

The battle was commenced by the wings; for Mermet's division was withheld until the enemy's generals, believing the whole of the attack was developed, had weakened their centre to strengthen their flanks. Then the French reserves, rushing violently forward, broke through the intrenchments and took the two principal forts, entering by the embrasures, and killing or dispersing all within them. Soult instantly rallied his troops, and sent two battalions to take the Portuguese left wing in the rear, while two other battalions were ordered to march straight into the town, and make for the bridge. The Portuguese army, thus cut in two, was soon beaten on all points. Laborde carried in succession a number of forts, took fifty pieces of artillery, and, reaching the head of the city, halted until Franceschi, who was engaged still more to the left, could join him. By this movement a large body of the Portuguese were driven off from the town, and forced back to the Douro, being followed by a brigade under General Arnaud.

Merle, seeing that the success of the centre was complete, brought up his left flank, carried all the forts to his right in succession, killed a great number of the defenders, and drove the rest towards the sea. These last dividing, fled for refuge, one part to the fort of St. Joa, the other towards the mouth of the Douro, where, maddened by terror, as the French came pouring down upon them, they strove, some to swim across, others to get over in small boats; their General, Lima, called out against this hopeless attempt, but they turned and murdered him, within musket-shot of the approaching enemy, and then, renewing the attempt to cross, nearly the whole perished. The victory was now certain, for Lorge had dispersed the people on the side of Villa de Conde, and General Arnaud, hemming in those above the town, prevented them from plunging into the river also, as in their desperate mood they were going to do.

Nevertheless the battle continued within Oporto, for the two battalions sent from the centre having burst the barricades at the entrance of the streets, penetrated, fighting, to the bridge, and here all the horrid circumstances of war seemed to be accumulated, and the calamities of an age compressed into one doleful hour. More than four thousand persons, old and young, and of both sexes, were seen pressing forward with wild tumult, some already on the bridge, others striving to gain it, all in a state of phrensy. The batteries on the opposite bank opened their fire when the French appeared, and at that moment a troop of Portuguese cavalry flying from the fight came down one of the streets, and, remorseless in their fears, bore, at full gallop, into the midst of the miserable, helpless crowd, trampling a bloody pathway to the river. Suddenly the nearest boats, unable to sustain the increasing weight, sunk, and the fore-

most wretches, still tumbling into the river as they were pressed from behind, perished, until the heaped bodies, rising above the surface of the waters, filled all the space left by the sinking of the vessels.

The first of the French that arrived, amazed at this fearful spectacle, forgot the battle, and hastened to save those who still struggled for life; and while some were thus nobly employed, others, by the help of planks, getting on to the firmer parts of the bridge, crossed the river and carried the batteries on the heights of Villa Nova. The passage was thus secured, but this terrible destruction did not complete the measure of the city's calamities; two hundred men, who occupied the Bishop's palace, fired from the windows and maintained that post, until the French, gathering around them in strength, burst the doors and put all to the sword. Every street and house then rung with the noise of the combatants and the shrieks of distress; for the French soldiers, exasperated by long hardships, and prone, like all soldiers, to ferocity and violence during an assault, became frantic with fury when, in one of the principal squares, they found several of their comrades, who had been made prisoners, fastened upright, and living, but with their eyes burst, their tongues torn out, their other members mutilated and gashed. Those that beheld the sight spared none who fell in their way. It was in vain that Soult strove to stop the slaughter; it was in vain that hundreds of officers and soldiers opposed, at the risk of their lives, the vengeance of their comrades, and by their generous exertions rescued vast numbers that would otherwise have fallen victims to the anger and brutality of the moment. The frightful scene of rape, pillage, and murder closed not for many hours, and what with those who fell in battle, those who were drowned, and those sacrificed to revenge, it is said that ten thousand Portuguese died on that unhappy day!* The loss of the French did not exceed five hundred men.

* S. Journal of Operations, MS.

CHAPTER III.

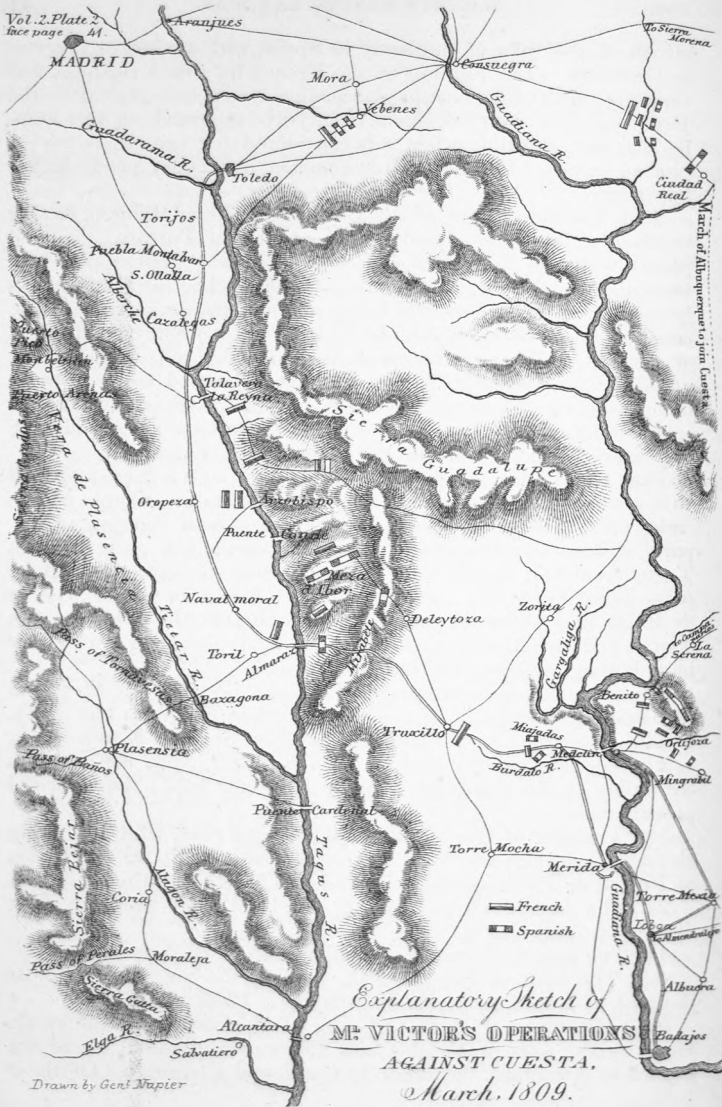
Operations of the first and fourth corps—General state of the French army—Description of the valley of the Tagus—Inertness of Marshal Victor—Albuquerque and Cartoajal dispute—The latter advances in La Mancha—General Sebastiani wins the battle of Ciudad Real—Marshal Victor forces the passage of the Tagus, and drives Cuesta's army from all its positions—French cavalry checked at Miajadas—Victor crosses the Guadiana at Medellin—Albuquerque joins Cuesta's army—Battle of Medellin—Spaniards totally defeated—Victor ordered by the King to invade Portugal—Opens a secret communication with some persons in Badajos—The peasants of Albuera discover the plot, which fails—Operations of General Lapisse—He drives back Sir R. Wilson's posts, and makes a slight attempt to take Ciudad Rodrigo—Marches suddenly towards the Tagus, and forces the bridge of Alcantara—Joins Victor at Merida—General insurrection along the Portuguese frontier—The Central Junta remove Cartoajal from the command, and increase Cuesta's authority, whose army is reinforced—Joseph discontented with Lapisse's movement—Orders Victor to retake the bridge of Alcantara.

THE dire slaughter at Oporto was followed up by a variety of important operations; but before these are treated of, it is essential to narrate the contemporaneous events on the Tagus and the Guadiana, for the war was wide and complicated, and the result depended more upon the general combinations than upon any particular movements.

OPERATIONS OF THE FIRST AND FOURTH CORPS.

It has been already related that Marshal Victor, after making a futile attempt to surprise the Marquis of Palacios, had retired to his former quarters at Toledo; that the Conde de Cartoajal, who succeeded the Duke of Infantado, had advanced to Ciudad Real with about fourteen thousand men; that Cuesta, having broken the bridge of Almaraz, guarded the line of the Tagus with fourteen thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred cavalry. The 4th corps remained at Talavera and Placentia, but held the bridge of Arzobispo by a detachment. The remainder of the French army was in Catalonia, at Zaragoza, or on the communication; the reserve of heavy cavalry had been suppressed, and the regiments dispersed among the *corps d'armée*; the whole army, exclusive of the King's guards, was about two hundred and seventy thousand men, with forty thousand horses, showing a decrease of sixty-five thousand men since the 15th of November.* But this included the imperial guards, the reserve of infantry, and many detachments drafted from the corps—in all forty thousand men, who had been

* Imperial Muster-rolls, MS.



Explanatory Sketch of
M. VICTOR'S OPERATIONS
 AGAINST CUESTA,
 March, 1809.

Drawn by Genl Napier

struck off the rolls of the army in Spain, with a view to the war in Germany. The real loss of the French by sword, sickness, and captivity, in the four months succeeding Napoleon's arrival in the Peninsula, was therefore about twenty-five thousand—a vast number, but not incredible, when it is considered that two sieges, twelve pitched battles, and innumerable combats had taken place during that period.

Such was the state of affairs when the Duke of Belluno, having received orders to aid Soult in the invasion of Portugal, changed places with the fourth corps. Sebastiani was then opposed to Cartoajal, and Victor stood against Cuesta. The former fixed his head-quarters at Toledo, the latter at Talavera de la Reyna, the communication between them being kept up by Montbrun's division of cavalry, while the garrison of Madrid, composed of the King's guards and Dessolle's division, equally supported both. But to understand the connection between the first, second, and fourth corps, and Lapisse's division, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the nature of the country on both sides of the Tagus.

That river, after passing Toledo, runs through a deep and long valley, walled up on either hand by lofty mountains. Those on the right bank are always capped with snow, and ranging nearly parallel with the course of the stream, divide the valley of the Tagus from Old Castile and the Salamanca country; the highest parts being known by the names of the Sierra de Gredos, Sierra de Bejar, and Sierra de Gata. In these sierras the Alberche, the Tietar, and the Alagon take their rise, and ploughing the valley in a slanting direction, fall into the Tagus.

The principal mountain on the left bank is called the Sierra de Guadalupe; it extends in a southward direction from the river, dividing the upper part of La Mancha from Spanish Estremadura.

The communications leading from the Salamanca country into the valley of the Tagus are neither many nor good; the principal passes are—

1st. The way of Horcajada, an old Roman road, which, running through Pedrahita and Villa Franca, crosses the Sierra de Gredos at Puerto de Pico, and then descends by Montbeltran to Talavera.

2d. The pass of Arenas, leading nearly parallel to, and a short distance from the first.

3d. The pass of Tornevecas, leading upon Placentia.

4th. The route of Bejar, which, crossing the Sierra de Bejar at the pass of Baños, descends likewise upon Placentia.

5th. The route of Payo or Gata, which crosses the Sierra de Gata by the pass of Perales, and afterwards dividing, sends one branch to Alcantara, the other to Coria and Placentia. Of these

five passes the two last only are, generally speaking, practicable for artillery.

The royal roads, from Toledo and Madrid to Badajos, unite near Talavera and follow the course of the Tagus by the right bank as far as Naval Moral, but then, turning to the left, cross the river at the bridge of Almaraz. Now, from Toledo, westward, to the bridge of Almaraz, a distance of above fifty miles, the left bank of the Tagus is so crowded by the rugged shoots of the Sierra de Guadalupe, that it may be broadly stated as impassable for an army, and this peculiarity of ground gives the key to the operations on both sides. For Cuesta and Cartoajal, by reason of this impassable Sierra de Guadalupe, had no direct military communication; but Victor and Sebastiani, occupying Toledo and Talavera, could unite on either line of operations by the royal roads above mentioned, or by a secondary road which, running near Yébenes, crosses the Tagus by a stone bridge near Puebla de Montalvan, half way between Toledo and Talavera.

The rallying point of the French was Madrid, and their parallel lines of defence were the Tagus, the Alberche, and the Guadarama.

The base of Cartoajal's operations was the Sierra de Morena.

Cuesta's first line was the Tagus, and his second the Guadiana, from whence he could retreat by a flank march to Badajos, or by a direct one to the defiles of Monasterio in the Sierra Morena.

The two Spanish armies, if they had been united, would not have furnished more than twenty-six thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, and they had no reserve. The two French corps, united, would have exceeded thirty-five thousand fighting men, supported by the reserve under the King. The French, therefore, had the advantage of numbers, position, and discipline.

Following the orders of Napoleon, Marshal Victor should have been at Merida before the middle of February. In that position he would have confined Cuesta to the Sierra Morena, and with his twelve regiments of cavalry he could easily have kept all the flat country, as far as Badajos, in subjection. That fortress itself had no means of resistance, and certainly there was no Spanish force in the field capable of impeding the full execution of the Emperor's instructions, which were also reiterated by the King. Nevertheless, the Duke of Belluno remained inert at this critical period, and the Spaniards, attributing his inactivity to weakness, endeavored to provoke the blow so unaccountably withheld; for Cuesta was projecting offensive movements against Victor, and the Duke of Albuquerque was extremely anxious to attack Toledo from the side of La Mancha. Cartoajal opposed Albuquerque's plans, but offered

him a small force with which to act independently. The Duke complained to the Junta of Cartoajal's proceedings, and Mr. Frere, whose traces are to be found in every intrigue and every absurd project broached at this period, having supported Albuquerque's complaints, Cartoajal was directed by the Junta to follow the Duke's plans; but the latter was himself ordered to join Cuesta, with a detachment of four or five thousand men.

ROUT OF CIUDAD REAL.

Cartoajal, in pursuance of his instructions, marched with twelve thousand men and twenty guns towards Toledo. His advanced guard attacked a regiment of Polish lancers, near Consuegra, but the latter retired without loss. Hereupon Sebastiani, with about ten thousand men, came up against him, and the leading divisions encountering at Yebenes, the Spaniards were pushed back to Ciudad Real, where they halted, leaving guards on the river in front of that town. The French immediately forced the passage, and a tumultuary action ensuing, Cartoajal was totally routed, with the loss of all his guns, a thousand slain, and several thousand prisoners; the vanquished fled by Almagro, and the French cavalry pursued even to the foot of the Sierra Morena. This action, fought on the 27th of March, and commonly called the battle of Ciudad Real, was not followed up with any great profit to the victors. Sebastiani gathered up the spoils, sent his prisoners to the rear, and held his troops concentrated on the upper Guadiana, to await the result of Victor's operations; thus enabling the Spanish fugitives to rally at Carolina, where they were reinforced by levies from Granada and Cordova.

While these events were passing in La Mancha, Estremadura was also invaded; for the King, having received a despatch from Soult, dated Orense, and giving notice that the second corps would be at Oporto about the 15th of March, had reiterated the order for Lapisse to move on Abrantes, and for the Duke of Belluno to pass the Tagus and drive Cuesta beyond the Guadiana. Marshal Victor, who appears to have been, for some reason unknown, averse to aiding the operations of the second corps at all, remonstrated, and especially urged that the order to Lapisse should be withdrawn, lest his division should arrive too soon, and without support, at Abrantes; but this time the King was firm, and, on the 14th of March, the Duke of Belluno, having collected five days' provisions, made the necessary dispositions to pass the Tagus.

The amount of the Spanish force immediately on that river was about sixteen thousand men, and Cuesta had also several detachments and irregular bands in his rear, which may be calculated at

eight thousand more.* The Duke of Belluno, however, estimated the troops in position before him at thirty thousand—a great error for so experienced a commander to make. On the other hand, Cuesta was as ill-informed; for this was the moment when, with his approbation, Colonel d'Urban proposed to Sir John Cradock that curiously combined attack against Victor, already noticed, in which the Spaniards were to cross the Tagus, and Sir Robert Wilson was to come down upon the Tietar. This also was the period that Mr. Frere, apparently ignorant that there were at least twenty-five thousand fighting men in the valley of the Tagus, without reckoning the King's or Sebastiani's troops, proposed that the twelve thousand British under Sir John Cradock should march from Lisbon to "drive the fourth French corps from Toledo," and "consequently," as he phrased it, "from Madrid." The first movement of Marshal Victor awakened Cuesta from these dreams.

The bridges of Talavera and Arzobispo were, as we have seen, held by the French, and their advanced posts were pushed into the valley of the Tagus, as far as the Barca de Bazagona.

The Spanish position extended from Garbin, near the bridge of Arzobispo, to the bridge of Almaraz—the centre being at Meza d'Ibor, a position of surprising strength, running at right angles from the Tagus to the Guadalupe. The head-quarters and reserves were at Deleytosa, and a road, cut by the troops, afforded a communication between that place and Meza d'Ibor.

On the right bank of the Tagus there was easy access to the bridges of Talavera, Arzobispo, and Almaraz; but on the left bank no road existed by which artillery could pass the mountains, except that of Almaraz, which was crossed, at the distance of four or five miles from the river, by the almost impregnable ridge of Mirabete.

The Duke of Belluno's plan was to pass the Tagus at the bridges of Talavera and Arzobispo, with his infantry and part of his cavalry, and to operate in the Sierra de Guadalupe against the Spanish right; while the artillery and grand parc, protected by the remainder of the cavalry, were to be united opposite Almaraz, having with them a raft bridge to throw across at that point.† This project is scarcely to be reconciled with the estimate made of Cuesta's force; for surely nothing could be more rash than to expose the whole of the guns and field stores of the army, with no other guard than some cavalry and one battalion of infantry, close to a powerful enemy, who possessed a good pontoon train, and who might, consequently, pass the river at pleasure.

The 15th, Laval's division of German infantry, and Lasalle's

* General Sémélé's Journal of Operations, MS.

† Journal of Operations of the First Corps, MS.

cavalry, crossed at Talavera, and, turning to the right, worked a march through the rocky hills; the infantry to Aldea Nueva, on a line somewhat short of the bridge of Arzobispo; the cavalry higher up the mountain towards Estrella. The 16th, when those troops had advanced a few miles to the front, the head-quarters, and the other divisions of infantry, passed the bridge of Arzobispo; while the artillery and the parcs, accompanied by a battalion of grenadiers and the escorting cavalry, moved to Almaraz, with orders to watch, on the 17th and 18th, for the appearance of the army on the heights at the other side, and then to move down to the point before indicated for launching the raft bridge.

Alarmed by these movements, Cuesta hastened in person to Mirabete, and directing General Henestrosa to defend the bridge of Almaraz, with eight thousand men, sent a detachment to reinforce his own right wing, which was posted behind the Ibor, a small river, but at this season running with a full torrent from the Guadalupe to the Tagus.

The 17th, the Spanish advanced guards were driven, with some loss, across the Ibor. They attempted to re-form on the high rocky banks of that river, but being closely followed, retreated to the camp of Meza d'Ibor, the great natural strength of which was increased by some field-works. Their position could only be attacked in front, and this being apparent at the first glance, Laval's division was instantly formed into columns of attack, which pushed rapidly up the mountain, the inequalities of ground covering them in some sort from the effects of the enemy's artillery. As they arrived near the summit, the fire of musketry and grape became murderous, but at this instant the Spaniards, who should have displayed all their vigor, broke and fled to Campillo, leaving behind them baggage, magazines, seven guns, and a thousand prisoners, besides eight hundred killed and wounded. The French had only seventy killed and five hundred wounded; and while this action was taking place at Meza d'Ibor, Villatte's division, being higher up the sierra, to the left, overthrew a smaller body of Spaniards, at Frenedoso, making three hundred prisoners, and capturing a large store of arms.

The 18th, at daybreak, the Duke of Bellulo, who had superintended in person the attack at Meza d'Ibor, examined from that high ground all the remaining position of the Spaniards. Cuesta, he observed, was in full retreat to Tuxillo, but Henestrosa was still posted in front of Almaraz; wheretore Villatte's division was detached after Cuesta, to Deleytosa, and Laval's Germans were led against Henestrosa, and the latter, aware of his danger and already preparing to retire, was driven hastily over the ridge of Mirabete.

In the course of the night, the raft bridge was thrown across the Tagus; the next day the French dragoons passed to the left bank, the artillery followed, and the cavalry immediately pushed forward to Truxillo, from which town Cuesta had already fallen back to Santa Cruz, leaving Henestrosa to cover the retreat. The 20th, after a slight skirmish, the latter was forced over the Mazarna, and the whole French army, with the exception of a regiment of dragoons left to guard the raft bridge, was poured along the road to Merida.

The advanced guard, consisting of a regiment of light cavalry, under General Bordesoult, arrived the 21st in front of Miajadas, where the road dividing, sends one branch to Merida, the other to Medellin. A party of Spanish horsemen were posted near the town; they appeared in great alarm, and by their hesitating movements invited a charge; the French incautiously galloped forward, and, in a moment, twelve or fourteen hundred Spanish cavalry, placed in ambush, came up at speed on the flanks. General Lasalle, who from a distance had observed the movements of both sides, immediately rode forward with a second regiment, and arrived just as Bordesoult had extricated himself from a great peril, by his own valor, but with the loss of seventy killed and a hundred wounded.

After this well-managed combat, Cuesta retired to Medellin without being molested, and Victor, spreading his cavalry posts on the different routes to gain intelligence and to collect provisions, established his own quarters at Truxillo, a town of some trade, and advantageously situated for a place of arms.* It had been deserted by the inhabitants and pillaged by the first French troops that entered, but it still offered great resources for the army, and there was an ancient citadel, capable of being rendered defensible, which was immediately armed with the Spanish guns, and provisioned from the magazines taken at Meza d'Ibor. Meanwhile, the flooding of the Tagus and the rocky nature of its bed injured the raft-bridge near Almaraz, and delayed the passage of the artillery and stores; wherefore directions were given to have a boat-bridge prepared, and a field-fort constructed on the left bank of the Tagus, to be armed with three guns, and garrisoned with a hundred and fifty men, to protect the bridge. These arrangements, and the establishment of a hospital for two thousand men at Truxillo, delayed the first corps until the 24th of March.

The light cavalry reinforced by twelve hundred *voltigeurs* being posted at Miajadas, had covered all the roads branching from that central point with their scouting parties, and now reported that a

* Journal of Operations, MS.

few of Cuesta's people had retired to Medellin; that from five to six thousand men were thrown into the Sierra de Guadalupe on the left of the French; that four thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry were behind the river Garganza, in front of Medellin, and that everything else was over the Guadiana. Thus the line of retreat chosen by Cuesta uncovered Merida, and, consequently, the great road between Badajos and Seville was open to the French. But Victor was not disposed to profit from this, for he was aware that Albuquerque was coming from La Mancha to Cuesta, and believed that he brought nine thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry; he therefore feared that Cuesta's intention was either to draw him into a difficult country, by making a flank march to join Cartoajal in La Mancha; or by crossing the Guadiana above Naval Villar, where the fords are always practicable, to rejoin his detachments in the Sierra de Guadalupe, and so establish a new base of operations on the left flank of the French army. This reasoning was misplaced; neither Cuesta nor his army were capable of such operations; his line of retreat was solely directed by a desire to join Albuquerque, and to save his troops, by taking to a rugged instead of an open country. The Duke of Belluno lost the fruits of his previous success, by thus overrating his adversary's skill; instead of following Cuesta with a resolution to break up the Spanish army, he, after leaving a brigade at Truxillo and Almaraz, to protect the communications, was contented to advance a few leagues on the road to Medellin with his main body; sending his light cavalry to Merida, and pushing on detachments towards Badajos and Seville, while other parties explored the roads leading into the Guadalupe.

The 27th, however, he marched in person to Medellin, at the head of two divisions of infantry, and a brigade of heavy cavalry. Eight hundred Spanish horse, posted on the right bank of the Guadiana, retired at his approach, and crossing that river, halted at Don Benito, where they were reinforced by other squadrons, but no infantry were to be discovered. The Duke of Belluno then passing the river took post on the road leading to Mingabril and Don Benito, and the situation of the French army in the evening was as follows:

The main body, consisting of two divisions of infantry, and one incomplete brigade of heavy cavalry, in position on the road leading from Medellin to Don Benito and Mingabril.

The remainder of the dragoons, under Latour Maubourg, at Zorita, fifteen miles on the left, watching the Spaniards in the Guadalupe.

The light cavalry at Merida, eighteen miles to the right, having

patrolled all that day on the roads to Badajos, Seville and Medellin.

Ruffin's division at Miajadas, eighteen miles in the rear.

But in the course of the evening intelligence arrived that Albuquerque was just come up with eight thousand men; that the combined troops, amounting to twenty-eight thousand infantry and seven thousand cavalry, were in position on the table land of Don Benito, and that Cuesta, aware of the scattered state of the French army, was preparing to attack the two divisions on their march the next day. Upon this, Victor, notwithstanding the strength of the Spanish army, resolved to fight, and immediately sent orders to Lasalle, to Ruffin, and to Latour Maubourg, to bring their divisions down to Medellin; the latter was also directed to leave a detachment at Miajadas to protect the route of Merida, and a brigade at Zorita, to observe the Spaniards in the Sierra de Guadalupe.

Cuesta's numbers were greatly exaggerated; that General, blaming everybody but himself for his failure on the Tagus, had fallen back to Campanarios, rallied all his scattered detachments, and then returned to Villa Nueva de Serena, where he was joined on the 27th by Albuquerque, who brought up, not a great body of infantry and cavalry as supposed, but less than three thousand infantry and a few hundred horse. This reinforcement, added to some battalions drawn from Andalusia, increased Cuesta's army to about twenty-five thousand foot, four thousand horse, and eighteen or twenty pieces of artillery; and with this force, he, fearing for the safety of Badajos, retraced his steps and rushed headlong to destruction.

Medellin, possessing a fine stone bridge, is situated in a hollow on the left bank of the Guadiana, and just beyond the town is a vast plain, or table land, the edge of which, breaking abruptly down, forms the bed of the river. The Ortigosa, which cuts this plain, is a rapid torrent, rushing perpendicularly on to the Guadiana, and having steep and rugged banks, yet in parts passable for artillery. Two roads branch out from Medellin, the one leading to Mingabril on the right, the other to Don Benito on the left, those places being about five miles apart.

BATTLE OF MEDELLIN.

The French army, with the exception of the troops left to cover the communications and those at Zorita, was concentrated in the town at ten o'clock, and at one, about fourteen thousand infantry, two thousand five hundred cavalry, and forty-two pieces of artillery, went forth to fight. The plain on the side of Don Benito was bounded by a high ridge of land, behind which Cuesta kept the

Spanish infantry concealed, showing only his cavalry and some guns in advance. To make him display his lines of infantry the French General sent Lasalle's light cavalry, with a battery of six guns and two battalions of German infantry, towards Don Benito, while Latour Maubourg, with five squadrons of dragoons, eight guns, and two other battalions, keeping close to the Ortigosa, advanced towards a point of the enemy's ridge called the Retamosa. The rest of the army were kept in reserve, the division of Villatte and the remainder of the Germans being, one half on the road of Don Benito, the other half on the road of Mingabril. Ruffin's division was a little way in rear, and a battalion was left to guard the baggage at the bridge of Medellin.

As the French squadron advanced, the artillery on both sides opened, and the Spanish cavalry guards in the plain retired slowly to the higher ground. Lasalle and Latour Maubourg then pressed forward, but just as the latter, who had the shortest distance to traverse, approached the enemy's position, the whole Spanish line of battle was suddenly descried in full march over the edge of the ridge, and stretching from the Ortigosa to within a mile of the Guadiana,—a menacing but glorious apparition. Cuesta, Henes-trosa, and the Duke del Parque, with the mass of cavalry, were on the left; Francisco Frias, with the main body of infantry, in the centre; Equia and Portazgo on the right, which was prolonged to the Guadiana by some scattered squadrons under Albuquerque, who flanked the march of the host as it descended with a rapid pace into the plain.

Cuesta's plan was now disclosed; his line overlapped the French left, and he was hastening to cut their army off from Medellin, but his order of battle was on a front of three miles, and he had no reserve. The Duke of Belluno, seeing this, instantly brought his centre a little forward, and then, reinforcing Latour Maubourg with ten guns and a battalion of grenadiers, and detaching a brigade of infantry as a support, ordered him to fall boldly on the advancing enemy; at the same time Lasalle, who was giving way under the pressure of his antagonist, was directed to retire towards Medellin, always refusing his left.

The Spaniards marched briskly forward into the plain, and a special body of cavalry, with three thousand infantry, running out from their left, met Latour Maubourg in front, while a regiment of hussars fell upon the French columns of grenadiers and guns in his rear. The hussars, being received with grape, a pelting fire of musketry, and a charge in flank by some dragoons, were beaten at once; but the Spanish infantry, closely followed by the rest of their own cavalry, came boldly up to Latour Maubourg's horse-

men, and with a rough discharge, forced them back in disorder. The French, however, soon rallied, and smashing the Spanish ranks with artillery, and fighting all together, broke in and overthrew their enemies, man and horse. Cuesta was wounded and fell, but, being quickly remounted, escaped.

While this was passing on the French right, Lasalle's cavalry, continually refusing its left, was brought fighting close up to the main body of the French infantry, which was now disposed on a new front, having a reserve behind the centre. Meanwhile Latour Maubourg's division was being re-formed on the ridge from whence the Spaniards had first descended, and the whole face of the battle was changed; for the Spanish left being put to flight, the French right wing overlapped the centre of their antagonist, and the long attenuated line of the latter wavering, disjointed, and disclosing wide chasms, was still advancing without an object.

The Duke of Belluno, aware that the decisive moment of the battle had arrived, was on the point of commanding a general attack, when his attention was arrested by the appearance of a column coming down on the rear of his right wing from the side of Mingabril. A brigade from the reserve, with four guns, was immediately sent to keep this body in check, while Lasalle's cavalry, taking ground to its left, unmasked the infantry in the centre, and the latter advancing, poured a heavy fire into the Spanish ranks; Latour Maubourg, sweeping round their left flank, then fell on the rear, and, at the same moment, Lasalle also galloped in upon the dismayed and broken bands. A horrible carnage ensued, for the French soldiers, while their strength would permit, continued to follow and strike, until three-fifths of the Spanish army wallowed in blood. Six guns and several thousand prisoners were taken; General Frias, deeply wounded, fell into the hands of the victor's, and so utter was the discomfiture, that for several days after, Cuesta could not rally a single battalion of infantry, and his cavalry was only saved by the speed of the horses.

Following General Sémélé's Journal, of which, however, I only possess an unauthenticated copy, the French loss did not exceed three hundred men; a number so utterly disproportionate to that of the vanquished as to be scarcely credible, and if correct, discovering a savage rigor in the pursuit by no means commendable; for it does not appear that any previous cruelties were perpetrated by the Spaniards to irritate the French soldiers. The right to slaughter an enemy in battle can neither be disputed nor limited; but a brave soldier should always have regard to the character of his country, and be sparing of the sword towards beaten men.

The main body of the French army passed the night of the 28th

near the field of battle ; but Latour Maubourg marched with the dragoons by the left bank of the Guadiana to Merida, leaving a detachment at Torre Mexia to watch the roads of Almendralego and Villa Franca, and to give notice if the remains of Cuesta's army should attempt to gain Badajos, in which case the dragoons had orders to intercept them at Loboa. The 29th, Villatte's division advanced as far as Villa Nueva de Serena, and the light cavalry were pushed on to Campanarios ; yet, as all the reports agreed that Cuesta, with a few horsemen, had taken refuge in the Sierra Morena, and that the remnants of his army were dispersed and wandering through the fields and along the by-roads, without any power of reuniting, the Duke of Belluno relinquished the pursuit. Having fixed his head-quarters at Merida, and occupied that place and Medellin with his infantry, he formed with his cavalry a belt extending from Loboa on the right to Mingabril on the left ; but from all this tract of country the people had fled, and even the great towns were deserted. Merida, situated in a richly cultivated basin, possessed a fine bridge and many magnificent remains of antiquity, Roman and Moorish ; amongst others, a castle built on the right bank of the river, close to the bridge, was so perfect that, in eight days, it was rendered capable of resisting any sudden assault ; six guns were mounted on the walls, a hospital for a thousand men was established there, and a garrison of three hundred men, with two months' stores and provisions for eight hundred, was put into it.

The King now repeated his orders, that the Duke of Belluno should enter Portugal, and that General Lapisse should march upon Abrantes. The former again remonstrated, on the ground that he could not make such a movement and defend his communications with Almaraz, unless the division of Lapisse was permitted to join him by the route of Alcantara. Nevertheless, as Badajos, although more capable of defence than it had been in December, when the fourth corps was at Merida, was still far from being secure ; and as many of the richer inhabitants, disgusted and fatigued with the violence of the mob government, were more inclined to betray the gates to the French than to risk a siege ; Victor, whose battering train (composed of only twelve pieces, badly horsed and provided) was still at Truxillo, opened a secret communication with the malcontents. The parties met at the village of Albuera, and everything was arranged for the surrender, when the peasants giving notice to the Junta that some treason was in progress, the latter arrested all the persons supposed to be implicated, and the project was baffled. The Duke of Belluno then resigned all further thoughts of Badajos, and contented himself with sending de-

tachments to Alcantara to get intelligence of General Lapisse, of whose proceedings it is now time to give some account.

OPERATIONS OF GENERAL LAPISSE.

This General, after taking Zamora in January, occupied Ledesma and Salamanca, where he was joined by General Maupetit's brigade of cavalry. Sir Robert Wilson's legion and the feeble garrisons in Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida were the only bodies in his front, and universal terror prevailed; yet he, although at the head of ten thousand men, with a powerful artillery, remained inactive from January to the end of March, and suffered Sir Robert, with a few hundred Portuguese, to vex his outposts, to intercept his provisions, to restrain his patrols, and even to disturb his infantry in their quarters. This conduct brought him into contempt, and enabled Wilson to infuse a spirit into the people which they were far from feeling when the enemy first appeared.

Don Carlos d'España, with a small Spanish force, being after a time placed under Sir Robert's command, the latter detached two battalions to occupy the pass of Baños, and Lapisse was thus deprived of any direct communication with Victor. In this situation the French General remained without making any vigorous effort, either to clear his front, or to get intelligence of the Duke of Dalmatia's march upon Oporto, until the beginning of April, when he advanced towards Bejar; but, finding the passes occupied, turned suddenly to his right, dissipated Wilson's posts on the Ecla, and forced the legion, then commanded by Colonel Grant, to take refuge under the guns of Ciudad Rodrigo. He summoned that town to surrender on the 6th, and, after a slight skirmish close to the walls, took a position between the Agueda and Ledesma. This event was followed by a general insurrection, from Ciudad Rodrigo to Alcantara and from Tamames to Bejar; for Lapisse, who had been again ordered by the King to fulfil the Emperor's instructions, and advance to Abrantes, instead of obeying, suddenly quitted his positions on the Agueda, and, without regarding his connection with the second corps, abandoned Leon, and made a rapid march, through the pass of Perales, upon Alcantara, followed closely by Sir Robert Wilson, Don Carlos d'España, the two battalions from Bejar, and a multitude of peasants, both Portuguese and Spanish.

At Alcantara, a corps of Spanish insurgents endeavored to defend the passage of the river, but the French broke through the intrenchments on the bridge, and with a full encounter carried the town, which they pillaged, and then joined the first corps at Merida, on the 19th of April. This false movement greatly injured the French cause. From that moment the conquering impulse given

by Napoleon was at an end, and his armies, ceasing to act on the offensive, became stationary or retrograded, while the British, Spanish, and Portuguese once more assumed the lead. The Duke of Dalmatia, abandoned to his own resources, and in total ignorance of the situation of the corps by which his movements should have been supported, was forced to remain in Oporto; and at the moment when the French combinations were thus paralyzed, the arrival of English reinforcements at Lisbon and the advance of Sir John Cradock towards Leiria, gave a sudden and violent impetus both to the Spaniards and Portuguese along the Beira frontier. The insurrection, no longer kept down by the presence of an intermediate French corps, connecting Victor's and Soult's forces, was thus put into full activity, from Alcantara on the Tagus to Amarante on the Tamega.

During this time Cuesta was gathering another host in the Morena. The simultaneous defeat of the armies in Estremadura and La Mancha had at first produced the greatest dismay in Andalusia; yet the Spaniards, when they found such victories as Ciudad Real and Medellin only leading to a stagnant inactivity on the part of the French, concluded that extreme weakness was the cause, and that the Austrian war had, or would, oblige Napoleon to abandon his projects against the Peninsula. This idea was general, and upheld the people's spirit and the Central Junta's authority, which could not otherwise have been maintained after such a succession of follies and disasters.

The misfortunes of the two Spanish Generals had been equal; but Cartoajal, having no popular influence, was dismissed, while Cuesta was appointed to command what remained of both armies; and the Junta, stimulated for a moment by the imminent danger in which they were placed, drew together all the scattered troops and levies in Andalusia, to reinforce him. To cover Seville, Cuesta took post in the defiles of Monasterio, and was there joined by eight hundred horse and two thousand three hundred infantry, drafted from the garrison of Seville; these were followed by thirteen hundred old troops from Cadiz, and by three thousand five hundred Granadian levies; and finally, eight thousand foot and two thousand five hundred horsemen, taken from the army of La Mancha, contributed to swell his numbers, until, in the latter end of April, they amounted to twenty-five thousand infantry, and six thousand cavalry. General Venegas, also, being recalled from Valencia, repaired to La Carolina, and proceeded to organize another army of La Mancha. Meanwhile Joseph, justly displeased at the false disposition made of Lapisse's division, directed that Alcantara should be immediately re-occupied. This, however, could not be

done without an action, which belongs to another combination, and shall be noticed hereafter; it is now proper to return to the operations on the Douro, which were intimately connected with those on the Guadiana.

CHAPTER IV.

The Bishop of Oporto flies to Lisbon, and joins the Regency—Humanity of Marshal Soult—The Anti-Braganza party revives in the north of Portugal—The leaders make proposals to Soult—He encourages them—Error arising out of this proceeding—Effects of Soult's policy—Assassination of Colonel Lameth—Execution at Arrifana—Distribution of the French troops—Franceschi opposed, on the Vouga, by Colonel Trant—Loison falls back behind the Souza—Hendelet marches to the relief of Tuy—The Spaniards, aided by some English frigates, oblige thirteen hundred French to capitulate at Vigo—Hendelet returns to Braga—The insurrection in the Entre Minho e Douro ceases—Silveira menaces Oporto—Laborde reinforces Loison, and drives Silveira over the Tamega—Gallant conduct and death of Colonel Patrick at Amarante—Combats at Amarante—French repulsed—Ingenious device of Captain Brochard—The bridge of Amarante carried by storm—Loison advances to the Douro—Is suddenly checked—Observations.

WHEN the Bishop of Oporto beheld, from his station at Sarea, the final overthrow of his ambitious schemes in the north of Portugal, he fled to Lisbon. There he reconciled himself to the Regency, became a member of that body, was soon after created Patriarch, and, as I shall have occasion to show, used his great influence in the most mischievous manner, discovering, on every occasion, the untamed violence and inherent falseness of his disposition.

The fall of Oporto enabled Marshal Soult to establish a solid base of operations, and to commence a regular system of warfare. The immediate fruit of his victory was the capture of immense magazines of powder; of a hundred and ninety-seven pieces of artillery, every gun of which had been used in the action, and of thirty English vessels, wind-bound in the river, loaded with wine and provisions for a month, which fell into his hands. Having repressed the disorders attendant on the battle, he adopted the same conciliatory policy which had marked his conduct at Chaves and Braga, and endeavored to remedy, as far as it was possible, the deplorable results of the soldiers' fury; recovering and restoring a part of the plunder, he caused the inhabitants remaining in the town to be treated with respect, and invited, by proclamation, all those who had fled to return. He demanded no contribution, and restraining with a firm hand the violence of his men, contrived, from

the captured public property, to support the army and even to succor the poorest and most distressed of the population.

But his ability in the civil and political administration of the Entre Minho e Douro produced an effect which he was not prepared for. The Prince Regent's desertion of the country was not forgotten. The national feeling was as adverse to Portugal being a dependency on the Brazils, as it was to the usurpation of the French; and the comparison between Soult's government and the horrible anarchy which preceded it, was all in favor of the former. His victories, and the evident vigor of his character, contrasted with the apparent supineness of the English, promised permanency for the French power, and the party, formerly noticed as being inimical to the house of Braganza, revived. The leaders, thinking this a favorable opportunity to execute their intention, waited upon the Duke of Dalmatia, and expressed their desire for a French prince and an independent government. They even intimated their good wishes towards the Duke himself, and demanded his concurrence and protection, while, in the name of the people, they declared that the Braganza dynasty was at an end.

Although unauthorized by the Emperor to accede to this proposition, Soult was yet unwilling to reject a plan from which he could draw such immediate and important military advantages. Napoleon was not a man to be lightly dealt with on such an occasion, but the Marshal, trusting that circumstances would justify him, encouraged the design, appointed men to civil employments, and raised a Portuguese legion of five battalions. He acted with so much dexterity, that in fifteen days the cities of Oporto and Braga, and the towns of Bacellos, Viana, Villa de Conde, Povia de Barcim, Feira, and Ovar, sent addresses containing the expression of their sentiments, and bearing the signatures of thirty thousand persons, as well of the nobles, clergy, and merchants, as of the people. These addresses were burnt when the French retreated from Oporto, but the fact that such a project was in agitation has never been denied; the Regency even caused inquest to be made on the matter, and it was then asserted that very few persons were found to be implicated. That many of the signatures were forged by the leaders, may readily be believed; but the policy of lessening the importance of the affair is also evident, and the inquisitors, if willing, could not have probed it to the bottom.

This transaction formed the ground-work of a tale, generally credited even by his own officers, that Soult perfidiously aimed at an independent crown. The circumstances were certainly such as might create suspicion; but that the conclusion was false, is shown by the mode in which Napoleon treated both the rumor and the

subject of it.* Slighting the former, he yet made known to his lieutenant that it had reached his ears, adding, "*I remember nothing but Austerlitz*,"† and at the same time largely increased the Duke of Dalmatia's command. On the other hand, the policy of Soult's conduct on this occasion, and the great influence, if not the numbers of the Portuguese malcontents, were abundantly proved by the ameliorated relations between the army and the peasantry.‡ The fierceness of the latter subsided; and even the priests abated of their hostility in the Entre Minho e Douro. The French soldiers were no longer assassinated in that province; whereas, previous to this intrigue, that cruel species of warfare had been carried on with infinite activity, and the most malignant passions called forth on both sides.

Among other instances of Portuguese ferocity, and of the truculent violence of the French soldiers, the death of Colonel Lameth, and the retaliation which followed, may be cited. That young officer, when returning from the Marshal's quarters to his own, was waylaid near the village of Arrifana, and murdered; his body was then stripped and mutilated in a shocking manner. This assassination, committed within the French lines, and at a time when Soult enforced the strictest discipline, was justifiable neither by the laws of war nor by those of humanity. No general could neglect to punish such a proceeding. The protection due to the army, and even the welfare of the Portuguese within the French jurisdiction, demanded a severe example; for the violence of the troops had hitherto been with difficulty restrained by their commanders, and if, at such a moment, he had appeared indifferent to their individual safety, his authority would have been set at nought, and the unmeasured indiscriminating vengeance of an insubordinate army executed.

Impressed with this feeling, and afflicted at the unhappy death of a personal friend, Soult directed General Thomières to march, with a brigade of infantry, to Arrifana, and punish the criminals. Thomières was accompanied by a Portuguese civilian, and, after a judicial inquiry, shot five or six persons whose guilt was said to have been proved; but it is certain that the principal actor, a Portuguese major of militia, and some of his accomplices, escaped across the Vouga to Colonel Trant, who, disgusted at their conduct, sent them to Marshal Beresford. It would also appear, from the statement of a peasant, that Thomières, or those under him, exceeded Soult's orders; for in that statement, attested by oath, it is said that twenty-

* Rovigo's Memoirs.

† Soult distinguished himself in that battle.

‡ S. Journal of Operations, MS.

four innocent persons were killed, and that the soldiers, after committing many atrocious excesses, burnt the village.

These details have been related partly because they throw a light upon the direful nature of this contest, but chiefly because the transaction has been adduced by other writers as proof of cruelty in Soult; a charge not to be sustained by the facts of this case, and belied by the general tenor of his conduct, which even his enemies, while they attributed it to an insidious policy, acknowledged at the time to be mild and humane.* And now, having finished this digression, in which the chronological order of events has been anticipated, I shall resume the narrative of military operations at that part where the disorders attendant on the battle of Oporto having been repressed, a fresh series of combinations were commenced, not less important than those which brought the French army down to the Douro.

The heavy blow struck on the 29th of March was followed up with activity. The boat-bridge was restored during the night; the forts of Mazinho and St. Joa de Foz surrendered; Franceschi's cavalry crossed the Douro, and taking post ten miles in advance on the Coimbra road, pushed patrols as far as the Vouga river. To support this cavalry, General Mermet's division occupied a position somewhat beyond the suburb of Villa Nova; Oporto itself was held by three brigades; the dragoons of Lorge were sent to Villa de Conde, a walled town situated at the mouth of the Ave; and General Caulincourt was directed up the Douro to Peñafiel, with a brigade of cavalry, having orders to clear the valley of the Tamega. Another brigade of cavalry was posted on the road leading to Barca de Trofa, to protect the rear of the army, and General Heudelet was directed to forward the hospitals from Braga to Oporto, but to hold his troop in readiness to open the communication with Tuy.

These dispositions being made, Soult had leisure to consider his general position. The flight of the Bishop had not much abated the hostility of the people, nor relieved the French from their difficulties; the communication with the Minho was still intercepted; the Tras os Montes was again in a state of insurrection; and Silveira, with a corps of eight thousand men, not only commanded the valley of the Tamega, but had advanced, after retaking Chaves, into the Entre Minho e Douro, posting himself between the Sierra de Catalina and the Douro. Lisbon, the ultimate object of the campaign, was two hundred miles distant, and covered by a British army, whose valor was to be dreaded, and whose numbers were daily increasing. A considerable body of natives were with Trant upon the Vouga, and Beresford's force between the Tagus and the Mondego, its disorderly and weak condition being unknown, appeared formidable at a distance. The day on which the second corps, fol-

* Appendix 8.

lowing the Emperor's instructions, should have reached Lisbon, was overpassed by six weeks, the line of correspondence with Victor was uncertain, and his co-operation could scarcely be calculated upon. Lapisse's division was yet unfelt as an aiding force, nor was it even known to Soult that he still remained at Salamanca: finally, the three thousand men expected from the Astorga country, under the conduct of the Marshal's brother, had not yet been heard of.

On the other hand, the Duke of Dalmatia had conquered a large and rich city; he had gained the military command of a very fertile country, from whence the principal supplies of the British army and of Lisbon were derived; he had obtained a secure base of operations and a prominent station in the kingdom; and if the people's fierceness was not yet quelled, they had learned to dread his talents, and to be sensible of their own inferiority in battle. In this state of affairs, judging that the most important objects were to relieve the garrison of Tuy and to obtain intelligence of Lapisse's division, Soult intrusted the first to Heudelet, and the second to Franceschi.

The last-named General had occupied Feira and Oliveira, and spread his posts along the Vouga; but the inhabitants fled to the other side of that river, and the rich valleys beyond were protected by Colonel Trant. This officer, well known to the Portuguese as having commanded their troops at Roriça and Vimiero, being at Coimbra when intelligence of the defeat at Braga arrived, had taken the command of all the armed men in that town, among which was a small body of volunteers, students at the university. The general dismay and confusion being greatly increased by the subsequent catastrophe at Oporto, the fugitives from that town and other places, accustomed to violence, and attributing every misfortune to treachery in the generals, flocked to Trant's standard; and he, as a foreigner, was enabled to assume an authority which no native of rank durst either have accepted or refused, without imminent danger. He soon advanced with eight hundred men to Sardao and Aveiro, where Eben and General Vittoria joined him, and the Conde de Barbacena brought him some cavalry. But as the people regarded these officers with suspicion, Trant retained the command, and his force was daily increased by the arrival of *ordenanza* and even regular troops, who abandoned Beresford's army to join him.

When Franceschi advanced, Trant sent a detachment by Castanheira to occupy the bridge of the Vouga; but the men, seized with a panic, dispersed, and this was followed by the desertion of many thousand *ordenanza*,—a happy circumstance, for the numbers that had at first collected behind the Vouga exceeded twelve thousand men, and their extreme violence and insubordination exciting

the utmost terror, impeded the measures necessary for defence. Trant, finally, retained about three thousand men, with which, imposing upon the French, he preserved a fruitful country from their incursions; he was, however, greatly distressed for money, because the Bishop of Oporto, in his flight, laid hands on all that was at Coimbra and carried it to Lisbon.

Franceschi, although reinforced with a brigade of infantry, contented himself with chasing some insurgents that infested his left flank, while his scouts, sent forward on the side of Viseu, endeavored to obtain information of Lapisse's division; but that General, as we have seen, was still beyond the Agueda; and while Franceschi was thus employed in front of the French army, Caulaincourt's cavalry on the Tamega was pressed by Silveira. And although Loison marched with a brigade of infantry to his assistance on the 9th of April, Silveira was too strong for both, and on the 12th, advancing from Canavezas, obliged Loison, after a slight action, to take post behind the Souza.

Meanwhile, Heudelet was hastening towards Tuy to recover the artillery and dépôts, from which the army had now been separated forty days. He was joined on the 6th of April, at Bacellos, by Lorge, who had taken Villa de Conde and cleared the coast line. The 7th they marched to Ponte de Lima, but the Portuguese resisted the passage vigorously, and it was not forced until the 8th. The 10th the French arrived in front of Valença, on the Minho. This fortress had been maltreated by the fire from Tuy, and the garrison, amounting to two hundred men, having only two days' provisions left, capitulated, on condition of being allowed to retire to their homes, and before the French could take possession, deserted the town. The garrison in Tuy, never having received the slightest intelligence of the army since the separation at Ribadavia, marvelled that the fire from Valença was discontinued, and their surprise was extreme when they beheld the French colors flying in that fort, and observed French videttes on the left bank of the Minho.

La Martinière's garrison, by the arrival of stragglers and a battalion of detachments that followed the army from St. Jago, had been increased to three thousand four hundred men; twelve hundred were in hospital, and two-thirds of the artillery-horses had been eaten in default of other food; the Portuguese had passed the Minho, and in conjunction with the Spaniards, attacked the place on the 15th of March; yet the French General, by frequent sallies, obliged them to keep up a distant blockade. The 22d of March, the defeat at Braga being known, the Portuguese repassed the Minho, the Spaniards dispersed, and La Martinière immediately

sent three hundred men to bring off the garrison of Vigo; it was too late, that place was taken, and the detachment with difficulty regained Tuy.

The peasants on the Arosa estuary had, as I have before noticed, risen, the 27th of February, while Soult was still at Orense; they were headed, at first, by General Silva and by the Count de Mezeda, and finally, a Colonel Barrois, sent by the Central Junta, took the command. As their numbers were very considerable, Barrois with one part attacked Tuy, and Silva, assisted by the *Lively* and *Venus*, British frigates on that station, invested Vigo. The garrison of the latter place was at first small, but the paymaster-general of the second corps, instead of proceeding to Tuy, entered Vigo, with the military chest and an escort of eight hundred men, and was blockaded there; nevertheless, after some slight attacks had been repulsed, the French governor negotiated for a capitulation on the 23d of March; distrustful however of the peasantry, he was still undecided on the 26th, and meanwhile, some of Romana's stragglers coming from the Val des Orres, collected between Tuy and Vigo; and Pablo Murillo, a regular officer, assembling fifteen hundred retired soldiers, joined the blockading force. His troops acting in concert with Captain Mackinley, of the *Lively*, obliged the garrison to surrender on terms.* The 27th, thirteen hundred men and officers, including three hundred sick, marched out with the honors of war, and having laid down their arms on the glacis, were embarked for an English port, according to the articles agreed upon. Four hundred and forty-seven horses, sixty-two covered wagons, some stores, and the military chest, containing five thousand pounds, fell into the victor's hands. The Spaniards then renewed their attack on Tuy; the Portuguese once more crossed the Minho, and the siege continued until the 10th of April, when the place was relieved by Heudelet.

The dépôts and the artillery were immediately transported across the river, and directed upon Oporto. The following day General Maucune, with a division of the sixth corps, arrived at Tuy, with the intention of carrying off the garrison, but seeing that the place was relieved, returned. Heudelet, after taking Viana, and the fort of Insoa, at the mouth of the Minho, placed a small garrison in the former, and blowing up the works of Valença, retired to Braga and Bacellos, sending Lorge again to Villa de Conde. The French sick were transported in boats along shore, from the mouth of the Minho to Viana, Villa de Conde, and thence to Oporto, and while these transactions were taking place on the Minho, La Houssaye, with a brigade of dragoons and one of infantry, scoured the coun-

* Captain Mackinley's Despatch.

try between the Lima and the Cavado, and so protected the rear of Heudelet.

All resistance in the Entre Minho e Douro had now ceased, because the influence of the *Anti-Braganza* party was exerted in favor of the French; but, on the *Tras os Montes* side, Silveira was advancing, and being joined by Botilho, from the Lima, boasted that he would be in Oporto the 15th. This unexpected boldness was explained by the news of Chaves having fallen, which now, for the first time, reached Soult. He then perceived that while Silveira was in arms, the tranquillity of the Entre Minho e Douro could only be momentary, and therefore directed Laborde with a brigade of infantry to join Loison and attack the Portuguese General by Amarante, while La Houssaye, crossing the Cavado, should push through Guimaraens for the same point.

The 15th, Laborde reached Peñafiel, and Silveira, hearing of La Houssaye's march, retired to Villamea. The 18th, Laborde drove back the Portuguese without difficulty, and their retreat soon became a flight. Silveira himself passed the Tamega at Amarante, and was making for the mountains, without a thought of defending that town, when Colonel Patrick, a British officer in the Portuguese service, encouraging his battalion, faced about, and rallying the fugitives, beat back the foremost of the enemy. This becoming act obliged Silveira to return, and while Patrick defended the approaches to the bridge on the right bank with obstinate valor, the former took a position, on the left bank, on the heights overlooking the suburb of Villa Real.

The 19th, La Houssaye arrived, the French renewed their attack on the town, and Patrick again baffled their efforts; but when that gallant man, being mortally wounded, was carried across the bridge, the defence slackened, and the Portuguese went over the Tamega: the passage of the river was, however, still to be effected. The bridges of Mondin and Cavez above, and that of Canavezas below Amarante, were destroyed; the Tamega was in full flood, with a deep rocky bed; the bridge in front of the French was mined, barred with three rows of palisades, and commanded by a battery of ten guns; the Portuguese were in position on the heights beyond, and could from thence discern all that passed on the bridge, and reinforce their advanced guard which was posted in the suburb.

PASSAGE OF THE TAMEGA, AT AMARANTE.

Laborde at first endeavored to work a way over by the flying sap. He reached the barricade the 20th of April, but the Portuguese fire was so deadly that he soon relinquished this method and

sought to construct a bridge of tressels half a mile below; which failed, and the efforts against the stone bridge were renewed. The 27th, the centre barricade was burned by Captain Brochard, an engineer, who then devised a method of forcing a passage so singularly bold, that all the generals, and especially Foy, were opposed to it. Nevertheless it was transmitted to Oporto, and Soult despatched General Hulot to examine its merits on the spot, who approved of it.

It appeared that the Portuguese mine was so constructed that while the muzzle of a loaded musket was in the chamber, a string tied to the trigger passed over the trenches and secured the greatest precision for the explosion. Brochard therefore proceeded in the following manner. In the night of the 2d of May, the French troops were conveniently disposed as near the head of the bridge as the necessity of keeping them hidden would permit; at eight o'clock, although the moon shone bright, twenty men were sent a little below the bridge to open an oblique fire against the intrenchments, and this being replied to and the attention of the Portuguese diverted to that side, a sapper, dressed in dark gray, crawled out, pushing with his head a barrel of powder, which was likewise enveloped in gray cloth to deaden the sound, along that side of the bridge which was darkened by the shadow of the parapet; when he had placed his barrel against the intrenchment covering the Portuguese mine, he retired in the same manner. Two others followed in succession, and retired without being discovered; but the fourth, after placing his barrel, rose to run back, and was immediately shot at and wounded. The fire of the Portuguese was then directed on the bridge itself, but as the barrels were not discovered, it soon ceased, and a fifth sapper, advancing like the others, attached a sausage seventy yards long to the barrels. At two o'clock in the morning the whole was completed, the French kept very quiet, and the Portuguese remained tranquil and unsuspecting.

Brochard had calculated that the effect of four barrels exploding together would destroy the Portuguese intrenchments, and burn the cord attached to their mine. The event proved that he was right, for a thick fog arising about three o'clock in the morning, the sausage was fired, and the explosion made a large breach. Brochard, with his sappers, instantly jumped on the bridge, threw water into the mine, cut away all obstacles, and, followed by a column of grenadiers, was at the other side before the smoke cleared away. The grenadiers being supported by other troops, not only the suburb, but the camp on the height behind were carried without a check, and the Portuguese dispersing, fled over the mountains. The execution of this bold, ingenious, and successful

project, cost only seven or eight men killed; while in the former futile attempts above a hundred and eighty men, besides many engineer and artillery officers, had fallen. It is, however, a singular fact, that there was a practicable ford near the bridge, unguarded, and apparently unknown to both sides.

A short time after the passage of the Tamega, Heudelet, marching from Braga by Guimaraens, entered Amarante; Laborde occupied the position abandoned by Silveira, and sent detachments up the left bank of the river to Mondin, while Loison pursued the fugitives. The Portuguese at the bridge of Canavezas, hearing of the action, destroyed the ammunition, and retired across the Douro. Over that river also went the inhabitants of Mezamfrio and Villa Real, when Loison, on the 6th of May, appeared in their vicinity.

This being made known to Soult, he reinforced Loison, and directed him to scour the right bank of the Douro as high as Pezo de Ragoa; to complete the destruction of Silveira's army, and, with a view to the reduction of the *Tras os Montes*, to patrol towards Braganza, on which side Bessières had been asked to co-operate. That Marshal was, however, gone to France, and the reply of his successor Kellermann being intercepted, it appeared that he was unable or unwilling to afford any aid.

Laborde was now recalled to Oporto, with two regiments of infantry, another regiment and a brigade of dragoons were left to guard the communications with Amarante, and meanwhile Loison, meeting with resistance at Pezo de Ragoa, and observing a considerable movement on the opposite bank of the Douro, became alarmed, and fell back to Mezamfrio. The 8th he returned to Amarante, but his march was harassed by the peasantry, with a vigor and boldness that indicated the vicinity of some powerful support, and in truth a new actor had appeared; the whole country was in commotion, and the Duke of Dalmatia felt himself suddenly pushed backward by a strong and eager hand.

OBSERVATIONS.—SPANISH OPERATIONS.

1. The great pervading error of the Spaniards in this campaign was the notion that their armies were capable of taking the lead in offensive movements, and fighting the French in open countries; whereas, to avoid general actions should have been with them a vital principle.

2. The resolution to fight the French having been unfortunately adopted, the second great error was the attaching equal importance to the lines of operation in La Mancha and Estremadura; the one should have been considered only as an accessory. It is evident:

that the first rank belonged to La Mancha, because it was in a more open country; because it more immediately threatened Madrid; and because a defeat there endangered Seville more than a defeat in Estremadura would have done. In La Mancha the beaten Spanish army must have fallen back upon Seville, in Estremadura it might have retired upon Badajos. But the latter place being defensible, and to the Spaniards of infinitely less importance than Madrid was to their opponents, the lead in the campaign must always have belonged to the army of La Mancha, which could, at any time, have obliged the French to fight a battle for the capital. The army of Estremadura might, therefore, have been safely reduced to fifteen thousand men, provided the army of La Mancha had been increased to forty or fifty thousand; and it would appear that, with a very little energy, the Junta could have provided a larger force. It is true that they would have been beaten just the same, but that is only an argument against fighting great battles, which was, certainly, the worst possible plan for the Spaniards to pursue.

3. The third great error was the inertness of Valencia and Murcia, or rather their hostility, for they were upon the verge of civil war with the Supreme Junta. Those provinces, so rich and populous, had been unmolested for eight months; they had suffered nothing from Moncey's irruption, they had received large succors from the English government, and Valencia had written her pretensions to patriotism in the bloody characters of assassination; yet were it not for the force under Llamas, which, after the defeat of Tudela, helped to defend Zaragoza, Valencia and Murcia might have been swallowed up by the ocean without any sensible effect upon the general cause. Those countries were, however, admirably situated to serve as a support to Aragon, Catalonia, Andalusia, and La Mancha, and they could, at this time, have paralyzed a large French force, by marching an army to San Clemente. It was the dread of their doing so that made the King restrain Sebastiani from pursuing his victory at Ciudad Real;* and assuredly, the Valencians should have moved; for it is not so much in their numbers as in the variety of their lines of operation that a whole people find their advantage in opposing regular armies. This, the observation of that profound and original writer, General Lloyd, was confirmed by the practice of Napoleon in Spain.

FRENCH OPERATIONS.

1. To get possession of Seville and Cadiz was certainly as great an object with Napoleon as to seize Lisbon, but the truth of

* Parl. Papers, 1810.

the maxim quoted above regulated the Emperor's proceedings. If Victor had been directed at once upon Andalusia, the Portuguese and Valencians could have carried their lines of operations upon his flanks and rear; if Badajos and Lisbon had been the objects of his march, the Andalusians could have fallen on his left flank and cut his communications. Now all such dangers were avoided by the march of Soult and Lapisse; their direction was not only concentric, but a regular prolongation of the great line of communication with France. Ney protected the rear of one, Bessières, the rear of the other, and those two marshals, also, separated and cut off the Asturias from the rest of Spain; thus, all that was formidable was confined to the south of the Tagus. For the same reason the course of conquest was to have proceeded from Portugal to Andalusia, which would then have been assailed both in front and flank, while the fourth corps held the Valencians in check. By this plan the French would never have lost their central position, nor exposed their grand line of communication to a serious attack.

2. That this plan, so wisely conceived in its general bearing, should fail, without any of the different corps employed having suffered a defeat, nay, when they were victorious in all quarters, is surprising, but not inexplicable. It is clear that Napoleon's orders were given at a time when he did not expect that a battle would have been fought at Coruña, or that the second corps would have suffered so much from the severity of the weather and the length of the marches; neither did he anticipate the resistance made by the Portuguese, between the Minho and the Douro. The last error was a consequence of the first, for his plans were calculated upon the supposition that the rapidity of Soult's movements would forestall all defence; yet the delay cannot be charged as a fault to that Marshal, whose energy was conspicuous.

3. Napoleon's attention, divided between Austria and Spain, must have been somewhat distracted by the multiplicity of his affairs. He does not seem to have made allowance for the very rugged country through which Soult had to march, at a season when all the rivers and streams were overflowing; and as the combinations of war were continually changing, the delay thus occasioned rendered Lapisse's instructions faulty; for, although it be true, that if the latter had marched by Guardia upon Abrantes while Soult advanced to Lisbon by Coimbra and Victor entered the Alemtejo, Portugal would have been conquered without difficulty; yet the combination was so wide, and the communications so uncertain, that unity of action could not be insured. Soult, weakened by the obstacles he encountered, required reinforcements after the taking of Oporto,

and if Lapisse, attaching himself to Soult's instead of Victor's incursion, had then marched upon Viseu, the Duke of Dalmatia would have been enabled to win his way without regard to the co-operation in the Alemtejo.

4. The first error of the French, if the facts are correctly shown, must therefore be attributed to Napoleon, because he overlooked the probable chances of delay, combined the operations on too wide a scale, and gave Ciudad Rodrigo and Abrantes, instead of Lamego and Viseu, for the direction of Lapisse's march. I say, if the facts are correctly shown, for it is scarcely discreet to censure Napoleon's military dispositions, however erroneous they may *appear* to have been, and it is certain that, in this case, his errors, if errors they were, although sufficient to embarrass his lieutenants, will not account for their entire failure. Above sixty thousand men were put in motion by him, upon good military principles, for the subjugation of Lisbon; we must therefore search in the particular conduct of the generals for the reason why a *project of Napoleon's, to be executed by sixty thousand French veterans, should have ended as idly and ineffectually as if it had been concocted by the Spanish Junta.*

OBSERVATIONS ON THE SEPARATE OPERATIONS OF LAPISSE,
VICTOR, SOULT, ROMANA, SILVEIRA, AND CUESTA.

LAPISSE.

1. An intercepted letter of General Maupetit shows the small pains taken by Lapisse to communicate with Soult. He directs that *even so many* as three hundred men should patrol towards Tras os Montes, to obtain information of the second corps, at a time when the object was so important that his whole force should have moved in mass rather than have failed of intelligence.

2. The manner in which he suffered Sir Robert Wilson to gather strength and to insult his outposts was inexcusable. He might have marched straight upon Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, and dispersed everything in his front; one of those fortresses would probably have fallen, if not both, and from thence a strong detachment pushed towards Lamego would not only have ascertained the situation of the second corps, but would have greatly aided its progress by threatening Oporto and Braga. It cannot be urged that Salamanca required the presence of a large force, because, in that open country, the people were at the mercy of Bessières' cavalry, and so sensible were the local junta of this, that both Salamanca and Ledesma refused assistance from Ciudad Rodrigo, when it was offered, and preferred a quiet submission.

3. When, at last, the King's reiterated orders obliged Lapisse