told the Abbé de Pradt that he would never undertake the venture, were it likely to cost him 80,000 men; but that even if all Spain were to rise, the insurrection could be suppressed at a sacrifice of 12,000 soldiers. The Spaniards of the lower orders were ignorant and indolent, but they were warlike, careless of life, passionate for their independence, and vindictive as orientals. Sober and frugal, they could sustain long fasts and endure extreme privations. In their climate, through great part of the year, the shelter of a roof was matter of indifference. Living far away from the corruption of the Court, their loyalty was a deep traditional sentiment, unshaken by centuries of gross misgovernment. In short, the Spanish people were still of the same stuff which had recruited the armies of Cortez and Alva: and if anything was likely to fire their pride, it was insolent aggression by their formidable neighbours.

That Spain was an agglomeration of semi-independent kingdoms was a source at once of weakness and of strength. The jealousies were detrimental to any broad scheme of regular warfare; but, on the other hand, in a guerilla insurrection, the Peninsula was like a steamship built in compartments. One province might be swamped by the rush of invasion, but the next, behind its mountain barriers, was comparatively indifferent. The patriotism was provincial, not national. As for those barriers, the successive ridges of parallel sierras, traversed by few and difficult roads; the rivers, rarely bridged and seldom fordable in flood; the gorges through which those roads are carried, were so many fastnesses or almost impregnable lines of defence, assuming that they were held by resolute men. Nor were the cities, as a rule, less defensible, thought except on the northern frontiers, or on the borders of Portugal, few were regularly fortified. The stubborn,

resistance of Zaragoza through the siege showed what effective use might be made of the flat-roofed palaces and massive convents, mutually supporting each other, and only to be taken by sap or storm. The plazas were so many rallying centres, where troops could bivouac or deploy, and which, by simply barricading the issues, could be turned into entrenched camps. In Portugal, a small and narrow country, the isolated risings could be speedily crushed by rapid concentration. In Spain, which could only be comparatively weakly occupied, there were vast distances to be traversed from the several head-quarters, over barren mountains and inhospitable plains. The Juntas had leisure to drill their levies, or they could rally the fugitives after defeat in *dehesas* and *depoblados,* heaths and wastes, which were practically inaccessible.

The first invasion, undertaken to escort Joseph to his capital, was planned on the assumption of the acquiescence of the nation, or at least in the belief that the French need deal with nothing more serious than local *émeutes*, which could be easily put down. Napoleon relied with reason on the superiority of disciplined troops, under veteran leaders, over raw levies wretchedly commanded. Nevertheless he knew that his own forces were chiefly composed of conscripts who fell easy victims to disease, or of foreigners pressed into the ranks and always ready to desert. His grand plans were worthy of his genius; but he had reckoned without the Spanish temperament, and had forgotten to count with the chapter of accidents. His generals would seldom act in concert, and his first and best combinations were baffled by the unexpected disaster of Baylen. The usurper fled from his capital to the Ebro; the army of invasion was standing on the defence; the Emperor's schemes were to be entirely remodelled,

and the occupation was to be recommenced more methodically and on an infinitely more formidable scale.

That brings us to the point where the English ministers decided to assume the offensive on land. It was no light undertaking, nor is it wonderful that the Cabinet had hesitated. The difficulties were great and the circumstances discouraging. The Emperor had put forth stupendous efforts. The numerical superiority of the French was overwhelming, for Portuguese and Spaniards were an undrilled rabble. Theirs was no longer an army of conscripts. Eighty thousand veterans, habituated to victory, had been drawn from Germany, celebrating the victories to come in a triumphal progress through France. In 1808 the conscription of 1810 had been already anticipated, so behind these were practically inexhaustible reserves. The advance was securely based on the northern fortresses, where the magazines were being filled to repletion. Eight *corps d'armée*, each complete in its several parts, were under the command of eight distinguished generals; above all, the Emperor was at headquarters in person, to overrule their rivalries and repair their mistakes.

The French generals had been schooled in war; their soldiers were flushed with conquest. The English Army was under a cloud since the treaty of Utrecht; ill-planned expeditions, often under incompetent chiefs, had damaged its reputation; the nation, ever susceptible to moods and fancies, had almost been brought to doubt its fighting qualities. There were no leaders who loomed large in the public eye like the French marshals, and the hero of Assaye, of subordinate rank, was slightingly spoken of as the Sepoy General. There was no master mind at the War Office or the Horse Guards—no organised plan. The contingents were at first sent out in driblets. As

for the cavalry, it was a mere handful, whereas the French were especially strong in that arm.

It might have been assumed that our forces would have one great advantage, as they were operating in friendly countries. That was far from being the case. Napoleon, although never neglecting his magazines, made the war, as far as possible, support itself, and his generals were unsparing in levying contributions. The British had to carry their supplies or buy them. Often their allies not only refused to sell provisions or hire animals for transport, but expected to be fed from the British cruisers. The French were assured of effective mutual support, when jealousy did not interfere. The British generals must reckon with confederates who seldom scrupled to play them false, and with shadowy *corps d'armée* absurdly magnified, or sometimes existing only in report. Far from getting reliable information, as might have been expected, they moved in an atmosphere of suspicion and mendacity, and the Government envoys and official despatches were the least trustworthy of all. Their communications rested on seas and sails, and on a rocky coast-line which, through the prevalent winds from the south-west, was always perilous and often impracticable. The more we weigh the conditions of that most unequal match, the more we marvel at the genius which achieved such unparalleled results. But the Austrian war withdrew Napoleon from Spain, and Providence gave us a Wellington to direct the allied operations.

SPAIN
& PORTUGAL
English Miles
20 10 0 20 40 60 80 100 120

CHAPTER I

INVASION OF PORTUGAL AND REVOLT OF MADRID,
November 1806—May 1808

WE retrace our steps to give a summary of the events that led immediately to the great war. Effect had to be given in the Peninsula to the oppressive Berlin decree, and it was followed up by the treaty of Fontainebleau. The Spanish Court, submissive to servility, had invited the interposition of Napoleon in domestic affairs. There was a shameful unveiling of the scandalous secrets of the palace. The Prince of the Asturias had been charged with conspiring against the lives of his royal parents. His mother regarded him with undisguised malignity, and Godoy, the Prime Minister and all-powerful favourite, was his bitter enemy. Professing to believe his life in danger, as indeed it probably was, he appealed to Napoleon for protection. On his side, Godoy, Prince of the Peace, was eager now to make any terms with the French Emperor. By summoning the Spaniards to arms on the Prussian declaration of war, he had provoked an enemy apt to be implacable, and feared he had sinned beyond forgiveness. To be restored to favour, to secure his personal safety and have his ill-gotten fortune guaranteed, he was willing to consent to any sacrifice. Napoleon welcomed the opportunity of interposing as mediator, for it precisely forwarded his views. With that high-handed and flagitious treaty he began his course of spoliation and treachery. That it deprived the House of

Braganza of its ancestral dominions might be fair enough, for undoubtedly had the Regent of Portugal been free from French menaces and pressure he would have cast in his lot unreservedly with the English. But the Queen of Etruria, daughter of the Spanish King, was arbitrarily expelled from the Tuscan territory with her infant son, being promised compensation in Northern Portugal. As to the semi-tropical province of Algarve in the south, that was to be erected into a principality for Godoy. As Napoleon robbed the Tuscan Queen, so from the first he meant to befool his obsequious Spanish tool. It is as clear that Godoy was effectually deceived as that the autocrat had no intention of fulfilling his promises. With the promptitude to which he had hitherto owed his successes, the Emperor lost no time in carrying out his decision. Nine days before the treaty was signed the French had passed the frontier on their march to Lisbon. The command was confided to Junot—to console him for the loss of his position on the Imperial staff—a general as audacious as he was ambitious; easily elated by the victories he was swift to follow up, and capable of admirable strategical combinations. But, as subsequent events were to show, he was depressed and paralysed by adverse circumstances. His march, after receiving his orders to leave Salamanca, was a brilliant military achievement. In a month to a day after leaving Bayonne his advance guard had entered Portugal. Over miserable roads, in late autumn and early winter, he pressed forward without giving his forces breathing time. If there was a certain number of seasoned soldiers, for the most part they were conscripts. Proclamations with fair promises were scattered broadcast, but the assurances were belied by pillage and rapine. The guns were brought forward, but the commissariat train fell

behind, and the army supported itself precariously by living on the inhabitants. The natives who offered desultory resistance were easily disposed of, but fatigue and hunger had done their work, and the general struggled into the capital at the head of 2000 footsore and famished veterans, with their cartouche boxes in many cases as empty as their bellies. It was a rash venture, but he had a great prize in view. It was known that the royal family contemplated flight to their colony of Brazil: the object of the forced marches was to secure their persons, or at all events the treasure with which their vessels were to be freighted. In that latter purpose Junot partially succeeded, but he had the mortification of barely being in time to see the leading ships of the squadron standing across the bar of the Tagus. There was an English squadron off the mouth of the river, the city was filled with an excited population lamenting the departure of the Royal House, and there was a considerable number of regular troops under arms. The people of Lisbon have been blamed for not rising on the French and annihilating the stragglers, as they might easily have done. But the accusation is unfair. Behind that feeble and exhausted advance guard was the whole strength of Napoleon's veteran hosts, with the terrible prestige of the conqueror who had never yet succumbed to defeat. So the Three Uhlans captured Rheims, because they represented the armies of United Germany.

Junot took advantage of the panic and surprise to occupy the posts of strength and make menacing dispositions. As his regiments straggled in his position was assured. Possibly, had he possessed the humanity and self-restraint of his subordinate, Travot—almost a singular exception to the truculence of his *confrères!*—Junot might have reduced the Portuguese to acquiescence and

obedience. The French were present in irresistible force; the Portuguese had no faith in effective succour from England, and the Spaniards were under the French colours as allies. Mild and generous government would have paid in every sense. Napoleon had chosen well when he sent that dashing leader to annex, but the choice proved singularly unfortunate when Junot came to administer. He carried the system of governing by terror—of making serfs instead of subjects of subjugated nations—to excess. He was the plunderer *par excellence* among predatory generals, compelled by their imperious master to live up to their opportunities, and almost constrained to enrich themselves by pillage. Junot was resentfully denounced by the exile of St Helena, in the memoirs dictated to Las Casas, as 'a monster of rapacity.' The proof is that when he embarked after the Convention of Cintra, he asked for five ships to carry his personal baggage, and had actually emptied the stables of the Prince Regent of Portugal. His subordinates, detached in command of districts, emulously followed his example. The soldiers, in their degree, imitated their superiors. What with public contributions, private exactions, outrages on property, insults to women, and, above all, by the sacrileges which scandalised the pious and alienated the priests, the Portuguese passed from despondency into desperation, and were driven by despair into open insurrection.

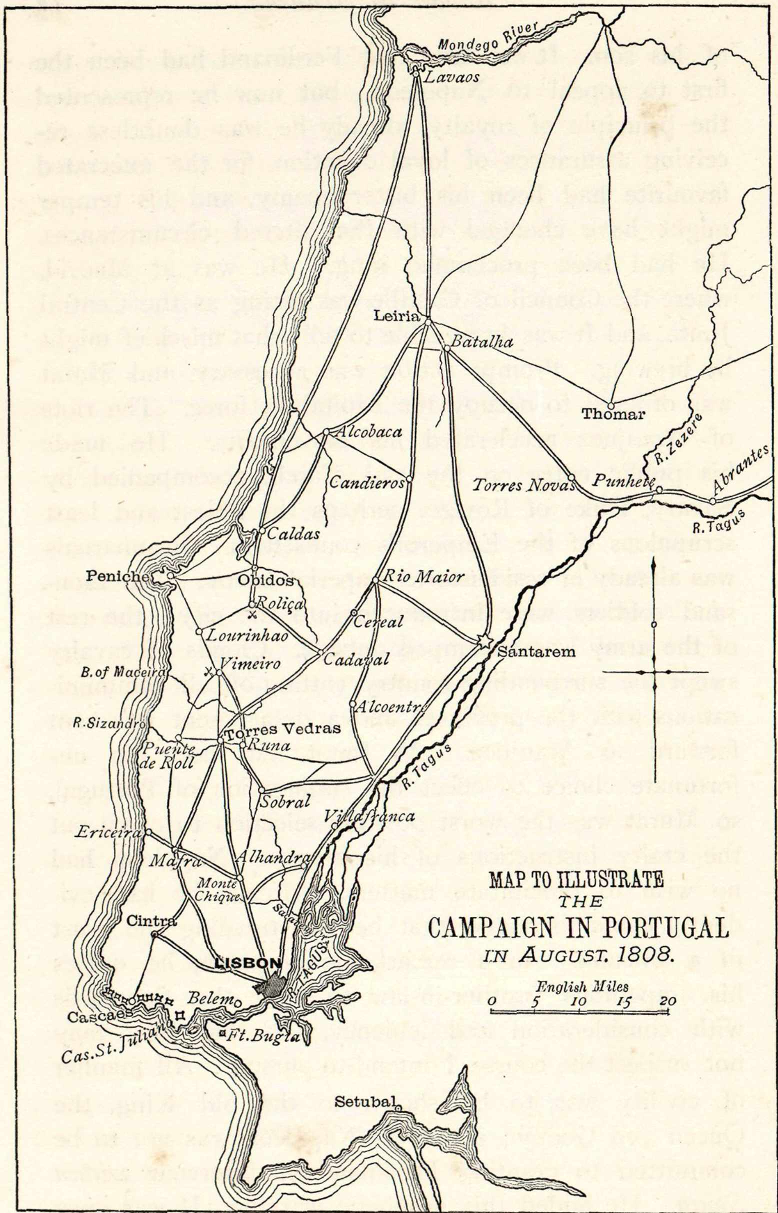
Isolated outbreaks might have been easily suppressed, and the reign of terror effectually established, had not the conflagration suddenly broken out in Spain. In Spain the policy of Napoleon in a very few months had turned a nation of cordial allies into deadly enemies. The warlike Spaniards had followed with admiration the achievements of the great captain. Among the more

intelligent his name had become a household word, like that of the Cid. They sympathised in his hatred of the English. The occupation of Gibraltar was a perpetual outrage on the national pride, and more recent offence had been given by the questionable capture of their frigates. When Junot was sent on his mission of annexation, considerable Spanish forces were engaged as his auxiliaries, and were well content to march under the tricolor. But in the early days of 1808 the nation began to take alarm. Under pretext of supporting the army of Portugal a stream of regiments continued to turn the western Pyrenees, and troops were even poured into Catalonia, remote as that province was from the scene of operations. A scheme, perfect from the military point of view, had been devised as a preliminary, by which the fortresses, which were the keys of Northern Spain, were to be transferred to French hands by infamous treachery. The commandants were generally patriotic, and their suspicions had been excited. But the orders of the Prime Minister were peremptory. The French were to be received everywhere as friends, and everything was to be done to gratify their wishes. At Pamplona, the strong capital of mountainous Navarre, the French by a trick were actually smuggled into the fortress in numbers sufficient to overpower the garrison. At Barcelona, Alvarez, who commanded in the almost impregnable fort of Monjuich, built originally to dominate the city, was a man of courage and determination, and would have taken measures to baffle the plot he had penetrated. But he knew that he would assuredly be disavowed by Godoy, and that successful resistance would have involved his disgrace, and probably be punished by death, unless he were prepared to break out in rebellion. Before the end of January the seizure of that northern chain of

strong places had given the invaders a secure base of operations, and the Pyrenees were lost as a line of defence. In February Napoleon could venture to throw off the mask with a demand for Spanish territory in exchange for compensation in Portugal. The violent *émeute* of Aranjuez precipitated events. By his greed, his infamous morals and the influence he had vilely abused, Godoy had long been justly odious. To a great extent he had been hoodwinked by Napoleon's professions, but now he was generally accused of venal treason and the popular indignation was not to be controlled. The Court had prepared to leave Aranjuez for Seville; it was believed that they meant to follow the example of the Braganza family, and, without the excuse of submitting to irresistible force, desert their subjects in this crisis of their fate. For Seville was on the road to Cadiz, whence they could embark for Vera Cruz. The mob burst into the precincts of the palace, cut the traces of the mule teams, and refused to let the sovereigns go. Nevertheless the veneration for the throne was profound; it still respected degraded royalty, but the pent-up indignation vented itself on the Minister. Dragged from his hiding-place by the people, he was rescued by the royal guards. He found temporary safety in ignominious hiding; he was afterwards escorted out of the country under protection of the French, whose policy was never to abandon an instrument. But irretrievably discredited, he had become useless for their purposes. Having no longer a supple agent at his service, who controlled the Court and governed the State, it was then that Napoleon took the fatal resolution of securing all the Bourbon family by threats or guile.

Nothing was to be apprehended, in the meantime, from the impotent Charles who had abdicated in favour

of his son. It was true that Ferdinand had been the first to appeal to Napoleon; but now he represented the principle of royalty, already he was doubtless receiving assurances of loyal devotion, for the execrated favourite had been his bitter enemy, and his temper might have changed with the altered circumstances. He had been proclaimed king. He was at Madrid, where the Council of Castille was sitting as the Central Junta, and it was impossible to tell what mischief might be brewing. Prompt action was necessary, and Murat was ordered to occupy the capital in force. The riots of Aranjuez accelerated his movements. He made his public entry on the 23d March, accompanied by Savary, Duke of Rovigo, perhaps the ablest and least scrupulous of the Emperor's counsellors. Beauharnais was already in residence as imperial envoy. Ten thousand soldiers were introduced into the city; the rest of the army was encamped outside. Clouds of cavalry swept the surrounding country, cutting off all communications with the provinces, and a detachment was sent forward to Aranjuez. As Junot had been an unfortunate choice to effect the subjugation of Portugal, so Murat was the worst possible selection to carry out the crafty instructions of his master. Napoleon had no wish to precipitate matters. Already he had evidently come to realise that he was treading the crust of a volcano. In a remarkable despatch, he orders his impetuous brother-in-law to treat the Spaniards with consideration and leniency, 'so that they may not suspect the course I intend to pursue.' All manner of civility was to be shown to the old King, the Queen and Godoy; above all, Napoleon was not to be committed to granting Ferdinand an interview *within Spain.* He added this prophetic warning, 'If war once


Mondego River
Lavaos
Leiria
Batalha
Thomar
Alcobaca
R. Zezere
Abrantes
Candieros
Torres Novas
Punhete
R. Tagus
Caldas
Peniche
Obidos
Rio Maior
Roliça
Cereal
Lourinhao
Santarem
Cadaval
B. of Maceira
Vimeiro
Alcoentre
R. Sizandro
Torres Vedras
Runa
Puente de Roll
R. Tagus
Sobral
Villafranca
Ericeira
Mafra
Alhandra
Monte Chique
MAP TO ILLUSTRATE
THE
CAMPAIGN IN PORTUGAL
IN AUGUST. 1808.
Cintra
LISBON
TAGUS
English Miles
0 5 10 15 20
Belem
Cascaes
Cas. St. Juliano
Ft. Bugia
Setubal

break out all is lost.' But Murat was not the man to temporise. He believed in military force, and he was irritated by the sullen bearing of the citizens and their ill-devised attempts at futile resistance. Possessing the real power, absolutely controlling the situation, he put himself ostentatiously forward, in place of using Spanish statesmen as a screen. He was indiscreet enough to have himself elected a member of the Central Junta, thereby accepting gratuitous responsibility for the unpopular measures he meant to inspire. But perhaps still more significant of the diplomacy of the tactless and headstrong *sabreur* was his urging the surrender of the sword of Francis I., treasured as a national heirloom in memory of the victory of Pavia, for it was an idle provocation to Spanish vanity.

At that time Murat had no fears for the future. His despatches are full of jubilant self-confidence; but the unfortunate Ferdinand was in extreme perturbation. He had made his entry into the capital, and his reception by the people had been all he could desire. He came prepared to play the humiliating *rôle* of toadying the civil and military French chiefs, but his flatteries were wasted. The French Ambassador paid him no royal honours. Murat, when questioned, declared he could take no steps in the matter till he received further instructions. Nevertheless, both Beauharnais and Savary were lavish of civilities in private. They posed as the friendly advisers of the young King, and their kindly advice was invariably the same—that he should seek an immediate interview with the Emperor. Then all would be well, and the Emperor would come to Burgos to meet him. Distracted between hopes and fears, Ferdinand was terrorised into his fatal decision, and on the 11th April he set out for Burgos. At his

own earnest request, Savary was the companion of his journey. The part assigned to the Duke, and he played it excellently, was to lull the victim into false security. Reaching Burgos, Ferdinand's fears got the upper hand, on learning that the Emperor was still at Bayonne. When he was reluctantly induced to proceed to Vittoria, it was too late to turn back. His Spanish counsellors, whose eyes were opened at last, tried hard to persuade him. As previously at Aranjuez, the populace rose and cut the traces of the carriage. But Ségur, who was there and pitied him, and who unhesitatingly condemns the conduct of his master, explains how, in obedience to orders, the French had closed in behind him, preventing a retreat. Yet it is possible that even then he might have been suffered to pass back, in fear of the grave responsibility of a public scandal. But Savary, always at his elbow, felt it was no time for scruples. He solemnly pledged his personal honour to a safe-conduct. Whatever the result of an interview, which could not fail to be satisfactory, whether as King or Prince he should be received as an honoured guest—be free, at his pleasure, to return as he had come. Ferdinand's eyes were finally opened to the fact of his captivity by the slights which he met with after crossing the Bidassoa. Betrayed and outraged, the prisoner proved less complaisant than the tyrant had hoped. Consequently orders were sent to Murat to transport the old King, the Queen and Godoy forthwith to Bayonne. The scenes that ensued in the stormy family meetings, where Napoleon sat as arbiter, were so scandalous as to appear almost incredible. It is said that the Queen, in a tempest of passion, told Ferdinand, in presence of her husband and the Emperor, that he was no son of Charles. The upshot was that Charles