

the Ebro, whereas less than seventy-six thousand were in line of battle, and those exceedingly ill-armed and provided. The right, under Palafox, held the country between Zaragoza and Sangüessa, on the Aragon river; the centre, under Castaños, occupied Borja, Tarazona, and Agreda; the left, under Blake, was posted at Reynosa, near the sources of the Ebro. The relative position of the French and Spanish armies was also very disadvantageous to the latter. From the right to the left of their line, that is, from Reynosa to Zaragoza, was twice the distance between Bayonne and Vittoria, and the roads more difficult; the reserve under Drouet was consequently in closer military communication with King Joseph's army than the Spanish wings were with one another.

The patriots were acting without concert upon double external lines of operation, and against an enemy far superior in quickness, knowledge, and organization, and even in numbers.

The French were superior in cavalry, and the base of their operations rested on three great fortresses,—Bayonne, St. Sebastian, and Pampeluna; they could in three days carry the centre and the reserve to either flank, and unite thirty thousand combatants without drawing a man from their garrisons.

The Spaniards held but one fortress, Zaragoza, and being divided in corps, under different generals of equal authority, they could execute no combined movement with rapidity or precision, nor under any circumstances could they unite more than 40,000 men at a given point.

In this situation of affairs, General Blake, his army organized in six divisions, each five thousand strong, broke up from Reynosa on the 17th of September.* One division advanced on the side of Burgos, to cover the march of the main body, which, threading the valley of Villarcayo, turned the right of Marshal Bessières, and reached the Ebro; two divisions occupied Traspaderna and Frias, and established a post at Oña, on the right bank of that river; a third division took a position at Medina; a fourth held the town of Erran and the sierra of that name; a fifth halted in the town of Villarcayo, to preserve the communication with Reynosa; and at the same time 8000 Asturians, under General Acevedo, quitted the camp at Llanes, and advanced to Santander.

General Broderick arrived in the Spanish camp, Blake impertuned him for money, and obtained it; but treated him otherwise with great coldness, and withheld all information relative to the movements of the army. English vessels hovering on the coast were prepared to supply the Biscayans with arms and ammunition, and Blake thinking himself in a situation to revive the insurrection

* Correspondence of Captain Carrol. Ibid. General Broderick.

in that province, and to extend it to Guipuscoa, detached his fourth division, and five guns, under the command of the Marquis of Portazgo, to attack General Monthion at Bilbao.* The King, getting knowledge of the march of this division, ordered a brigade from his right wing to fall on its flank by the valley of Orduña, and caused General Merlin to reinforce Monthion by the valley of Durango, while Bessières aided these dispositions with a demonstration on the side of Frias. The combination was made too late, Portazgo was already master of Bilbao.† Monthion had retired on the 20th to Durango, and Bessières fell back with his corps to Miranda, Haro, and Puente Lara, having first injured the defences of Burgos.

The King then took post with the reserve at Vittoria, and Ney, immediately abandoning his position on the Ebro, carried his whole force, by a rapid march, to Bilbao, where he arrived on the evening of the 26th; at the same time, General Merle's division executed a combined movement from Miranda upon Osma and Barbacena. Portazgo, being thus overmatched, occupied the heights above Bilbao, until nightfall, and then retreated to Valmaceda, where he found the third division, for Blake had changed his position, and now occupied Frias with his right, Quincóes with his centre, and Valmaceda with his left; all the Spanish artillery was in the town of Villarcayo, guarded by a division; and in this situation, holding the passes of the mountains, Blake awaited the arrival of the Asturians, who were marching by the valley of Villarcayo. Thus the second effort to raise Biscay failed of success.‡

In the mean time, O'Neil, following Colonel Doyle's plan before mentioned, entered Sanguessa, and was beaten out of it again, with the loss of two guns. However, the Castilian army approached the Ebro by the road of Soria; General La Peña occupied Logroño, Nalda, and Najera;§ Llamas and Caro occupied Corella, Cascante, and Calahorra, and O'Neil took post in the mountains, on the left bank of the Aragon, facing Sanguessa. The peasantry of the valleys assembled in considerable numbers, the country between Zaragoza and the Aragon river appeared to be filled with troops, and Monecy, withdrawing from the Ebro, took a position, with his left flank at the pass of Sanguessa, his centre at Falces, and his right at Estella. Ney also, leaving Merlin with three thousand men at Bilbao, returned to the Ebro, but finding that Logroño was occupied in force by the Spaniards, halted at Guardia on the 5th of October, and remained in observation.||

* Correspondence of General Leith.

† Journal of the King's Operations, MS.

‡ Correspondence of General Leith.

§ Journal of the King's Operations, MS.

|| Ibid.

On the 4th, the King and Bessières, at the head of Mouton's and Merle's divisions, quitted Miranda, and advanced along the road of Osma, with the intention of feeling for Blake on the side of Frias and Medina; the Spaniards were then in force at Valmaceda, but Joseph, deceived by false information, imagined that they were again in march towards Bilbao, and therefore pushed on to Lodio, with the intention of attacking Blake during the movement; at Lodio he ascertained the truth, and being uneasy about Moncey, returned the 7th to Murquia, where he left Merle to protect the rear of the troops at Bilbao, and then proceeded to Miranda with the division of Mouton. On the 12th, Blake, still intent upon the insurrection of Biscay, placed a division at Orduña, and attacked Bilbao with eighteen thousand men.* Merlin retired fighting up the valley of Durango as far as Zornosa, but being joined there by General Verdier, with six battalions, turned and checked the pursuit. At this time, however, the leading columns of the great French army were passing the Spanish frontier; Laval's division advanced to Durango; Sebastiani, with six thousand men, relieved Merle at Murquia, who repaired to Miranda; Verdier returned to Vittoria, and Lefebre, Duke of Dantzic, assumed the command of the three divisions posted at Durango.

On the Spanish side, the Marquis of Romana's division had disembarked on the 9th at Santander, and the infantry, eight thousand strong, completely equipped and provided from the English stores, proceeded, by slow marches, to join Blake. The Asturians had halted at Villarcayo, but the Estremaduran army, under the Conde de Belvedere, was put in motion, and the Castilian forces arrived upon the Ebro; the first and third divisions of the Andalusian army were on the march from La Mancha, and Castaños, quitting Madrid, proceeded towards Tudela. All things announced the approach of a great crisis, yet such was the apathy of the Supreme Junta, that the best friends of Spain hoped for a defeat, as the only mode of exciting sufficient energy in the government to save the state, and by some it was thought that even that sharp remedy would be insufficient. A momentary excitement was, however, caused by the intercepted letter to Jourdan before spoken of; the troops in the second line were ordered to proceed to the Ebro by forced marches; letters were written, pressing for the advance of the British army, and Castaños was enjoined to drive the enemy, without delay, beyond the frontier. But this sudden fury of action ended with those orders. Sir David Baird's corps was detained in the transports at Coruña, waiting for permission to land; no assistance was afforded to Sir John Moore; and although the subsidies already

* Journal of the King's Operations.

paid by England amounted to ten millions of dollars,* and that Madrid was rich, and willing to contribute to the exigencies of the moment, the Central Junta, while complaining of the want of money, would not be at the trouble of collecting patriotic gifts, and left the armies "to all the horrors of famine, nakedness, and misery."† The natural consequence of such folly and wickedness ensued; the people ceased to be enthusiastic, and the soldiers deserted in crowds.

The conduct of the generals was not less extraordinary. Blake had voluntarily commenced the campaign without magazines, and without any plan, except that of raising the provinces of Biscay and Guipuscoa. With the usual blind confidence of a Spaniard, he pressed forward, ignorant of the force or situation of his adversaries, never dreaming of a defeat; and so little experienced in the detail of command, that he calculated upon the ordinary quantity of provisions contained in an English frigate, which cruised off the coast, as a resource for his army, if the country should fail to supply him with subsistence;‡ his artillery had only seventy rounds for each gun, his men were without great-coats, many without shoes, and the snow was beginning to fall in the mountains.§ That he was able to make any impression is a proof that King Joseph possessed little military talent; the French, from the habitude of war, were, indeed, able to baffle Blake without difficulty, but the strategic importance of the valley of Orduña they did not appreciate, or he would have been destroyed. The lesson given by Napoleon, when he defeated Wurmser in the valley of Brenta, might have been repeated, under more favorable circumstances, at Orduña and Durango.

But if genius was asleep with the French, it was dead with the Spaniards. As long as Blake remained between Frias and Valmaceda, his position was tolerably secure from an attack; because the Montaña Santander is exceedingly rugged; and the line of retreat by Villarcayo was open; nevertheless, he was cooped up in a corner, and ill placed for offensive movements, which were the only operations he thought of. Instead of occupying Burgos, and repairing the citadel, he descended on Bilbao with the bulk of his army, thereby discovering his total ignorance of war; for several great valleys, the upper parts of which were possessed by the French, met near that town, and it was untenable. The flank of his army was always exposed to an attack from the side of Orduña, and his line of retreat was in the power of Bessières. To protect his flank and rear, Blake detached largely, but that weakened the

* Parliamentary Papers.

† Vindication of Castaños.

‡ General Broderick's Letter. Parl. Pap.

§ Birch's Letters to Leith, MS

main body without obviating the danger; nor did he make amends for his bad dispositions by diligence; for his movements were slow, his attacks without vigor, and his whole conduct displayed temerity without decision, rashness without enterprise.

The armies of the centre and right were not better conducted. Castañõs having quitted Madrid on the 8th of October, arrived at Tudela on the 17th, and on the 20th held a conference with Palafox at Zaragoza. The aggregate of their forces did not much exceed forty-five thousand men, of which from two to three thousand were cavalry, and sixty pieces of artillery followed the divisions, which were posted in the following manner:—*

ARMY OF THE CENTRE,—27,000.

General Pignatelli, with ten thousand Castilian infantry, one thousand five hundred cavalry, and fourteen guns, at Logroño.

General Grimarest, with the second division of Andalusia, five thousand men, at Lodosa.

General La Peña, with the fourth division, five thousand infantry, at Calahorra.

The parc of artillery, and a division of infantry, four thousand, at Centruenigo.

The remainder at Tudela and the neighboring villages.

ARMY OF ARAGON,—18,000.

O'Neil, with seven thousand five hundred men, held Sor, Lumbar, and Sanguessa.

Thirty miles in the rear, St. Marc occupied Exca with five thousand five hundred men.

Palafox, with five thousand men, remained in Zaragoza.

The Ebro rolled between these two corps, but viewed as one army, their front lines occupied two sides of an irregular triangle, of which Tudela was the apex, Sanguessa and Logroño the extremities of the base. From the latter points, the rivers Ebro and Aragon, which meet at Milagro, describe, in their double course, an arc, the convex of which was opposed to the Spaniards. The streams of the Ega, the Arga, and the Zidasco rivers, descending from the Pyrenees in parallel courses, cut the chord of this arc at nearly equal distances, and fall, the first two into the Ebro, the last into the Aragon, and all the roads leading from Pampeluna to the Ebro follow the course of those torrents.

Marshal Moncey's right was at Estella on the Ega; his centre held Falces and Tafalla on the Arga and the Zidasco; his left was in front of Sanguessa on the Aragon; the bridges of Olite and

* Appendix, No. 27.

Peralta were secured by advanced parties, and Caparosa, where there was another bridge, was occupied in force. In this situation he could operate freely between the torrents which intersected his line. He commanded all the roads leading to the Ebro, and he could, from Caparosa, at any moment, issue forth against the centre of the Spanish armies. Now from Tudela to Sanguessa is fifty miles, from Tudela to Logroño sixty miles, but from Tudela to Caparosa is only twelve miles of good road; wherefore, the extremities of the Spanish line were above one hundred miles, or six days' march from each other, while a single day would have sufficed to unite the French within two hours' march of the centre. The weakness of the Spaniards' position is apparent.

If Palafox, crossing the Aragon at Sanguessa, advanced towards Pampeluna, Moncey would be on his left flank and rear; if he turned against Moncey, the garrison of Pampeluna would fall upon his right; if Castaños, to favor the attack of Palafox, crossed the Ebro at Logroño, Ney, being posted at Guardia, was ready to take him in flank; if the two wings endeavored to unite, their line of march was liable to be intercepted at Tudela by Moncey, and the rear of Castaños be attacked by Ney, who could pass the Ebro at Logroño or Lodosa. If they remained stationary, they might easily be beaten in detail.

Any other than Spanish generals would have been filled with apprehension on such an occasion; but Palafox and Castaños, heedless of their own danger, tranquilly proceeded to arrange a plan of offensive operations singularly absurd.* They agreed that the army of the centre, leaving a division at Lodosa and another at Calahorra, should make a flank march to the right, and take a position along the Aragon, the left to be at Tudela, the right at Sanguessa; that is, with less than twenty thousand men to occupy fifty miles of country close to a powerful and concentrated enemy. In the mean time, Palafox, with the Aragonese, crossing the river at Sanguessa, was to extend in an oblique line to Roncesvalles, covering the valleys of Talay, Escay, and Roncal with his centre, and reinforcing his army by the armed inhabitants, who were ready to flock to his standard.† Blake was invited to co-operate, in combination, by Guipuscoa, so as to pass in the rear of the whole French army, unite with Palafox, and thus cut off the enemy's retreat into France, and intercept his reinforcements at the same time.

Castaños returned to Tudela on the 23d, and proceeded to Logroño on the 25th, the grand movement being to commence on

* Sir John Moore's Papers. Colonel Graham's Correspondence.

† Ibid. Colonel Doyle's Correspondence.

the 27th. But on the 21st, Grimarest had pushed forward strong detachments across the Ebro to Mendavia, Andosilla, Sesma, and Carcur, and one over the Ega to Lerim; the Castilian outposts occupied Viana on the left bank of the Ebro; the Aragonese divisions were already closing upon Sangüessa, and a multitude of peasants crowded to the same place in the hope of obtaining arms and ammunition. Moncey, deceived by this concourse of persons, estimated the force in Sangüessa at twenty thousand, when, in fact, it was only eight thousand regular troops; and his report, and the simultaneous movement of the Spaniards on both extremities, made the King apprehend a triple attack from Logroño, Lodosa, and Sangüessa. He immediately reinforced Ney with Merlin's division from Bessières' corps, and directed him to clear the left bank of the Ebro, while Bonnet's division, also taken from Bessières, descended the right bank from Haro to Briones.* A division of Moncey's corps, stationed at Estella, received orders to follow the course of the Ega, and second Ney's operations; and a part of the garrison of Pampeluna, posted at Montreal and Salinas, was commanded to advance upon Nardues, and make a demonstration against Sangüessa.

When Castaños arrived at Logroño these operations were in full activity. Ney had, on the 24th, driven back the Castilian outposts, crowned the height opposite that town on the 25th, and was cannonading the Spaniards' position. On the 26th, he renewed his fire briskly until twelve o'clock, at which time Castaños, after giving Pignatelli strict orders to defend his post unless he was turned by a force descending the right bank of the Ebro, proceeded himself to Lodosa and Calahorra.† Meanwhile the French from Estella, falling down the Ega, drove the Spanish parties out of Mendavia, Andosilla, Carcur, and Sesma; and Grimarest retired from Lodosa to La Torre with such precipitation, that he left Colonel Cruz, a valuable officer, with a light battalion, and some volunteers at Lerim, where he was taken after a creditable resistance.‡

Pignatelli, regardless of Castaños' orders, retired from Logroño, and abandoned all his guns at the foot of the Sierra de Nalda, only a few miles from the enemy; then crossing the mountains, he gained Centruenigo in such disorder, that his men continued to arrive for twenty-four hours consecutively. On the right, O'Neil skirmished with the garrison of Pampeluna, and lost six men killed and eight wounded, but in the Spanish fashion, announced

* Journal of the King's Operations, MS.

† Whittingham's Correspondence, MS.

‡ Colonel Graham's Correspondence, MS.

that, after a hard action of many hours, the enemy was completely overthrown. On the 27th, Merlin's division rejoined Bessières at Miranda, and Bonnet, retiring from Briones, took post in front of Pancorbo. Castaños, incensed at the ill conduct of the Castilians, dismissed Pignatelli and incorporated his troops with the Andalusian division; fifteen hundred men of the latter, being sent back to Nalda under the Conde de Cartoajal, recovered the lost guns, and brought them safe to Centruenigo.

Dissensions followed these reverses. Palafox arrogantly censured Castaños, and a cabal, of which General Coupigny appears to have been the principal mover, was formed against the latter. The Junta, exasperated that Castaños had not already driven the enemy beyond the frontier, encouraged his traducers, and circulated slanderous accusations themselves, as if his inaction alone had enabled the French to remain in Spain; they sent Francisco Palafox, brother of the Captain-General, and a member of the Supreme Junta, to head-quarters, avowedly to facilitate, but really to control the military operations, and he arrived at Alfaro on the 29th, accompanied by Coupigny, and the Conde de Montijo, a turbulent factious man, shallow and vain, but designing and unprincipled. Castaños waited upon this representative of the government, and laid before him the denuded state of the army;* the Captain-General, Palafox, also came up from Zaragoza, and a council of war was held at Tudela, on the 5th of November. The rough manner in which the Spaniards had just been driven from the left bank of the Ebro made no impression on the council, which persisted in the grand project of getting in the rear of the French, although it was known that sixty thousand fresh men had joined the latter. Deeming it, however, fitting that Blake should act the first, it was resolved to await his time, and, as an intermediate operation, it was agreed that the army of the centre, leaving six thousand men at Calahorra, and a garrison at Tudela, should cross the Ebro and attack Caparosa:† French parties had, however, pushed as far as Valtierra, and in the skirmishes which ensued, the conduct of the Castilian battalions was discreditable.‡ Joseph Palafox then returned to Zaragoza, and the deputy separated himself from Castaños.

The loss sustained by desertion and the previous combats was considerable, but some Murcian levies, and a part of the first and third Andalusian divisions, joined the army of the centre, which now mustered twenty-six thousand infantry, and nearly three thousand

* Castaños' Vindication.

† Colonel Graham's Correspondence, MS.

‡ Whittingham's Correspondence, MS.

cavalry under arms, with fifty or sixty pieces of artillery. The position of the army extended from Calahorra, by Haro, to Tudela. La Peña held the first town with five thousand men; Grimarest and Caro commanded eight thousand at the second; head-quarters, with thirteen thousand five hundred men, were fixed in the last; Cartoajal remained with eleven hundred in the Sierra de Nalda, and eight hundred were posted at Ansejo.* From these points, in pursuance of the plan arranged, the troops were actually in movement to cross the Ebro, when despatches from Blake announced that he had met with some disaster on the 31st, the extent of which he did not communicate.

This news arrested the attack, and the preposterous transactions that ensued resembled the freaks of Caligula rather than the operations of real war. First, it was arranged that the army should abandon Tudela, and take a position in two lines, the extremities of the one to rest on Calahorra and Amedo, the second to extend from Alfaro to Fitero, and the deputy ordered O'Neil, with the army of Aragon, to occupy the latter of these lines forthwith;† O'Neil, however, refused to stir without instructions from the Captain-General. This was on the 9th; on the 10th the plan was changed. Castaños fixed his head-quarters at Centruenigo, and the deputy proposed that O'Neil should descend the right bank of the Aragon river, and attack Caparosa in the rear; that the troops in Tudela should attack it in front; and that a division should make a demonstration of passing the Ebro in boats, opposite to Milagro, in order to favor this attack. Castaños assented, and on the 12th a division assembled opposite Milagro, while La Peña, with two divisions, marched against Caparosa; suddenly, the whimsical deputy sent them orders to repair to Lodosa, forty miles higher up the Ebro, to attack the bridge at that place, while Grimarest, crossing in the boats at Calahorra, should ascend the left bank of the Ebro, and take it in rear. La Peña and Villarcayo, confounded by this change, wrote to Castaños for an explanation, and this was the first intimation that the latter, who was lying sick at Centruenigo, received of the altered dispositions.‡ He directed his lieutenants to obey; but being provoked beyond endurance, wrote sharply to the Junta, demanding to know who was to command the army; and after all this insolence and vamping, no operation took place: Francisco Palafox, declaring that his intention was merely to make a demonstration, ordered the troops to their quarters, and then, without assigning

* Whittingham's Correspondence, MS.

† Graham's Correspondence, MS.

‡ Castaños' Vindication.

any reason, deprived La Peña of his command, and appointed Car-toajal in his place.*

It was at this time that Sir John Moore's letter arrived, but Castaños, no longer master of his own operations, could ill concert a plan of campaign with the general of another army; he could not even tell what troops were to be at his nominal disposal! for the Estremaduran force, originally destined for his command, was now directed by the Junta upon Burgos, and the remainder of his first and third division was detained in Madrid. His enemies, especially Montijo, were active in spreading reports to his disadvantage, the deserters scattered over the country declared that all the generals were traitors, and the people of the towns and villages, deceived by the Central Junta and excited by false rumors, respected neither justice nor government, and committed the most scandalous excesses.† Blake's situation was not more prosperous. The road from Bayonne to Vittoria was encumbered with the advancing columns of the great French army.

An imperial decree, issued early in September, incorporated the troops already in Spain with the grand army then marching from Germany, and the united forces were to compose eight divisions, called "Corps d'Armée," an institution analogous to the Roman legion; because each "Corps d'Armée," although adapted for action as a component part of a large army, was also provided with light cavalry, a parc, and train of artillery, engineers, sappers and miners, and a complete civil administration, to enable it to take the field as an independent force. The imperial guards and the heavy cavalry of the army were, however, not included in this arrangement; the first had a constitution of their own, and at this time all the heavy cavalry, and all the artillery, not attached to the "Corps d'Armée," were formed into a large reserve. As the columns arrived in Spain, they were united to the troops already there, and the whole was disposed conformably to the new organization.

Marshal Victor, Duke of Belluno, commanded the	First Corps.
Marshal Bessières, Duke of Istria, "	Second Corps.
Marshal Monecy, Duke of Cornegliano, "	Third Corps.
Marshal Lefebvre, Duke of Dantzic, "	Fourth Corps.
Marshal Mortier, Duke of Treviso, "	Fifth Corps.
Marshal Ney, Duke of Elchingen, "	Sixth Corps.
General St. Cyr, "	Seventh Corps.
General Junot, Duke of Abrantes, "	Eighth Corps.

The seventh corps was appropriated to Catalonia, but the remainder were, in the latter end of October, assembled or assembling in Navarre and Biscay. General Merlin, with a division, held

* Graham's Correspondence, MS.

† Vindication of Castaños.

Zornosa, and observed Blake, who remained tranquilly at Bilbao. Two divisions of the fourth corps occupied Durango and the neighboring villages. One division and the light cavalry of the first corps was at Vittoria, a second division of the same corps guarded the bridge of Murguia on the river Bayas, and commanded the entrance to the valley of Orduña.* Haro, Puente Lara, Miranda, and Pancorbo were maintained by the infantry of the King's body guard and the second corps; and the light cavalry of the latter covered the plains close up to Briviesca. The reinforcements were daily crowding up to Vittoria, and the King, restrained by the Emperor's orders to a rigorous system of defence, occupied himself with the arrangements attendant upon such an immense accumulation of force, and left Blake in quiet possession of Bilbao. The latter mistook this apparent inactivity for timidity; he was aware that reinforcements, in number equal to his whole army, had joined the enemy, yet, with wonderful rashness, resolved to press forward, and readily agreed to attempt a junction with Palafox, in the rear of the French position.

At this time Romana's infantry were approaching Bilbao, and the Estremadurans were in march for Burgos; but the country was nearly exhausted of provisions, both armies felt the scarcity, desertion prevailed among the Spaniards, and the Biscayans, twice abandoned, were fearful of a third insurrection. Prudence dictated a retreat towards Burgos, but Blake resolved to advance. First he posted General Acevedo with the Asturians and the second division at Orduña; then he left a battalion at Miravalles, to preserve the communication with Bilbao;† finally he marched himself, on the 24th, at the head of seventeen thousand fighting men, divided in three columns, to attack Zornosa. The right column ascended the valley of Durango by Galdacano, the centre by Larabezua, the left by Rigoytia; and General Acevedo penetrated through the mountains of Gorbea by Ozoco and Villaro, with a view to seize Manares and St. Antonia d'Urquitiola. It was intended by this operation to cut the communication between Miranda on the Ebro, and the town of Durango, and thus to intercept the retreat of Marshal Ney, and oblige him to surrender with sixteen thousand men;‡ for Blake was utterly ignorant of his adversary's position, and imagined that he had only two corps to deal with. He believed that the King, with one, was in his front at Durango and Mont Dragon, and that Ney, with the other, was at Miranda; but, in fact, the latter was at that moment attacking Pignatelli at Logroño.

* Journal of the King's Operations, MS.

† Carrol's Correspondence.

‡ Broderick's Correspondence.

As the Spanish army approached Zornosa, Merlin, abandoning the town, drew up on some heights in the rear. Bad weather, and the want of provisions, checked further operations until the evening of the 25th, when the Spanish division at Rigoytia attempted to turn the right flank of the French; at the same time Blake marched against the centre and left, and Merlin fell back to Durango. The Duke of Dantzic, alarmed by these movements, concentrated Sebastiani's and Laval's division, and a Dutch brigade of infantry, at Durango; and as his third division, under General Valence, was not come up, the King reinforced him with Villatte's division of the first corps, and ordered Merlin's force, which was composed of detachments, to join their respective regiments.*

Until the 30th the armies remained quiet, but at daybreak on the 31st, the Spaniards were formed in a checkered order of battle across the Durango road, five miles beyond Zornosa, and close to the enemy's position. The Duke of Dantzic, apprised by the previous movements that he was going to be attacked, became impatient; the state of the atmosphere prevented him from discovering the order of march, or the real force of the Spaniards, but he knew that Blake had the power of uniting nearly fifty thousand men, and concluding that such a force was in his front, he resolved to anticipate his adversaries by a sudden and vigorous assault.† In fact, the Spanish generals were so little guided by the rules of war, that before their incapacity was understood, their very errors, being too gross for belief, contributed to their safety. Blake had commenced a great offensive movement, intending to beat the troops in his front, and to cut off and capture Ney's corps of sixteen thousand men. In six days, although unopposed, he advanced less than fifteen miles; and so disposed his forces, that out of thirty-six thousand men, he had only seventeen thousand infantry, without artillery, upon the field of battle. His adversary, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, formed in three columns of attack, then descended from the heights.‡

COMBAT OF DURANGO.

A thick fog covering the mountain sides, filled all the valleys, and a few random shots alone indicated the presence of the hostile armies, when suddenly Villatte's division appearing close to the Spanish vanguard, with a brisk onset forced it back upon the third division; Sebastiani's and Laval's followed in succession; a fire of artillery, to which Blake could make no reply, opened along the

* S. Journal of the King's Operations, MS

† Ibid.

‡ Carrol's Correspondence.

road, the day cleared, and the Spanish army, heaped in confused masses, was, notwithstanding the example of personal courage given by Blake, and the natural strength of the country, driven from one position to another. At mid-day it was beyond Zornosa, and at three o'clock in full flight for Bilbao, which place it gained, in a state of great confusion, during the night; but the next day Blake crossed the Salcedon, and took a position at Nava.* The Duke of Dantzic pursued as far as Gueñes, and then leaving General Villatte, with seven thousand men, to observe the enemy, returned to Bilbao. Twelve vessels, laden with English stores, were in the river, but contrived to escape.

The King was displeased with the precipitancy of Marshal Lefebre, but to aid him ordered the division of the first corps stationed at Murguia to descend the valley of Orduña, as far as Amurio; at the same time, Mouton's division was detached from the second corps towards Barbareña, from whence it was, according to circumstances, either to join the troops in the valley of Orduña, or to watch Medina and Quincoes, and press Blake in his retreat, if he retired by Villarcayo. The French were ignorant of the situation of General Acevedo, but the day of the action at Zornosa that General was at Villaro, from whence he endeavored to rejoin Blake, by marching to Valmaceda; he reached Miravalles, in the valley of Orduña, on the 3d, at the moment when the head of the French troops coming from Murguia appeared in sight, and after a slight skirmish, the latter, thinking they had to deal with the whole of Blake's army, retired to Orduña.

Acevedo immediately pushed for the Salcedon river, and Villatte, who first got notice of his march, dividing his own troops, posted one half at Orantia, on the road leading from Miravalles to Nava, the other on the road to Valmaceda, thus intercepting the Spaniards' line of retreat.† Blake, informed of Acevedo's danger, in the night of the 4th, promptly passed the bridge of Nava, meaning to fall suddenly upon the nearest French; but they were aware of his intention, and sending a detachment to occupy Gordujuela, a pass in the mountains leading to Bilbao, rejoined Villatte on the Valmaceda road. Five Spanish divisions and some of Romana's troops were now assembled at Orantia. Blake left two in reserve, detached one against Gordujuela, and with the other two drove Villatte across the Salcedon. That General rallied on the left bank and renewed the action, but at this moment Acevedo appeared in sight, and sending two battalions by a circuit to gain the rear of the French, with the remainder joined in the combat. Villatte

* S. Journal of Operations, MS. Leith's Correspondence, MS.

† S. Journal of Operations, MS. Captain Carrol

then retired fighting, and encountering the two battalions in his retreat, broke through them, and reached Gueñes, yet with considerable loss of men, and he also left one gun and part of his baggage in the hands of the Spaniards. Thus ended a series of operations and combats, which had lasted for eleven days.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. The Duke of Dantzic's attack at Durango was founded upon false data; it was inconsistent with the general plan of the campaign, hasty, ill-combined, and feebly followed up; and it was an unpardonable fault to leave Villatte without support, close to an army that had met with no signal defeat, and that was five times his strength. The march of Victor's division was too easily checked at Miravalles, and for five days General Acevedo, with at least eight thousand men, wandered unmolested in the midst of the French columns, and finally escaped without any extraordinary effort.

2. General Blake's dispositions, with the exception of his night march from Nava to Orantia, will, if studied, afford useful lessons in an inverse sense. From the 24th of October to the 4th of November, he omitted no error that the circumstances rendered it possible to commit; and then, as if ashamed of the single judicious movement that occurred, he would not profit by it. When Romana's infantry had partly arrived, and the remainder were in the vicinity of Nava, the whole Spanish army was, contrary to all reasonable expectation, concentrated; above thirty thousand fighting men were united in one mass, harassed, but not much discouraged, and the Conde de Belvedere, with twelve thousand infantry, twelve hundred cavalry, and thirty pieces of artillery, was close to Burgos. If Blake had been at all acquainted with the principles of his art, he would then have taken advantage of Villatte's retreat, to march by Espinosa and Villarcayo to the upper Ebro; from thence he could have gained Burgos, brought up the artillery from Reynosa, and uniting Belvedere's troops to his own, have opened a communication with the English army. In that position, with a plentiful country behind him, his retreat open, and his army provided with cavalry, he might have commenced a regular system of operations; but with incredible obstinacy and want of judgment, he now determined to attack Bilbao again, and to renew the ridiculous attempt to surround the French army and unite with Palafox at the foot of the Pyrenees.

Such were the commanders, the armies, the rulers, upon whose exertions the British Cabinet relied for the security of Sir John Moore's troops, during their double march from Lisbon and Co-

ruña! It was in such a state of affairs that the English ministers, anticipating the speedy and complete destruction of the French forces in Spain, were sounding the trumpet for an immediate invasion of France! Of France, defended by a million of veteran soldiers, and governed by the mightiest genius of two thousand years! As if the vast military power of that warlike nation had suddenly become extinct, as if Baylen were a second Zama, and Hannibal flying to Adrumetum instead of passing the Iberus!* But Napoleon, with an execution more rapid than other men's thoughts, was already at Vittoria, and his hovering eagles cast a gloomy shadow over Spain.

* Lord W. Bentinck's Correspondence. Appendix, No. 13, § 8.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

Napoleon arrives at Bayonne—Blake advances toward Bilbao—The Count Belvedere arrives at Burgos—The first and fourth corps advance—Combat of Gueñes—Blake retreats—Napoleon at Vittoria; his plan—Soult takes the command of the second corps—Battle of Gamonal—Burgos taken—Battle of Espinosa—Flight from Reynosa—Soult overruns the Montaña de Santander, and scours Leon—Napoleon fixes his head-quarters at Burgos, changes his front, lets 10,000 loose cavalry upon Castile and Leon—Marshals Lasnes and Ney directed against Castaños—Folly of the Central Junta—General St. Juan occupies the pass of the Somosierra—Folly of the Generals on the Ebro—Battle of Tudela.

AFTER the opening of the legislative sessions, the Emperor repaired to Bayonne. He arrived there on the 3d of November. It was his intention that the presumption of the Spanish generals should be encouraged by a strict defensive system until the moment when the blow he was prepared to strike should fall with the greatest effect; hence the precipitate attack at Zornosa displeased him; nor was he satisfied with the subsequent measures of the King, for he thought that Mouton's division would be endangered between the army of Blake and that of the Conde de Belvedere.* To prevent any accident, he judged it necessary that Bessières should advance with the whole of the second corps to Burgos; that Marshal Victor should march by Amurio to Valmaceda, and that Marshal Lefebre should immediately renew his attack on that position from the side of Bilbao. Thus, at the very moment when Blake was leading his harassed and starving troops back to Bilbao, two corps, amounting to fifty thousand men, were in full march to meet him, and a third, having already turned his right flank, was on his rear.

The Spanish General advanced from Valmaceda on the 7th, and thinking that only fifteen hundred men were in Gueñes, prepared to surround them.† Two divisions, making a circuit to the left, passed through Abellana and Sopoerte, with a view to gain the bridge of Sodupe, in the rear of Gueñes, while two other divisions

* S. Journal of the King's Operations, MS.

† Captain Carroll's Correspondence.

attacked that position in front; the remainder of the army followed at some distance, but the advanced guard of the 4th corps was in Gueñes, and after an action of two hours, the Spaniards were thrown into such confusion that night alone saved them from a total rout. The same day, one of their flanking divisions was encountered and beaten near Sopoerte, and the retreat of the other being intercepted on the side of Abellana, it was forced to make for Portogaleta on the sea-coast, and from thence to Santander.* Blake, whose eyes were now opening to the peril of his situation, resolved to retire upon Espinosa de los Monteros, a mountain position, two marches distant, where he designed to rest his troops, and draw supplies from his magazines at Reynosa. Falling back to Valmaceda in the night, he gained Nava the next day, and on the 9th was at Espinosa. The late division of Romana's infantry joined him on the march, and, with exception of the men cut off at Abellana, the whole army was concentrated on strong ground commanding the intersection of the roads from Santander, Villarcayo, and Reynosa.

Napoleon, accompanied by the Dukes of Dalmatia and Montebello, quitted Bayonne the morning of the 8th, and reached Vittoria in the evening. He was met by the civil and military chiefs at the gates of the town, but refusing to go to the house prepared for his reception, jumped off his horse, entered the first small inn that he observed, and calling for his maps, and a report of the situation of the armies on both sides, proceeded to arrange the plan of his campaign.

The first and fourth corps, after uniting at Valmaceda, had separated again at Nava on the 9th. Victor was therefore pursuing the track of Blake, and Lefebre was marching upon Villarcayo by Medina. The second corps was concentrating at Briv'esca. The third corps occupied Tafalla, Peraltes, Caparosa, and Estrella. The sixth corps, the guard, and the reserve, were distributed from Vittoria to Miranda, and a division, under the command of General La Grange, was at Guardia, connecting the positions of the third and sixth corps. The fifth corps was still behind the frontier, and the eighth, composed of the troops removed from Portugal by the convention of Cintra, was marching from the French sea ports, where it had disembarked.

On the Spanish side, the Conde de Belvedere was at Burgos; Castaños and Palafox, unknowing of their danger, were planning to cut off the French army, and Blake was flying to Espinosa. The English army was scattered from Coruña to Talavera de la Reyna. On these facts, and in two hours, the Emperor had arranged his plans.

* General Leith's Correspondence.

Moncey was directed to leave a division in front of Pampeluna, in observation of the Spaniards on the Aragon, to concentrate the remainder of the third corps at Lodosa, and remain on the defensive until further orders. La Grange was reinforced by Colbert's brigade of light cavalry from the sixth corps, and directed upon Logroño. The first and fourth corps were to press Blake without intermission; the sixth to march towards Aranda de Duero. The Duke of Dalmatia, appointed to command the second corps, was ordered to fall headlong upon the Conde de Belvedere, and the Emperor, with the imperial guards and the reserve, followed the movement of the second corps.*

These instructions being issued, the enormous mass of the French army was put in motion with a celerity that marked the vigor of Napoleon's command. Marshal Soult departed on the instant for Briviesca, arrived at day-break on the 9th, received the second corps from Bessières, and in a few hours was in full march for the terrace of Monasterio, which overlooks the plains of Burgos; headquarters were established there, during the night, and Franceschi's light cavalry took the road of Zaldueño to Arlanzon, with orders to cross the river of that name, to descend the left bank, cut the communication with Madrid, and prevent the Spaniards rallying at the convent of the Chartreuse, if defeated near Burgos.

At four o'clock on the morning of the 10th, Soult was again in march from Monasterio, and at six o'clock General Lassalle's cavalry reached Villa Fria. The Conde de Belvedere, being informed of their approach, posted the Spanish army at Gamonal, and taking four thousand infantry, eight guns, and the whole of his cavalry, fell upon Lassalle. The latter skirmished for a while, and then, following his orders, retired slowly to Rio Bena, but at eight o'clock the French infantry, which had advanced by two roads, was reunited at this town, and immediately pushed forward on Villa Fria. Belvedere was driven back upon Gamonal, and the Spanish army was discovered in line of battle. The right was in a wood, leaving a clear space of some extent unoccupied between it and the river Arlanzon; the left was posted in the walled park of Vellimer; thirty pieces of artillery covered the front, and seven or eight thousand armed peasants were arrayed on the heights, immediately behind the regular troops; these latter amounted to eleven thousand one hundred and fifty infantry, and eleven hundred and fifty cavalry. This was the best army at that time in Spain; it was composed of the Walloon and Spanish guards, the regiments of Mayorca, Zafra, and Valencia de Alcantara;† the hussars of Va

* S. Marshal Soult's operations, MS.

† S. Journal of operations, MS.

lencia, the royal carbineers, and some volunteers of good families; it was completely equipped, and armed principally from the English stores, yet its resistance was even more feeble than that made by the half-famished peasants of Blake's force.

BATTLE OF GAMONAL.

Lassalle, with the light cavalry, leading down upon the Spanish right, filled the plain between the river and the wood, and at the same moment the Spanish artillery opened along the whole of the line; then the French infantry, formed in columns of regiments, arrived, and Mouton's division, composed of old soldiers, broke at once into the wood at a charging pace. General Bonnet followed closely, but so rapid and effectual was the assault of Mouton's veterans that the Spaniards fled in disorder before Bonnet's troops could fire a shot; their left wing, although not attacked, followed the example of the right, and the whole mass, victors and vanquished, rushed into the town of Burgos with extraordinary violence and uproar. Bessières, who retained the command of all the heavy cavalry, passed at full gallop toward the Madrid road, where it crosses the Arlanzon, sabring the fugitives, and taking all the guns which had escaped Mouton, while, on the other side of the river, Franceschi was seen cutting in pieces some Catalonian light troops stationed there, and barring all hopes of flight. Never was a defeat more instantaneous, or more complete. Two thousand five hundred Spaniards were killed; twenty guns, thirty ammunition wagons, six pairs of colors, and nine hundred men were taken on the field; four thousand muskets were found unbroken, and the fugitives dispersed far and wide. Belvedere himself escaped to Lerma, where he arrived in the evening of the day on which the battle was fought, and meeting some battalions, principally composed of volunteers, on their march to join his army, retired with them to Aranda de Duero during the night; but first, with true Spanish exaggeration, wrote a despatch, in which he asserted that the French, repulsed in two desperate attacks, had, after thirteen hours' hard fighting, succeeded in a third.*

All the ammunition and stores of the defeated army were captured in Burgos; and the indefatigable Soult, who was still upon the post-horse which he had mounted at Briviesca, who had travelled from Bayonne to Burgos, taken the latter town, and gained a decisive victory, all within the space of fifty hours, now detached one column in pursuit on the side of Lerma, another towards Palencia and Valladolid, and marched himself with a third, on the very day of the battle, towards Reynosa, where he hoped to intercept Blake's

* Appendix, No. 15.

line of retreat to the plains of Leon.* This last-mentioned General had reached Espinosa, as we have seen, on the evening of the 9th, with six divisions, including Romana's infantry, who also dragged with them six guns of small calibre; but the separation of the fourth division at Abellana, the deserters, and the losses sustained in battle, had reduced his army below twenty-five thousand fighting men; and the parc of ammunition and artillery, guarded by two thousand infantry, were behind Reynosa, at Aguilar del Campo, on the road to Leon; yet his position was strong, and he hoped to remain in it for some days unmolested. His left wing, composed of the Asturians and the first division, occupied some heights which covered the road of Santander; the centre, consisting of the third division, and the reserve, formed a line across the road of Reynosa, which leads through Espinosa directly to the rear; the second division was established on a commanding height, a little on the right hand of the town; Romana's infantry were posted in a wood, two miles in advance of the right, and the vanguard, with six guns, formed a reserve behind the centre of the position.†

BATTLE OF ESPINOSA.

On the 10th, the Duke of Belluno came up, and at two o'clock in the afternoon, the head of a French column, driving back Romana's infantry, seized the wood, but the Spaniards, reinforced by the third division, renewed the combat; a second column then opened its fire upon the Spanish centre, thus weakened by the advance of the third division, and at the same time some light troops ascending the heights on the left, menaced that wing of Blake's army. Meanwhile the contest on the right was maintained with vigor, and the Spaniards, supported by the fire of the six guns in their centre, even appeared to be gaining ground, when the night closed and put an end to the action, leaving the French in possession of the wood, and of a ridge of hills, which, at the distance of a cannon shot, run parallel to the centre of the position.

The Generals S. Roman and Riquiémé were mortally wounded on the Spanish side, and at daylight the next morning Víctor, who had relieved his left with fresh troops during the night, renewed the attack. General Maison, throwing out a cloud of skirmishers along the front of the Spanish centre and left wing, under cover of their fire, passed rapidly to his own right, and fell upon the Asturians and the first division. Blake, observing this movement, detached a column of grenadiers to reinforce the latter, and advanced in person with three regiments from the centre, to take

* Carrol's Correspondence.

† *Ibid.*

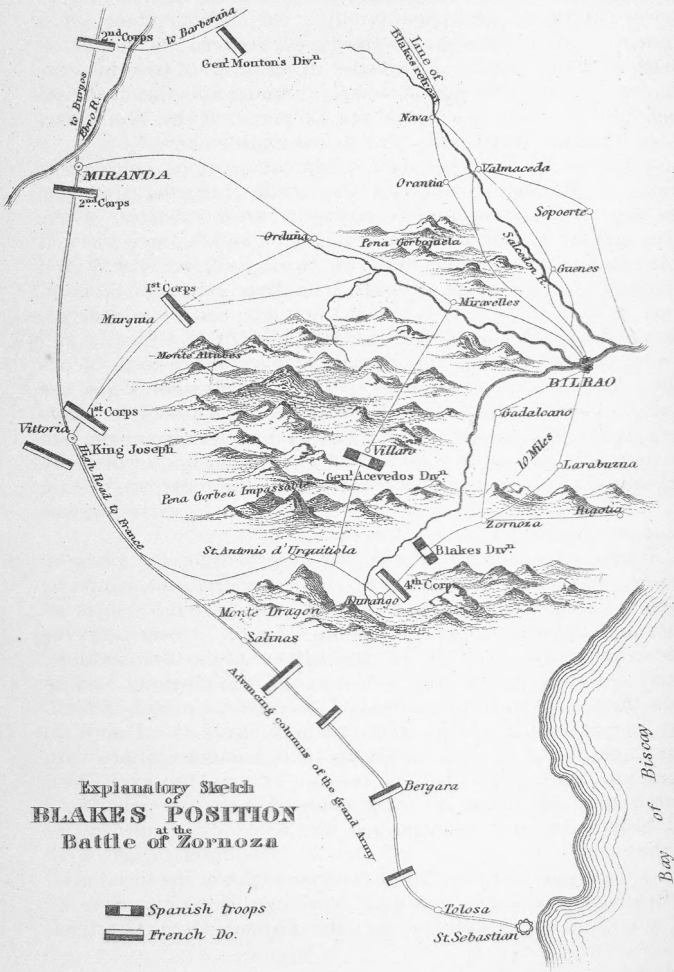
Maison in flank during his march ; but it was too late. Three Asturian generals fell at the first fire, and the troops of that kingdom fled without waiting for the enemy : they were soon followed by the first division, and Maison, continuing his course without a check, intercepted the line of retreat by Santander, and also that by the town of Espinosa. In the mean time, the French troops posted on the parallel ridge before spoken of, attacked the centre, and when the division in the wood also advanced against the right, the whole Spanish army gave way in terrible confusion, crowding heavily towards the river Trueba, which swept with a bound round the rear—the men endeavoring to escape, some by the fords, some by the town, some by the hills on the right ; but the weather was bad, the road steep, the overthrow fatal. Those whom the sword missed, went to their own provinces, carrying dismay into the remotest parts of Galicia, Leon, Castile, and the Asturias. Blake himself reached Reynosa on the 12th, and then rallied about seven thousand fugitives, without artillery, without arms, without spirit, and without hope.

It has been said that, Spartan-like, Romana's soldiers died to a man in their ranks ; yet, in 1812, Captain Hill, of the royal navy, being at Cronstadt to receive Spaniards taken by the Russians during Napoleon's retreat, found that the greater portion were men who had escaped with Romana from the Danish Isles in 1808. Captives at Espinosa, they had served Napoleon for four years, passed the ordeal of the Moscow retreat, and were still above four thousand strong !

A line of retreat by Aguilar del Campo, where his artillery remained, was still open to Blake, who thought to remain at Reynosa, to restore order, and then retire through Leon upon Sir David Baird's division, the head of which was now near Astorga. But his total ignorance of the French operations and strength again misled him ; he looked only to the side of Espinosa, and already Soult's cavalry was upon his line of retreat, and the Duke of Dantzic was hastening by the valley of Villarcayo towards Reynosa.* Upon the 13th, he was attacked by Soult's advanced guard, and being now utterly confounded, he fled with four or five thousand men through the valley of Cabuerniga, and took refuge at Arnedo, in the heart of the Asturian mountains, where the Marquis of Romana joined him, and assumed the command of all that remained of this unfortunate army.

Blake being thus disposed of, Marshal Lefebre, after a halt of a few days to refresh his troops, took the road of Carrion and Valladolid, while Soult concentrated the 2d corps at Reynosa, and seized

* S. Journal of Operations, MS.



Santander, where he captured a quantity of English stores. This done, the Duke of Dalmatia spread his columns over the whole of the Montaña, pursuing, attacking, and dispersing every body of Spaniards which yet held together, and filling all places with alarm. Everything military belonging to the patriots was thus driven over the snowy barrier of the Asturian hills; and Soult, having left a detachment at San Vincente de Barqueira, scoured the banks of the Deba, took the town of Potes, and overrun Leon with his cavalry as far as Sahagun and Saldana. Meanwhile the Duke of Belluno, quitting Espinosa, joined the Emperor, whose headquarters were fixed at Burgos, after the defeat of Belvedere.*

These battles of Espinosa and Gamonal, and the subsequent operations of Marshal Soult, laid the north of Spain prostrate, secured the whole coast from St. Sebastian to the frontier of the Asturias, and by a judicious arrangement of small garrisons and movable columns, the provinces of Guipuscoa, Navarre, Biscay, and the Baston de Laredo, were fettered. Thus the communication of the army with France could no longer be endangered by insurrection in the rear; the wide and fertile plains of Old Castile and Leon were thrown open to the French, and forbidden to the separated divisions of the British army. These great advantages, the result of Napoleon's admirable combinations, the fruits of ten days of active exertion, obtained so easily, and yet so decisive of the fate of the campaign, prove the weakness of the system upon which the Spanish and British governments were at this time acting—if that can be called a system where no one general knew what another had done, was doing, or intended to do.

But Burgos, instead of Vittoria, was now become the pivot of operations; and the right of the army being secured, the Emperor prepared to change his front, and bear down against the armies of Castaños and Palafox, with a similar impetuosity. It was however first necessary to ascertain the exact situation of the British force. Napoleon believed that it was concentrated at Valladolid, and he detached three divisions of cavalry and twenty-four pieces of artillery, by Lerma and Palencia, with orders to cross the Duero, to turn the flank of the English, threaten their communications with Portugal, and thus force them to retire. It was, however, soon discovered that the heads of their columns had not penetrated beyond Salamanca and Astorga, and that many days must elapse before they could be concentrated and in a condition to act offensively. Certain of this fact, the Emperor let loose his three divisions of cavalry, and eight thousand horsemen, sweeping over the plains, vexed all Leon and Castile; the Captain General Pigna-

* S. Journal of Operations, MS.

telli shamefully fled, and the authorities everywhere shrunk from the tempest. The people displayed no enthusiasm, and, disconcerted by the rapid movements of the French, spread a thousand confused and contradictory reports, while the incursions of the cavalry extended to the neighborhood of Astorga, to Benevente, Zamora, Toro, Tordesilla, and even to the vicinity of Salamanca. Such was the fear or the apathy of the inhabitants, that thirty dragoons were sufficient to raise contributions at the gates of the largest towns;* and after the overthrow of Espinosa was known, ten troopers could safely traverse the country in any direction.

The front of the French army being now changed, the second corps, hitherto the leading column of attack, became a corps of observation, covering the right flank and protecting the important point of Burgos, where large magazines were establishing, and upon which the reinforcements continually arriving from France were directed. Of the other corps, the first, the guards, and a part of the reserve were at Burgos; Ney, with the sixth, was at Aranda de Duero. This officer's march from Ebro had been made to intercept the Estremadurans on the side of Madrid; and although their sudden destruction at Gamonal rendered this unnecessary, Ney was equally well placed to cut Castaños off from the capital. Meanwhile, as Lagrange had occupied Logroño, and Monecy was with three divisions of infantry and one of cavalry at Lodosa, the Spanish army of the centre was turned, menaced, and excised from Madrid, before Castaños was even aware that the campaign had commenced.

In passing the mountains near Tolosa, Lasnes, Duke of Montebello, fell from his horse, and was left at Vittoria, and his hurts were dangerous; a rapid and interesting cure was however effected by wrapping him in the skin of a sheep newly slain,† and the Emperor then directed him to assume the command of Lagrange's division and Colbert's light cavalry, to unite them with the third corps at Lodosa, and to fall upon Castaños in front. At the same time he ordered Ney to ascend the course of the Duero with the light cavalry and two divisions of the sixth corps, to connect his left with the right of Lasnes, and to gain Agreda by the road of Osma and Soria, from whence he could intercept the retreat of Castaños, and place himself on the rear of the Spanish army. To support this operation, the first corps, and Latour Maubourg's division of heavy cavalry being drawn from the reserve, proceeded by Lerma and Aranda, and from thence slowly followed the direction of Ney's march. The Emperor, with the guards, and the

* Sir John Moore's Papers, MS.

† Baron Larrey's Surgical Campaigns.

remainder of the reserve, continued at Burgos, where the citadel was repaired and armed, magazines formed, and arrangements made to render it the great *dépôt* of the army; and all the reinforcements coming from France were directed upon this town, and proclamations were issued, assuring the country people of protection, if they would be tranquil and remain in their houses.

Ten days had now elapsed since Napoleon, breaking forth from Vittoria, had deluged the country with his troops, and each day was marked by some advantage gained over the Spaniards, but these misfortunes were still unknown at Tudela and disregarded at the capital. The remnants of Belvedere's army had rallied in the pass of the Somosierra, and on the side of Segovia;* the troops belonging to the army of the centre, which had been detained in Madrid, were forwarded to the former place, those left behind from Cuesta's levies were ordered to the latter. General St. Juan, an officer of reputation, took the command at the Somosierra,† General Heredia repaired to Segovia, an intermediate camp of detachments was formed at Sepulveda, and the men thus collected were, by the Junta, magnified into a great army sufficient to protect Madrid. That the left wing of the French army was still unbroken upon the Ebro, the Central Junta attributed, not to the enemy's strength, but to the dilatory proceedings of Castaños;‡ wherefore, depriving him of the command, they gave it to Romana, precisely at the moment when it was impossible for the latter General to reach the army he was to lead; but the Junta wanted a battle, and uncorrected by Blake's destruction, doubted not of victory.

The proceedings at Tudela also continued to be worthy of the time, for the madness of the generals and the folly of the deputy had increased rather than abated. The freaks of Francisco Palafox, and their ridiculous termination on the 12th of November, I have already related, and a few days sufficed to give birth to new plans equally absurd, but more dangerous, as the crisis approached nearer. This time Castaños took the lead. He knew upon the 10th that the Estremaduran army was at Burgos, and that the French were marching on that town; from that moment, despairing of the junction of the British army, and likewise of his own first and third divisions which had been left in Madrid, he sent orders to Belvedere to unite himself with Blake.§ His letters never reached that officer, who was defeated before they were written, and Castaños, feeling that he himself was in a dangerous position,

* Mr. Stuart. Lord W. Bentinck, MSS.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Castaños' Vindication.

and that some decided measure was required, conceived so extraordinary a plan, that it would be difficult to credit it upon any authority but his own. He proposed to carry the army of the centre, reduced in numbers and ill-disciplined as it was, by the Concha de Haro and Soria, towards Burgos, to fall upon the Emperor's rear-guard, and, as a preliminary step, he determined to beat the army in his front;* but Palafox had also a plan for attacking Moncey on the side of Sanguessa, and the first measure necessary was to combine these double operations. It was agreed therefore that Caparosa should be garrisoned by four thousand infantry, that the bridge head at that place should be fortified, and that O'Neil should be reinforced at Sanguessa by detachments from the centre until his troops amounted to nineteen thousand infantry and twelve hundred cavalry;† he was then to break down the bridge, place guards at all the passages on the Aragon, come down to Caparosa, cross the river, and threaten Peraltes and Olite on the 17th; but on the 18th, he was to turn suddenly to the left, and get in rear of Lodosa, while La Peña and Coupigny, marching from Centruenigo, should attack Moncey in front.

This great movement was openly talked of at the head-quarters of the Spanish generals for several days before its execution;‡ and these extraordinary commanders, who were ignorant of Blake's disasters, announced their intention of afterwards marching towards Vittoria to lighten the pressure on that officer if he should be in difficulty; or if, as his despatches of the 5th had assured them, he was successful, to join in a general pursuit. Castaños, however, concealed his real project, which was to move by the Concha de Haro towards Burgos.

It was found impossible to procure a sufficient number of boats to lay a bridge over the Ebro at Alfaro, thus the reinforcements intended for O'Neil were forced to make a circuit by Tudela, and lost three or four days;§ however, on the 14th O'Neil arrived at Caparosa, after breaking the bridge of Sanguessa, and on the 15th the reinforcements joined him. The 17th, the day appointed for the execution of the plan, Castaños received notice of his own dismissal from the command, yet he persevered in his project. La Peña and Coupigny were put in motion to pass the bridges of Logroño and Lodosa, and the fords between them, but General O'Neil, instead of executing his part, first refused to stir without an order from Joseph Palafox, who was at Zaragoza, and then chang-

* Castaños' Vindication,

† Colonel Graham's Correspondence, MSS.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

ing his ground, complained that he was without bread.* Castaños besought him to move upon the 18th, urging the necessity of the measure, and the danger of delay; but the deputy, Palafox, who had hitherto approved of the project, suddenly quitted the headquarters, and went to Caparosa, from whence, in concert with O'Neil, he wrote to demand a further reinforcement from the centre, of six thousand infantry and some more cavalry, without which they affirmed that it would be dangerous to pass the Aragon river. Castaños preserved his temper, invited the deputy to return to the right bank of the Ebro, and opposed the demand for more troops on the ground of the delay it would cause; but now the Captain-General Palafox, agreeing with neither side, proposed a new plan, and it is difficult to say how long these strange disputes would have continued, if an umpire had not interposed, whose award was too strongly enforced to be disregarded.

Castaños was with the divisions of Coupigny and La Peña at Calahorra on the 19th, when he received information that a French corps was advancing upon Logroño;† it was Lasnes, with Lagrange's and Colbert's troops, yet the Spaniard concluded it to be Ney, for he was ignorant of the changes which had taken place since the 8th of the month. It was likewise reported that Moncey, whose force he estimated at twelve thousand, when it really was above twenty thousand, had concentrated at Lodosa, and, at the same time, the Bishop of Osma announced that twelve thousand men, under Dessolles, were marching from the side of Aranda de Duero. On the 21st, the intelligence that Dessolles had passed Almazan, and that Moncey was in motion, was confirmed.‡ Castaños then, relinquishing his offensive projects, prepared to retire, and it was full time; for Marshal Ney, who left Aranda on the 19th, had passed Almazan on the 20th, dispersed several small bands of insurgents, and entered Soria on the 21st, so that when Castaños determined to fall back on the 21st, his flank was already turned, and his retreat upon Madrid in the enemy's power. The Spanish artillery was at Centruenigo, and a large detachment was with O'Neil at Caparosa; but during the night of the 21st and 22d Castaños retired to the heights which extend from Tudela by Cascante, Novellas, Tarazona, and Monteguda.§

On the morning of the 22d Lasnes was seen marching upon Calahorra; at this moment the only supply of money which the Central Junta had transmitted for his army arrived at Tudela, and,

* Castanos' Vindication.

† Ibid.

‡ Castanos's account of the Battle of Tudela.

§ Ibid.

to complete the picture of distracted councils, O'Neil refused to fall back upon Caparosa without the order of Palafox. Fortunately the latter arrived at the moment in Tudela, and a conference taking place between him and Castaños the same day, they agreed that the Aragonese army should cross the Ebro, and occupy the heights over Tudela, while the rest of the troops should stretch away in line as far as Tarazona; nevertheless, in defiance of all orders, entreaties, or reasoning, the obstinate O'Neil remained in an olive-wood on the right bank of the river during the night of the 22d, leaving the key of the position open to the enemy.

A council of war was held, the discussion was turbulent, and the opinions discordant. Palafox insisted on the defence of Aragon, as the principal or rather the only object to be attended to;* and he wished the whole army to pass to the left bank of the Ebro, and confine its operations to the protection of Zaragoza on that side,—a proposal which alone was sufficient to demonstrate his total incapacity for military affairs. Castaños reasoned justly against this absurdity, but the important moments passed in useless disputation, and the generals came to no conclusion. Meanwhile Marshal Lasnes, bringing with him Maurice Mathieu's division of the sixth corps, which had just arrived from France, concentrated above thirty thousand infantry, four or five thousand cavalry, and sixty pieces of artillery, and marching by Alfaro, appeared, at eight o'clock in the morning of the 23d, in front of the Spanish outposts, close to Tudela, just at the moment when the Aragonese were passing the bridge and ascending their position.

BATTLE OF TUDELA.

From forty to fifty guns were distributed along the front of the Spanish army, which, numbering about forty-five thousand fighting men, was extended on a range of easy hills from Tudela to Tarazona, a distance of more than ten miles. The divisions of the army of the centre connected the Aragonese with the fourth division, which occupied Cascante, three divisions were in Tarazona, and there were no intermediate posts between these scattered bodies. The weakness attendant on such an arrangement being visible to the enemy at the first glance, Lasnes hastened to make his dispositions, and at nine o'clock General Morlot with one division attacked the heights above the town. Maurice Mathieu, supported by the cavalry of Lefebvre Desnouettes, assailed the centre, and General Lagrange advanced against Cascante. The Aragonese resisted Morlot with vigor, and even pressed him in the plain at the foot of

* *Ibid.*, and his Vindication.

† Mr. Stuart's Letters, MS. Lord W. Bentinck's ditto.

the hills, but Maurice Mathieu having gained possession of an olive-wood, and a small ridge which was connected with the centre of the Spanish position, after some sharp fighting pierced the line, and then Lefebvre, breaking through the opening with his cavalry, wheeled up to the left, and threw the right wing into hopeless confusion. The defeated soldiers fled towards the bridge of Tudela, pursued by the victorious horsemen. In the mean time La Peña, descending from Cascante with the fourth division, drove in L'arange's advanced guard of cavalry, yet he was soon encountered at a charging pace by the infantry, was beaten and fell back to Tarazona, where three divisions had remained during the whole of the action, which, strictly speaking, was confined to the heights above Tudela. Palafox was not in the battle, and O'Neil, with the right wing and the centre, fled to Zaragoza with such speed, that some of the fugitives are said to have arrived there the same evening.

When La Peña was driven back upon Tarazona, the left wing had commenced an orderly retreat towards Borja, when some cavalry, detached by Ney from the side of Soria, coming in sight, caused great confusion; a magazine blew up, in the midst of the disorder cries of treason were heard, the columns dissolved in a few moments, and the road to Borja was covered with a disorganized multitude. This ended the celebrated battle of Tudela, in which forty thousand men were beaten and dispersed by an effort that, being in itself neither very vigorous nor well sustained, was nevertheless sufficient to demonstrate the incapacity of Spanish generals, and the want of steadiness in Spanish soldiers.

Several thousand prisoners, thirty pieces of artillery, and all the ammunition and baggage, fell into the hands of the French, who rated the killed and wounded very high. The total loss may be estimated at eight or nine thousand men.* Fifteen thousand escaped to Zaragoza; a detachment of two thousand, under the Conde de Cartoajal and General Lilli, left in the mountains of Nalda, were cut off by the result of the action, and two divisions, whose numbers were increased by fugitives from the others, were rallied at Calatayud on the 25th, but they were half starved and mutinous. At Calatayud, Castaños received two despatches from the Central Junta, virtually restoring him to the command, for the first empowered him to unite the Aragonese army with his own, and the second desired him to co-operate with St. Juan in the Somosierra to protect the capital.† The battle of Tudela disposed of the first despatch; the second induced Castaños to march by Siguenza upon Madrid.

* Eleventh Bulletin. Victoires et Conquêtes.

† Castanos' Account of the Battle of Tudela, and Vindication.

In the mean time, Napoleon, recalling the greatest part of his cavalry from the open country of Castile, and having left seven or eight thousand men in Burgos, had fixed his head-quarters at Aranda de Duero on the 23d; but from the difficulty of transmitting despatches through a country in a state of insurrection, intelligence of the victory at Tudela only reached him on the 26th, and he was exceedingly discontented that Castaños should have escaped the hands of Ney.* That Marshal had been instructed to reach Soria by the 21st, to remain there until Lasnes should be in front of the Spaniards, and then to pass by Agreda, and intercept the retreat of the latter; and on the evening of the 21st, General Jomini and Colonel D'Esmenard, staff-officers of the sixth corps, arrived with an escort of eighty cavalry at Soria. This town is situated upon a rocky height, with a suburb below, and the Conde de Cartoajal, who was retiring from the mountains of Nalda, happening to be in the upper part, the magistrates endeavored to entrap the French officers. For this purpose, they were met at dusk by the municipality, and invited to enter the town with great appearance of cordiality; but their suspicions were excited, the plan failed, Cartoajal marched during the night, and the next day the sixth corps occupied the place.

General Jomini, whose profound knowledge of the theory of war enabled him to judge accurately of the events that were likely to occur, urged Ney to continue his march upon Calatayud, without any rest; the Marshal, however, either offended with the heat of Jomini's manner, or from some other cause, resolved to follow the letter of his instructions, and remained at Soria the 23d and 24th, merely sending out some light cavalry on the side of Medina Celi and Agreda. On the 25th he marched to the latter town, and the 26th crossed the field of battle, passing through Cascante; the 27th, he arrived, with one division, at Mallan, a town between Tudela and Zaragoza, his advanced guard being at Arlazon on the Xalon.* To the erroneous direction and dilatory nature of these movements, Castaños owed the safety of the troops, which were re-assembled at Calatayud.

Ney must have been acquainted with the result of the battle on the 25th, and it is remarkable that he should have continued on the road towards Agreda, when a single march by Medina Celi would have brought him upon the line of retreat from Calatayud to Sigüenza. By some writers these errors have been attributed to Ney's jealousy of Marshal Lasnes; by others it has been asserted that the plunder of Soria detained him. The falsehood of the

* S. Journal of Operations, MS. Eleventh Bulletin.

† S. Journal of Operations, MS.