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have been swept away, the wheels were taken off, and they were slidden over on the foot-bridges. Sometimes they were hauled along causeways and connecting bridges so narrow, that the wheels rested on half their fellies upon the stones which were set edge upwards on the verge of the road. It was the first march these troops had ever made, but notwithstanding the severity of such labour, performed at such a season, and during incessant rain, not a man deserted, and there was no straggling, no murmuring amid all their difficulties: they sung as they went along, and reached their resting-place at night with unabated cheerfulness.

*He refuses
to return to
Porto.*

Sir Robert had plainly stated to the Junta that his legion was not to form part of the garrison, but that in every operation without the walls he should think it his duty to aid, and even in defence of the suburbs before the Salamanca gate, as long as his return over the bridge was assured. The Junta and the people of that city displayed a hearty willingness to co-operate with their allies in any manner that might appear most conducive to the common cause; and from that generous spirit they never departed during all the vicissitudes of the war. At first there was a fair prospect of acting offensively; but when the authorities at Ledesma and Salamanca declined the assistance which was offered them from this quarter, Sir Robert, instead of maintaining the line of the Tormes, as he had hoped to do, formed on the Agueda, having his head-quarters at San Felices. When he had marched from the coast, it was with the hope of facilitating the plans and contributing to the success of a British army perfectly equipped and disciplined, strong in itself, and confident in its commanders and its cause. He now learnt that that army was retreating with a speed which the most utter defeat could hardly have precipitated: at the same time he was privately advised to fall back on Porto. But though weak himself,

he had already ascertained that the French in that part of Spain were not strong, that the activity and appearance of his little corps had imposed upon them a salutary opinion of his strength, and that his continuance there was of no trifling importance, not merely as covering the removal of the British stores from Almeida, but as checking the enemy's advance in that direction, counteracting the report which they busily spread and indeed believed themselves, that the English had entirely abandoned Spain, encouraging the Spaniards, and gaining time for them to strengthen the works of Ciudad Rodrigo, and for training a brave and well-disposed people.

This became of more consequence when the Junta of that city had, in their own language, "the melancholy honour of being the only one which held out in all Castille," Ledesma and Salamanca having, without a show of resistance, admitted the enemy. For him to obtain intelligence was as easy, owing to the disposition of the people, as it was difficult for the French. Having ascertained that they had few cavalry and only 1500 foot in Salamanca, that they were proportionally weak in the country about Zamora and Villalpando, and that they had not occupied Ledesma for want of men, he entered Ledesma, carried off, in Ferdinand's name for the Junta of Rodrigo, the treasure and money which had been raised there for the French in obedience to requisition, and compelled them to seek and convoy what provisions they extorted from the country. They had given public notice that every person who disobeyed their requisitions should be punished with death. Sir Robert sent forth a counter-proclamation, declaring, that if this threat were effected, he would hang a Frenchman for every Spaniard. By incessant activity, attacking their posts in open day, he kept them perpetually on the alarm, and made them apprehend a serious attack on Salamanca itself. Upon that score their ap-

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*Effect of his
movements.*

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*Part of the
legion de-
tained at
Porto.*

*Displeasure
of the au-
thorities
there.*

*Rank given
him by the
Spanish go-
vernment.*

prehensions would have been realized, if the whole force which Sir Robert had raised had been then at his command ; or if even with such poor means as he possessed he had not been withheld by orders from Lisbon. But the remaining corps of his legion had been detained at Porto, and when he had applied for them, and for clothing and military stores, he had been answered that the men were wanted for the defence of Porto itself, and that, even if stores might have been spared, they could not be sent without imminent danger from the people. It was in vain for him to represent that the measures which he had taken were those which were best adapted for the protection of Portugal, by covering her weakest side ; that Portugal must be defended beyond her frontiers ; that the service in which he was engaged was of all others that in which the troops might soonest acquire the discipline and experience in which the Portugueze soldiers were so notoriously deficient ; that he wanted the men only ; not provisions, those he could assure to them ; not money, for if what had been received from England for the express use of the legion were withheld from it, he would apply elsewhere. Reasoning was of no avail when the danger from the side of Galicia appeared to be so near as in reality it was ; and the Bishop of Porto, though he had warmly encouraged the formation of the legion, as an important measure towards restoring the military character of his countrymen, and though Sir Robert had succeeded in gaining his good opinion to a high degree, was nevertheless offended at the disrespect which seemed to be shown to him and the other Portugueze authorities, by the manner in which that officer was now acting as if wholly independent of them. From the Spanish government, however, Sir Robert received as much encouragement as he could have desired in his most sanguine hopes. They gave him the rank of Brigade-General, and placed the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo and the troops in the

province at his disposal. And this proof of confidence was given at a time when a misunderstanding had arisen between the two cabinets, which might have been fatal to the common cause, if each party had not rendered full justice to the upright intention of the other.

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As soon as the dispersion of Blake's army was known in England, the British government anticipating the disasters which would follow, considered Cadiz as the ultimate point of retreat to which the Spaniards would be driven; there, supported by that fortress on one side, and by Gibraltar on the other, they might make a stand which no force that France could bring against them could overpower. Accordingly, when Sir John Moore's first intention of retreating was communicated, government resolved that his army should immediately be transferred to the south of Spain, for it was impossible to foresee the miserable state to which the manner of his retreat would reduce it. But the representations of that general concerning the little assistance which he received from the Spaniards, and the little patriotism which he could discover, so far influenced ministers, that they thought it improper to hazard an army in the south, unless a corps of it were admitted into Cadiz. The treachery of Morla, and the danger of similar treasons, rendered this precaution advisable. Upon this subject Mr. Frere was instructed to communicate with the Junta, and as it was not apprehended that the required proof of confidence would be refused, General Sherbrooke, with 4000 men, was ordered to sail immediately for Cadiz. He was not to require the command of the garrison, . . . that might have offended the feelings of the Spaniards. If, however, the Junta should not admit him, he was then to proceed to Gibraltar, and any operations in the south were necessarily to be abandoned, though there was no intention even in that case of abandoning the cause of Spain. Sir John

*Proposal
that Bri-
tish troops
should be
admitted
into Cadiz.*

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*Objections
of the Spa-
nish govern-
ment.*

Cradock also was instructed to sail for Cadiz, if he should find it necessary to abandon Portugal; but he was not to take this step till he had been apprized of the determination of the Spanish government.

Before it was known that the Junta had quitted Aranjuez, Sir George Smith had been sent to Cadiz on a local mission, to provide for the possible case of British troops being necessary for the defence of that city, at a time when it might be impracticable to obtain the opinion of the central government. When the government was removed to Seville, his mission ceased with the necessity of it. He, however, not only considered it as still existing, but went beyond his instructions; informed the governor of Cadiz that he had authority to require that British troops should be admitted to garrison that place; and sent to Sir John Cradock, directing him to dispatch troops thither from Lisbon, . . . a measure which was not to have been taken except at the direct solicitation of the Spanish authorities at Cadiz. And this he did without waiting for their consent, and without consulting or even communicating with the English ambassador. The Junta immediately conceived that some secret designs were on foot, with which Mr. Frere had not been entrusted, because he had not been thought a proper instrument; and that minister had the vexation of hearing the justice which they did to his frankness urged as a ground for unjust suspicions. "Cadiz," they said, "was not threatened, and a measure so extraordinary as that of admitting English troops there might compromise the Supreme Junta with the nation. Many would imagine that the prognostics of Morla, which the government had considered as dreams, had assumed at least an air of reality; and however the Junta might be persuaded of the purity of the motives by which Great Britain was influenced, it would not be in their power to counteract this imagination.

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Spain had addressed herself to Great Britain, and had obtained succours and good offices, which would for ever redound to the honour of England. Spain had opened her heart to unbounded gratitude ; but never could believe that her misfortunes obliged her to this. Let the allied troops disembark in small divisions, so as to leave room for each other, proceed without delay to occupy cantonments at Xeres, Port St. Mary's, and the neighbourhood, and then pursue their march into the interior. It would be easy to fall back upon Cadiz if that should be necessary ; but that necessity was at all events very distant." This, as the final resolution of King Ferdinand, the Junta (governing in his name) communicated to Mr. Frere : "trusting," they said, "in his discernment and in his religious probity, that he would feel the truth of their representations, and give the most peremptory orders for the British troops to abide by what had been agreed upon, and under no pretext whatever to remain in the fortress of Cadiz."

During these discussions, the two regiments under General Mackenzie, which Sir George Smith had so precipitately ordered from Lisbon, arrived in the bay. About the same time Mr. Frere received a copy of the instructions intended for Sir John Moore, directing him, in case he could not keep his ground in the north, to embark his troops, and carry them round either to Lisbon or to the south of Spain. These the ambassador communicated to the Junta ; and at the same time informed them that the British government expected Buonaparte would have driven back the English army into Galicia, and marched himself into Andalusia to make himself master of Seville, and shut the door against every hope of succour. Expecting that he would pursue this plan, government, while it sent these instructions to Sir John Moore, dispatched the corps under General Sherbrooke, with a view of preventing at least the sur-

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*Mr. Frere's
representations to the
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render of Cadiz, and ensuring to the auxiliary army some safe landing-place. In such a scheme, Mr. Frere argued, there was nothing unreasonable; it did not become the British ministers to risk their army without any place of retreat from an enemy who was less formidable for his military force than for the means of corruption which he employed, . . . means which the capitulation of Madrid evinced to have been not less successful in Spain than in other countries. Should the English then expose themselves to the danger arising from the enemy's intrigues, only in deference to the injurious suspicions which that very enemy wished to excite against them in the minds of the Spanish government, . . . a government to which that of his Britannic Majesty had never ceased to offer proofs of disinterestedness and of good faith? "The members of the Junta," said Mr. Frere, "will do me the justice to admit that I have never endeavoured to promote the interests of my nation, but as being essentially connected with those of their own. If, however, I have always been guided by the same sentiments and the same views which a Spanish politician might have, I do not think it is to depart from them, if I deliver the same opinion which I should give had I the honour of occupying a place in the council of your nation; namely, that the whole policy of the Spanish government rests essentially on a persuasion of perfect good faith on the part of England, and that it is important to confirm it more and more by testimonies of mutual confidence, and by avoiding the slightest appearance of distrust between government and government."

One other point Mr. Frere adverted to, which, though less important, was of great weight. The precariousness of commerce, occasioned by the supposed insecurity of Cadiz, was prejudicial to the finances of Spain. There was no longer a place in the peninsula where British goods could be deposited; and

the government was therefore under the necessity of cutting off all mercantile intercourse between the colonies and the rest of the civilized world, or of affording to foreign commerce a security which it could not find in the sole protection of a Spanish garrison. On this head he appealed to the custom-house registers, and to the applications made by neutrals for permission to reshipe goods, which they did not deem any longer safe. A note was transmitted in reply to this, saying, that the Junta would dispatch an extraordinary courier to London, and empower their minister there to settle a point of so much importance in a manner agreeable to the interests of both nations. Meantime, the English troops which were at present in the bay, and those which should arrive there, might disembark, for the purpose of proceeding to Port St. Mary, San Lucar, Xeres, and the other places proposed for their cantonment. No misfortune which could happen to the Spanish cause could prevent the English from falling back on Gibraltar and Cadiz; and this step would prevent the inconvenience and perhaps sickness to which they might be exposed by remaining on board ship or in Cadiz, the appointed stations being in a country the most healthy in the world.

Having thus considered the convenience of the troops, the Junta submitted two propositions to Mr. Frere, the only person, they said, alluding to Sir George Smith's interference, whom they acknowledged as the representative of the British nation. First, that the British troops should proceed to Catalonia, and garrison the maritime ports of that principality, thus enabling the Spanish army in that quarter to march to the relief of Zaragoza. Secondly, that they should co-operate with Cuesta: that general was threatened by a force not very superior in number to his own, and the assistance of the English might give him the superiority; thus Cadiz would be secured, and time given to set on

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 foot the troops who were now only waiting for muskets from England. The note concluded by expressing a feeling of honourable pain in the Junta, that England should distrust the safety of Cadiz unless it were garrisoned by English troops. They asserted, that the constancy and valour of the Spanish nation, manifested in this arduous struggle, entitled it to the respect of Europe; and, gently hinting at what had passed in Galicia, they requested that a veil might be drawn over it. Cadiz was not situated like Coruña, the same events therefore could not possibly occur there.

*Conference
 with Mr.
 Frere.
 Feb. 18.*

Upon the receipt of this note, Mr. Frere requested a conference. They proposed to him that he should name a governor for Cadiz. He replied, it was a responsibility with which he would not charge himself for all the world. Four months ago he should have chosen Morla, Espeleta six months before that: both had been found wanting in the day of trial, though neither had been placed in a situation so trying as that of a governor holding out in the last remaining garrison. Then replying to the argument, that the Junta could not act against popular opinion, "it must likewise be recollected," he said, "that the British government could not proceed in opposition to an opinion equally decided in England; and which of the two pretensions was the more just? England was willing to expose an English army to any hazard which resulted absolutely from the nature of things; but England would not consent that that danger should be aggravated in the slightest degree, out of deference to the caprice of popular opinion, or suspicions which were unworthy of either country. England required of Spain that it should place confidence in the British government, binding itself by the most formal engagements; Spain offered the choice of a governor and the chance of his fidelity. Our proposal was in every respect the fairest and the most rational, and

it could not be expected that we should depart from a demand of right, for the sake of conferring a favour. Mr. Frere offered to propose to General Mackenzie, that he should leave 1000 men in Cadiz, and proceed with the rest to act in concert with Cuesta for the protection of Seville, and that when General Sherbrooke arrived, 3000 should proceed to the same direction, and he should content himself with garrisoning Cadiz with 2000 men, and proceed with or forward the remainder of his own force to General Mackenzie. To this proposition the Junta had so nearly acceded, that the agreement was only broken off by their insisting that the public mind could not be reconciled to the admission of 2000 troops into Cadiz, and offering to admit half the number, a force which Mr. Frere judged altogether inadequate to a purpose for which his own government allotted four times that amount.

The conference, which was conducted on both sides with perfect moderation and temper, concluded with a fair avowal from the Junta, that they were convinced of the good faith of the British government, and of the advantage that would result to Spain from the admission of British troops into Cadiz, if that were to be the indispensable condition of their co-operation; but that their own existence as a government depended upon popular opinion; and the English ambassador could not be ignorant what numerous and active enemies were endeavouring to undermine them. The Junta of Seville, who gave themselves great credit for resisting the introduction of the English into Cadiz last year when the French were advanced as far as Ecija, were upon the watch now, and calling the attention of the people to the conduct of the Central Junta in the present instance. Mr. Frere made answer, that he could not of course expect his opinion should be submitted to upon a subject on which their existence as a government and their personal security (for such in

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