

knowledge of war, were also directed against that devoted land, and a long train of gallant soldiers followed, until two hundred thousand men, accustomed to battle, had penetrated the gloomy fastnesses of the western Pyrenees, while forty thousand of inferior reputation, drawn from the interior of France, from Naples, from Tuscany, and from Piedmont, assembled on the eastern ridges of those gigantic hills. The march of this multitude was incessant, and as the troops passed the capital, Napoleon, neglectful of nothing which could excite their courage and swell their military pride, addressed to them one of his nervous orations. In the tranquillity of peace it may seem inflated, but on the eve of battle it is thus a general should speak.

“Soldiers! after triumphing on the banks of the Vistula and the Danube, with rapid steps you have passed through Germany. This day, without a moment of repose, I command you to traverse France. Soldiers! I have need of you! The hideous presence of the leopard contaminates the peninsula of Spain and Portugal. In terror he must fly before you. Let us bear our triumphal eagles to the Pillars of Hercules! there also we have injuries to avenge. Soldiers! you have surpassed the renown of modern armies, but have you yet equalled the glory of those Romans who, in one and the same campaign, were victorious upon the Rhine and the Euphrates, in Illyria and upon the Tagus? A long peace, a lasting prosperity, shall be the reward of your labors; but a real Frenchman could not, ought not to rest until the seas are free and open to all. Soldiers! all that you have done, all that you will do, for the happiness of the French people, and for my glory, shall be eternal in my heart!”

Thus saying, he sent his army towards the frontiers of Spain, and himself hastened to meet the Emperor Alexander at Erfurth. Their conference, conducted upon the footing of intimate friendship, produced a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive, and the fate of Spain was by the one, with calm indifference, abandoned to the injustice of the other; but the accession of strength which this treaty, and the manifest personal partiality of Alexander, gave to the French Emperor, inspired him, perhaps, with the idea that the English Cabinet would, if a fair occasion offered, gladly enter into negotiations for a general peace.

The two Emperors wrote a joint letter to the King of England. “The circumstances of Europe had,” they said, “brought them together; their first thought was to yield to the wish and the wants of every people, and to seek in a speedy pacification the most efficacious remedy for the miseries which oppressed all nations. The long and bloody war which had torn the continent was at an end,

without the possibility of being renewed. If many changes had taken place in Europe, if many states had been overthrown, the cause was to be found in the state of agitation and misery in which the stagnation of maritime commerce had placed the greatest nations; still greater changes might yet take place, and all of them contrary to the policy of the English nation. Peace, then, was at once the interest of the people of the continent, as it was the interest of the people of Great Britain. We entreat your Majesty," they concluded, "we unite to entreat your Majesty to listen to the voice of humanity, to silence that of the passions; to seek with the intention of arriving at that object; to conciliate all interests, and thus, preserving all powers which exist, insure the happiness of Europe and of this generation, at the head of which Providence has placed us."

To this joint letter Mr. Canning replied by two letters addressed to the French and Russian ministers, accompanied by an official note. In that addressed to the Russian, he observed that, "however desirous the King might be to reply personally to the Emperor, he was prevented by the unusual mode of communication adopted, which had deprived it of a private and personal character. It was impossible to pay that mark of respect to the Emperor without at the same time acknowledging titles which he had never acknowledged. The proposition for peace would be communicated to Sweden, and to the existing government of Spain. It was necessary that his Majesty should receive an immediate assurance that France acknowledged the government of Spain as a party to the negotiation. That such was the intention of the Emperor could not be doubted, when the lively interest manifested by his Imperial Majesty for the welfare and dignity of the Spanish monarchy was recollected. No other assurance was wanted that the Emperor could not have been induced to sanction by his concurrence or approbation usurpations, the principles of which were not less unjust than their example was dangerous to all legitimate sovereigns."

The letter addressed to Mons. de Champagny, Duke of Cadore, merely demanded that Sweden and Spain should be admitted as parties to the negotiation. The official note commenced by stating the King's desire for peace, on terms consistent with his honor, his fidelity to his engagements, and the permanent repose of Europe. "The miserable condition of the continent, the convulsions it had experienced, and those with which it was threatened, were not imputable to his Majesty. If the cause of so much misery was to be found in the stagnation of commercial intercourse, although his Majesty could not be expected to hear with unqualified regret that

the system devised for the destruction of the commerce of his subjects had recoiled upon its authors or its instruments, yet, as it was neither the disposition of his Majesty, nor in the character of the people over whom he reigned, to rejoice in the privations and unhappiness even of the nations which were combined against him, he anxiously desired the termination of the sufferings of the continent." The note then, after stating that the progress of the war had imposed new obligations upon Great Britain, claimed for Sicily, for Portugal, for Sweden, and for Spain, a participation in the negotiations. "Treaties," it stated, "existed with the three first, which bound them and England in peace and war. With Spain, indeed, no formal instrument had yet been executed, but the ties of honor were to the King of England as strong as the most solemn treaties, wherefore it was assumed that the Central Junta, or government of Spain, was understood to be a party to any negotiation in which his Majesty was invited to engage."

The reply of Russia was peremptory. The claims of the sovereigns, allies of Great Britain, she would readily admit; but the insurgents of Spain Russia would not acknowledge as an independent power. The Russians—and England, it was said, could recollect one particular instance—had always been true to this principle; moreover, the Emperor had acknowledged Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain, and was united to the French Emperor for peace and for war; he was resolved not to separate his interests from those of Napoleon. After some further arguments touching the question, the reply concluded by offering to treat upon the basis of the "*uti possidetis*," and the respective power of the belligerent parties, or upon *any basis*, for the conclusion of an honorable, just, and equal peace.

The insulting tone of Mr. Canning's communication produced an insulting reply from Mons. de Champagny, which also finished by proposing the "*uti possidetis*" as a basis for a treaty, and expressing a hope that, without losing sight of the inevitable results of the force of states, it would be remembered that between great powers there could be no solid peace but that which was equal and honorable for both parties. Upon the receipt of these replies, the English minister broke off the negotiations, and all chance of peace vanished; but previous to the conclusion of this remarkable correspondence, Napoleon had returned to Paris.

What his real views in proposing to treat were, it is difficult to determine. He could not have expected that Great Britain would relinquish the cause of Spain; he must therefore have been prepared to make some arrangement upon that head, unless the whole proceeding was an artifice to sow distrust among his enemies. The

English ministers asserted that it was so; but what enemies were they among whom he could create this uneasy feeling? Sweden, Sicily, Portugal? The notion as applied to them was absurd; it is more probable that he was sincere. He said so at St. Helena; and the peculiar circumstances of the period at which the conferences of Erfurth took place warrant a belief in that assertion.* The menacing aspect of Austria, the recent loss of Portugal, the hitherto successful insurrection of Spain, the secret societies of Germany, the desire of consolidating the Polish dominions, and placing while he might a barrier to the power of Russia on that side, the breach which the events of the Peninsula made in his continental system of excluding British goods, and the commercial distresses of Europe, were cogent reasons for a peace; they might well cause him to be suspicious of the future, and render him anxious for an excuse to abandon an unjust contest, in which he could not fail to suffer much, and to risk more than he could gain. In securing the alliance of Russia he only disentangled a part of the Gordian knot of politics; to cut the remainder with his sword was, at this conjuncture, a task which even he might have been doubtful of. The fact that his armies were marching upon Spain proves nothing to the contrary of this supposition. Time was to him of the utmost consequence. His negotiations proving abortive, it would have been too late to have reinforced his troops on the Ebro, and the event evinced the prudence of his measures in that respect.

The refusal to admit the Spaniards as a party to the conferences for peace is scarcely more conclusive; to have done that would have been to resign the weapon in his hands before he entered the lists. That England could not abandon the Spaniards is unquestionable, but that was not the necessary consequence of continuing the negotiations. There was a bar put to the admission of a Spanish diplomatist, but no bar was thereby put to the discussion of Spanish interests; the correspondence of the English minister would not of necessity have compromised Spanish independence, it need not have relaxed in the slightest degree the measures of hostility, nor retarded the succors preparing for the patriots. And when we consider the great power of Napoleon's arms, the subtlety and force of his genius, the good fortune which had hitherto attended his progress in war, the vast additional strength which the alliance of Russia conferred at the moment; and when, to oppose all this, we contrast the scanty means of Spain, and the confusion into which she was plunged, it does appear as if her welfare would have been better consulted by an appeal to negotiation rather than to

* O'Meara. Voice from St. Helena, vol. ii.

battle. It is true that Austria was arming, yet Austria had been so often conquered, was so sure to abandon the cause of the patriots, and every other cause, when pressed, so certain to sacrifice every consideration of honor or faith to the suggestions of self-interest, that the independence of Spain, through the medium of war, could only be regarded as the object of uncertain hope; a prize to be gained, if gained at all, by wading through torrents of blood, and sustaining every misery that famine and the fury of devastating armies could inflict. To avoid, if possible, such dreadful evils by negotiation was worth trial, and the force of justice, when urged by the minister of a great nation, would have been difficult to withstand; no power, no ambition, can resist it and be safe.

But such an enlarged mode of proceeding was not in accord with the shifts and subterfuges that characterized the policy of the day, when it was thought wise to degrade the dignity of such a correspondence by a ridiculous denial of Napoleon's titles; and praiseworthy to render a state paper, in which such serious interests were discussed, offensive and mean, by miserable sarcasm, evincing the pride of an author rather than the gravity of a statesman. There is sound ground also for believing that hope, derived from a silly intrigue carried on through the Princess of Tour and Taxis, with Talleyrand and some others, who were even then ready to betray Napoleon, was the real cause of the negotiation having been broken off by Mr. Canning. Mr. Whitbread declared in the House of Commons, that he saw no reason for refusing to treat with France at that period, and although public clamor afterwards induced him to explain away this expression, he needed not to be ashamed of it; for if the opinion of Cicero, that an unfair peace is preferable to the justest war, was ever worthy of attention, it was so at this period, when the success of Spain was doubtful, her misery certain, her salvation only to be obtained through the baptism of blood!

Upon the 18th of October Napoleon returned to Paris, secure of the present friendship and alliance of Russia, but uncertain of the moment when the stimulus of English subsidies would quicken the hostility of Austria into life; yet, if his peril was great, his preparations to meet it were likewise enormous. He called out two conscriptions. The first, taken from the classes of 1806, 7, 8, and 9, afforded eighty thousand men arrived at maturity; these were destined to replace the veterans directed against Spain. The second, taken from the class of 1810, also produced eighty thousand, which were disposed of as reserves in the dépôts of France.* The French troops left in Germany were then concentrated on the side of Austria; Denmark was evacuated, and one hundred thousand sol-

* Imperial Decree, 11th Sept., 1808.

diers were withdrawn from the Prussian states. The army of Italy was powerfully reinforced and placed under the command of Prince Eugene, who was assisted by Marshal Massena. Murat also, who had succeeded Joseph in the kingdom of Naples, was directed to assemble a Neapolitan army on the shores of Calabria, and to threaten Sicily. In short, no measures that prudence could suggest were neglected by this wonderful man, to whom the time required by Austria for the mere preparation of a campaign seemed sufficient for the subjection of the whole Peninsula.

The session of the legislative body was opened on the 24th of October; the Emperor, in his speech from the throne, after giving a concise sketch of the political situation of Europe, touched upon Spain. "In a few days I go," said he, "to put myself at the head of my armies, and, with the aid of God, to crown the King of Spain in Madrid! to plant my eagles on the towers of Lisbon!" Then departing from Paris he repaired to Bayonne, but the labors of his ministers continued; their speeches and reports, more elaborately explicit than usual, exposed the vast resources of France, and were well calculated to impress upon the minds of men the danger of provoking the enmity of such a powerful nation. From those documents it appeared that the expenses of the year, including the interest of the national debt, were under thirty millions sterling, and completely covered by the existing taxes, drawn from a metallic currency;* that no fresh burthens would be laid upon the nation; that numerous public works were in progress; that internal trade, and the commerce carried on by land were flourishing, and nearly one million of men were in arms!

The readiness with which Mr. Canning broke off the negotiation of Erfurth, and defied this stupendous power, would lead to the supposition that on the side of Spain at least he was prepared to encounter it with some chance of success; yet no trace of a matured plan is to be found in the instructions to the generals commanding in Portugal previous to the 25th of September, nor was the project then adopted one which discovered any adequate knowledge of the force of the enemy, or of the state of affairs: indeed the conduct of the Cabinet relative to the Peninsula was scarcely superior to that of the Central Junta itself. Several vague projects, or rather speculations, were communicated to the generals in Portugal, but in none of them was the strength of the enemy alluded to, in none was there a settled plan of operations visible! it was evident that the prodigious activity of the Emperor was not taken into consideration, and that a strange delusion relative to his power, or to his intentions, existed among the English ministers.

* Exposé de l'Empire, 1809.

It was the 6th of October before a despatch, containing the first determinate plan of campaign, arrived at Lisbon.* Thirty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry were to be employed in the north of Spain, of which ten thousand were to be embarked at the English ports, and the remainder to be composed of regiments drafted from the army then in Portugal. Sir John Moore was appointed to command the whole, and he was authorized, at his own discretion, to effect a junction by a voyage round the coast, or by a march through the interior. He chose the latter, 1, because a voyage at that season of the year would have been tedious and precarious; 2, because the intention of Sir Hew Dalrymple had been to enter Spain by Almeida, and the few arrangements which that General had power to make were made with a view to such a march; 3; because he was informed that the province of Galicia would be scarcely able to equip the force coming from England, under the command of Sir David Baird. But Moore was directed to take the field immediately, to fix upon some place, either in Galicia or on the borders of Leon, for concentrating the whole army, and the specific plan of operations was to be concerted afterwards with the Spanish generals! This was a light and idle proceeding, promising no good result, for the Ebro was to be the theatre of war, and the head of the great French host coming from Germany was already in the passes of the Pyrenees; the local difficulties impeding the English General's progress were also abundant, and of a nature to make that which was ill begun, end worse, and that which was well arranged, fail. To be first in the field is a great and decided advantage, yet here the plan of operations was not even arranged when the enemy's first blows were descending.

Sir John Moore had much to execute, and with little help.† He was to organize an army of raw soldiers, and in a poor and unsettled country, just relieved from the pressure of a harsh and griping enemy; he was to procure the transport necessary for his stores, ammunition, and even for the conveyance of the officers' baggage. Assisted by an experienced staff, such obstacles do not very much impede a good general; but here, few of the subordinate officers had served a campaign, and every branch of the administration, civil and military, was composed of men, zealous and willing indeed, yet new to a service where no energy can prevent the effects of inexperience from being severely felt. The roads through Portugal were very bad, and the rainy season, so baleful to an army, was upon the point of setting in; time pressed sorely when it was essential to be quick, and gold, which turneth the

* Lord Castlereagh's Despatch. Parliamentary Papers.

† Sir John Moore's Papers.

wheels of war, was wanting.* And this, at all times a great evil, was the more grievously felt at the moment, inasmuch as the Portuguese, accustomed to fraud on the part of their own government and to forced contributions by the French, could not readily be persuaded that an army of foreigners, paying with promises alone, might be trusted. Nor was this natural suspicion allayed by observing that, while the General and his troops were thus kept without money, all the subordinate agents dispersed throughout the country were amply supplied. Sir David Baird, who, with his portion of troops, was to land at Coruña, and to equip in a country already exhausted by Blake's army, was likewise encompassed with difficulties; for from Coruña to the nearest point where he could effect a junction with the forces marching from Lisbon, was two hundred miles; and he also was without money.†

No general-in-chief was appointed to command the Spanish armies, nor was Sir John Moore referred, by the English ministers, to any person with whom he could communicate at all—much less concert a plan of operations for the allied forces. He was unacquainted with the views of the Spanish government, and he was alike uninformed of the numbers, composition, and situation of the armies with whom he was to act and those with whom he was to contend.‡ Twenty-five thousand pounds in his military chest, and his own genius, constituted his resources for a campaign, which was to lead him far from the coast and all its means of supply. He was first to unite the scattered portions of his forces by a winter march of three hundred miles; another three hundred were to be passed before he reached the Ebro; there he was to concert a plan of operations with generals acting each independent of the other, their corps reaching from the northern sea-coast to Zaragoza, themselves jealous and quarrelsome, their men insubordinate, differing in customs, discipline, language, and religion from the English, and despising all foreigners; and all this was to be accomplished in time to defeat an enemy who was already in the field, accustomed to great movements, and conducted by the most rapid and decided of men. It must be acknowledged that the ministers' views were equally vast and inconsiderate, and their miscalculations are the more remarkable, as there was not wanting a man, in the highest military situation, to condemn their plan at the time, and to propose a better.

The Duke of York, in a formal minute, drawn up for the information of the government, observed that the Spanish armies, being unconnected and occupying a great extent of ground, were weak; that the French being concentrated, and certain of reinforcement, were strong; that there could be no question of the relative value

* Appendix, No. 13, § 1.

† Ibid. §§ 1, 3.

‡ Ibid. § 4.

of Spanish and French soldiers, and that, consequently, the allies might be beaten before the British could arrive at the scene of action; the latter would then unaided have to meet the French army, and it was essential to provide a sufficient number of troops to meet such an emergency. That number he judged should not be less than sixty thousand men, and by a detailed statement he proved that such a number could have been furnished without detriment to any other service, but his advice was unheeded.*

At this period, also, the effects of that incredible folly and weakness, which marked all the proceedings of the Central Junta, were felt throughout Spain. In any other country, the conduct of the government would have been attributed to insanity. So apathetic with respect to the enemy as to be contemptible, so active in pursuit of self-interest as to become hateful; continually devising how to render itself at once despotic and popular, how to excite enthusiasm and check freedom of expression; how to enjoy the luxury of power without its labor, how to acquire great reputation without trouble, how to be indolent and victorious at the same moment.† Fear prevented the members from removing to Madrid after every preparation had been made for a public entrance into that capital. They passed decrees repressing the liberty of the press on the ground of the deceptions practised upon the public, yet themselves never hesitated to deceive the British agents, the generals, the government, and their own countrymen, by the most flagitious falsehoods upon every subject, whether of greater or less importance. They hedged their own dignity round with ridiculous and misplaced forms, opposed to the vital principle of an insurrectional government, devoted their attention to abstract speculations, recalled the exiled Jesuits, and inundated the country with long and labored state papers, while the pressing business of the moment was left uncared for. Every application on the part of Lord William Bentinck and Mr. Stuart, even for an order to expedite a common courier, was met by difficulties and delays, and it was necessary to have recourse to the most painful solicitations to obtain the slightest attention; nor did that mode always succeed.‡

Sir John Moore strenuously grappled with the difficulties besetting him, and well knowing the value of time in military transactions, urged forward the preparations with all possible activity. He was very desirous that troops who had a journey of six hundred miles to make previous to meeting the enemy, should not, at the commencement, be overwhelmed by the torrents of rain, which, in Portugal, descend at this period with such violence as to destroy the shoes, ammunition, and accoutrements of a soldier, and render

* Appendix, No. 24.

† Appendix, No. 13, § 6.

‡ Mr. Stuart's Letters, MS.

him almost unfit for service. The Spanish generals recommended that the line of march should be conducted by Almeida, Ciudad Rodrigo, Salamanca, Valladolid, and Burgos; and that the magazines for the campaign should be formed at one of the latter towns. This coincided with the previous preparations, and the army was therefore organized in three columns, two of which were directed upon Almeida, by the routes of Coimbra and Guarda, while the third, comprising the artillery, the cavalry, and the regiments quartered in the Alemtejo, was destined to move by Alcantara, upon Ciudad Rodrigo. Almeida itself was chosen for a place of arms, and all the reserve stores and provisions were forwarded there, as time and circumstances would permit; but the want of money, the unsettled state of the country, and the inexperience of the commissariat, rendered it difficult to procure the means of transport even for the light baggage of the regiments, although the quantity of the latter was reduced so much as to create discontent. One Sataro, the same person who has been already mentioned as an agent of Junot's in the negotiation with Sir Charles Cotton, engaged to supply the army, but dishonestly failing in his contract, so embarrassed the operations, that the General resigned all hope of being able to move with more than the light baggage, the ammunition necessary for immediate use, and a scanty supply of medicines; the formation of the magazines at Almeida was also retarded, and the future subsistence of the troops was thus thrown upon a raw commissariat, unprovided with money.* The General, however, relying upon its increasing experience, and upon the activity of Lord William Bentinck and Mr. Stuart, did not delay his march, and he sent agents to Madrid and other places to make contracts, and to raise money; for such was the policy of the ministers, that they supplied the Spaniards with gold, and left the English army to get it back in loans.

Many of the regiments were actually in movement when an unexpected difficulty forced the commander-in-chief to make a fresh disposition of the troops. The state of the Portuguese roads north of the Tagus was unknown, but the native officers and the people had alike declared that they were impracticable for artillery; the opinion of Colonel Lopez, a military commissary sent by the Spanish government to facilitate the march of the British, coincided with this information; and the report of Captain Delancey, one of the most intelligent and enterprising of those officers of the Quartermaster-General's department, who were employed to examine the lines of route, corroborated the general opinion. Junot had indeed, with infinite pains, carried his guns along these roads, but his carriages had been broken and the batteries rendered unser-

* Appendix, No. 13, § 6.

viceable by this operation; wherefore Moore reluctantly determined to send his artillery and cavalry by the south bank of the Tagus to Talavera de la Reyna, from whence they might gain Naval Carreiro, the Escorial, the pass of the Guadarama mountains, Espinar, Arevalo, and Salamanca. He would have marched the whole army by the same route, if this disagreeable intelligence respecting the northern roads had been obtained earlier; but when the arrangements were all made for the supplies to go to Almeida, and when most of the regiments were actually in movement towards that town, it was too late to alter their destination.

This separation of the artillery, although it violated a great military principle, which prescribes that the point of concentration for an army should be beyond the reach of the enemy, was here a matter of apparent necessity; and no danger was apprehended from the offensive operations of an adversary represented to be incapable of maintaining his own line of defence. Valladolid and Burgos were considered by the Spaniards as safe places for the English magazines; Moore shared so much of the universal confidence in the Spanish enthusiasm and courage, as to suppose that Salamanca would not be an insecure point of concentration for his columns, while covered by such numerous patriotic armies as were said to be on the Ebro. One brigade of six-pounders he retained with the head-quarters, but the remainder of his artillery, consisting of twenty-four pieces, the cavalry, amounting to a thousand troopers, the great parc of the army, containing many hundred carriages and escorted by three thousand infantry, he sent by the road of Talavera, under the command of Sir John Hope, an officer qualified by his talents, firmness, and zeal, to conduct the most important enterprises.

The rest of the army marched in three columns, the first by Alcantara and Coria, the second by Abrantes, the third by Coimbra, all having Ciudad Rodrigo as the point of direction; and with such energy did the General overcome all obstacles, that the whole of the troops were in movement, and head-quarters quitted Lisbon the 26th of October, just twenty days after the receipt of the despatch which appointed him to the chief command; a surprising diligence, but rendered necessary by the pressure of circumstances. "The army," to use his own words, "ran the risk of finding itself in front of the enemy with no more ammunition than the men carried in their pouches: but had I waited," he adds, "until everything was forwarded, the troops would not have been in Spain until the spring, and I trust that the enemy will not find out our wants as soon as they will feel the effects of what we have."

The Spaniards, however, who expected "everybody to fly, ex-

cept themselves," thought him slow, and were impatient, and from every quarter indeed letters arrived, pressing him to advance. Lord William Bentinck and Mr. Stuart, witnesses of the sluggish incapacity of the Spanish government, judged that such a support was absolutely necessary to sustain the reeling strength of Spain. The Central Junta was awakened for a moment. Hitherto, as a mask for its ignorance, it had treated the French power with contempt, and the Spanish generals and the people echoed the sentiments of the government; but now, a letter addressed by the Governor of Bayonne to General Jourdan, stating that sixty thousand infantry and seven thousand cavalry would reinforce the French armies between the 16th of October and the 16th of November, was intercepted, and made the Junta feel that a crisis for which it was unprepared was approaching; then with the folly usually attendant on improvidence, these men, who had been so slow themselves, required that others should be supernaturally quick as danger pressed.

In the mean time Sir David Baird's forces arrived at Coruña. Lord William Bentinck had given intimation of their approach, and the Central Junta had repeatedly assured him that every necessary order was given, and that every facility would be afforded, for their disembarkation and supply. This was untrue; no measures of any kind had been taken, no instructions issued, no preparations made; the Junta of Coruña disliked the personal trouble of a disembarkation in that port, and in the hope that Baird would be driven to another, refused him permission to land, until a communication was had with Aranjuez;* yet fifteen days elapsed before an answer could be obtained from a government who were daily pestering Sir John Moore with complaints of the tardiness of his march.

Sir David Baird came without money; Sir John could only give him £8000, a sum which might have been mistaken for a private loan, if the fact of its being public property were not expressly mentioned;† yet at this time Mr. Frere, the plenipotentiary, arrived at Coruña, with two millions of dollars, intended for the use of the Spaniards; and while such large sums, contrary to the earnest recommendations of Mr. Stuart and Major Coxe, were lavished in that quarter, the penury of the English General obliged him to borrow the funds in Mr. Frere's hands. Thus assisted, the troops were put in motion, but wanting all the equipments essential to an army, they were forced to march by half battalions, conveying their scanty stores on country cars, hired

* Captain Kennedy's Letter. Parl. Pap.

† Sir J. Moore to Lord Castlereagh, 27th Oct. Appendix, No. 13, §§ 1, 5 & 6.

from day to day; nor was that meagre assistance obtained but at great expense, and by compliance with a vulgar mercenary spirit predominant among the authorities of Galicia. The Junta frequently promised to procure the carriages, but did not; the commissaries, pushed to the wall by the delay, offered an exorbitant remuneration; the cars were then forthcoming, and the procrastination of the government proved to be a concerted plan to defraud the military chest. In fine, the local rulers were unfriendly, crafty, fraudulent, the peasantry suspicious, fearful, rude, disinclined toward strangers, and indifferent to public affairs; a few shots only were required to render theirs a hostile instead of a friendly greeting.

With Mr. Frere came a fleet, conveying a Spanish force, under the Marquis of Romana. When the insurrection first broke forth, that nobleman commanded fourteen or fifteen thousand troops, who were serving with the French armies, and how to recover this disciplined body of men from the enemy was a subject of early anxiety with the Junta of Seville.* Castaños, in his first intercourse with Sir Hew Dalrymple, signified his wish that the British government should adopt some mode of apprising Romana that Spain was in arms, and should endeavor to extricate him and his army from the toils of the enemy; and finally a gentleman named M'Kenzie was employed by the English ministers to conduct the enterprise. The Spanish troops were quartered in Holstein, Sleswig, Jutland, and the islands of Funen, Zealand, and Langeland. Mr. M'Kenzie, through the medium of one Robertson, a Catholic priest, opened a communication with Romana, and as neither the General nor the soldiers he commanded hesitated, a judicious plan was concerted. Sir Richard Keats, with a squadron detached from the Baltic fleet, suddenly appeared off Nyborg, in the island of Funen, and a majority of the Spanish regiments quartered in Sleswig immediately seized all the craft in the different harbors of that coast, and pushed across the channel to Funen; Romana, with the assistance of Keats, had already seized the port and castle of Nyborg without opposition, save from a small Danish ship of war that was moored across the mouth of the harbor, and from thence the Spaniards passed to Langeland, where they embarked, above nine thousand strong, on board the English fleet commanded by Sir James Saumarez. The rest of the troops either remained in Sleswig or were disarmed by the Danish force in Zealand. This enterprise was conducted with prudent activity, and the unhesitating patriotism of the Spanish soldiers was very honorable, but the danger was slight to all but Mr. Robertson. Romana, after touching at Eng-

* Sir Hew Dalrymple's Correspondence.

land, repaired to Coruña; his troops did not, however, land at that port, but at Santander, where they were equipped from the English stores, and proceeded by divisions to join Blake's army in Biscay.

Among the various subjects calling for Sir John Moore's attention, there was none of greater interest than the appointment of a generalissimo to the Spanish armies. Impressed with the imminent danger of procrastination or uncertainty in such a matter, he desired Lord William Bentinck and Mr. Stuart to urge the central government with all their force upon that head; to Lord Castlereagh he represented the injury that must accrue to the cause, if the measure was delayed; and he proposed to go himself to Madrid, with a view of adding weight to these representations. Subsequent events frustrated this intention, and there seems no reason to imagine that his personal remonstrances would have influenced a government described by Mr. Stuart, after a thorough experience of its qualities, as "never having made a single exertion for the public good, neither rewarding merit nor punishing guilt," and being for all useful purposes "absolutely null." The Junta's dislike to a single military chief was not an error of the head, and reason is of little avail against the suggestions of self-interest.

The march of the British troops was as rapid as the previous preparations had been; but General Anstruther had, unadvisedly, halted the leading column in Almeida, and when Moore reached that town on the 8th of November, he found the whole of the infantry assembled there, instead of being on the road to Salamanca. The condition of the men was, however, superb, and their discipline exemplary; on that side all was well, yet from the obstacles encountered by Sir David Baird, and the change of direction in the artillery, it was evident that no considerable force could be brought into action before the end of the month. Meanwhile, the Spaniards were hastening events. Despatches from Lord William Bentinck announced that the enemy remained stationary on the Ebro, although reinforced by ten thousand men; that Castaños was about to cross that river at Tudela; and that the army of Aragon was moving by Sor upon Roncevalles, with a view to gain the rear of the French, while Castaños assailed their left flank. Moore, judging that such movements would bring on a battle, the success of which must be very doubtful, became uneasy for his own artillery. His concern was increased by observing that the guns might have kept with the other columns; "and if anything adverse happens, I have not," he wrote to General Hope, "necessity to plead; the road we are now travelling, that by Villa Velha and Guarda, is practicable for artillery; the brigade under

Wilmot has already reached Guarda, and, as far as I have already seen, the road presents few obstacles, and those easily surmounted. This knowledge was, however, only acquired by our own officers: when the brigade was at Castello Branco, it was not certain if it could proceed." He now desired Hope no longer to trust any reports, but seek a shorter line, by Placentia, across the mountains to Salamanca.

Up to this period, all reports from the agents, all information from the government at home, all communications public and private, coincided upon one subject. *The Spaniards were an enthusiastic, a heroic people, a nation of unparalleled energy! their armies were brave, they were numerous, they were confident! one hundred and eighty thousand men were actually in line of battle, extending from the sea-coast of Biscay to Zaragoza; the French, reduced to a fourth of this number, cooped up in a corner, were shrinking from an encounter; they were deserted by the Emperor, they were trembling, they were spiritless!* Nevertheless, the General was somewhat distrustful; he perceived the elements of disaster in the divided commands, and the lengthened lines of the Spaniards, and early in October he had predicted the mischief that such a system would produce. "As long as the French remain upon the defensive," he observed, "it will not be so much felt, but the moment an attack is made, some great calamity must ensue." However, he was not without faith in the multitude and energy of the patriots, when he considered the greatness of their cause.

Castaños was at this time pointed out by the Central Junta as the person with whom to concert a plan of campaign, and Sir John Moore, concluding that it was a preliminary step towards making that officer generalissimo, wrote to him in a conciliatory style, well calculated to insure a cordial co-operation. It was an encouraging event; the English General believed it to be the commencement of a better system, and looked forward with more hope to the opening of the war. But this favorable state soon changed; far from being created chief of all, Castaños was superseded in the command he already held, the whole folly of the Spanish character broke forth, and confusion and distress followed.* At that moment also clouds arose in a quarter which had hitherto been all sunshine; the military agents, as the crisis approached, lowered their sanguine tone, and no longer dwelt upon the enthusiasm of the armies; they admitted that the confidence of the troops was sinking, and that even in numbers they were inferior to the French. In truth, it was full time to change their note, for the real state of affairs could no longer be concealed; a great catastrophe was at hand; but what of wildness in their projects, or skill in the

* Appendix, No. 13, § 7.

enemy's, what of ignorance, vanity, and presumption in the generals, what of fear among the soldiers, and what of fortune in the events, combined to hasten the ruin of the Spaniards, and how that ruin was effected, I, quitting the English army for a time, will now relate.

CHAPTER IV.

Movements of the Spanish generals on the Ebro; their absurd confidence, their want of system and concert—General opinion that the French are weak—Real strength of the King—Marshal Ney and General Jourdan join the army—Military errors of the King exposed by Napoleon, who instructs him how to make war—Joseph proposes six plans of operation—Operations thereupon.

IN the preceding chapters I have exposed the weakness, the folly, the improvidence of Spain, and shown how the bad passions and sordid views of her leaders were encouraged by the unwise prodigality of England. I have dissected the full boast and meagre preparations of the governments in both countries, laying bare the bones and sinews of the insurrection, and by comparing their loose and feeble structure with the strongly knitted frame and large proportions of the enemy, prepared the reader for the inevitable issue of a conflict between such ill-matched champions. In the present book, I shall recount the sudden and terrible manner in which the Spanish armies were overthrown, during the tempestuous progress of the French Emperor. Yet, previous to relating these disasters, I must revert to the period immediately following the retreat of King Joseph, and trace those early operations of the French and Spanish forces, which, like a jesting prologue to a deep tragedy, unworthily ushered in the great catastrophe.

CAMPAIGN OF THE FRENCH AND SPANISH ARMIES BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE EMPEROR.

After General Cuesta was removed from the command, and the Junta of Seville had been forced by Major Coxe to disgorge so much of the English subsidy as sufficed for the immediate relief of the troops in Madrid, all the Spanish armies closed upon the Ebro.

General Blake, reinforced by eight thousand Asturians, established his base of operations at Reynosa, opened a communication

with the English vessels off the port of Santander, and directed his views towards Biscay.*

The Castilian army, conducted by General Pignatelli, resumed its march upon Burgo del Osma and Logroño.

The two divisions of the Andalusian troops under La Peña, and the Murcian division of General Llamas, advanced to Tarazona and Tudela.†

Palafox, with the Aragonese and Valencian divisions of St. Marc, operated from the side of Zaragoza.‡

The Conde de Belvedere, a weak youth, not twenty years of age, marched with fifteen thousand Estremadurans upon Logroño, as forming part of Castaños' army, but soon received another destination.§

Between all these armies there was neither concert nor connection; their movements were regulated by some partial view of affairs, or by silly caprices of the generals, who were ignorant of each other's plans, and little solicitous to combine operations. The weak characters of many of the chiefs, the inexperience of all, and this total want of system, opened a field for intriguing men, and invited unqualified persons to interfere in the direction of affairs: thus we find Colonel Doyle making a journey to Zaragoza, and priding himself upon having prevailed with Palafox to detach seven thousand men to Sanguessa. Captain Whittingham, without any knowledge of Doyle's interference, earnestly dissuading the Spaniards from such an enterprise. The first affirming that the movement would "turn the enemy's left flank, threaten his rear, and have the appearance of cutting off his retreat." The second arguing that, Sanguessa being seventy miles from Zaragoza, and only a few leagues from Pampeluna, the detachment would itself be cut off. Doyle judged that, drawing the French from Caparosa and Milagro, it would expose those points to Llamas and La Peña; that it would force the enemy to recall the reinforcements said to be marching against Blake, enable that General to form a junction with the Asturians, and then, with the forty thousand men thus collected, possess himself of the Pyrenees; and if the French army, estimated at thirty-five thousand men, did not fly, cut it off from France, or, by moving on Miranda, sweep clear Biscay and Castile. Palafox, pleased with this plan, sent Whittingham to inform Llamas and La Peña that O'Neil would, with six thousand men, march on the 15th of September to Sanguessa.

* General Broderick's Correspondence.

† Captain Whittingham.

‡ Colonel Doyle.

§ Castaños' Vindication.

Those generals disapproved of the movement as dangerous, premature, and at variance with the plan arranged in the council of war held at Madrid; but Palafox, regardless of their opinion, persisted.* O'Neil accordingly occupied Sanguessa, drew the attention of the enemy, and was immediately driven across the Alagon river.

In this manner all their projects, characterized by a profound ignorance of war, were lightly adopted and as lightly abandoned, or ended in disasters; yet victory was more confidently anticipated than if consummate skill had presided over the arrangements; and this vainglorious feeling, extending to the military agents, was by them propagated in England, where the foreboasting was nearly as loud, and as absurd, as in the Peninsula. The delusion was universal; even Lord William Bentinck and Mr. Stuart, deceived by the curious consistency of the Spanish falsehoods, doubted if the French army was able to maintain its position, and believed that the Spaniards had obtained a moral ascendancy in the field.†

Drunk with vanity and folly, and despising the "remnants" of the French army on the Ebro, which they estimated at from thirty-five to forty thousand men, the Spanish government proposed that the British army should be directed upon Catalonia; and when they found that this proposal was not acceded to, they withdrew ten thousand men from the Murcian division, and sent them to the neighborhood of Lerida. The innate pride and arrogance of the Spaniards were also nourished by the timid and false operations of King Joseph. Twenty days after the evacuation of Madrid, that monarch was at the head of above fifty thousand fighting men, exclusive of eight thousand employed to maintain the communications, and to furnish the garrisons of Pampeluna, Tolosa, Irun, St. Sebastian and Bilbao; exclusive also of the Catalonian army, which was seventeen thousand strong, and distinct from his command.‡ A strong reserve assembled at Bayonne, under General Drouet, supplied reinforcements, and was itself supported by drafts from the interior of France; six thousand men, forming movable columns, watched the openings of the Pyrenees, from St. John Pied de Port to Roussillon, and guarded the frontier against Spanish incursions; and a second reserve, composed of Neapolitans, Tuscans, and Piedmontese, was commenced at Belgarde, with a view of supporting Duhesme in Catalonia. How the King quelled the nascent insurrection at Bilbao, and how he dispersed the insurgents of the valleys in Aragon, I have already related; but after those operations, the French army made no movement. It was re-organized, and divided

* Whittingham's Correspondence.

† Lord W. Bentinck's Correspondence, MS. Doyle's Correspondence, MS.

‡ Appendix, No. 6.

into three grand divisions and a reserve. Bessières retained the command of the right wing, Monecy assumed that of the left, and Ney, arriving from Paris, took charge of the centre; the reserve, chiefly composed of detachments from the imperial guard, remained near the person of the King, and the old republican General Jourdan, a man whose day of glory belonged to another era, re-appeared upon the military stage, and filled the office of Major-General to the army.

With such a force, and so assisted, there was nothing in Spain, turn which way he would, capable of opposing King Joseph's march. But the incongruity of a camp with a court is always productive of indecision and of error; the truncheon does not fit every hand, and the French army soon felt the inconvenience of having at its head a monarch who was not a warrior. Joseph remained on the defensive, without understanding the force of the maxim, "*that offensive movements are the foundation of a good defence;*" he held Bilbao, and, contrary to the advice of the generals who conducted the operations on his left, abandoned Tudela, to choose for his field of battle Milagro, a small town situated near the confluence of the Arga and Aragon with the Ebro.* While Bessières held Burgos in force, his cavalry commanded the valley of the Duero, menaced Palencia and Valladolid, and, scouring the plains, kept Blake and Cuesta in check; instead of reinforcing a post so advantageous, the King relinquished Burgos as a point beyond his line of defence, and Bessières' troops were posted in successive divisions behind it, as far as Puente Lara on the Ebro. Ney's force then lined that river down to Logroño, the reserve was quartered behind Miranda, and Trevino, a small obscure place, was chosen as the point of battle, for the right and centre.†

In this disadvantageous situation the army, with some trifling changes, remained from the middle of August until late in September, during which time the artillery and carriages of transport were repaired, magazines were collected, the cavalry remounted, and the preparations made for an active campaign when the reinforcements should arrive from Germany. But the line of resistance thus offered to the Spaniards evinced a degree of timidity which the relative strength of the armies by no means justified; the left of the French evidently leaned towards the great communication with France, and seemed to refuse the support of Pampeluna; Tudela was abandoned, and Burgos resigned to the enterprise of the Spaniards; all this indicated fear, a disposition to retreat if the enemy advanced. The King complained with what extreme difficulty he

* Napoleon's notes. Appendix, Nos. 4 & 5.

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

VOL. I.—P

obtained intelligence, yet he neglected by forward movements to feel for his adversaries; wandering as it were in the dark, he gave a loose to his imagination, and conjuring up a phantom of Spanish strength, which had no real existence, anxiously waited for the development of their power, while they were exposing their weakness by a succession of the most egregious blunders.

Joseph's errors did not escape the animadversion of his brother, whose sagacity enabled him, although at a distance, to detect, through the glare of the insurrection, all its inefficiency; he dreaded the moral effect produced by its momentary success, and was preparing to crush the rising hopes of his enemies; but despising the Spaniards as soldiers, Joseph's retreat, and subsequent position, displeased him, and he desired his brother to check the exultation of the patriots, by acting upon a bold and well-considered plan, of which he sent him the outline. His notes, dictated upon the occasion, are replete with genius, and evince his absolute mastery of the art of war. "It was too late," he said, "to discuss the question whether Madrid should have been retained or abandoned; idle to consider, if a position, covering the siege of Zaragoza, might not have been formed; useless to examine, if the line of the Duero was not better than that of the Ebro for the French army.* The line of the Ebro was actually taken, and it must be kept; to advance from that river without a fixed object would create indecision, this would bring the troops back again, and produce an injurious moral effect. But why abandon Tudela, why relinquish Burgos? Those towns were of note, and of reputation; the possession of them gave a moral influence, and moral force constituted two-thirds of the strength of armies. Tudela and Burgos had also a relative importance; the first, possessing a strong bridge, was on the communication of Pampeluna and Madrid, it commanded the canal of Zaragoza, it was the capital of a province. When the army resumed offensive operations, their first enterprise would be the siege of Zaragoza; from that town to Tudela, the land carriage was three days, but the water carriage was only fourteen hours, wherefore to have the besieging artillery and stores at Tudela, was the same as to have them at Zaragoza; if the Spaniards got possession of the former, all Navarre would be in a state of insurrection, and Pampeluna exposed. Tudela then was of vast importance, but Milagro was of none; it was an obscure place, without a bridge, and commanding no communication; in short, it was without interest, defending nothing! led to nothing! A river," said this great commander, "though it should be as large as the Vistula, and as rapid as the Danube at its mouth, is nothing, unless there are good points of passage, and a head quick to take the offensive; the Ebro, as a

* Appendix, No. 5.

defence, was less than nothing, a mere line of demarcation! and Milagro was useless. The enemy might neglect it, be at Estella, and from thence gain Tolosa, before any preparation could be made to receive him; he might come from Soria, from Logroño, or from Zaragoza.

"Again, Burgos was the capital of a province, the centre of many communications, a town of great fame, and of relative value to the French army; to occupy it in force, and offensively, would threaten Palencia, Valladolid, Aranda, and even Madrid. It is necessary," observed the Emperor, "to have made war a long time to conceive this; it is necessary to have made a number of offensive enterprises, to know how much the smallest event, or even indication, encourages or discourages, and decides the adoption of one enterprise instead of another." "In short, if the enemy occupies Burgos, Logroño, and Tudela, the French army will be in a pitiful position. It is not known if he has left Madrid; it is not known what has become of the Gallician army, and there is reason to suspect that it may have been directed upon Portugal; in such a state, to take up, instead of a bold, menacing, and honorable position like Burgos, a confined, shameful one like Trevino, is to say to the enemy, You have nothing to fear, go elsewhere, we have made our dispositions to go farther: or we have chosen our ground to fight, come there, without fear of being disturbed. But what will the French General do if the enemy marches the next day upon Burgos? Will he let the citadel of that town be taken by six thousand insurgents? if the French have left a garrison in the castle, how can four or five hundred men retire in such a vast plain? and, from that time, all is gone; if the enemy masters the citadel, it cannot be retaken. If, on the contrary, we should guard the citadel, we must give battle to the enemy, because it cannot hold out more than three days, and if we are to fight a battle, why should Bessières abandon the ground where we wish to fight?"

"These dispositions appear badly considered, and when the enemy shall march, our troops will meet with such an insult as will demoralize them if there are only in surgenets or light troops advancing against them. If fifteen thousand insurgents enter Burgos, retrench themselves in the town, and occupy the castle, it will be necessary to calculate a march of several days to enable us to post ourselves there, and to retake the town, which cannot be done without some inconvenience; and if, during this time, the real attack is upon Logroño or Pampeluna, we shall have made countermarches without use, which will have fatigued the army. If we hold it with cavalry only, is it not to say we do not intend stopping, and to invite the enemy to come there? It is the first time that an army

has quitted all its offensive positions to take up a bad defensive line, and to affect to choose its field of battle, when the thousand and one combinations which might take place, and the distance of the enemy, did not leave a probability of being able to foresee if the battle would take place at Tudela, between Tudela and Pampeluna, between Soria and the Ebro, or between Burgos and Miranda." Then followed an observation which may be studied with advantage by those authors who, unacquainted with the simplest rudiments of military science, censure the conduct of generals, and are pleased, from some obscure nook, to point out their errors to the world; authors who, profoundly ignorant of the numbers, situation, and resources of the opposing armies, pretend, nevertheless, to detail with great accuracy the right method of executing the most difficult and delicate operations of war. As the rebuke of Turenne, who frankly acknowledged to Louvois that he could pass the Rhine at a particular spot, if the latter's finger were a bridge, has been lost upon such men, perhaps the more recent opinion of Napoleon may be disregarded. "But it is not permitted," says that consummate general, "*it is not permitted, at the distance of three hundred leagues, and without even a state of the situation of the army, to direct what should be done.*"

After having thus protected himself from the charge of presumption, the Emperor proceeded to recommend certain dispositions for the defence of the Ebro. The Spaniards, he said, were not to be feared in the field; twenty-five thousand French in a good position would suffice to beat all their armies united, and this opinion he deduced from the events of Dupont's campaign, of which he gave a short analysis. "Let Tudela," he said, "be retrenched if possible; at all events it should be occupied in force, and offensively towards Zaragoza. Let the General commanding there, collect provisions on all sides, secure the boats, with a view to future operations when the reinforcements should arrive, and maintain his communication with Logroño by the right bank if he can, but certainly by the left; let his corps be considered as one of observation. If a body of insurgents only approach, he may fight them, or keep them constantly on the defensive by his movements against their line or against Zaragoza; if regular troops attack him, and he is forced across the Ebro, let him then operate about Pampeluna until the general-in-chief has made his dispositions for the main body; in this manner no prompt movement upon Estella and Tolosa can take place, and the corps of observation will have amply fulfilled its task.

"Let Marshal Bessières, with all his corps united, and reinforced by the light cavalry of the army, encamp in the wood near Burgos;

let the citadel be well occupied, the hospital, the dépôts, and all encumbrances sent over the Ebro; let him keep in a condition to act, be under arms every day at three o'clock in the morning, and remain until the return of his patrols: he should also send parties to a great extent, as far as two days' march. Let the corps of the centre be placed at Miranda and Briviesca, and all the encumbrances be likewise sent across the Ebro behind Vittoria; this corps should be under arms every morning, and send patrols by the road of Soria, and wherever the enemy may be expected: and it must not be lost sight of, that these two corps, being to be united, they should be connected as little as possible with Logroño, and consider the left wing as a corps detached, having a line of operations upon Pampeluna, and a separate part to act. Tudela is preserved as a post contiguous to the line. Be well on the defensive," he continues; "in short, make war! that is to say, get information from the alcaldes, the curates, the posts, the chiefs of convents, and the principal proprietors; you will then be perfectly informed. The patrols should always be directed upon the side of Soria, and of Burgos, upon Palencia, and upon the side of Aranda; they could thus form three posts of interception, and send three reports of men arrested; these men should be treated well, and dismissed after they had given the information desired of them. Let the enemy then come, and we can unite all our forces, hide our marches from him, and fall upon his flank at the moment he is meditating an offensive movement."

With regard to the minor details, the Emperor thus expressed himself: "Soria is not, I believe, more than two short marches from the actual position of the army, and that town has constantly acted against us; an expedition sent there to disarm it, to take thirty of the principal people as hostages, and to obtain provisions, would have a good effect. It would be useful to occupy Santander; it will be of advantage to move by the direct road of Bilbao to Santander. It will be necessary to occupy and disarm Biscay and Navarre, and every Spaniard taken in arms there should be shot.* The manufactories of arms at Placentia should be watched, to hinder them from working for the rebels. The port of Pancorbo should be armed and fortified with great activity, ovens and magazines of provisions and ammunition should be placed there; situated nearly half way between Madrid and Bayonne, it is an intermediate post for the army, and a point of support for troops operating towards Galicia. The interest of the enemy," he resumes, "is to mask his forces; by hiding the true point of attack, he operates in such a

* Navarre and Biscay being within the French line of defence, the inhabitants were, according to the civilians, *de facto* French subjects.

manner, that the blow he means to strike is never indicated in a positive way, and the opposing general can only guess it by a well-matured knowledge of his own position, and of the mode in which he makes his offensive system act, to protect his defensive system. We have no accounts of what the enemy is about; it is said that no news can be obtained, as if this case was extraordinary in an army, as if spies were common; they must do in Spain as they do in other places. Send parties out. Let them carry off, sometimes the priest, sometimes the alcalde, the chief of a convent, the master of the post or his deputy, and, above all, the letters. Put these persons under arrest until they speak; question them twice each day, or keep them as hostages; charge them to send foot messengers, and to get news. When we know how to take measures of vigor and force, it is easy to get intelligence. All the posts, all the letters must be intercepted; the single motive of procuring intelligence will be sufficient to authorize a detachment of four or five thousand men, who will go into a great town, will take the letters from the post, will seize the richest citizens, their letters, papers, gazettes, &c. It is beyond doubt, that even in the French lines, the inhabitants are all informed of what passes; of course, out of that line they know more; what, then, should prevent you from seizing the principal men? Let them be sent back again without being ill-treated. It is a fact that when we are not in a desert, but in a peopled country, if the general is not well instructed, it is because he is ignorant of his trade. The services which the inhabitants render to an enemy's general are never given from affection, nor even to get money; the truest method to obtain them is by safeguards and protections to preserve their lives, their goods, their towns, or their monasteries!"

Joseph, although by no means a dull man, seems to have had no portion of his brother's martial genius. The operations recommended by the latter did not appear to the King to be applicable to the state of affairs; he did not adopt them, but proposed others, in discussing which he thus defended the policy of his retreat from Madrid: "When the *defection* of twenty-two thousand men (Dupont's) caused the King to quit the capital, the disposable troops remaining were divided in three corps, namely, his own, Marshal Bessières', and General Verdier's, then besieging Zaragoza; but these bodies were spread over a hundred leagues of ground, and with the last the King had little or no connection.* His first movement was to unite the two former at Burgos, afterwards to enter into communication with the third, and then the line of defence on the Ebro was adopted; an operation, said the King, dictated by sound reason—because when the events of Andalusia foreboded a

* Appendix, No. 6.

regular and serious war, prudence did not permit three corps, the strongest of which was only eighteen thousand men, to separate to a greater distance than six days' march, in the midst of eleven millions of people in a state of hostility. But fifty thousand French could defend with success a line of sixty leagues, and could guard the two grand communications of Burgos and Tudela, against enemies who had not up to that period been able to carry to either point above twenty-five thousand men. In this mode fifteen thousand French could be united upon either of those roads."

Joseph was dissatisfied with Napoleon's plans, and preferred his own. The disposable troops at his command, exclusive of those at Bilbao, were fifty thousand, which he distributed as follows: The right wing occupied Burgos, Pancorbo, and Puente Lara. The centre was posted between Haro and Logroño. The left extended from Logroño to Tudela, and the latter town was not occupied. He contended that this arrangement, at once offensive and defensive, might be advantageously continued if the great army, directed upon Spain, arrived in September, since it tended to refit the army already there, and menaced the enemy; but that it could not be prolonged until November, because in three months the Spaniards must make a great progress, and would very soon be in a state to take the offensive, with grand organized corps obedient to a central administration, which would have time to form in Madrid. Everything announced, he said, that the month of October was one of those decisive epochs which gave, to the party who knew how to profit from it, the priority of movements and success, the progress of which it was difficult to calculate.

In this view of affairs, the merits of six projects were discussed by the King.

First project. To remain in the actual position. This was declared to be unsustainable, because the enemy could attack the left with forty thousand, the centre with forty thousand, the right with as many. Tudela and Navarre, as far as Logroño, required twenty-five thousand men to defend them. Burgos could not be defended but by an army in a state to resist the united forces of Blake and Cuesta, which would amount to eighty thousand men; it was doubtful if the twenty thousand bayonets which could be opposed to them, could completely beat them; if they did not, the French would be harassed by the insurgents of three provinces—Biscay, Navarre, and Guipuscoa would interpose between the left wing and France.

Second project. To carry the centre and reserve by Tudela, towards Zaragoza or Albazan. United with the left, they would amount to thirty thousand men, who might seek for, and, doubtless,

would defeat the enemy, if he was met with on that side. In the mean time, the right wing, leaving garrisons in the citadel of Burgos and the fort of Pancorbo, could occupy the enemy, and watch any movements in the *Montaña Santander*, or disembarkations that might take place at the ports. But this task was considered difficult, because Pancorbo was not the only defile accessible to artillery; three leagues from thence another road led upon Miranda, and there was a third passage over the point of the chain which stretched between Haro and Miranda.

Third project. To leave the defence of Navarre to the left wing, to carry the centre, the reserve, and the right wing to Burgos, and to beat the enemy before he could unite; an easy task, as the French would be thirty thousand strong. Meanwhile, Monecy would keep the Spaniards in check on the side of Tudela, or, if unable to do that, he was to march up the Ebro, by Logroño and Briviesca, and join the main body: the communication with France would be thus lost, but the army might maintain itself until the arrival of the Emperor. A modification of this project was, that Monecy, retiring to the intrenched camp of Pampeluna, should there await either the arrival of the Emperor, or the result of the operations towards Burgos.

Fourth project. To pass the Ebro in retreat, and to endeavor to tempt the enemy to fight in the plain between that river and Vittoria.

Fifth project. To retire, supporting the left upon Pampeluna, the right upon Montdragon.

Sixth project. To leave garrisons, with the means of six weeks' defence, in Pampeluna, St. Sebastian, Pancorbo, and Burgos. To unite the rest of the army, march against the enemy, attack him wherever he was found, and then wait, either near Madrid or in that country into which the pursuit of the Spaniards or the facility of living should draw the army. This plan relinquished the communications with France entirely, but it was said that the grand army could easily open them again; the troops, already in Spain, would be sufficiently strong to defy all the efforts of the enemy, to disconcert all his projects, and to wait in a noble attitude the general impulse which would be given by the arrival of the Emperor.

Of all these projects, the last was the favorite with the King, who strongly recommended it, and asserted that if it was followed, affairs would be more prosperous when the Emperor arrived than could be expected from any other plan. Marshal Ney and General Jourdan approved of it, but it would appear that Napoleon had other views, and too little confidence in his brother's military judgment to intrust so great a matter to his guidance.

OBSERVATIONS.

1. It is undoubted that there must always be some sympathy of genius in the man who is to execute another's conception in military affairs. Without that species of harmony between their minds, the thousand accidental occurrences and minor combinations which must happen contrary to expectation, will inevitably embarrass the executor to such a degree, that he will be unable to see the most obvious advantages; and in striving to unite the plan he has received with his own views, he will adopt neither, but steering an unsteady, reeling course between both, will fail of success. The reason of this appears to be, that a strong, and, if the term may be used, inveterate attention must be fixed upon certain great principles of action in war, to enable a general to disregard the minor events and inconveniences which cross his purpose: minor they are to the great object, but in themselves sufficient to break down the firmness and self-possession of any but extraordinary men.

2. The original memoir from which Joseph's projects have been extracted, is so blotted and interlined, that it would be unfair to consider it as a mature production. The great error which pervades it, is the conjectured data upon which he founds his plans, and the little real information which he appears to have had relative to the Spanish forces, views, or interior policy. His plans were based upon the notion that the Central Junta would be able and provident, the Spaniards united, the armies strong and well guided; none of which was true. Again, he estimated Cuesta and Blake's armies at eighty thousand, and considered them as one body; but they were never united at all, and if they had, they would scarcely have amounted to sixty thousand. The bold idea of throwing himself into the interior came too late; he should have thought of that before he quitted Madrid, or at least before the central government was established at that capital. His operations might have been successful against the miserable armies opposed to him, but against good and movable troops they would not, as the Emperor's admirable notes prove. The first project, wanting those offensive combinations discussed by Napoleon, was open to all his objections, as being timid and incomplete. The second was crude and ill-considered; for, according to the King's estimate of the Spanish force, thirty thousand men on each wing might oppose the heads of his columns, while sixty thousand could still have been united at Logroño. These might pass the Ebro, excite insurrection in Navarre, Guipuscoa, and Biscay, seize Tolosa and Miranda, and fall upon the rear of the French army, which, thus cut in two and its communications intercepted, would have been extremely embar-

rapped. The third was not better judged. Burgos, as an offensive post, protecting the line of defence, was very valuable, and to unite a large force there was so far prudent; but if the Spaniards retired and refused battle with their left, while the centre and right operated by Logroño and Sanguessa, what would have been the result? The French right must, without any definite object, either have continued to advance, or remained stationary without communication, or returned to fight a battle for those very positions which they had just quitted. The fourth depended entirely upon accident, and is not worth argument. The fifth was an undisguised retreat. The sixth was not applicable to the actual situation of affairs; the King's force was no longer an independent body—it was become the advanced guard of the great army, marching under Napoleon. It was absurd, therefore, to contemplate a decisive movement, without having first matured a plan suitable to the whole mass that was to be engaged in the execution: in short, to permit an advanced guard to determine the operations of the main body, was to reverse the order of military affairs, and to trust to accident instead of design. It is curious, that while Joseph was proposing this irruption into Spain, the Spaniards and the military agents of Great Britain were trembling lest he should escape their power by a precipitate flight. “*War is not a conjectural art!*”

CHAPTER V.

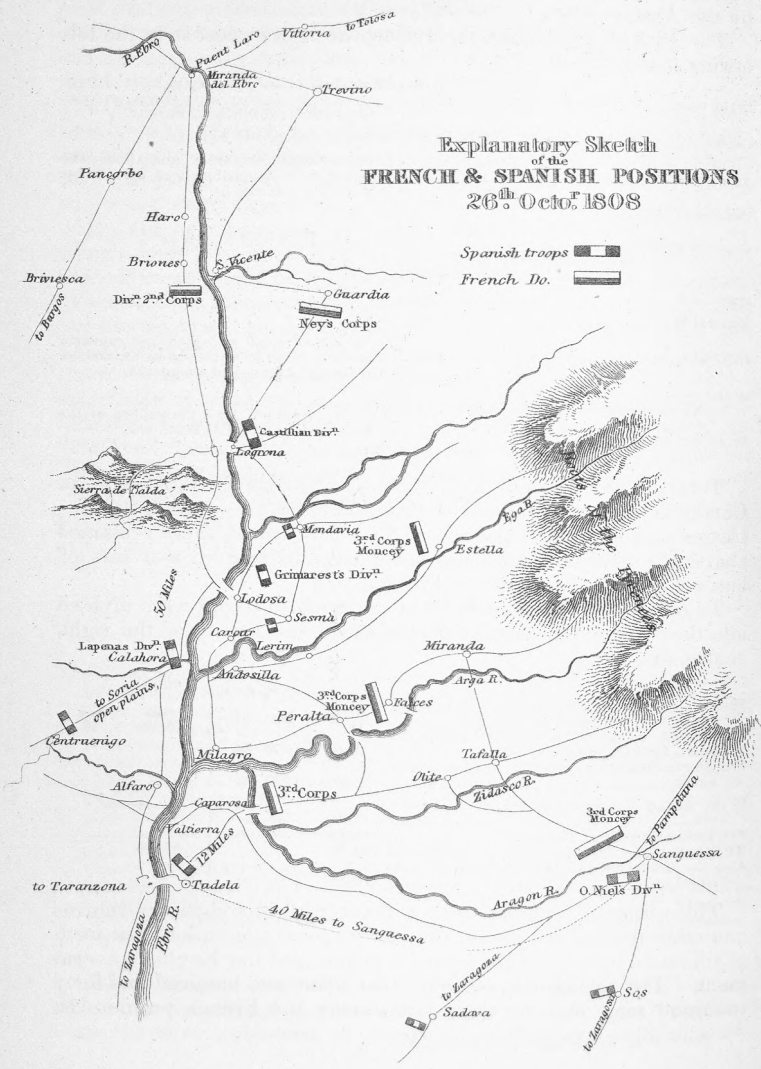
Position and strength of the French and Spanish armies—Blake moves from Reynosa to the Upper Ebro; sends a division to Bilbao; French retire from that town—Ney quits his position near Logroño, and takes Bilbao—The armies of the centre and right approach the Ebro and the Aragon—Various evolutions—Blake attacks and takes Bilbao—Head of the grand French army arrives in Spain—The Castilians join the army of the centre—The Asturians join Blake—Apathy of the Central Junta—Castaños joins the army; holds a conference with Palafox; their dangerous position; arrange a plan of operations—The Spaniards cross the Ebro—The King orders a general attack—Skirmish at Sanguessa, at Logroño, and Lerim—The Spaniards driven back over the Ebro—Logroño taken—Colonel Cruz, with a Spanish battalion, surrenders at Lerim—Francisco Palafox, the military deputy, arrives at Alfaró; his exceeding folly and presumption; controls and insults Castaños—Force of the French army increases hourly; how composed and disposed—Blake ascends the valley of Durango—Battle of Zornosa—French retake Bilbao—Combat at Valmaceda—Observations.



THE Emperor overruled the offensive project of the King, and the latter was forced to distribute the centre and right wing in a manner more consonant to the spirit of Napoleon's instructions;

The first was the belief in the...
 The second was the belief in the...
 The third was the belief in the...
 The fourth was the belief in the...
 The fifth was the belief in the...
 The sixth was the belief in the...
 The seventh was the belief in the...
 The eighth was the belief in the...
 The ninth was the belief in the...
 The tenth was the belief in the...



Explanatory Sketch
of the
FRENCH & SPANISH POSITIONS
26th Octo^r 1808



Spanish troops 
French Do. 

but he still neglected to occupy Tudela, and covered his left wing by the Aragon river.

The 18th of September, the French army was posted in the following manner:—*

Right wing.... Marshal Bessières.....	15,595	} Under Arms {	Three divisions of infantry in front of Pancorbo, at Briviesca, Santa Maria, and Cuba; light cavalry behind Burgos.
Centre..... Marshal Ney.....	13,756		
Left wing..... Marshal Moncey.....	16,636	} {	Milagro, Lodosa, Caparosa, and Alfaro; the garrison of Pampeluna was also under Moncey's command.
Reserve of the King. General Saligny... 5,413			
Imperial guard. General Dorsenne. 2,423		} {	Miranda, Haro, and Puente Lara.
Total.....	7,833		
Garrisons.....	6,004	} {	Pampeluna. Bilbao.
General Monthion.....	1,500		
General La Grange.....	6,979	} {	Composed of small garrisons and movable columns, guarding the communications of Biscay, Alava, and Guipuscoa.
Grand reserve. Movable columns..... 1,984 Stationary..... 20,005			
Total, commanded by General Drouet.....	21,989	} {	Bayonne, and watching the valleys of the Pyrenees opening into Navarre.

Total 98,289 present under arms, exclusive of the troops in Catalonia; and when the communications were secured, the fortresses garrisoned and the fort of Pancorbo armed, there remained above fifty thousand sabres and bayonets disposable on a line of battle extending from Bilbao to Alfaro.

To oppose this formidable force the Spanish troops were divided into three principal masses, denominated the armies of the right, centre, and left.

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Guns.	First Line.	
The first, composed of the divisions of St. Marc and O'Neil, numbered about.....	17,500	500	24	} Men. 75,400	} Guns. 86
The second, composed of the divisions of Lapeña, Llamas, and Caro.....	26,000	1,300	36		
The third, consisting entirely of Gallicians, about.....	30,000	100	26		
In the second line the Castilians were at Segovia.....	12,000	—	—	} Second Line.	} 57,000
The Estremadurans at Talavera.....	13,000	—	—		
Two Andalusian divisions were in La Mancha	14,000	—	—		
And the Asturians (posted at Llanes) were called.....	18,000	—	—		

This estimate, founded upon a number of contemporary returns and other documents, proves the monstrous exaggerations put forth at this time to deceive the Spanish people and the English government. The Spaniards pretended that above one hundred and forty thousand men in arms were threatening the French positions on

* Journal of the King's operations, MS.