento*. At two on the afternoon of the 7th, the troops departed to reinforce Marshal Soult, who had followed Sir Rowland's movements; and in less than two hours after their departure, Lieutenant-Colonel Mondedeu, the commandant of a Guerrilla party, entered; on the morrow, the Medico arrived with part of his band, the Empecinado's division on the following day, and on the 11th, the Camp Marshal Bassecourt with some of his troops. Fewer disorders were committed than might have been expected under such circumstances, and those chiefly by peasants and deserters, who thought to take advantage of the sort of interregnum in which the capital was left; but the officers caused these offenders to be arrested, and exerted themselves to prevent excesses. But the inhabitants were told that, as the human means of effecting with God's blessing their own deliverance, they must contribute towards

the support of the soldiers as much as their necessities could spare ; and it may be supposed that this contribution was exacted with less compunction on the one part, and submitted to with less unwillingness on the other, because both well knew that when the French returned the locust would devour what the palmer-worm had left.

CHAP.
XLII.

1812.

November.

On the 6th Sir Rowland reached Arevalo, which is about 80 miles from Madrid ; the troops had suffered much from the weather, more from the gross ill management on the part of the commissariat and the staff, and not a little from their own irregularities, moral discipline having long been disregarded in modern armies. He was now in communication with Lord Wellington, and was instructed to continue his march by Fonteveros upon Alba de Tormes. By this time Lord Wellington's army had been recruited by rest, and the enemy had rendered the bridges passable at Toro and at Tordesillas : he broke up therefore from his position in front of the latter city before daylight, leaving the fires burning : that day he fell back to Torrecilla de la Orden, continued his march the following day, and on the 8th took up the position which he had twice before occupied in front of Salamanca. Sir Rowland crossed the Tormes the same day at Alba, occupied that town and castle with Major-General Howard's brigade, and stationed a Portuguese division on the left of the Tormes, under Major-General Hamilton, to support them. They were not followed during their retreat from the Douro ; the enemy halted to collect provisions and bring up their detachments, and the armies of Portugal and the north then formed their junction with those of the south, and of the centre under Soult and the Intruder : their united force amounted to not less than 80,000 foot and 12,000 horse, being the whole of their disposable force in Spain, and it was believed that they had with them not fewer than 200 pieces of cannon. The allies

*Junction of
the retreat-
ing armies.*

*Junction of
the French
armies.*