

He refused their offers; and, the 4th of September, his headquarters were established at Badajos. Meanwhile, Romana, delivering over his army to the Duke del Parque, repaired to Seville; and Venegas again advanced into La Mancha, but at the approach of a very inferior force of the enemy, retired, with all the haste and confusion of a rout, to the Morena. The English troops were then distributed in Badajos, Elvas, Campo Mayor, and other places, on both banks of the Guadiana; the brigades already in Portugal were brought up to the army, and the lost ammunition and equipments were replaced from the magazines at Lisbon, Abrantes, and Santarem; Beresford, leaving some light troops and militia on the frontier, retired to Thomar, and this eventful campaign of two months terminated.

The loss of the army was considerable; above three thousand five hundred men had been killed, or had died of sickness, or fallen into the enemy's hands. Fifteen hundred horses had perished from want of food, exclusive of those lost in battle; the spirits of the soldiers were depressed, and a heart-burning hatred of the Spaniards was engendered by the treatment all had endured. To fill the cup, the pestilent fever of the Guadiana, assailing bodies which fatigue and bad nourishment had already predisposed to disease, made frightful ravages; dysentery, that scourge of armies, raged, and, in a short time, above five thousand men died in the hospitals.

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## CHAPTER IX.

General observations on the campaign—Comparison between the operations of Sir John Moore and Sir A. Wellesley.

### OBSERVATIONS.

DURING this short, but important campaign, the armies on both sides acted in violation of the maxim which condemns "*double external lines of operation*," but the results vindicated the soundness of the rule. Nothing permanent or great, nothing proportionate to the number of the troops, the vastness of the combinations, or the reputation of the commanders, was achieved; yet, neither Sir Arthur Wellesley, nor the Duke of Dalmatia, nor Marshal Jourdan can be justly censured, seeing that the two last were controlled by the King, and the first by circumstances of a peculiar nature. The French Marshals were thwarted by superior authority; and the English General, commanding an auxiliary

force, was obliged to regulate his movements, not by his own military views, but by the actual state of the Spaniards' operations, and with reference to the politics and temper of that people.

La Mancha was the true line by which to act against Madrid; but the British army was on the frontier of Portugal, the Junta refused Cadiz as a place of arms, and without Cadiz, or some other fortified sea-port, neither prudence nor his instructions would permit Sir Arthur to hazard a great operation on that side; hence he adopted, not what was most fitting in a military sense, but what was least objectionable among the few plans that could be concerted at all with the Spanish generals and government. Now, the latter being resolved to act with strong armies, both in Estremadura and La Mancha, the English General had but to remain on a miserable defensive system in Portugal, or to unite with Cuesta in the valley of the Tagus. His territorial line of operations was therefore a matter of necessity, and any fair criticism must be founded on the management of his masses after it was chosen. That he did not greatly err in his conception of the campaign is to be inferred from the fact, that Napoleon, Soult, Victor, and Jourdan simultaneously expected him upon the very line he followed. He was thwarted by Cuesta at every step, Venegas failed to aid him, and the fatal error relative to Soult's forces under which he labored throughout, vitiated all his operations; yet he shook the intrusive monarch roughly, in the midst of fifty thousand men.

Let the project be judged, not by what did happen, but by what would have happened, if Cuesta had been active, and if Venegas had performed his part loyally. The junction of the British and Spanish forces was made at Naval Moral, on the 22d of July. The Duke of Belluno, with twenty-one thousand men, was then in position behind the Alberche, the fourth corps near Madrilejos in La Mancha, and Joseph at Madrid, where General Foy had just arrived, to concert Soult's movement upon Placentia. It is evident that the King and Sebastiani could not reach the scene of action before the 25th or 26th of July, nor could Soult influence the operations before the 1st or 2d of August. If, then, the allied army, being sixty thousand strong, with a hundred pieces of artillery, had attacked Victor on the morning of the 23d, it is to be presumed that the latter would have been beaten, and obliged to retreat, either upon Madrid or Toledo; but the country immediately in his rear was open, and ten thousand horsemen could have been launched in the pursuit. Sir Robert Wilson, also, would have been on Victor's flank, if, neglecting a junction with the fourth corps, that Marshal had taken the road to Madrid; and if that of Toledo.

the first and fourth corps would have been separated from the King, who did not reach Vargas until the evening of the 25th, but who would not, in this case, have been able to advance at all beyond Naval Carneiro.

Now, admitting that, by superior discipline and experience, the French troops had effected their retreat on either line without any serious calamity, what would have followed?

1. If Victor joined the King, the latter could only have retired, by Guadalaxara, upon the third corps, or have gone by the Guadarama towards Soult.

2. If Victor joined Sebastiani, the two corps must have retreated to Guadalaxara, and the King would have joined them there, or, as before said, have pushed for the Guadarama to join Soult.

No doubt that Marshal, having so powerful an army, would, in either case, have restored Joseph to his capital, and have cut off Sir Arthur's communication with Portugal by the valley of the Tagus. Nevertheless, a great moral impression would have been produced by the temporary loss of Madrid, which was, moreover, the general dépôt of all the French armies; and, meanwhile, Venegas, Cuesta, and Sir Arthur Wellesley would have been united, and on one line of operations, (that of La Mancha,) which, under such circumstances, would have forced the Junta to consent to the occupation of Cadiz. In this view it must be admitted that the plan was conceived with genius.

Victor's position on the Alberche was, however, strong; he commanded twenty-five thousand veterans; and, as the Spaniards were very incapable in the field, it may be argued that a general movement of the whole army to Escalona, and from thence to Maqueda, would have been preferable to a direct attack at Salinas; because the allies, if thus suddenly placed in the midst of the French corps, might have beaten them in detail, and would certainly have cut the King off from the Guadarama, and forced him back upon the Guadalaxara. But, with Cuesta for a colleague, how could a general undertake an operation requiring celerity and the nicest calculation?

The false dealing of the Junta no prudence could guard against, but experience proves that, without extraordinary good fortune, some accident will always happen to mar the combinations of armies acting upon "*double external lines*." And so it was with respect to Venegas; for that General, with a force of twenty-six thousand men, suffered himself to be held in check for five days by three thousand French, and at the battle of Almonacid showed that he knew neither when to advance nor when to retreat.

The patience with which Sir Arthur Wellesley bore the foolish

insults of Cuesta, and the undaunted firmness with which he sought to protect the Spanish army, require no illustration. When the latter fell back from St. Ollalla on the 26th, it was impossible for the British to retreat with honor; and there is nothing more memorable in the history of this war, nothing more creditable to the personal character of the English chief, than the battle of Talavera, considered as an isolated event. Nevertheless, that contest proved that the allies were unable to attain their object; for, notwithstanding Victor's ill-judged partial attacks on the night of the 27th and morning of the 28th, and notwithstanding the final repulse of the French, all the advantages of the movements, as a whole, were with the latter. They were, on the 31st of July, including the garrison of Toledo, still above forty thousand men, and they maintained their central position, although it was not until the 1st of August that Soult's approach caused any change in the views of the allied generals; and this brings us to the fundamental error of Sir Arthur Wellesley's operations.

That so able a commander should engage himself in the narrow valley of the Tagus with twenty thousand British and forty thousand Spanish troops, when fifty thousand French were waiting for him at the further end, and above fifty thousand more were hanging on his flank and rear, shows that the greatest masters of the art may err: but he who wars, walks in a mist through which the keenest eyes cannot always discern the right path. "*Speak to me of a general who has made no mistakes in war,*" said Turenne, "*and you speak of one who has seldom made war.*"

Sir Arthur Wellesley thus excused his error: "When I entered Spain I had reason to believe that I should be joined by a Spanish army in such a respectable state of discipline and efficiency, as that it had kept in check, during nearly three months after a defeat, a French army, at one time superior, and at no time much inferior.

"I had likewise reason to believe that the French corps in the north of Spain were fully employed; and although I had heard of the arrival of Marshal Soult at Zamora, on the 29th of June, with a view to equip the remains of his corps, I did not think it possible that three French corps, consisting of thirty-four thousand men, under three marshals, could have been assembled at Salamanca without the knowledge of the governor of Ciudad Rodrigo, or of the Junta of Castile; that these corps could have been moved from their stations in Galicia, the Asturias, and Biscay, without setting free, for general operations, any Spanish troops which had been opposed to them, or without any other inconvenience to the enemy than that of protracting to a later period the settlement

of his government in those provinces; and that they could have penetrated into Estremadura, without a shot being fired at them by the troops deemed sufficient to defend the passes by the Spanish generals."

Thus it was that, like the figures in a phantasmagoria, the military preparations of Spain, however menacing in appearance, were invariably found to be vain and illusory. That Sir Arthur Wellesley's error was not fatal is to be attributed to three causes:

1. The reluctance of Marshal Ney to quit Astorga;
2. The march of the fifth corps upon Villa Castin instead of Salamanca;
3. The vehemence with which Victor urged the battle of Talavera: in short, jealousy among the marshals, and the undecided temper of the King.

If Soult had not been thwarted, he would have concentrated the three corps near Salamanca before the 20th, and he would have reached Placentia before the 28th of July. The allies must then have forced their way into La Mancha, or been crushed; but could they have done the former without another battle? without the loss of all the wounded men? could they have done it at all? The British, including Robert Craufurd's brigade, were seventeen thousand fighting men on the 29th, yet wasted with fatigue and hunger. The Spaniards were above thirty thousand; but in them no trust could be placed for an effort requiring fine discipline and courage of the highest order. The intrusive King was at the head of forty thousand good troops. Venegas, at once ignorant and hampered by the intrigues of the Junta, was as nought in the operations, while Soult's step, stealthy when the situation of affairs was obscure, would have been impetuous when a light broke on the field of battle; it is scarcely possible to conceive that the allies could have forced their way in front before that Marshal would have fallen on their rear.

#### FRENCH OPERATIONS.

Joseph was finally successful; yet it may be safely affirmed that, with the exception of uniting his three corps behind the Guadarama, on the evening of the 25th, his proceedings were an almost uninterrupted series of errors. He would not suffer Soult to besiege Ciudad Rodrigo with seventy thousand men, in the end of July. To protect Madrid from the army of Venegas overbalanced, in his mind, the advantages of this bold and grand project, which would inevitably have drawn Sir Arthur Wellesley from the Tagus, and which, interrupting all military communication between the northern and southern provinces, and insuring possession of Castile and Leon, would, by its success, have opened a broad way to Lisbon.

Cuesta and Venegas, meanwhile, would have marched against Madrid!—Cuesta and Venegas, acting on external lines, and whose united force did not exceed sixty-five thousand men! The King, holding a central position, with fifty thousand French veterans, was alarmed at this prospect, and, rejecting Soult's plan, drew Mortier, with the fifth corps, to Villa Castin. Truly, this was to avoid the fruit-tree from fear of a nettle at its stem!

Sir Arthur Wellesley's advance to Talavera was the result of this great error; but he having thus incautiously afforded Soult an opportunity of striking a fatal blow, a fresh combination was concerted. The King, with equal judgment and activity, then united all his own forces near Toledo, separated Venegas from Cuesta, pushed back the latter upon the English army, and obliged both to stand on the defensive, with eyes attentively directed to their front, when the real point of danger was in the rear. This indeed was skilful; but the battle of Talavera which followed was a palpable, an enormous fault. The allies could neither move forward nor backward, without being infinitely worse situated for success than in that strong position, which seemed marked out by fortune herself for their security. Until the 31st, the operations of Venegas were not even felt; hence, till the 31st, the French position on the Alberche might have been maintained without danger; and, on the first of August, the head of Soult's column was at Placentia.

Let us suppose that the French had merely made demonstrations on the 28th, and had retired behind the Alberche the 29th, would the allies have dared to attack them in that position? The conduct of the Spaniards, on the evening of the 27th, answers the question; and moreover, Joseph, with an army compact, active, and experienced, could with ease have baffled any efforts of the combined forces to bring him to action; he might have covered himself by the Guadarama river and by the Tagus in succession; and the farther he led his opponents from Talavera, without uncovering the line of La Mancha, the more certain the effect of Soult's operation; but here we have another proof that double external lines are essentially vicious.

The combined movement of the French was desirable, from the greatness of the object to be gained, and safe, from the powerful force on each point; and the occasion was so favorable that, notwithstanding the imprudent heat of Victor, the reluctance of Ney, and the unsteady temper of the King, the fate of the allies was, up to the evening of the 3d, heavy in the scale. Nevertheless, as the central position held by the allies cut the line of correspondence between Joseph and Soult, the King's despatches were intercepted, and the whole operation, even at the last hour, was thus baffled

The first element of success in war is, that everything should emanate from a single head; and it would have been preferable that the King, drawing the second and fifth corps to him by the pass of the Guadarama, or by that of Avila, should, with the eighty thousand men thus united, have fallen upon the allies in front. Such a combination, although of less brilliant promise than the one adopted, would have been more sure; and the less a general trusts to fortune, the better. She is capricious!

When one Spanish army was surprised at Arzobispo, another completely beaten at Almonacid, and when Wilson's Portuguese corps was dispersed at Baños, the Junta had just completed the measure of their folly by quarrelling with the British, which was the only force left that could protect them. The French were in truth, therefore, the masters of the Peninsula, but they terminated their operations at the very moment when they should have pursued them with redoubled activity, because the general aspect of affairs and the particular circumstances of the campaign were alike favorable. For Napoleon was victorious in Germany; and of the British expeditions against Italy and Holland, the former had scarcely struggled into life—the latter was already corrupting in death. Hence, Joseph might have been assured that he would receive reinforcements, but that none, of any consequence, could reach his adversaries; and, in the Peninsula, there was nothing to oppose him. Navarre, Biscay, Aragon, and the Castiles were subdued; Gerona closely beleaguered, and the rest of Catalonia, if not quiescent, totally unable to succor that noble city. Valencia was inert; the Asturias still trembling; in Galicia there was nothing but confusion. Romana, commanding fifteen thousand infantry, but neither cavalry nor artillery, was then at Coruña, and dared not quit the mountains. The Duke del Parque held Ciudad Rodrigo, but was in no condition to make head against more than a French division. The battle of Almonacid had cleared La Mancha of troops. Estremadura and Andalusia were, as we have seen, weak, distracted, and incapable of solid resistance. There remained only the English and Portuguese armies, the one being at Jaraicejo, the other at Moraleja.

The line of resistance may, therefore, be said to have extended from the Sierra Morena to Coruña—weak from its length; weaker, that the allied corps, being separated by mountains, by rivers, and by vast tracts of country, and having different bases of operation, such as Lisbon, Seville, and Ciudad Rodrigo, could not act in concert, except offensively; and with how little effect in that way the campaign of Talavera had proved! But the French were concentrated in a narrow space, and, having only Madrid to cover, were

advantageously situated for offensive or defensive movements. The allied forces were, for the most part, imperfectly organized, and would not, all together, have amounted to ninety thousand fighting men. The French were above one hundred thousand, dangerous from their discipline and experience—more dangerous that they held a central position, and that their numbers were unknown to their opponents; and, moreover, having in four days gained one general and two minor battles, their courage was high and eager.

At this period, by the acknowledgment of Spaniards themselves, the fate of the country depended entirely upon the British troops, and doubtless the latter were soldiers of no ordinary stamp; yet there is a limit to human power, in war as well as in other matters.\* Sir Arthur Wellesley was at the head of some seventeen thousand men, of all arms, and about five thousand were between Lisbon and Alcantara; but the whole French army could, in two days, have been concentrated in the valley of the Tagus. Soult alone, of all the associated generals, appears to have viewed this crisis with the eye of a great commander. Had he been permitted to follow up the attack at Arzobispo, on the 8th of August, what could the seventeen thousand starving British troops, encumbered with the terror-stricken Spaniards, have effected against the seventy thousand French that would have stormed their positions on three sides at once? The hardy, enduring English infantry might, indeed, have held their ground in one battle, but could they have fought a second? Would not a movement of the first corps by Guadalupe, would not famine alone, have forced the ten or twelve thousand men remaining (if, indeed, so many were left) to abandon the banks of the Tagus—to abandon, also, their parcels of ammunition and their wounded men, and to retreat towards Portugal?—and to retreat also with little hope, harassed, as they would have been, by six thousand horsemen?—for Soult had eighteen regiments of cavalry.

Let it be supposed, however, that the strength of the Meza d'Ibor and the Mirabete had baffled all the enemy's efforts, and that, seeing the allies fixed in those positions, the sixth corps, in pursuance of Soult's second proposal, had crossed the frontier of Portugal: Sir Arthur Wellesley, contemplating such an event, affirmed that he meant to follow them in any movement they might make against Lisbon.† There were, however, two ways of following, the one by the south and the other by the north bank of the Tagus. Now, if he designed to cross the Tagus at the Cardinal's bridge, and so, connecting his right with Beresford, to hang on the

\* See Calvo, Garay, and Lord Wellesley's Correspondence, Parl. Papers, 1810

† Parl. Papers, 1810.



enemy's rear, it could only have been while he was ignorant of Venegas's defeat, and when he imagined the French to have but thirty thousand men in the valley of the Tagus; but they had above seventy thousand; and, without endangering Madrid, they could have invaded Portugal with, at least, fifty thousand men under arms. If, on the other hand, he designed to move by the south side of the Tagus, the French line of march upon Abrantes and Lisbon was shorter than his; and Beresford, who only reached Moraleja on the 12th, would have been cut off, and thrown back upon Almeida. It is true that Marshal Ney alleged the difficulty of feeding the troops in the country about Placentia and Coria, and the prudence of Soult's project might, in that respect, have been somewhat questionable. But the Duke of Elchingen was averse to *any* invasion of Portugal, and, to an unwilling mind, difficulties enlarge beyond their due proportion; moreover, his talents were more remarkable in a battle than in the dispositions for a campaign, and Soult's opinion must, on this occasion, be allowed greater weight; because the Vera de Placentia and the valleys of the Bejar and the Gata mountains were exceedingly fertile, and had been little injured, and the object was, not to fix a base of operations, but to obtain a momentary subsistence until a richer country could be opened.

Admitting, however, that a march on Lisbon was not feasible at that moment, there could have been no well-founded objection to the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, which Soult again proposed. The Emperor's instructions were indeed pleaded, but those were general, and founded on the past errors of the campaign, which made him doubtful of the future; they were not applicable to the peculiar circumstances of the moment, and would have been disregarded by a general with a tinge of his own genius. Fortunately for Spain, the intrusive King was not a great commander; when he might have entered the temple of victory with banners flying, he stretched himself at the threshold and slept.

The departure of the English army was a remarkable epoch in the Peninsular war. The policy of combining operations with the Spanish armies, and of striking directly at the great masses of the French, had been fairly acted upon, and had failed; and the long cherished delusion relative to Spanish enthusiasm and Spanish efficiency, was at last dissipated. The transactions of the campaign of 1809 form a series of practical comments upon the campaign of 1808. All the objections which had been made to Sir John Moore's conduct, being put to the test of experience, proved illusory, while the soundness of that General's views was confirmed in every particular. The leading events of the two campaigns bear a striking resemblance to each other.

Both Sir Arthur Wellesley and Sir John Moore advanced from Portugal to *aid the Spanish armies*. The first General commanded about twenty thousand, the last about twenty-three thousand men; but there was this difference: that, in 1808, Portugal was so disorganized as to require a British force to keep down anarchy; whereas, in 1809, Portugal formed a good base of operations, and a Portuguese army was acting in co-operation with the British.

Sir John Moore was joined by six thousand men under Romana, and there was no other Spanish army in existence to aid him.

Sir Arthur Wellesley was joined by thirty-eight thousand Spaniards under Cuesta, and he calculated upon twenty-six thousand under Venegas; while from twenty to twenty-five thousand others were acting in Galicia and Leon.

Sir John Moore was urgent to throw himself into the heart of Spain, to aid a people represented as abounding in courage and every other military virtue. Judging of what he could not see by that which was within his view, he doubted the truth of these representations, and thinking that a powerful army, commanded by a man of the greatest military genius, was likely to prove formidable, he was unwilling to commit his own small force in an unequal contest. Nevertheless, feeling that some practical demonstration of the difficulties to be encountered was required by the temper of the times, he made a movement, too delicate and dangerous to be adopted, unless for a great political as well as military purpose. To relieve the southern provinces, and to convince the English government and the English public that they had taken a false view of affairs, were the objects of his advance to the Carrion river; but, although he carried his army forward with a boldness that marked the consciousness of superior talents, he never lost sight of the danger he was incurring by exposing his flank to the French Emperor. To obviate this danger as much as possible, he established a second line of retreat upon Galicia, and he kept a watchful eye upon the cloud gathering at Madrid. Arrived in front of Soult's corps, and being upon the point of attacking him, the expected storm burst, but by a rapid march to Benevente, Moore saved himself from being taken in flank and rear and destroyed. Benevente was however untenable against the forces brought up by Napoleon, and the retreat being continued to Coruña, the army, after a battle, embarked.

It was objected, 1. That Moore should have gone to Madrid. 2. That he should have fought at Astorga, at Villa Franca, and at Lugo, instead of at Coruña. 3. That he overrated the strength of the enemy, and undervalued the strength and enthusiasm of the Spaniards, and that, being of a desponding temper, he lost the

opportunity of driving the French beyond the Ebro ; for, that a battle gained (and it was assumed that a battle must have been gained had he attacked) would have assuredly broken the enemy's power, and called forth all the energies of Spain.

Sir John Moore reasoned that the Spanish enthusiasm was not great ; that it evaporated in boasting and promises which could not be relied upon ; that the British army was sent as an auxiliary, not as a principal force, and that the native armies being all dispersed before he could come to their assistance, the enemy was far too strong to contend with single-handed ; wherefore, it was prudent to re-embark, and to choose some other base of operations, to be conducted upon sounder views of the actual state of affairs, or to give up the contest altogether ; for that little or no hope of final success could be entertained unless the counsels and dispositions of the Spaniards changed for the better. He died ; and the English ministers, adopting the reasoning of his detractors, once more sent an auxiliary army to Spain, although the system still existed which he had denounced as incompatible with success.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, a general of their own choice—and assuredly a better could not have been made—was placed at the head of this army ; and, after giving to Soult a heavy blow on the Douro, he also advanced to deliver Spain. Like Sir John Moore, he was cramped for the want of money, and, like Sir John Moore, he was pestered with false representations, and a variety of plans, founded upon short-sighted views, and displaying great ignorance of the art of war ; but, finally, he adopted, and, as far as the inveterate nature of the people he had to deal with would permit, executed a project which, like Sir John Moore's, had for its object to overpower the French in his front, and, by forcing them to concentrate, relieve the distant provinces, and give full play to the enthusiasm of the Spaniards.

When Sir John Moore advanced, there were no Spanish armies to assist him ; the French were above three hundred and twenty thousand strong, and of these two hundred and fifty thousand were disposable to move against any point ; moreover, they were commanded in person by Napoleon, of whom it has been said by the Duke of Wellington, that his presence alone was equal to forty thousand good troops.

When Sir Arthur Wellesley advanced, the French forces in the Peninsula did not exceed two hundred and sixty thousand men, of which only one hundred thousand could be brought to bear on his operations ; and he was assisted by sixty thousand Spaniards, well armed, and tolerably disciplined. His plans were certainly laid with great ability upon the data furnished to him, but he trusted to

Spanish promises and to Spanish energy, and he did not fail to repent his credulity. He delivered and gained that battle which Sir John Moore had been reproached for not essaying; but it was found that a veteran French army, even of inferior numbers, was not to be destroyed, or even much dispirited, by one defeat; and while this battle was fighting, Soult, with fifty thousand men, came down upon the flank and rear of the English, a movement precisely similar to that which Napoleon had made from Madrid upon the flank and rear of Sir John Moore. This last General saved himself by crossing the Esla, in the presence of the French patrols; and in like manner, Sir Arthur evaded destruction by crossing the Tagus, within view of the enemy's scouts; so closely timed was the escape of both.

When Sir John Moore retreated, the Spanish government, reproaching him, asserted that the French were on the point of ruin, and Romana, even at Astorga, continued to urge offensive operations.

When Sir Arthur Wellesley retired from Jaraicejo, the Junta in the same manner asserted that the French were upon the point of retiring from Spain, and General Eguia proposed offensive operations.

In explaining his motives, and discussing the treatment he had met with, Sir John Moore wrote thus to his own government: "*The British were sent to aid the Spanish armies, but they are not equal to encounter the French, who have at least eighty thousand men, and we have nothing to expect from the Spaniards, who are not to be trusted; they are apathetic, lethargic, quick to promise, backward to act, improvident, insensible to the shame of flying before the enemy; they refuse all assistance, and I am obliged to leave ammunition, stores and money behind. The Spanish armies have shown no resolution, the people no enthusiasm nor daring spirit, and that which has not been shown hitherto, I know not why it should be expected to be displayed hereafter.*" Such were his expressions.

When Sir Arthur Wellesley had proved the Spaniards, he, also, writing to his government, says:—"We are here worse off than in a hostile country; never was an army so ill used;—the Spaniards have made all sorts of promises;—we had absolutely no assistance from the Spanish army; on the contrary, we were obliged to lay down our ammunition, to unload the treasure, and to employ the cars in the removal of our sick and wounded. The common dictates of humanity have been disregarded by them; and I have been obliged to leave ammunition, stores, and money behind. *Whatever is to be done must be done by the British army, but that is*

*certainly not capable, singly, to resist a French army of at least seventy thousand men."*

The last advice given to the government, by Sir John Moore, was against sending an auxiliary force to Spain. Sir Arthur Wellesley, in the same spirit, withdrew his troops; and, from that moment to the end of the struggle, he warred indeed for Spain, and in Spain, but never with Spain. "I have fished in many troubled waters, but Spanish troubled waters I will never try again," was his expression, when speaking of this campaign; and he kept his word. That country became, indeed, a field on which the French and English armies contended for the destiny of Europe; but the defeats or victories, the promises or the performances of the Spaniards scarcely influenced the movements. Spain, being left to her own devices, was beaten in every encounter, foiled in every project, yet made no change in her policy; and while Portugal endeavored to raise her energy on a level with that of her ally, Spain sought to drag down England to the depth of folly and weakness in which she herself was plunged. The one would not sacrifice an atom of false pride to obtain the greatest benefits; the other submitted, not with abject dependence, but with a magnanimous humility, to every mortification, rather than be conquered: and the effects of their different modes were such as might be expected. Portugal, although assaulted by an infinitely greater number of enemies, in proportion to her strength, overthrew the oppressors the moment they set foot upon her soil; while in Spain, town after town was taken, army after army dispersed, every battle a defeat, and every defeat sensibly diminished the heat of resistance.

Napoleon once declared that a nation resolved to be free could not be conquered, and the Spaniards re-echoed the sentiment in their manifestos, as if to say it was all that was necessary. But Napoleon contemplated a nation, like the Portuguese, making use of every means of defence, whether derived from themselves or their alliances; not a people puffed with conceit, and lavish of sounding phrases, such as "perishing under the ruins of the last wall," yet beaten with a facility that rendered them the derision of the world; a people unable to guide themselves, yet arrogantly refusing all advice. Such a nation is ripe for destruction, and such a nation was Spain.

The campaign of 1809 finished the third epoch of the war, and it was prolific of instruction. The jealousy of the French marshals, the evils of disunion, the folly of the Spanish government, and the absurdity of the Spanish character, with respect to public affairs, were placed in the strongest light; while the vast combinations, the sanguinary battles, the singular changes of fortune, the

result so little suitable to the greatness of the efforts, amply demonstrated the difficulty and the uncertainty of military affairs. It was a campaign replete with interest; a great lesson from which a great commander profited. Sir Arthur Wellesley had now experienced the weakness of his friends and the strength of his enemies, and he felt all the emptiness of public boasting. Foreseeing that if the contest was to be carried on, it must be in Portugal, and that unless he himself could support the cause of the Peninsula, it must fall, his manner of making war changed; his caution increased tenfold, yet abating nothing of his boldness, he met and baffled the best of the French legions in the fulness of their strength. He was alike unmoved by the intrigues of the Portuguese Regency, and by the undisguised hatred of the Spanish government; and when some of his own generals, and two of them on his personal staff, denouncing his rashness and predicting the ruin of the army, caused the puny energy of the English ministers to quail as the crisis approached, he, with gigantic vigor, pushed aside these impediments, and, steadily holding on his own course, proved himself a sufficient man, whether to uphold or to conquer kingdoms.





Drawn by Genl Napier



# BOOK IX.

## CHAPTER I.

INDEPENDENCE of the Asturians and Gallicians—Guerilla system in Navarre and Aragon.—The partidas surround the third corps—Blake abandons Aragon—Suchet's operations against the partidas—Combat of Tremendal—The advantages of Suchet's position—Troubles at Pampeluna—Suchet ordered by Napoleon to repair there—Observations on the guerilla system.

WHEN Galicia was delivered by the campaign of Talavera, the Asturias became the head of a new line of operation threatening the enemy's principal communication with France. But this advantage was feebly used. Kellermann's division at Valladolid, and Bonnet's at Santander, sufficed to hold both Asturians and Gallicians in check; and the sanguinary operations in the valley of the Tagus, were collaterally, as well as directly, unprofitable to the allies. In other parts, the war was steadily progressive in favor of the French, yet their career was one of pains and difficulties.

Hitherto Biscay had been tranquil, and Navarre so submissive, that the artillery employed against Zaragoza was conveyed by the country people, without an escort, from Pampeluna to Tudela. But when the battle of Belchite terminated the regular warfare in Aragon, the guerilla system commenced in those parts; and as the chiefs acquired reputation at the moment when Blake was losing credit by defeats, the dispersed soldiers flocked to their standards, hoping thus to cover past disgrace, and to live with a greater license; because the regular armies suffered under the restraints without enjoying the benefits of discipline, while the irregulars purveyed for themselves. Thus, Zaragoza being surrounded by rugged mountains, every range became the mother of a guerilla brood; nor were the regular partisan corps less numerous than the partidas.

On the left of the Ebro, the Catalonian colonels, Baget, Parena, Pedroza, and the chief Theobaldo, brought their Migueletes to the Sierra de Guara, overhanging Huesca and Barbastro. In this position, commanding the sources of the Cinca and operating on

both sides of that river, they harassed the communication between Zaragoza and the French outposts, and maintained an intercourse with the governor of Lerida, who directed the movements and supplied the wants of all the bands in Aragon.

On the right of the Ebro, troops raised in the district of Molino were united to the corps of Gayan, and that officer, entering the mountains of Montalvan, the valley of the Xiloca, and the town of Daroca, pushed his advanced guards even to the plain of Zaragoza, and occupied Nuestra Senora del Aguilar; this convent, situated on the top of a high rock near Carineña, he made his *dépôt* for provisions and ammunition, and surrounded the building with an intrenched camp.

On Gayan's left, General Villa Campa, a man of talent and energy, established himself at Calatayud, with the regular regiments of Soria and La Princesa, and making fresh levies, rapidly formed a large force, with which he cut the direct line between Zaragoza and Madrid.

Beyond Villa Campa's positions the circle of war was continued by other bands, which, descending from the Moncayo mountains, infested the districts of Tarazona and Borja, and intercepted the communications between Tudela and Zaragoza. The younger Mina, called the student, vexed the country between Tudela and Pampeluna; and the inhabitants of the high Pyrenean valleys of Roncal, Salazar, Anso, and Echo were also in arms, under Renovalles. This officer, taken at Zaragoza, was, by the French, said to have broken his parole, but he pleaded a previous breach of the capitulation, and having escaped to Lerida passed from thence, with some regular officers, into the valleys, where he surprised several French detachments. His principal post was at the convent of San Juan de la Pena, which is built on a rock, remarkable in Spanish history as a place of refuge maintained with success against the Moorish conquerors; the bodies of twenty-two kings of Aragon rested in the church, and the whole rock was held in veneration by the Aragonese, and supposed to be invulnerable. From this post Saraza, acting under Renovalles, continually menaced Jaca, and communicating with Baget, Pedroza, and Father Theobaldo, completed, as it were, the investment of the third corps.

All these bands, amounting to at least twenty thousand armed men, commenced their operations at once, cutting off isolated men, intercepting convoys and couriers, and attacking the weakest parts of the French army. Meanwhile Blake, having rallied his fugitives at Tortosa, abandoned Aragon, and proceeding to Tarragona, endeavored to keep the war alive in Catalonia.

Suchet, in following up his victory at Belchite, had sent de-

tachments as far as Morella, on the borders of Valencia, and pushed his scouting parties close up to Tortosa. Finding the dispersion of Blake's troops complete, he posted Meunier's division on the line of the Guadalupe, with orders to repair the castle of Alcañiz, so as to form a head of cantonments on the right bank of the Ebro; then crossing that river at Caspe with the rest of the army, he made demonstrations against Mequinenza, and even menaced Lerida, obliging the governor to draw in his detachments, and close the gates. After this he continued his march by Fraga, recrossed the Cinca, and leaving Habert's division to guard that line, returned himself in the latter end of June to Zaragoza by the road of Monzon.

Having thus dispersed the regular Spanish forces and given full effect to his victory, the French General sought to fix himself firmly in the positions he had gained. Sensible that arms may win battles, but cannot render conquest permanent, he projected a system of civil administration which might enable him to support his troops, and yet offer some security of property to those inhabitants who remained tranquil. But, as it was impossible for the people to trust to any system, or to avoid danger, while the mountains swarmed with the partidas, Suchet resolved to pursue the latter without relaxation, and to put down all resistance in Aragon before he attempted to enlarge the circle of his conquests; and he knew that while he thus laid a solid base for further operations, he should also form an army capable of executing any enterprise.

Commencing on the side of Jaca, he dislodged the Spaniards from their positions near that castle, in June, and supplied it with ten months provisions. After this operation, Almunia and Carineña, on the right of the Ebro, were occupied by his detachments, and having suddenly drawn together four battalions and a hundred cuirassiers at the latter point, he surrounded Nuestra Senora del Aguilar during the night of the 19th, destroyed the intrenched camp, and sent a detachment in pursuit of Gayan. On the same day, Pedroza was repulsed on the other side of the Ebro, near Barbastro, and General Habert also defeated Perena. The troops sent in pursuit of Gayan dispersed his corps at Uzed, Daroca was occupied by the French, and the vicinity of Calatayud and the mountains of Moncayo were then scoured by detachments from Zaragoza, one of which took possession of the district of Cinco Villas. Meanwhile Jaca was continually menaced by the Spaniards of St. Juan de la Pena, and Saraza, descending from thence by the valley of the Gallego, on the 23d of August, surprised and slew a detachment of seventy men close to Zaragoza. On the 26th, however, five French battalions stormed the sacred rock, and penetrated

up the valleys of Anso and Echo in pursuit of Renovalles; nevertheless, that chief, retiring to Roncal, obtained a capitulation for the valley without surrendering himself.

These operations having, in a certain degree, cleared Aragon of the bands on the side of Navarre and Castile, the French General turned against those on the side of Catalonia. Baget, Perena, and Pedroza were chased from the Sierra de Guarra, but rallied between the Cinca and the Noguerra, and were there joined by Renovalles, who assumed the chief command; on the 23d of September, however, the whole were routed by General Habert, the men dispersed, and the chiefs took refuge in Lerida and Mequinenza. Suchet then occupied Fraga, Candasnos, and Monzon, established a flying bridge on the Cinca, near the latter town, raised some field-works to protect it, and that done, resolved to invade the districts of Venasque and Benevarres, the subjection of which would have secured his left flank, and opened a new line of communication with France. The inhabitants, having notice of his project, assembled in arms, and being joined by the dispersed soldiers of the defeated partisans, menaced a French regiment posted at Graus. Colonel La Peyrolerie, the commandant, marched the 17th of October, by Roda, to meet them, but having reached a certain distance up the valley, was surrounded, yet he broke through in the night, and regained his post. During his absence the peasantry of the vicinity came down to kill his sick men; the townsmen of Graus opposed this barbarity, and Marshal Suchet affirms that such humane conduct was not rare in Aragonese towns.

While this was passing in the valley of Venasque, the governor of Lerida caused Caspe, Fraga, and Candasnos to be attacked, and some sharp fighting took place. The French maintained their posts, but the whole circle of their cantonments being still infested by the smaller bands, petty actions were fought at Belchite, and on the side of Molino, at Arnedo, and at Soria. Mina still intercepted the communications with Pampeluna; and Villa Campa, quitting Calatayud, rallied Gayan's troops, and gathered others on the rocky mountain of Tremendal, where a large convent and church once more furnished a citadel for an intrenched camp. Against this place Colonel Henriod marched from Daroca, with from fifteen hundred to two thousand men and three pieces of artillery, and driving back some advanced posts from Ojos Negros and Origuela, came in front of the main position at eleven o'clock in the morning of the 25th of November.

#### COMBAT OF TREMENDAL.

The Spaniards were on a mountain, from the centre of which a

tongue of land shooting out, overhung Origuella, and on the upper part of this tongue stood the fortified convent of Tremendal. To the right and left the rocks were nearly perpendicular, and Henriod, seeing that Villa Campa was too strongly posted to be beaten by an open attack, skirmished as if he would turn the right of the position by the road of Albaracin. Villa Campa was thus induced to mass his forces on that side, and in the night, the fire of the bivouacs enabled the Spaniards to see that the main body of the French troops and the baggage were retiring, while Henriod, with six chosen companies and two pieces of artillery, coming against the centre, suddenly drove the Spanish outposts into the fortified convent, and opened a fire with his guns, as if to cover the retreat. This cannonade, however, soon ceased, and Villa Campa, satisfied that the French had retired, was thrown completely off his guard; Henriod's six companies then secretly scaled the rocks of the position, rushed amongst the sleeping Spaniards, killed and wounded five hundred, and put the whole army to flight. Meanwhile, on the other side of the Ebro, a second attempt was made against the valley of Venasque, which being successful, that district was disarmed.

Petty combats still continued to be fought in other parts of Aragon, but the obstinacy of the Spaniards gradually gave way. In December, Suchet, assisted by General Milhaud, with a movable column from Madrid, took the towns of Albaracin and Teruel, the insurgent Junta fled to Valencia, and thus the subjection of Aragon was, in a manner, effected; for the interior was disarmed and quieted, and the partidas which still hung upon the frontiers were obliged to recruit and be supplied from other provinces, and acted chiefly on the defensive. The Aragonese were indeed so vexed by the smaller bands, now dwindling into mere banditti, that a smuggler of Barbastro asked leave to raise a Spanish corps, with which he chased and suppressed many of them.

The reinforcements now pouring into Spain enabled the French General to prepare for extended operations. The original Spanish army of Aragon was reduced to about eight thousand men, of which a part were wandering with Villa Campa, a part were in Tortosa, and the rest about Lerida and Mequinenza; those fortresses were, in fact, the only obstacles to a junction of the third with the seventh corps, and in them the Spanish troops who still kept the field took refuge, when closely pressed by the invaders.

The policy of the Supreme Junta was always to form fresh corps upon the remnants of their beaten armies. Hence Villa Campa, keeping in the mountains of Albaracin, recruited his ranks, and still infested the western frontier of Aragon: Garcia Novarro, mak-

ing Tortosa his base of operations, lined the banks of the Algas, and menaced Alcañitz; and Perena, trusting to the neighborhood of Lerida for support, posted himself between the Noguera and the Segre. However, the activity of the French gave little time to effect any considerable organization.

Suchet's positions formed a circle round Zaragoza. Tudela, Jaca, and the castle of Aljaferia were garrisoned, but his principal forces were on the Guadalupe and the Cinca, occupying Alcañitz, Caspe, Fraga, Monzon, Barbastro, Benevarres, and Venasque; of these, the first, third, and fourth were places of strength, and whether his situation be regarded in a political or a military light, it was become most important. One year had sufficed, not only to reduce the towns and break the armies, but in part to conciliate the feelings of the Aragonese—at that time, confessedly the most energetic portion of the nation—and to place the third corps, with reference to the general operations of the war, in a most formidable position.

1. The fortified castle of Alcañitz formed a head of cantonments on the right bank of the Ebro, and being situated at the entrance of the passes leading into Valencia, furnished a base, from which Suchet could invade that rich province; and by which, also, he could place the Catalonian army between two fires, whenever the seventh corps should again advance beyond the Llobregat.

2. Caspe secured the communication between the wings of the third corps, while Fraga, with its wooden bridge over the Cinca, offered the means of passing that uncertain river at all seasons.

3. Monzon, a regular fortification, in some measure balanced Lerida; and its flying bridge over the Cinca enabled the French to forage all the country between Lerida and Venasque; moreover, a co-operation of the garrison of Monzon, the troops at Barbastro, and those at Benevarres, could always curb Perena.

4. The possession of Venasque permitted Suchet to communicate with the movable columns, (appointed to guard the French frontier,) while the castle of Jaca rendered the third corps in a manner independent of Pampeluna and St. Sebastian. In fine, the position on the Cinca and the Guadalupe, menacing alike Catalonia and Valencia, connected the operations of the third with the seventh corps, and henceforward we shall find these two armies gradually approximating until they formed but one force, acting upon a distinct system of invasion against the south.

Suchet's projects were, however, retarded by insurrections in Navarre, which, at this period, assumed a serious aspect. The student Mina, far from being quelled by the troops sent at different periods in chase of him, daily increased his forces, and, by hardy

and sudden enterprises, kept the Navarrese in commotion. The Duke of Mahon, one of Joseph's Spanish adherents, appointed Viceroy of Navarre, was at variance with the military authorities, and all the disorders attendant on a divided administration and a rapacious system ensued. General D'Agoult, the governor of Pampeluna, was accused of being in Mina's pay, and his suicide during an investigation seems to confirm the suspicion, but it is certain that the whole administration of Navarre was oppressive, venal, and weak.

To avert the serious danger of an insurrection so close to France, the Emperor directed Suchet to repair there with a part of the third corps, and that General soon restored order in Pampeluna, and eventually captured Mina himself; yet he was unable to suppress the system of the *partidas*. "*Espoz y Mina*" took his nephew's place; and from that time to the end of the war, the communications of the French were troubled, and considerable losses inflicted upon their armies by this celebrated man—undoubtedly the most conspicuous person among the *partida* chiefs. And here it may be observed how weak and inefficient this guerilla system was to deliver the country, and that, even as an auxiliary, its advantages were nearly balanced by the evils.

It was in the provinces lying between France and the Ebro that it commenced. It was in those provinces that it could effect the greatest injury to the French cause, and it was precisely in those provinces that it was conducted with the greatest energy, although less assisted by the English than any other part of Spain: a fact leading to the conclusion, that ready and copious succors may be hurtful to a people situated as the Spaniards were. When so assisted, men are apt to rely more upon their allies than upon their own exertions. But however this may be, it is certain that the *partidas* of Biscay, Navarre, Aragon, and Catalonia, although they amounted at one time to above thirty thousand men, accustomed to arms, and often commanded by men of undoubted enterprise and courage, never occupied half their own number of French at one time; never absolutely defeated a single division—never prevented any considerable enterprise—never, with the exception of the surprise of Figueras, to be hereafter spoken of, performed any exploit seriously affecting the operations of a single "corps d'armée."

It is true, that if a whole nation will but persevere in such a system, it must in time destroy the most numerous armies. But no people will thus persevere; the aged, the sick, the timid, the helpless, are all hinderers of the bold and robust. There will, also, be a difficulty to procure arms, for it is not on every occasion that so rich and powerful a people as the English will be found in

alliance with insurrection; and when the invaders follow up their victories by a prudent conduct, as was the case with Suchet and some others of the French generals, the result is certain. The desire of ease natural to mankind, prevails against the suggestions of honor; and although the opportunity of covering personal ambition with the garb of patriotism may cause many attempts to throw off the yoke, the bulk of the invaded people will gradually become submissive and tranquil. It is a fact that, notwithstanding the violent measures resorted to by the partida chiefs to fill their ranks, deserters from the French and even from the British formed one-third of their bands.

To raise a whole people against an invader may be easy, but to direct the energy thus aroused is a gigantic task, and, if misdirected, the result will be more injurious than advantageous. That it was misdirected in Spain was the opinion of many able men of all sides, and to represent it otherwise, is to make history give false lessons to posterity. Portugal was thrown completely into the hands of Lord Wellington, but that great man, instead of following the example of the Supreme Junta, and encouraging independent bands, enforced a military organization upon totally different principles. The people were, indeed, called upon and obliged to resist the enemy, but it was under a regular system, by which all classes were kept in just bounds, and the whole physical and moral power of the nation rendered subservient to the plan of the General-in-chief. To act differently is to confess weakness: it is to say that the government, being unequal to the direction of affairs, permits anarchy.

The partida system in Spain was the offspring of disorder, and disorder in war is weakness accompanied by ills the least of which is sufficient to produce ruin. It is in such a warfare, that habits of unbridled license, of unprincipled violence, and disrespect for the rights of property are quickly contracted, and render men unfit for the duties of citizens; and yet it has with singular inconsistency been cited as the best and surest mode of resisting an enemy, by politicians who hold regular armies in abhorrence, although a high sense of honor, devotion to the cause of the country, temperance, regularity, and decent manners are of the very essence of the latter's discipline.

Regular armies have seldom failed to produce great men, and one great man is sufficient to save a nation; but when every person is permitted to make war in the manner most agreeable to himself, for one that comes forward with patriotic intentions, there will be two to act from personal interest; in short, there will be more robbers than generals. One of the first exploits of Espoz y



Mina was to slay the commander of a neighboring band, because, under the mask of patriotism, he was plundering his own countrymen :\* nay, this, the most fortunate of all the chiefs, would never suffer any other partida than his own to be in his district ; he also, as I have before related, made a species of commercial treaty with the French, and strove earnestly and successfully to raise his band to the dignity of a regular force. Nor was this manner of considering the guerilla system confined to the one side. The following observations of St. Cyr, a man of acknowledged talents, show that, after considerable experience of this mode of warfare, he also felt that the evil was greater than the benefit :

“ Far from casting general blame on the efforts made by the Catalans, I admired them ; but, as they often exceeded the bounds of reason, their heroism was detrimental to their cause. Many times it caused the destruction of whole populations without necessity and without advantage.

“ When a country is invaded by an army stronger than that which defends it, it is beyond question that the population should come to the assistance of the troops, and lend them every support ; but, without an absolute necessity, the former should not be brought on to the field of battle.” “ It is inhuman to place their inexperience in opposition to hardened veterans.

“ Instead of *exasperating* the people of Catalonia, the leaders should have endeavored to *calm* them, and have directed their ardor so as to second the army on great occasions. But they excited them without cessation, led them day after day into fire, fatigued them, harassed them, forced them to abandon their habitations, to embark if they were on the coast, if inland to take to the mountains and perish of misery within sight of their own homes, thus abandoned to the mercy of a hungry and exasperated soldiery. The people's ardor was exhausted daily in partial operations ; and hence, on great occasions, when they could have been eminently useful, they were not to be had.

“ Their good will had been so often abused by the folly of their leaders, that many times their assistance was called for in vain. The peasantry, of whom so much had been demanded, began to demand in their turn. They insisted that the soldiers should fight always to the last gasp, were angry when the latter retreated, and robbed and ill-used them when broken by defeat.

“ They had been so excited, so exasperated against the French, that they became habitually ferocious, and their ferocity was often as dangerous to their own party as to the enemy. The atrocities committed against their own chiefs disgusted the most patriotic,

\* Extract from the Life of Mina.

abated their zeal, caused the middle classes to desire peace as the only remedy of a system so replete with disorder. Numbers of distinguished men, even those who had vehemently opposed Joseph at first, began to abandon Ferdinand; and it is certain that, but for the expedition to Russia, that branch of the Bourbons which reigns in Spain would never have remounted the throne.

“The cruelties exercised upon the French military were as little conformable to the interest of the Spaniards. Those men were but the slaves of their duty and of the state; certain of death a little sooner or a little later, they, like the Spaniards, were victims of the same ambition. The soldier naturally becomes cruel in protracted warfare; but the treatment experienced from the Catalans brought out this disposition prematurely; and that unhappy people were themselves the victims of a cruelty, which, either of their own will or excited by others, they had exercised upon those troops that fell into their power; and this without any advantage to their cause, while a contrary system would, in a little time, have broken up the seventh corps—seeing that the latter was composed of foreigners, naturally inclined to desert. But the murders of all wounded, and sick, and helpless men, created such horror, that the desertion, which at first menaced total destruction, ceased entirely.”

Such were St. Cyr's opinions; and, assuredly, the struggle in Catalonia, of which it is now time to resume the relation, was not the least successful in Spain.

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## CHAPTER II

Continuation of the operations in Catalonia—St. Cyr sends Lecchi to the Ampurdan; he returns with the intelligence of the Austrian war, of Verdier's arrival in the Ampurdan, and of Augereau's appointment to the command of the seventh corps—Augereau's inflated proclamation—It is torn down by the Catalonians—He remains sick at Perpignan—St. Cyr continues to command—Refuses to obey Joseph's orders to remove into Aragon—Presses Verdier to commence the siege of Gerona—Reinforces Verdier—Remains himself at Vich—Constancy of the Spaniards—St. Cyr marches from Vich, defeats three Spanish battalions, and captures a convoy—Storms St. Felieu de Quixols—Takes a position to cover Verdier's operations—Siege of Gerona—State of the contending parties—Assault of Monjoui fails—General Fontanes storms Palamos—Wimpfen and the Milans make a vain attempt to throw succors into Gerona—Monjoui abandoned.

### OPERATIONS IN CATALONIA.

THE narrative of the Catalonian affairs was broken off at the moment when St. Cyr, having established his quarters at Vich, received intelligence of the Austrian war, and that Barcelona had

been relieved by the squadron of Admiral Comaso.\* His whole attention was then directed towards Gerona; and with a view to hastening General Reille's preparation for the siege of that place, a second detachment, under Lecchi, proceeded to Ampurdan. During this time, Coupigny continued at Tarragona, and Blake made his fatal march into Aragon; but those troops which, under Milans and Wimpfen, had composed Reding's left wing, were continually skirmishing with the French posts in the valley of Vich, and the partisans, especially Claros and the Doctor Rovira, molested the communications in a more systematic manner than before.

Lecchi returned, about the 18th of May, with the intelligence that Napoleon had quitted Paris for Germany, that General Verdier had replaced Reille in the Ampurdan, and that Marshal Augereau had reached Perpignan in his way to supersede St. Cyr himself in the command of the seventh corps. The latter part of this information gave St. Cyr infinite discontent. In his "Journal of Operations," he asserts that his successor earnestly sought for the appointment, and his own observations on the occasion are sarcastic and contemptuous of his rival.

Augereau, who, having served in Catalonia during the war of the revolution, imagined that he had then acquired an influence which might be revived on the present occasion, framed a proclamation that vied with the most inflated of Spanish manifestoes; but the latter, although turgid, were in unison with the feelings of the people, whereas Augereau's address, being at utter variance with those feelings, was a pure folly. This proclamation he sent into Catalonia, escorted by a battalion; but even on the frontier, the Miguelette colonel, Porta, defeated the escort, and tore down the few copies that had been posted. Augereau, afflicted with the gout, remained at Perpignan; and St. Cyr continued to command, but reluctantly, because (as he affirms) the officers and soldiers were neglected, and himself exposed to various indignities, the effects of Napoleon's ill-will. The most serious of these affronts was permitting Verdier to correspond directly with the Minister of War in France, and the publishing of his reports in preference to St. Cyr's. For these reasons, the latter says he contented himself with a simple discharge of his duty. But, after the conspiracy in the second corps, Napoleon cannot be justly blamed for coldness towards an officer who, however free himself from encouraging the malcontents in the French army, was certainly designed for their leader. It is rather to be admired that the Emperor discovered so little jealousy. When a man has once raised himself to the highest power, he must inevitably give offence to his former comrades; for,

\* See vol. I. p. 421.

as all honors and rewards flowing from him are taken as personal favors, so all checks and slights, or even the cessation of benefits, are regarded as personal injuries. Where the sanction of time is wanting to identify the sovereign with the country, the discontented easily convince themselves that revenge is patriotism.

While St. Cyr was preparing for the siege of Gerona, Joseph, as we have seen, directed him to march into Aragon, to repel Blake's movement against Suchet.\* This order he refused to obey, and with reason; for it would have been a great error to permit Blake's false movement to occupy two "corps d'armée," and so retard the siege of Gerona, to the infinite detriment of the French affairs in Catalonia. Barcelona was never safe while Hostalrich and Gerona were in the Spaniards' possession. St. Cyr was well aware of this, but the evils of a divided command are soon felt. He who had been successful in all his operations, was urgent, for many reasons, to commence the siege without delay; but Verdier, who had failed at Zaragoza, was cautious in attacking a town which had twice baffled Duhesme; and when pressed to begin, complained that he could not, after placing garrisons in Rosas and Figueras, bring ten thousand men before Gerona, which, seeing the great extent of the works, were insufficient.

St. Cyr, disregarding the works, observed that the garrison did not exceed three thousand men, that it could not well be increased, and that expedition was of more consequence than numbers. Nevertheless, considering that a dépôt of provisions, established for the service of the siege at Figueras, and which it was unlikely Napoleon would replenish, must, by delay, be exhausted, as well as the supplies which he had himself collected at Vich, he sent all his own cannoniers, sappers, and artillery horses, two squadrons of cavalry, and six battalions of infantry to the Ampurdan, and having thus increased the number of troops there to eighteen thousand men, again urged Verdier to be expeditious.

These reinforcements marched the 23d of May, and the covering army, diminished to about twelve thousand men under arms, continued to hold the valley of Vich until the middle of June. During this time, the Migueletes often skirmished with the advanced posts, but without skill or profit; and the inhabitants of the town always remained in the high mountains unsheltered and starving, yet still firm of resolution not to dwell with the invaders. This may be attributed partly to fear, but more to that susceptibility to grand sentiments, which distinguishes the Spanish peasants. Although little remarkable for hardihood in the field, their Moorish blood is attested by their fortitude; men and women alike, they endure ca-

\* See page 185.

lunacy with a singular and unostentatious courage. In this they are truly admirable. But their virtues are passive, their faults active, and, continually instigated by a peculiar arrogance, they are perpetually projecting enterprises which they have not sufficient vigor to execute, although at all times they are confident and boasting more than becomes either wise or brave men.

Early in June, St. Cyr, having consumed nearly all his corn, resolved to approach Gerona, and secure the harvest which was almost ripe in that district; but, previous to quitting Vich, he sent his sick and wounded men, under a strong escort, to Barcelona, and disposed his reserves in such a manner that the operation was effected without loss. The army, loaded with as much grain as the men could carry, then commenced crossing the mountains which separate Vich from the districts of Gerona and Hostalrich. In two days it passed by Folgarolas, San Saturnino, Santa Hillario, and Santa Coloma de Farnes; the head-quarters were fixed at Caldas de Malavella on the 20th, the fort of St. Felieu de Quixols was stormed on the 21st, and the Spanish privateers driven to seek another harbor. The French then occupied a half circle, extending from St. Felieu to the Oña river. Intermediate posts were established at St. Grace, Vidreras, Mallorquinas, Rieu de Arenas, Santa Coloma de Farnes, Castaña, and Bruñola, thus cutting off the communication between Gerona and the districts occupied by Coupigny, Wimpfen, the Milans, and Claros.

During the march from Vich, the French defeated three Spanish battalions, and captured a convoy, coming from the side of Martorel, and destined for Gerona. St. Cyr calls them the forerunners of Blake's army—a curious error, for Blake was, on that very day, being defeated at Belchite, two hundred miles from Santa Coloma. Strictly speaking, there was, at this period, no Catalonian army; the few troops that kept the field were acting independently. Coupigny, the nominal commander-in-chief, remained at Tarragona, where he and the other authorities, more occupied with personal quarrels and political intrigues than with military affairs, were thwarting each other. Thus the Spanish and French operations were alike weakened by internal divisions.

Verdier was slow, cautious, and more attentive to the facilities afforded for resistance than to the number of regular soldiers within the works. He, or rather Reille, had appeared before Gerona on the 6th of May, but it was not till the 4th of June that, reinforced with Lecchi's division, he completed the investment of the place on both sides of the Ter. On the 8th, however, ground was broken; and thus, at the very moment when Blake, with the main body of the army, was advancing against Zaragoza, in other words, seeking

to wrest Aragon from the French, Catalonia was slipping from his own hands.

### THIRD SIEGE OF GERONA.

When this memorable siege commenced, the relative situations of the contending parties were as follows:—Eighteen thousand French held the Ampurdan, and invested the place. Of this number about four thousand were in Figueras, Rosas, and the smaller posts of communication; and it is remarkable that Verdier found the first-named place, notwithstanding its great importance, *destitute of a garrison*, when he arrived there from France; a fact consistent with Lord Collingwood's description of the Catalan warfare, but irreconcilable with the enterprise and vigor attributed to them by others.

St. Cyr, the distribution of whose forces has been already noticed, covered the siege with twelve thousand men, and Duhesme, having about ten thousand, including sick, continued to hold Barcelona.\* Forty thousand French were, therefore, disposed between that city and Figueras; while, on the Spanish side, there was no preparation. Blake was still in Aragon; Coupigny, with six thousand of the worst troops, was at Tarragona; the Milans watched Duhesme; Wimpfen, with a few thousand, held the country about the upper Llobregat; Juan Claros and Rovira kept the mountains on the side of Olat and Ripol; and, in the higher Catalonia, small bands of Migueletes were dispersed under different chiefs. The Somatenes, however, continuing their own system of warfare, not only disregarded the generals as in the time of Reding, but fell upon and robbed the regular troops, whenever a favorable opportunity occurred. The Spanish privateers, dislodged from St. Felieu, now resorted to Palamos bay, and the English fleet, under Lord Collingwood, watched incessantly to prevent any French squadron, or even single vessels, from carrying provisions by the coast.

From Gerona, the Governor did not fail to call loudly on the generals, and even on the *Supreme Central Junta*, for succors, but his cry was disregarded, and when the siege commenced, his garrison did not exceed three thousand regular troops, his magazines and hospitals were but scantily provided, and he had no money. Alvarez Mariano was, however, of a lofty spirit, great fortitude, and in no manner daunted.

The works of Gerona, already described, were little changed since the first siege; there, however, as in Zaragoza, by a mixture of superstition, patriotism, and military regulations, the moral as well as physical force of the city had been called forth. There, like

\* Imperial Muster Roll, MS.

wise, a sickness, common at a particular season of the year, was looked for to thin the ranks of the besiegers ; and there also women were enrolled, under the title of the company of Sta. Barbara, to carry off the wounded, and to wait upon the hospitals, and at every breath of air, says St. Cyr, their ribbons were seen to float amidst the bayonets of the soldiers! To evince his own resolution, the Governor forbade the mention of a capitulation under pain of death ; but severe punishments were only denounced, not inflicted. Alvarez, master of his actions, and capable of commanding without phrensy, had recourse to no barbarous methods of enforcing authority ; obstinate his defence was, and full of suffering to the besieged, yet free from the stain of cruelty, and rich in honor.

On the 4th of June the siege was begun, and on the 12th one mortar-battery, erected at Casen Rocca on the left of the Ter, and two breaching-batteries, established against Fort Monjouic, being ready to play, the town was summoned in form. The answer was an intimation that henceforth all flags of truce would be fired upon, which was the only proceeding indicative of the barbarian in the conduct of Alvarez.

The 13th, the small suburb of Pedreto was taken possession of by the French, and early on the morning of the 14th, the batteries opened against Monjouic, while the town was bombarded from Casen Rocca. The 17th, the besieged drove the enemy from Pedreto, but were finally repulsed with the loss of above a hundred men.

The 19th, the stone towers of St. Narcis and St. Louis, forming the outworks of Monjouic, being assaulted, the besieged, panic-stricken, abandoned them and the tower of St. Daniel also. The French immediately erected breaching-batteries, four hundred yards from the northern bastion of Monjouic. Tempestuous weather retarded their works, but they made a practicable opening by the 4th of July, and with a strange temerity resolved to give the assault, although the flank fire of the works was not silenced, nor the glacis crowned, nor the covered way or counterscarp injured, and that a half-moon, in a perfect state, covered the approaches to the breach. The latter was proved by the engineers in a false attack on the night of the 4th, and the resolution to assault was then adopted, yet the storming force drawn from the several quarters of investment was only assembled in the trenches on the night of the 7th ; and during these four days, as the batteries ceased to play, the Spaniards retrenched and barricadoed the opening.

At four o'clock in the morning of the 8th, the French column, jumping out of the trenches, rapidly cleared the space between them and the fort, descended the ditch, and mounted to the assault

with great resolution; but the Spaniards had so strengthened the defences that no impression could be made, and the assailants, taken in flank and rear by the fire from the half-moon, the covered way, and the eastern bastion, were driven back. Twice they renewed the attempt, but their assault failed, with a loss of a thousand men killed and wounded. The success of the besieged was however mitigated by an accidental explosion, which destroyed the garrison of the small fort of St. Juan, situated between Monjouic and the city.

About the period of this assault, which was given without St. Cyr's knowledge, the latter, finding that Claros and Rovira interrupted the convoys coming from Figueras to Gerona, withdrew a brigade of Souham's division from Santa Coloma de Farnes, and posted it on the left of the Ter, at Bañolas. The troops on the side of Hostalrich were thus reduced to about eight thousand men under arms, although an effort to raise the siege was to be expected; for letters from Alvarez, urgently demanding succors of Blake, had been intercepted, and the latter, after his defeat in Aragon, was, as I have said, collecting men at Tarragona.

Meanwhile, to secure the coast-line from Rosas to Quixols before Blake could reach the scene of action, St. Cyr resolved to take Palamos. To effect this, General Fontanes marched from St. Felieu on the 5th of July with an Italian brigade, six guns, and some squadrons of dragoons. Twice he summoned the place, and the bearer being each time treated with scorn, the troops moved on to the attack; but in passing a flat part of the coast near Torre Valenti, they were cannonaded by six gun-boats so sharply, that they could not keep the road until the artillery had obliged the boats to sheer off.

#### STORMING OF PALAMOS.

This town having a good roadstead, and being only one march from Gerona, was necessarily a place of importance; and the works, although partly ruined, were so far repaired by the Catalans as to be capable of some defence. Twenty guns were mounted, and the town, built on a narrow rocky peninsula, had but one front, the approach to which was over an open plain completely commanded from the left by some very rugged hills, on which a considerable number of Somatenes were assembled, with their line touching upon the walls of the town. Fontanes drove the Somatenes from this position, and a third time summoned the place to surrender. The bearer was killed, and the Italians immediately stormed the works. The Spaniards, flying towards the shore, endeavored to get on board their vessels, but the latter put off to sea, and some