

CHAP. of the succession. Every house in Barcelona lies exposed to
 XII. Monjuich, which stands singly on the south-west. A new fortress
 1808. had been erected there early in Charles the Third's reign, and it
 August. had that completeness and magnificence which characterised
 public works in Spain. On the sea side it was considered im-
 pregnable, so admirably had the natural strength of the situation
 been improved by art; and toward the land the glacis had been
 sloped at an incredible expense in such a manner that no ap-
 proaches could be made under shelter. The population of Bar-
 celona in 1797 was 130,000, and if the increase since had been
 in proportion to that of the ten years preceding, it must have
 amounted to 150,000 at this time. Yet this population, than
 which a braver and nobler-minded people were no where to be
 found, was kept under control by 4000 French, Lechi having
 been left with no greater force. The city was so completely at
 the mercy of the citadel and Monjuich, that the invaders had
 nothing to fear from open attacks. Their only danger was from
 stratagems or famine. Against the former they were always on
 their guard; and it was to open the communication for supplies
 and reinforcements from France that Duhesme had undertaken
 the expedition against Gerona.

*The Junta
 of Cata-
 lonia re-
 move to the
 head-quar-
 ters.*

The Marques del Palacio arrived in Catalonia without trea-
 sure or provisions, and there was no government to which he
 could look for either. The contributions which had been raised
 had already been expended, and nothing was to be obtained by
 way of loan. A temporary resource was found in the confiscation
 of French property; for in these calamitous times the numerous
 French families who were settled in Spain bore their full share
 in the general misery and ruin. These funds, however, could
 not long suffice; and for the better establishment of some per-
 manent system, it was agreed that the Supreme Junta of Cata-
 lonia, which had hitherto resided at Lerida, should remove from

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that inconvenient situation, and accompany in future the headquarters. The Junta was newly constituted accordingly, and the Commander-in-chief was chosen president. The Marques would now have marched to raise the siege of Gerona; but such means as he would have deemed adequate were wanting; he had no cavalry, the little which there was in Lerida and Tarragona was unfit for action, and perhaps he reasonably distrusted his troops if they were led against a well-disciplined army. Caldagues, however, was sent to harass the enemy and interrupt the siege, with four companies of regular troops, 2000 Miquelets and Somatens, and three pieces of artillery. He was joined at Hostalrich by more of these new levies, making his whole number 4300 men, and he received two cannon from that fortress. They advanced to Castella, passing within sight of the French encampment; some officers came out of the city to confer with the Count, and a joint attack upon the enemy's batteries was concerted for the following morning.

Caldagues sent to interrupt the siege of Gerona.

Cabañes, ii. 30—32, 52—55.

This was on the night of the 15th; Duhesme had been so harassed in his operations, and so slow in them, that though he arrived before Gerona on the 19th of July, it was not till the morning of August 13 that his batteries began their fire. It was directed chiefly against the Castle, which, like that at Barcelona, bears the name of Monjuich, and which, with all the other forts around Gerona, had been neglected, and was in a state of great dilapidation. On the 15th a considerable breach had been made. The garrison was then strengthened with 900 men, who were ordered to be ready at daybreak, and to sally as soon as the relieving troops should be ascending the hill of Monjuich; but instead of waiting for this, they sallied as soon as they saw them marching down the distant heights of St. Miguel and Los Angeles. The execution therefore was as rash as the plan, and certainly few attempts in war have ever been made in which there was so

He attacks the enemy's batteries with success.

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little reasonable prospect of success. The besieging army consisted of 11,000 men, of which 1000 were cavalry, all disciplined soldiers, upon whom their officers could rely. There were 4700 regular troops in Gerona, who, for want of discipline, were not to be relied on in the field; and of the force which Caldagues had now collected, amounting to 6000, there were but 300 regulars. But Duhesme was at this time too much dispirited by the general prospect of affairs in Spain, and the reverses which he himself had suffered, to be sensible of his own superiority, or to profit by the errors of his opponents. One battery was taken at the point of the bayonet in this premature sally, and presently set on fire. A second also was stormed; the French, who had been driven from it, recovered it, being reinforced by a Swiss battalion; but a column of the Spaniards arrived in time to assist their countrymen, and it was again taken, and the carriages burnt. D. Henrique O'Donell, who held the rank of *Sargento Mayor* in the regiment of Ultonia, distinguished himself greatly in this part of the action. The destruction of these batteries was the object for which Caldagues had hazarded an attack upon an enemy so greatly superior in strength. His own troops, meantime, drove the French from the heights of S. Miguel to the village of Camp-Dura; from thence they, in their turn, were driven back to the heights, and being there reinforced, made the enemy again give way before them, dislodged them from Camp-Dura, and pursued them till they crossed the river Ter to Sarria.

Cabañes, ii.
55—62.

Duhesme
raises the
siege.

Caldagues dispatched news of his victory from the field of battle to Tarragona, saying that the enemy's batteries were demolished, and all the artillery taken with which they had battered Monjuich in breach. All that he had hoped, and more than he could reasonably have expected, had been obtained; and when his troops, flushed with success, would have exposed themselves in the plain to the French cavalry, he restrained them, ordered

them to fortify themselves upon the heights, and exerted himself to repair the breach in Monjuich, lest it should be attacked in the morning. Duhesme indeed might have recovered in the night the positions which he had lost, so little discipline was there among the Spaniards, and so little watch or order was observed, notwithstanding the strict injunctions of the Commander. But Duhesme appears to have been one of those men who lose their powers of mind when good fortune forsakes them; and Caldagues, when day broke, and he was expecting a formidable attack, discovered, to his astonishment, that the enemy had disappeared. They had fled, rather than retreated, in the night, and in such haste, that they left several hundred barrels of powder which they might with ease have rolled into the river. Reille returned to Figueras with little loss, there being no impediment in that direction; but Duhesme, who did not venture a second time upon the coast road, when he reached Calella took a line between the high mountains and the sea, throwing his artillery down the precipices, and abandoning great part of the baggage and stores, and even leaving the sick and wounded who were not able to sit on horseback. The retreat was made with such precipitation, that Milans, who pursued, did not come up with them till they were within seven miles of Barcelona, on the heights of Mongat. But Lechi being, fortunately for them, apprised by a spy of their approach, met them there with part of the garrison, at a time when a small Spanish force might have completed their destruction.

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*Marshal
Gouvion
St. Cyr,
Pieces Jus-
tif. No. 3.
Cabañes, ii.
62—81.*

An outcry was raised against Palacio because he had not intercepted the enemy in their retreat, nor was he ever forgiven by the unreasonable people for not having done what it was impossible to do. When the account from the field of battle reached him at Tarragona, the French were half way to Barcelona; and before he was apprised that they had broken up the

*Unpopu-
larity of
the com-
mander
in Cata-
lonia.*

*Cabañes, ii.
101.*

CHAP. XII. siege, they were already in that city. The command which he had undertaken was no enviable one. The repulse of the enemy at Valencia, their losses in Andalusia, and the heroic defence of Zaragoza, had raised hopes which nothing but the most brilliant success could satisfy; the service in which he was engaged required great steadiness and military skill; the best of his troops were wanting in both, and the great body of them fit only for irregular war. The Junta of Catalonia had decreed that an army of 40,000 men should be raised; and because there were no officers to command, and no time for disciplining them, they determined that the whole force should consist of Miquelets. This class of irregular troops was originally called * Almogavares; but when they began to alter their savage appearance and barbarous mode of warfare, they took their present name from one of their favourite commanders, Miquelot de Prats, a notable partizan who attached himself to Cæsar Borgia. The name was popular among the Catalans, the Miquelets having distinguished themselves whenever the country was invaded, and especially in the succession war. It was intended to raise forty *tercios* of a thousand men each, and this might have been done in a few days, such was the national spirit, if equipments of every kind had not been wanting. A great bounty was given to these Miquelets, but this prevented recruiting for the line, and the regular troops were disgusted at seeing that men received larger pay for engaging in a service where they had more liberty, and were subject to less discipline. On the other hand,

*Difficulties
of the ser-
vice.*

*D. Fr. Ma-
noel Hist.
de Catalaña,
l. iv. p. 90.*

*Cabañes, i.
90—93.*

* An account of them may be found in the notes to the Chronicle of the Cid, pp. 141 and 418. Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr says of the present Miquelets, that they are the best light troops in Europe (p. 54.) But Cabañes argues that they cannot possibly be so efficient as they were when war was carried on less scientifically, and he regrets that it was not possible to raise regular regiments in their stead. P. i. 90.

the Miquelet officers received less pay than those of the army, and were less esteemed, their rank being only during the war. The force which was thus defective in its constitution, was also ill armed. Sir Hew Dalrymple, upon whom pressing demands for arms were made from all that side of the peninsula, could allot but few to Catalonia; and the abundant supplies which had been sent out by England were dispatched to other parts, where they were neither so much wanted nor so well bestowed; for Barcelona was the great arsenal of the province: 50,000 firelocks had there fallen into the enemy's hands, whereas the manufactory at Ripoll could furnish the Catalans with not more than 150 per week. Palacio therefore ordered pikes or partisans to be made, with which he armed the two foremost ranks of the Miquelets, who, as upon the old system, were drawn up three deep. In hands that can be trusted with the bayonet the pike would be a weapon hardly less efficient; but for these raw troops the want of fire-arms lessened the little confidence which they felt in themselves when they were brought to encounter soldiers as well disciplined as armed. Even the regular troops knew their own inferiority in the art of war. They were incapable of manœuvring in the face of an enemy; for so greatly had their discipline been neglected while no danger was apprehended, that they had gone through none of the rehearsals by which soldiers are prepared for real action; mere drilling seems to have been all the instruction they had received.

With this force, as ill officered as it was ill provided in all other respects, the Marques removed his head-quarters to Villafraanca, to maintain the line of the Llobregat, and take advantage of any opportunity for recovering Barcelona while the blockade was kept up. An expectation that something would be attempted by the inhabitants seems to have influenced the Spaniards to this measure, otherwise ill judged. The recovery of Barcelona

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Cabañes, ii.
130—132.

Cabañes, i.
78.

*The Mar-
quis ap-
proaches
Barcelona.*
Sept. 1.

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1808.

September.*Marshal
Gouvion
St. Cyr,
280.**British
troops or-
dered from
Sicily, but
detained
there by the
commander.**Cabañes, ii.
129.*

was indeed an object of the greatest importance ; but weakened as Duhesme then was, a few thousand Miquelets, with the armed population, would have sufficed to prevent the incursions of the garrison, and the Spaniards should have taken their post on the Fluvia instead of the Llobregat, with the Ter for their second position, and Gerona and Hostalrich to support them, . . . there they could best have impeded the efforts which the French would make for relieving and securing to themselves the strongest place in Spain. A British force might here have rendered the most essential service. Deputies from the Junta of Catalonia were sent to Madrid, to consult with the Council of Generals there upon the affairs of the province ; and in the hope of obtaining British aid one of them proceeded to Lisbon to confer with Sir Hew Dalrymple. All that could be done in that quarter was effected ; the Spanish troops in Lisbon were embarked for Catalonia ; and the British Government, sensible of what might be effected there by timely measures, ordered thither 10,000 men from the army at that time stationed in Sicily. But a feint of invading Sicily was made by Murat, who had succeeded Joseph Buonaparte as Intrusive King at Naples ; and the troops were detained in an inactive and unworthy service, when they ought to have been co-operating for the most important ends with one of the finest and bravest people in the world. At no other time or place during the whole war could such a body of English troops have been employed to so much effect as at this time in Catalonia. Some petty jealousies or idle forms had hitherto deprived the Catalans also of cavalry when it might have been most useful. There was a regiment of hussars in Majorca, for which the Junta repeatedly applied, and its applications were earnestly enforced by the British officers who were in communication with that island ; but it was not till after a series of frivolous and vexatious delays that they were embarked at length in the

beginning of October ; and a detachment of them had not reached the Llobregat more than twenty-four hours before they were led to intercept the enemy at S. Culgat, on their return to Barcelona from a marauding expedition. Not expecting to be attacked by cavalry, the French were taken by surprise ; they suffered a considerable loss, and from that time confined their incursions within narrower bounds. The troops from Portugal soon afterwards arrived ; reinforcements also came from Valencia and Majorca ; Palacio was removed from the command, because of the unpopularity which he had incurred, and was succeeded by D. Juan Miguel de Vives.

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1808.
September.

Cabañes, ii.
161.

The want of military knowledge and military talent was never more severely felt in any country than in Spain at this momentous crisis. It could not be doubted that Buonaparte was preparing to bring against the Spaniards that tremendous force which none of the continental powers had hitherto been able to withstand. If he seemed to delay, it was only that the preparations might be more complete ; sure, meantime, that neither Spain nor England knew at that time how to profit by the interval, and that very probably disunion might arise among the Spaniards themselves, of which he might take advantage. The French had paid dearly for the error of dividing their forces, and advancing where they had no point of support ; they were now in strong positions, receiving reinforcements from time to time, and waiting in security till Buonaparte should come in person to complete the subjugation of Spain, which they, as well as the tyrant himself, believed could not be averted by any human interference. About the middle of August they sent a detachment to take possession of Bilbao, a beautiful but defenceless city, commanded on every side by its hanging gardens. The inhabitants, inferior in number, ill armed, and without any works to protect them, made a brave resistance, in revenge for

Bilbao occupied by the French.

CHAP. which the French committed great enormities when they entered
 XII. the town: had they arrived a few hours later, they would have
 1808. got possession of arms, ammunition, and money from England,
 which were just entering the harbour.

*Difficulties
 in bringing
 the Spanish
 armies into
 the field.*

A full sense of their danger, when the whole wrong which was intended them was avowed, had roused the Spaniards to their first great and successful exertions. After their victorious troops had entered Madrid, they were less alive to the danger, and more sensible of the embarrassments of their situation. Sudden efforts, directed by the emergency which called them forth, would no longer avail. Foresight and combination were required for extensive operations; and these were thwarted by selfish views, and still more by capricious or obstinate tempers, which in this state of general insubordination there was nothing to restrain. The Galician army under Blake, having the plains of Castille before them, could not advance without cavalry in the face of an enemy who had from three to five thousand dragoons; and Cuesta would not send his cavalry to act under Blake, because of his quarrel with that General and with the Junta of Galicia. The Extremaduran army, from a similar feeling of pride, was kept vapouring before Elvas, while it was called for by all the authorities at Madrid. A more vexatious impediment was interposed by the Junta of Seville. That Board had thought proper, when the army in Andalusia was first raised, for one of its members to accompany the Commander-in-chief, that no injury might arise from delay in consulting the civil authority, and perhaps also to rid themselves of Tilly, who was the person appointed. When, to their disgrace, they elected this man to the Central Junta, D. Andres Miñano was deputed to the army in his stead, with a salary of a thousand dollars per month; but public opinion at Seville was so strongly expressed against this misapplication of the public money, and supported