

it on the right of that river. This had obliged Soult to send troops towards Malaga, and fatally delayed his march to Estremadura.

Meanwhile Marmont was concentrating his army in the Salamanca country, and it was rumored that he meant to attack Ciudad Rodrigo. Lord Wellington was somewhat disturbed by this information; he knew indeed that the flooding of the rivers in the north would prevent a blockade; and he was also assured that Marmont had not yet obtained a battering train. But the Spanish generals and engineers had neglected the new works and repairs of Ciudad Rodrigo; even the provisions at St. Joa de Pesquiera had not been brought up; the fortress had only thirty days' supply. Almeida was in as bad a state, and the grand project of invading Andalusia was likely to be balked by these embarrassments.

On the 30th, Soult's advance from Cordova being decided, the fifth division was brought over the Guadiana as a reserve to the covering army; but Power's Portuguese brigade, with some cavalry of the same nation, still maintained the investment on the right bank, the siege was urged forward very rapidly, forty-eight pieces of artillery were in constant play, and the sap against San Roque advanced. The enemy was equally active; his fire was very destructive, and his progress in raising the ravelin and counter-guard of the front attacked was very visible.

The 1st of April the sap was pushed close to the San Roque, the Trinidad bastion crumbled under the stroke of the bullet, and the flank of the Santa Maria, which was casemated and had hitherto resisted the batteries, also began to yield. The 2d the face of the Trinidad was very much broken; but at the Santa Maria, the casemates being laid open, the bullets were lost in their cavities, and the garrison commenced a retrenchment, to cut off the whole of the attacked front from the town.

In the night a new battery against the San Roque was armed, and two officers with some sappers, gliding behind that outwork, gagged the sentinel, placed powder barrels and a match against the dam of the inundation, and retired undiscovered; but the explosion did not destroy the dam, and the inundation remained. Nor did the sap make progress, because of the French musketeers; for though the marksmen set against them slew many, they were reinforced by means of a raft with parapets, which crossed the inundation, and men also passed by the cloth communication from the Trinidad gate.

On the 3d some guns were turned against the curtain behind the San Roque, but the masonry proved hard, ammunition was scarce, and as a breach there would have been useless while the inundation remained, the fire was soon discontinued. The two

breaches in the bastion were now greatly enlarged, and the besieged assiduously labored at the retrenchments behind them, and converted the nearest houses and garden walls into a third line of defence. All the houses behind the front next the castle were also thrown down, and a battery of five guns, intended to flank the ditch and breach of the Trinidad, was commenced on the castle hill, but outside the wall; the besiegers therefore traced out a counter-battery of fourteen Shrapnell howitzers, to play upon that point during the assault.

The crisis of the siege was now approaching rapidly. The breaches were nearly practicable. Soult, having effected a junction with Drouet and Daricau, was advancing; and as the allies were not in sufficient force to assault the place and give battle at the same time, it was resolved to leave two divisions in the trenches, and to fight at Albuera with the remainder. Graham therefore fell back towards that place, and General Hill having destroyed the bridge at Merida, marched from the upper Guadiana to Talavera Real.

Time being now, as in war it always is, a great object, the anxiety on both sides redoubled; but Soult was still at Llerena, when on the morning of the 5th the breaches were declared practicable, and the assault ordered for that evening. Leith's division was even recalled to the camp to assist, when a careful personal examination of the enemy's retrenchments caused some doubts in Lord Wellington's mind, and he delayed the storm, until a third breach, as originally projected, should be formed in the curtain between the bastions of Trinidad and Maria. This could not, however, be commenced before morning, and during the night the enemy's workmen labored assiduously at their retrenchments, regardless of the showers of grape with which the besiegers' batteries scoured the ditch and the breach. But the 6th, the besiegers' guns being all turned against the curtain, the bad masonry crumbled rapidly away, in two hours a yawning breach appeared, and Wellington, having again examined the points of attack in person, renewed the order for the assault. Then the soldiers eagerly made themselves ready for a combat, so fiercely fought, so terribly won, so dreadful in all its circumstances, that posterity can scarcely be expected to credit the tale; but many are still alive who know that it is true.

The British General was so sensible of Phillipon's firmness and of the courage of his garrison, that he spared them the affront of a summons; yet seeing the breach strongly intrenched, and the enemy's flank fire still powerful, he would not in this dread crisis, trust his fortune to a single effort. Eighteen thousand daring soldiers burned for the signal of attack, and as he was unwilling

to lose the service of any, to each division he gave a task such as few generals would have the hardihood even to contemplate.

On the right Picton's division was to file out of the trenches, to cross the Rivillas river, and to scale the castle walls, which were from eighteen to twenty-four feet in height, furnished with all means of destruction, and so narrow at top, that the defenders could easily reach and as easily overturn the ladders.

On the left, Leith's division was to make a false attack on the Pardaleras, and a real assault on the distant bastion of San Vincente, where the glacis was mined, the ditch deep, the scarp thirty feet high, and the parapet garnished with bold troops well provided; for Phillipon, following his old plan, had three loaded muskets placed beside each man, that the first fire might be quick and deadly.

In the centre, the fourth and light divisions, under General Colville and Colonel Andrew Barnard, were to march against the breaches. They were furnished like the third and fifth divisions with ladders and axes, and were preceded by storming parties of five hundred men each with their respective forlorn hopes. The light division was to assault the bastion of Santa Maria, the fourth division to assault the Trinidad and the curtain; and the columns were divided into storming and firing parties, the former to enter the ditch, the latter to keep the crest of the glacis.

Besides these attacks, Major Wilson of the forty-eighth was to storm the San Roque with the guards of the trenches, and on the other side of the Guadiana, General Power was to make a feint on the bridge-head.

At first only one brigade of the third division was to have attacked the castle, but just before the hour fixed upon, a sergeant of sappers having deserted from the enemy, informed Wellington that there was but one communication from the castle to the town, whereupon he ordered the whole division to advance together.

This was the outline of the plan, but many nice arrangements filled it up, and some were followed, some disregarded, for it is seldom that all things are strictly attended to in a desperate fight. Nor were the enemy idle, for while it was yet twilight some French cavalry issued from the Pardaleras, escorting an officer who endeavored to look into the trenches, with a view to ascertain if an assault was intended; but the piquet on that side jumped up, and firing as it ran, drove him and his escort back into the works. Then the darkness fell and the troops only awaited the signal.

ASSAULT OF BADAJOS.

The night was dry but clouded, the air thick with watery exha-

lations from the rivers, the ramparts and the trenches unusually still; yet a low murmur pervaded the latter, and in the former, lights were seen to flit here and there, while the deep voices of the sentinels at times proclaimed that all was well in Badajos. The French, confiding in Phillipon's direful skill, watched from their lofty station the approach of enemies, whom they had twice before baffled, and now hoped to drive a third time blasted and ruined from the walls; the British, standing in deep columns, were as eager to meet that fiery destruction as the others were to pour it down; and both were alike terrible for their strength, their discipline, and the passions awakened in their resolute hearts.

Former failures there were to avenge, and on either side such leaders as left no excuse for weakness in the hour of trial; and the possession of Badajos was become a point of honor, personal with the soldiers of each nation. But the strong desire for glory was in the British dashed with a hatred of the citizens on an old grudge, and recent toil and hardship, with much spilling of blood, had made many incredibly savage; for these things render the noble-minded, indeed, averse to cruelty, but harden the vulgar spirit. Numbers also, like Cæsar's centurion who could not forget the plunder of Avaricum, were heated with the recollection of Ciudad Rodrigo, and thirsted for spoil. Thus every spirit found a cause of excitement, the wondrous power of discipline bound the whole together as with a band of iron, and, in the pride of arms, none doubted their might to bear down every obstacle that man could oppose to their fury.

At ten o'clock, the castle, the San Roque, the breaches, the Pardaleras, the distant bastion of San Vincente, and the bridge-head on the other side of the Guadiana, were to have been simultaneously assailed, and it was hoped that the strength of the enemy would shrivel within that fiery girdle. But many are the disappointments of war. An unforeseen accident delayed the attack of the fifth division; and a lighted carcass, thrown from the castle, falling close to where the men of the third division were drawn up, discovered their array, and obliged them to anticipate the signal by half an hour. Then, everything being suddenly disturbed, the double columns of the fourth and light divisions also moved silently and swiftly against the breaches, and the guard of the trenches rushing forward with a shout, encompassed the San Roque with fire, and broke in so violently that scarcely any resistance was made.

But a sudden blaze of light and the rattling of musketry indicated the commencement of a most vehement combat at the castle. There General Kempth—for Picton, hurt by a fall in the camp, and

expecting no change in the hour, was not present—there General Kempt, I say, led the third division; he had passed the Rivillas, in single files by a narrow bridge, under a terrible musketry, and then re-forming, and running up the rugged hill, had reached the foot of the castle when he fell severely wounded, and being carried back to the trenches, met Picton who hastened forward to take the command. Meanwhile his troops spreading along the front reared their heavy ladders, some against the lofty castle, some against the adjoining front on the left, and with incredible courage ascended amidst showers of heavy stones, logs of wood, and bursting shells rolled off the parapet, while from the flanks the enemy plied his musketry with a fearful rapidity, and in front, with pikes and bayonets, stabbed the leading assailants or pushed the ladders from the walls; and all this attended with deafening shouts, and the crash of breaking ladders, and the shrieks of crushed soldiers answering to the sullen stroke of the falling weights.

Still, swarming round the remaining ladders, these undaunted veterans strove who should first climb, until all being overturned, the French shouted victory, and the British, baffled, but untamed, fell back a few paces, and took shelter under the rugged edge of the hill. Here when the broken ranks were somewhat re-formed the heroic Colonel Ridge, springing forward, called with a stentorian voice on his men to follow, and seizing a ladder, once more raised it against the castle, yet to the right of the former attack, where the wall was lower, and an embrasure offered some facility. A second ladder was soon placed alongside of the first, by the grenadier officer Canch, and the next instant he and Ridge were on the rampart, the shouting troops pressed after them, the garrison amazed, and in a manner surprised, were driven fighting through the double gate into the town, and the castle was won. A reinforcement, sent from the French reserve, then came up, a sharp action followed, both sides fired through the gate, and the enemy retired, but Ridge fell, and no man died that night with more glory—yet many died, and there was much glory.

During these events, the tumult at the breaches was such as if the very earth had been rent asunder and its central fires were bursting upwards uncontrolled. The two divisions had reached the glacis, just as the firing at the castle had commenced, and the flash of a single musket discharged from the covered way as a signal showed them that the French were ready; yet no stir was heard, and darkness covered the breaches. Some hay packs were then thrown, some ladders were placed, and the forlorn hopes and storming parties of the light division, about five hundred in all, had descended into the ditch without opposition, when a bright flame

shooting upwards displayed all the terrors of the scene. The ramparts, crowded with dark figures and glittering arms, were seen on the one side, and on the other, the red columns of the British, deep and broad, were coming on like streams of burning lava; it was the touch of the magician's wand, for a crash of thunder followed, and with incredible violence the storming parties were dashed to pieces by the explosion of hundreds of shells and powder-barrels.

For an instant the light division stood on the brink of the ditch, amazed at the terrific sight, then, with a shout that matched even the sound of the explosion, flew down the ladders, or disdaining their aid, leaped, reckless of the depth, into the gulf below; and nearly at the same moment, amidst a blaze of musketry that dazzled the eyes, the fourth division came running in and descended with a like fury.* There were however only five ladders for both columns, which were close together, and a deep cut made in the bottom of the ditch, as far as the counter-guard of the Trinidad, was filled with water from the inundation; into this watery snare the head of the fourth division fell, and it is said that above a hundred of the fusileers, the men of Albuera, were there smothered. Those who followed, checked not, but as if such a disaster had been expected, turned to the left, and thus came upon the face of the unfinished ravelin, which, being rough and broken, was mistaken for the breach, and instantly covered with men; yet a wide and deep chasm was still between them and the ramparts from whence came a deadly fire wasting their ranks. Thus baffled, they also commenced a rapid discharge of musketry, and disorder ensued; for the men of the light division, whose conducting engineer had been disabled early, and whose flank was confined by an unfinished ditch intended to cut off the bastion of Santa Maria, rushed towards the breaches of the curtain and the Trinidad, which were indeed before them, but which the fourth division were destined to storm.

Great was the confusion, for now the ravelin was quite crowded with men of both divisions, and while some continued to fire, others jumped down and ran towards the breach, many also passed between the ravelin and the counter-guard of the Trinidad, the two divisions got mixed, and the reserves, which should have remained at the quarries, also came pouring in, until the ditch was quite filled, the rear still crowding forward, and all cheering vehemently. The enemy's shouts also were loud and terrible, and the bursting of shells and of grenades, the roaring of the guns from the flanks, answered by the iron howitzers from the battery of the parallel, the heavy roll and horrid explosion of the powder-barrels, the whizzing flight of the blazing splinters, the loud exhortations of the officers, and the continual clatter of the muskets, made a maddening din

* Appendix 11, § 2.

Now a multitude bounded up the great breach as if driven by a whirlwind, but across the top glittered a range of sword-blades, sharp-pointed, keen-edged on both sides, and firmly fixed in ponderous beams, which were chained together and set deep in the ruins; and for ten feet in front, the ascent was covered with loose planks, studded with sharp iron points, on which the feet of the foremost being set the planks moved, and the unhappy soldiers, falling forward on the spikes, rolled down upon the ranks behind. Then the Frenchmen, shouting at the success of their stratagem, and leaping forward, plied their shot with terrible rapidity, for every man had several muskets; and each musket in addition to its ordinary charge contained a small cylinder of wood stuck full of leaden slugs, which scattered like hail when they were discharged.

Again the assailants rushed up the breaches, and again the sword-blades, immovable and impassable, stopped their charge, and the hissing shells and thundering powder-barrels exploded unceasingly. Hundreds of men had fallen, and hundreds more were dropping, but still the heroic officers called aloud for new trials, and sometimes followed by many, sometimes by a few, ascended the ruins; and so furious were the men themselves, that in one of these charges, the rear strove to push the foremost on to the sword-blades, willing even to make a bridge of their writhing bodies, but the others frustrated the attempt by dropping down; and men fell so fast from the shot, that it was hard to know who went down voluntarily, who were stricken, and many stooped unhurt that never rose again. Vain also would it have been to break through the sword-blades, for the trench and parapet behind the breach were finished, and the assailants, crowded into even a narrower space than the ditch was, would still have been separated from their enemies, and the slaughter would have continued.

At the beginning of this dreadful conflict, Colonel Andrew Barnard had with prodigious efforts separated his division from the other, and preserved some degree of military array; but now the tumult was such that no command could be heard distinctly, except by those close at hand; and the mutilated carcasses heaped on each other, and the wounded, struggling to avoid being trampled upon, broke the formations; order was impossible! Yet officers of all stations, followed more or less numerously by the men, were seen to start out, as if struck by a sudden madness, and rush into the breach, which, yawning and glittering with steel, seemed like the mouth of some huge dragon belching forth smoke and flame. In one of these attempts, Colonel Macleod of the forty-third, a young man whose feeble body would have been quite unfit for war, if it

had not been sustained by an unconquerable spirit, was killed. Wherever his voice was heard, there his soldiers gathered, and with such a strong resolution did he lead them up the fatal ruins, that when one behind him, in falling, plunged a bayonet into his back, he complained not, and, continuing his course, was shot dead within a yard of the sword-blades. But there was no want of gallant leaders or desperate followers.

Two hours spent in these vain efforts convinced the soldiers that the breach of the Trinidad was impregnable; and as the opening in the curtain, although less strong, was retired, and the approach to it impeded by deep holes and cuts made in the ditch, the troops did not much notice it after the partial failure of one attack which had been made early. Gathering in dark groups and leaning on their muskets, they looked up with sullen desperation at the Trinidad, while the enemy, stepping out on the ramparts, and aiming their shots by the light of the fire-balls which they threw over, asked as their victims fell, "*Why they did not come into Badajos?*"

In this dreadful situation, while the dead were lying in heaps, and others continually falling, the wounded crawling about to get some shelter from the merciless fire above, and withal a sickening stench from the burnt flesh of the slain, Captain Nicholas, of the engineers, was observed by Mr. Shaw* of the forty-third, making incredible efforts to force his way with a few men into the Santa Maria bastion. Shaw, having collected about fifty soldiers of all regiments, joined him; and although there was a deep cut along the foot of this breach also, it was instantly passed, and these two young officers at the head of their gallant band rushed up the slope of the ruins; but when they had gained two-thirds of the ascent, a concentrated fire of musketry and grape dashed nearly the whole dead to the earth! Nicholas was mortally wounded, and the intrepid Shaw stood alone! After this no further effort was made at any point, and the troops remained passive, but unflinching, beneath the enemy's shot, which streamed without intermission; for, of the riflemen on the glacis, many leaping early into the ditch had joined in the assault, and the rest, raked by a cross-fire of grape from the distant bastions, baffled in their aim by the smoke and flames from the explosions, and too few in number, had entirely failed to quell the French musketry.

About midnight, when two thousand brave men had fallen, Wellington, who was on a height close to the quarries, sent orders for the remainder to retire and re-form for a second assault; for he had just then heard that the castle was taken, and, thinking that the enemy would still hold out in the town, was resolved to assail

* Now Lieutenant-Colonel Shaw Kennedy.

the breaches again. This retreat from the ditch was however not effected without further carnage and confusion; for the French fire never slackened, and a cry arose that the enemy were making a sally from the distant flanks, which caused a rush towards the ladders; then the groans and lamentations of the wounded who could not move, and expected to be slain, increased, many officers who had not heard of the order endeavored to stop the soldiers from going back, and some would even have removed the ladders, but were unable to break the crowd.

All this time the third division was lying close in the castle, and either from a fear of risking the loss of a point which insured the capture of the place, or that the egress was too difficult, made no attempt to drive away the enemy from the breaches. On the other side however the fifth division had commenced the false attack on the Pardaleras, and on the right of the Guadiana, the Portuguese were sharply engaged at the bridge; thus the town was girdled with fire; for General Walker's brigade, having passed on during the feint on the Pardaleras, was escalading the distant bastion of San Vicente. His troops had advanced along the banks of the river, and reached the French guard-house at the barrier-gate, undiscovered, for the ripple of the waters smothered the sound of their footsteps; but just then the explosion at the breaches took place, the moon shone out, and the French sentinels, discovering the columns, fired. The British troops, immediately springing forward under a sharp musketry, began to hew down the wooden barrier at the covered way, while the Portuguese, being panic-stricken, threw down the scaling-ladders. Nevertheless the others snatched them up again, and forcing the barrier, jumped into the ditch; but the guiding engineer officer was killed, and there was a *cunette* which embarrassed the column, and when the foremost men succeeded in rearing the ladders, the latter were found too short, for the walls were generally above thirty feet high. Meanwhile the fire of the French was deadly, a small mine was sprung beneath the soldiers' feet, beams of wood and live shells were rolled over on their heads, showers of grape from the flank swept the ditch, and man after man dropped dead from the ladders.

Fortunately some of the defenders having been called away to aid in recovering the castle, the ramparts were not entirely manned, and the assailants, having discovered a corner of the bastion where the scarp was only twenty feet high, placed three ladders there under an embrasure which had no gun, and was only stopped with a gabion. Some men got up, but with difficulty, for the ladders were still too short, and the first man who gained the top was pushed up by his comrades, and then drew others after him, until

many had gained the summit; and though the French shot heavily against them from both flanks and from a house in front, they thickened and could not be driven back; half the fourth regiment entered the town itself to dislodge the enemy from the houses, while the others pushed along the rampart towards the breach, and by dint of hard fighting successively won three bastions.*

In the last of these combats General Walker, leaping forward, sword in hand, at the moment when one of the enemy's cannoners was discharging a gun, fell covered with so many wounds that it was wonderful how he could survive, and some of the soldiers, immediately after perceiving a lighted match on the ground, cried out, A mine! At that word, such is the power of imagination, those troops, whom neither the strong barrier, nor the deep ditch, nor the high walls, nor the deadly fire of the enemy could stop, staggered back appalled by a chimera of their own raising; and in this disorder a French reserve, under General Viellande, drove on them with a firm and ready charge, and pitching some men over the walls, and killing others outright, again cleansed the ramparts even to the San Vincente. There however Leith had placed Colonel Nugent, with a battalion of the thirty-eighth as a reserve, and when the French came up, shouting and slaying all before them, this battalion, about two hundred strong, arose, and with one close volley destroyed them.

Then the panic ceased, the soldiers rallied, and in compact order once more charged along the walls towards the breaches; but the French, although turned on both flanks and abandoned by fortune, did not yet yield; and meanwhile the detachment of the fourth regiment, which had entered the town when the San Vincente was first carried, was strongly situated, for the streets were empty and brilliantly illuminated, and no person was seen; yet a low buzz and whisper were heard around, lattices were now and then gently opened, and from time to time shots were fired from underneath the doors of the houses by the Spaniards. However, the troops, with bugles sounding, advanced towards the great square of the town, and in their progress captured several mules going with ammunition to the breaches; but the square itself was as empty and silent as the streets, and the houses as bright with lamps; a terrible enchantment seemed to be in operation, for they saw nothing but light, and heard only the low whispers close around them, while the tumult at the breaches was like the crashing thunder.

There indeed the fight was still plainly raging, and hence, quitting the square, they attempted to take the garrison in reverse, by attacking the ramparts from the town-side; but they were received with a rolling musketry, driven back with loss, and resumed their

* Appendix 11, § 2.

movement through the streets. At last the breaches were abandoned by the French, other parties entered the place, desultory combats took place in various parts, and finally General Viellande and Phillipon, who was wounded, seeing all ruined, passed the bridge with a few hundred soldiers, and entered San Christoval, where they all surrendered early the next morning upon summons to Lord Fitzroy Somerset, who had with great readiness pushed through the town to the draw-bridge ere they had time to organize further resistance. But even in the moment of ruin the night before, the noble governor had sent some horsemen out from the fort to carry the news to Soult's army, and they reached him in time to prevent a greater misfortune.

Now commenced that wild and desperate wickedness which tarnished the lustre of the soldier's heroism. All indeed were not alike, for hundreds risked and many lost their lives in striving to stop the violence; but the madness generally prevailed, and as the worst men were leaders here, all the dreadful passions of human nature were displayed. Shameless rapacity, brutal intemperance, savage lust, cruelty and murder, shrieks and piteous lamentations, groans, shouts, imprecations, the hissing of fires bursting from the houses, the crashing of doors and windows, and the reports of muskets used in violence, resounded for two days and nights in the streets of Badajos! on the third, when the city was sacked, when the soldiers were exhausted by their own excesses, the tumult rather subsided than was quelled. The wounded men were then looked to, the dead disposed of!

Five thousand men and officers fell during this siege, and of these, including seven hundred Portuguese, three thousand five hundred had been stricken in the assault, sixty officers and more than seven hundred men being slain on the spot. The five generals, Kempt, Harvey, Bowes, Colville, and Picton, were wounded, the first three severely; about six hundred men and officers fell in the escalade of San Vincente, as many at the castle, and more than two thousand at the breaches, each division there losing twelve hundred! And how deadly the strife was at that point, may be gathered from this: the forty-third and fifty-second regiments, of the light division, alone lost more men than the seven regiments of the third division engaged at the castle!

Let any man picture to himself this frightful carnage taking place in a space of less than a hundred square yards; let him consider that the slain died not all suddenly, nor by one manner of death; that some perished by steel, some by shot, some by water, that some were crushed and mangled by heavy weights, some trampled upon, some dashed to atoms by the fiery explosions; that

for hours this destruction was endured without shrinking, and that the town was won at last; let any man consider this, and he must admit that a British army bears with it an awful power. And false would it be to say that the French were feeble men; for the garrison stood and fought manfully and with good discipline, behaving worthily. Shame there was none on any side. Yet who shall do justice to the bravery of the soldiers? the noble emulation of the officers? Who shall measure out the glory of Ridge, of Macleod, of Nicholas, or of O'Hare, of the ninety-fifth, who perished on the breach, at the head of the stormers, and with him nearly all the volunteers for that desperate service? Who shall describe the springing valor of that Portuguese grenadier who was killed, the foremost man at the Santa Maria? or the martial fury of that desperate soldier of the ninety-fifth, who, in his resolution to win, thrust himself beneath the chained sword-blades, and there suffered the enemy to dash his head to pieces with the ends of their muskets? Who can sufficiently honor the intrepidity of Walker, of Shaw, of Canch, or the resolution of Ferguson of the forty-third, who, having in former assaults received two deep wounds, was here, with his hurts still open, leading the stormers of his regiment, the third time a volunteer, and the third time wounded!* Nor would I be understood to select these as pre-eminent; many and signal were the other examples of unbounded devotion, some known, some that will never be known; for in such a tumult much passed unobserved, and often the observers fell themselves ere they could bear testimony to what they saw; but no age, no nation ever sent forth braver troops to battle than those who stormed Badajos.

When the extent of the night's havoc was made known to Lord Wellington, the firmness of his nature gave way for a moment, and the pride of conquest yielded to a passionate burst of grief for the loss of his gallant soldiers.

* Appendix 11, § 2.

CHAPTER VI.

The state of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida obliges Lord Wellington to relinquish his design of invading Andalusia—Soul's operations described—He reaches Villa Franca—Hears of the fall of Badajos and retires—Penne Villemur and Morillo move from the Niebla against Seville—Ballesteros, having defeated Maransin at Cartama, comes from the Ronda against Seville—A French convoy is stopped in the Morena, and the whole of Andalusia is in commotion—Seville is saved by the subtlety of a Spaniard in the French interest—Ballesteros retires—Assaults Zahara and is repulsed—Sends a division against Ossuna, which is also repulsed by the *Escopeteros*—Drives General Rey from Allora to Malaga—Soul marches from Llerena towards Seville, and General Conroux brings a brigade from the Guadalete to attack Ballesteros—Sir S. Cotton defeats General Peyreymont's cavalry near Usagre—Soul concentrates his army near Seville, to fight the allies—Lord Wellington marches to Beira—Marmont's operations—He marches against Ciudad Rodrigo—Carlos d'España retires towards Almeida, and Victor Alten towards Penamacor—The French appear before Almeida—General Trant arrives on the Cabeça Negro—The French retire, and Trant unites with J. Wilson at Guarda—Marmont advances to Sabugal—Victor Alten abandons Penamacor and Castello Branco, and crosses the Tagus—The Portuguese General Lecor opposes the enemy with skill and courage—Marmont drives Trant from Guarda, and defeats his militia on the Mondego—Lord Wellington crosses the Tagus and enters Castello Branco—Marmont's position perilous—Lord Wellington advances to attack him—He retreats over the Agueda—The allied army is spread in wide cantonments, and the fortresses are victualled.

THE English General, having now achieved the second part of his project, was desirous to fight a great battle in Andalusia, which would have been the crown of this extraordinary winter campaign; but the misconduct of others would not suffer him to do this. At Ciudad Rodrigo the Spanish engineers had entirely ceased the repairs of the works; Carlos d'España, besides neglecting to provision that place, had by his oppressive conduct alarmed all the people of the vicinity, and created a dangerous spirit of discontent in the garrison; Almeida was insecure, and Marmont's army was already between the Agueda and the Coa.

It was essential to place those fortresses in safety ere the march into Andalusia could take place; but the English General, knowing that the danger in Beira was not very imminent, lingered a few days, hoping that Soul, in his anger at the loss of Badajos, would risk a blow on this side of the Morena; and he was certain that the French General could not stop more than a few days, because of the secondary armies whose operations were then in progress.

Soul was indeed deeply affected by the loss of Badajos, but he was surrounded by enemies, and the contest was too unequal. He had quitted Seville the 1st of April with twelve regiments of infantry, two of cavalry, and one battery of artillery. His march was by Lora del Rio and Constantine upon Llerena; and to impose

upon the allies, General Gazan moved by the road of Monasterio with the remainder of the artillery and the baggage, escorted by Barois' division of infantry and some cavalry. But this column turned into the cross roads at Santa de Guillena, and so reached Constantino, whence they followed the main body, and thus the whole army was concentrated at Llerena on the 6th. This circuitous march had been determined by the situation of Drouet and Daricau, who, having been before driven into the mountains by the Cordova roads, could not rally upon the side of Monasterio; now however they advanced to Fuentes de Ovejuña, and the allies fell back to Albuera and Talavera Real.

On the 7th the French reached Villa Franca, and their cavalry entered Villalba and Fuente del Maestro. The 8th they were in march to fight, when the horsemen sent by Phillipon from Badajos, during the assault, brought the news of its fall; at the same moment their General was apprised by his spies that Marmont, by whom he expected to be joined, was in the north, and could not assist him. He immediately fell back to Llerena, for the allies could then bring forty-five thousand men into action, and the French army, though strongly constituted and the best troops in Spain, did not exceed twenty-four thousand.

Soult had now little time to deliberate, for Penne Villemur and Morillo, issuing out of Portugal with four thousand men, had crossed the lower Guadiana, and seized San Lucar de Mayor on the 4th. This place was ten miles from Seville, which was only garrisoned by a Spanish-Swiss battalion in Joseph's service, aided by "*Escopeteros*" and by the sick and convalescent men; the commandant, Rignoux, had therefore, after a skirmish, shut himself up in fortified convents. The 6th the Spaniards had occupied the heights in front of the Triana bridge, and the 7th attacked the French intrenchments, hoping to raise a popular commotion. But a worse danger was gathering on the other side; for Ballesteros, after the defeat of Maransin at Cartama, had advanced with eleven thousand men, intending to fall on Seville from the left of the Guadalquivir.

To distract the attention of the French, and to keep Laval from detaching the troops to Seville, the Spanish General had sent Copons with four thousand men by Itar to Junquera, which is on the Malaga side of the Ronda; meanwhile he himself entered Los Barios with the rest of his army, and thus threatened at once Granada and the lines of Chiclana. At the same time all the similar partidas of the Ronda were let loose in different directions, to cut the communications, to seize the small French magazines, and to collect the Spanish soldiers, who at different periods had quitted their colors and retired to their homes.

Copons remained at Junquera, but Ballesteros, with three divisions commanded by Cruz Murgeon, the Marquis de Las Cuevas, and the Prince of Anglona, marched to Utrera as soon as Soult had departed from Seville; thus the communication of that city with Cadiz on one side, and with Malaga and Granada on the other, was cut off. The situation of the French was very critical, and they wanted ammunition, because a large convoy, coming from Madrid with an escort of twelve hundred men, was stopped in the Morena by the partidas from the Ronda and from Murcia.

On the 6th the Spanish cavalry was within a few miles of Seville, when false information, adroitly given by a Spaniard in the French interest, led Ballesteros to believe that Soult was close at hand, whereupon he immediately returned to the Ronda; the next day Penne Villemur, having received notice from Lord Wellington that the French would soon return, also retired to Gibraelon.

Ballesteros soon discovered the deceit, when, instead of returning to Seville, he on the 9th assaulted the small castle of Zahara in the hills, and, being repulsed with considerable loss, made a circuit north of Ronda, by Albodonaes, Alcala de Pruna, to Casarbonela, where he was rejoined by Copons. The division of Cuevas then marched against Ossuna, which, being only garrisoned by "*Escopeteros*," was expected to fall at once; but after two days' combat and the loss of two hundred killed and wounded, the three thousand patriots retired, baffled by a hundred and fifty of their own countrymen fighting for the invaders.

When Cuevas returned, Ballesteros marched in three columns, by roads leading from Casarbonela and Antequera, to attack General Rey, who was posted with eighteen hundred men near Allora, on the Guadaljore river. The centre column was first engaged without any advantage, but when Rey saw the flank columns coming on, he retired behind the Guadalmedina river, close to Malaga, having lost a colonel and two hundred men in passing the Guadaljore.

After this action Ballesteros returned to the Ronda, for Soult was now truly at hand, and his horsemen were already in the plains. He had sent Digeon's cavalry on the 9th to Cordova, to chase the partidas, and had ordered Drouet's division to take post at Fuentes Ovejuna; then directing Peyreymont's cavalry upon Usagre, he had come himself by forced marches to Seville, which he reached the 11th, hoping to surprise the Spaniards; but the stratagem which had saved Seville on the 6th also saved Ballesteros; for General Conroux was coming up on the other side from the Guadalete, and the Spaniards would have been inclosed but for their timely retreat. And scarcely had Soult quitted Llerena when the

French met with a disaster near Usagre, which, though a strong position, had always proved a very dangerous advanced post on both sides.

Sir Stapleton Cotton, while following the trail of the enemy on the evening of the 10th, had received intelligence that Peyremont's cavalry was between Villa Garcia and Usagre, and he immediately conceived hopes of cutting it off. To effect this, Anson's brigade, then commanded by Colonel Frederic Ponsonby, moved during the night from Villa Franca upon Usagre, and at the same time Le Marchant's brigade marched from Los Santos upon Benvenida to intercept the retreat on Llerena. Ponsonby's advanced guard having commenced the action too soon, the French fell back, before Le Marchant could intercept them; but as some heights, skirting the Llerena road, prevented them from seeing that General, they again drew up in order of battle behind the junction of the Benvenida road.

The hostile bodies were nearly equal in numbers, about nineteen hundred sabres on each side, but Sir Stapleton soon decided the action; for ably seizing the accidental advantage of ground, he kept the enemy's attention engaged by skirmishing with Ponsonby's squadrons, while Le Marchant, secretly passing at the back of the heights, sent the fifth dragoon guards against their flank, and the next moment Ponsonby charged their front. Thus assailed, the French gave way in disorder, and being pursued for four miles left several officers and a hundred and twenty-eight men prisoners, and many were killed in the field. The loss of the British was only fifty-six men and officers, of which forty-five were of the fifth dragoon guards.

The beaten troops found refuge with Drouet's infantry, which had not yet left Llerena; but after this action, that General fell back with all his troops behind the Guadalquivir, for Soult was then preparing to fight the allies at Seville.

The Duke of Dalmatia was well aware of Wellington's intention to invade Andalusia. He knew exactly the amount and disposition of his forces, and was resolved to meet him coming out of the Morena, with all the Freuch army united; neither did he doubt the final issue, although the failure of the last harvest and the non-arrival of convoys since February had lessened his resources. Wellington's plan was however deferred. He had levelled his trenches, and brought two Portuguese regiments of infantry from Abrantes and Elvas to form a temporary garrison of Badajos, until some Spaniards, who had been landed at Ayamonte in March, could arrive; then giving over the charge of the repairs to General Hill, who remained with two divisions of infantry and

three brigades of cavalry in Estremadura, he marched himself upon Beira, which Marmont was now ravaging with great cruelty.

That Marshal had been anxious to unite with Soult in Estremadura, but the Emperor's orders were imperative, that he should make a diversion for Badajos by an irruption into Portugal. On the 14th of March he ascertained that none of Wellington's divisions were left on the Agueda, and on the 27th he was ready to move. Bonnet, reinforced by Carrier's brigade, was then on the Orbijo, in observation of the Gallicians; Ferrier's division was at Valladolid, and Foy's in the valley of the Tagus; but the other five divisions of infantry, and one of cavalry, had passed the mountains and concentrated on the Tormes, carrying with them fifteen days' provisions, scaling ladders, and the materials for a bridge. Both Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo were therefore in manifest peril, and Almeida, which contained the allies' battering train, was still very incompletely fortified. Hence, on the first rumor of Marmont's movement, Lord Wellington had thrown in two militia regiments, with a strong detachment of British artillery-men; the garrison was therefore three thousand six hundred strong, and the governor, Colonel Le Mesurier, labored hard to complete the defences.*

Of the northern militia, which had been called out before the allies quitted the Coa, six thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry were under Silveira, three thousand infantry under Trant, the same number under John Wilson, and two thousand five hundred under Lecor. But the law was, that persons liable to serve should be enrolled by classes in rotation, and therefore the present men, with the exception of Silveira's, were raw peasants totally unskilled in the use of arms. All these officers save Lecor, whose post was at Castello Branco, had been for some time in movement, and Trant and Wilson were on the 22d at Lanego, where General Baccellar, who commanded the province, fixed his head-quarters. Silveira had the same destination, but his march was slow, and his object rather to draw the wonder of his countrymen; for in his unquenchable vanity he always affected to act as an independent general.

When Trant was assured that Marmont's direction would be on Ciudad, and not Oporto, he advanced from Lamego followed by Wilson, intending to take post on the lower Coa. While in march he received Le Mesurier's despatches, which induced him to make a forced march with one brigade, to the Cabeça Negro mountain, behind the bridge of Almeida. His design was to break down the restored part of that structure, and so prevent the enemy from penetrating to Pinhel, where there was a magazine; and his march was well-timed, for two French divisions were then driving

* Appendix 12, § 1.

Carlos d'España over the plain beyond the Coa. It appeared that Marmont having come close to Ciudad Rodrigo on the 30th, the Spaniards and Victor Alten fell back from the Yeltes before him; and the latter, who had six hundred excellent German cavalry, immediately crossed the Agueda, and neither comprehending the spirit of Lord Wellington's orders, nor the real situation of affairs, retreated at once to Castello Branco, four long marches from Ciudad, thus leaving all the country open to the enemy's marauding parties. Carlos d'España, who had eight hundred infantry, also retreated across the plain of the Cima de Coa to Fort Concepcion, but on the 3d the French, having laid their bridge at the ford of Caridad, passed the Agueda and drove him from thence, and he reached the Cabeça Negro in retreat with only two hundred men, at the very moment Trant arrived.

The latter, seeing no French cavalry on the plain, and being desirous of concerting his operations with Le Mesurier, immediately threw some skirmishers into the vineyards on the right of the road beyond the bridge; then, escorted by some guides whom he had dressed in red uniform, he galloped to the glacis of the fortress, communicated with the governer, received from him a troop of English cavalry which happened to be in the place, and returned at dusk. The Cabeça Negro was immediately covered with bivouac fires, and in the evening Le Mesurier sallied from the fortress, and drove back the enemy's light troops. The two divisions of infantry had come against Almeida, with orders to storm it, but these vigorous actions disturbed them; the attempt was not made, and the general commanding excused himself to Marmont, on the ground that the sudden appearance of Trant indicated the vicinity of British troops. In this false notion he marched the next morning up the Coa towards Alfayates, where Marmont met him with two other divisions, and eight squadrons of cavalry, having left one division to blockade Ciudad.

Trant now sent back the horsemen to Le Mesurier, and marched to Guarda, to cover the magazines and hospital at Celerico. Here he was joined by Wilson, and here he ought also to have been joined by Silveira; but that General, instead of crossing the Douro on the 5th, and marching up to Guarda, only crossed it on the 14th, and then halted at Lamego. Thus, instead of twelve thousand infantry, and four hundred cavalry, who had seen some service, there were scarcely six thousand raw peasants, in a position, strong, if the occupying force had been numerous enough to hold the ridge of Porcas and other heights behind it, but a very dangerous post for a small force, because it could be turned by the right and left, and the line of retreat to the Mondego was not favorable.

Neither had Trant any horsemen to scout, for Baccellar, a weak old man, who had never seen an enemy, was now at Celerico, and retained the only squadron of dragoons in the vicinity for his own guard.

This post Trant and Wilson held, with six thousand militia and six guns, from the 9th to the 14th, keeping the enemy's marauders in check; and they were also prepared to move by the high ridge of the Estrella to Abrantes, if the French should menace that fortress, which was not unlikely. For Marmont had pushed forward on Sabugal, and Victor Alten, abandoning Castello Branco, while the French were still at Memoa, fifty miles distant from him, had crossed the Tagus at Villa Velha, and it is said had even some thoughts of burning the bridge. The French parties then traversed the lower Beira in every direction, plundering and murdering in such a shameful manner, that the whole population fled before them. However, General Lecor, a good soldier, stood fast with the militia at Castello Branco; he checked the French cavalry detachments, removed the hospitals and some of the stores, and when menaced by a strong force of infantry on the 12th, destroyed the rest of the magazines, and fell back to Sarnadas, only one short march on the road to Villa Velha; and the next day, when the French retired, he followed and harassed their rear.

Marmont's divisions being now spread over the country in search of supplies, Trant formed the very daring design of surprising the French Marshal himself in his quarters at Sabugal. Baccellar's procrastinations fortunately delayed the execution of this project, which was undoubtedly too hazardous an enterprise to undertake with such troops; for the distance was twenty miles, and it was a keen observation of Lord Wellington's, when Trant adverted to the magnitude of the object, to say that "*In war nothing is so bad as failure and defeat.*" This would undoubtedly have been the case here: for in the night of the 13th, that on which Trant would have made the attempt, Marmont, having formed the design of surprising Trant, had led two brigades of infantry and four hundred cavalry up the mountain.* He cut off the outposts, and was actually entering the streets at daybreak with his horsemen, when the alarm was beaten at Trant's quarters by one drummer; this being taken up at hazard by all the other drummers in different parts of the town, caused the French Marshal to fall back at the moment when a brisk charge would have placed everything at his mercy, for the beating of the first drum was accidental, and no troops were under arms.†

* Marmont's Official Reports, MS.

† General Trant's papers, MS.

The militia immediately took post outside Guarda, but they had only one day's provisions, and the French cavalry could turn their flank and gain Celerico in their rear, while the infantry attacked their front; the guns were therefore moved off under cover of the town, and the regiments, withdrawing in succession, retreated over three or four miles of open ground and in good order, although the enemy's cavalry hovered close on the flank, and the infantry followed at a short distance. Further on, however, there was a wooded declivity, leading to the Mondego, and here, while the head of the troops was passing the river below, forty dragoons, sent up by Baccellar the evening before, were pressed by the French, and galloped through the rear-guard of eight hundred infantry; these last, seeing the enemy dismount to fire their carabines, and finding that the wet had damaged their own powder, fled also, and the French followed with hue and cry.

All the officers behaved firmly, and the Mondego was finally passed, yet in confusion and with the loss of two hundred prisoners; and Marmont might now have crossed the river, on the flank of the militia, and galloped into Celerico, where there was nothing to defend the magazines; instead of which he halted and permitted the disorderly rabble to gain that place. Such, however, was his compassion, that when he found they were really nothing but poor undisciplined peasants, he would not suffer his cavalry to cut them down, and no man was killed during the whole action, although the French horsemen were actually in the midst of the fugitives. Baccellar, having destroyed a quantity of powder at Celerico, retreated with Trant's people the next day towards Lamego; Wilson remained at Celerico, and when the enemy had driven in his outposts, he ordered the magazines to be destroyed, but the order was only partly executed when the French retired, and on the 17th the militia re-occupied Guarda.

This short campaign of the militia I have treated at length, because it produced an undue effect at the time, and because it shows how trifling accidents will mar the greatest combinations; for here the English General's extensive arrangements for the protection of Beira were utterly disconcerted by the slow advance of Silveira on the one side, and the rapid retreat of General Alten on the other. Again, the French, deceived by some red uniforms, and by some bivouac fires on the Cabeça Negro, had relinquished the attack of Almeida to run after a few thousand undisciplined militiamen, who were yet saved by the accidental beating of a drum; and it is curious to find a Marshal of France personally acting as a partisan, and yet effecting nothing against these miserable troops.

The disaster on the Mondego spread consternation as far as

Coimbra, and the most alarming reports reached Lord Wellington, whose operations it is now time to notice. When Soult's retreat from Llerena was ascertained, the allied army had marched towards the Tagus, and on the 11th Lord Wellington, hearing of Alten's retreat, sent him orders to re-cross that river without delay, and return to Castello Branco. The 16th the advanced guard of the army also reached that town, and the same day a militia officer, flying from Coimbra in the general panic, came to head-quarters and reported that the enemy was master of that town; but the next hour brought General Wilson's report from Guarda, and the unfortunate wretch whose fears had led him to give the false information, was tried and shot by order of Beresford.

At this time the French army, in number about twenty-eight thousand, was concentrated, with the exception of Brennier's division, which remained near Ciudad Rodrigo, between Sabugal and the ridge of hills overlooking Penamacor. Marmont was inclined to fight, for he had heard of a convoy of provisions which Lord Wellington had some days before sent by the way of Almeida to Ciudad, and intended to cut it off; but the convoy having reached Almeida was safe, and the French General's own position was very critical. Almeida and the militia at Guarda were on his right flank, Ciudad Rodrigo was on his rear, and immediately behind him the Coa and the Agueda rivers were both swelled by heavy rains which fell from the 13th to the 19th, and the flood had broken the bridge near Caridad. There remained only the Puente de Villar on the upper Agueda for retreat, and the roads leading to it were bad and narrow; the march from thence to Tamames was also circuitous and exposed to the attack of the allies, who could move on the chord through Ciudad Rodrigo. Marmont's retreat must therefore have been effected through the pass of Perales upon Coria, and the English General, conceiving good hopes of falling on him before he could cross the Coa, moved forward to Pedrogoa; but the rear of the army was not yet across the Tagus, and a sufficient body of troops for the attack could not be collected before the 21st. On that day, however, the Agueda having subsided, the French restored their bridge, the last of their divisions crossed it on the 24th, and Marmont thus terminated his operations without loss. After this he again spread his troops over the plains of Leon, where some of his smaller posts had indeed been harassed by Julian Sanchez, but where the Gallician army had done nothing. The Portuguese militia were immediately disbanded, and the English General made the greatest exertions to revictual Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, intending when that was effected to leave Pictou with a corps upon the Agueda, and march himself against

Andalusia, following his original design. The first division, which had only reached Castello Branco, returned to Castello de Vide, and as Foy's division had meanwhile reoccupied Truxillo, Hill advanced to observe him, and the fifth Spanish army returned to Estremadura. But the difficulty of supplying the fortresses was very great. The incursion of Marmont had destroyed all the intermediate magazines, and dispersed the means of transport on the lines of communication; the Portuguese government would not remedy the inconvenience either there or on the other frontier, and Elvas and Badajos were suffering from the same cause as Ciudad and Almeida.

In this dilemma Lord Wellington adopted, from necessity, a very unmilitary and dangerous remedy. For having declared to the members of the Portuguese government, that on their heads he would throw the responsibility of losing Badajos and Elvas, if they did not immediately victual both, a threat which had its due effect, he employed the whole of the carriages and mules attached to the army to bring up stores to Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo; meanwhile he quartered his troops near the points of water-carriage, that is to say, on the Mondego, the Douro, and the Tagus. Thus the army was spread from the Morena to the Tagus, from the Tagus to the Douro, from the Douro to the Mondego, on a line little less than four hundred miles long, and in the face of three hostile armies, the farthest of which was but a few marches from the outposts. It was however scarcely possible for the French to assemble again in masses, before the ripening of the coming harvest; and, on the other hand, even the above measure was insufficient to gain time; the expedition against Andalusia was therefore abandoned, and the fifth great epoch of the war terminated.

CHAPTER VII.

General observations—The campaign considered—The justice of Napoleon's views vindicated, and Marmont's operations censured as the cause of the French misfortunes—The operations of the army of the centre and of the south examined—Lord Wellington's operations eulogized—Extraordinary adventures of Captain Colquhoun Grant—The operations of the siege of Badajos examined—Lord Wellington's conduct vindicated.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

In this campaign the French forces were too much scattered, and they occupied the countries bordering on Portugal rather as a

conquered territory than as a field of operations. The movements of the armies of the north, of the centre, and of Portugal, might have been so combined as to present a hundred thousand men on a field of battle; yet Wellington captured two great fortresses within gun-shot, as it were, of them all, and was never disturbed by the approach of even thirty thousand men. This arose partly from the want of union, partly from the orders of the Emperor, whose plans the generals either did not or would not understand in their true spirit, and therefore executed without vigor; and yet the French writers have generally endeavored to fasten the failures on Napoleon, as if he only was mistaken about the war in Spain! It is easy to spurn the dead lion!

The expedition of Montbrun to Alicant has been fixed upon as the chief cause of the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo. Napoleon however did not desire that Montbrun's march should be held in abeyance for a week, upon the strength of some vague rumors relative to the allies' proceedings, and yet he finally sent at precisely the wrong period; neither did he contemplate that General's idle display at Alicant after the city of Valencia had fallen. But ill-executed and hurtful as this expedition doubtless was in various ways, the loss of Ciudad Rodrigo cannot be directly traced to it. Montbrun was at Almanza on the 9th of January, and on the 19th Ciudad was stormed; now, if he had not been at Almanza he would have been at Toledo, that is, eight marches from Salamanca; and as the commencement of the siege was not known until the 15th, even at Valladolid, he could not have been on the Tormes before the 25th, which would have been five days too late. The Emperor wished to strengthen Suchet at the crisis of the Valencian operations, and his intent was that Montbrun should have reached that city in December, but the latter did not arrive before the middle of January; had he been only a week earlier, that is, had he marched at once from Toledo, Mahy could not have escaped, Alicant would then have fallen, and if Blake had made an obstinate defence at Valencia the value of such a reinforcement would have been acknowledged.

At this period Valencia was the most important point in the Peninsula, and there was no apparent reason why Ciudad should be in any immediate danger; the Emperor could not calculate upon the errors of his own generals. It is therefore futile to affirm that Montbrun's detachment was made on a false principle; it was on the contrary conceived in perfect accord with the maxim of concentrating on the important point at the decisive moment; errors, extraneous to the original design, alone brought it within the principle of dissemination.

The loss of Ciudad Rodrigo may be directly traced to the Duke of Ragusa's want of vigilance, to the scanty garrison which he kept in the place, to the Russian war, which obliged the Emperor to weaken the army of the north; finally, to the extravagance of the army of the centre. Marmont expressly asserts that at Madrid three thousand men devoured and wasted daily the rations of twenty-two thousand, and the stores thus consumed would have enabled the army of Portugal to keep concentrated, in which case Wellington could not have taken Ciudad; and if the army of the centre had been efficient, Hill would have incurred great danger, and Soult's power been vastly augmented.

It is not Napoleon's skill only, that has been assailed by these writers. Lord Wellington also is blamed for not crushing Souham's division at Tamames between the 23d and the 26th of January; although Souham, a good general, never entered Tamames, except with cavalry scouts, and kept his main body at Matilla, whence one forced march would have placed him behind the Tormes in safety! In such a shallow manner have the important operations of this period been treated. Nor will the causes commonly assigned for the fall of Badajos better bear examination.

"Marmont, instead of joining Soult in Estremadura, followed a phantom in Beira." "It was his vanity and jealousy of the Duke of Dalmatia that lost Badajos." Such are the assertions of both French and English writers; nevertheless the Duke of Ragusa never anticipated any success from his movement into Beira, and far from avoiding Soult, earnestly desired to co-operate with him; moreover this invasion of Beira, which has been regarded as a folly, was the conception of Napoleon, the greatest of all captains! and it is not difficult to show that the Emperor's design was, notwithstanding the ill result, capacious and solid.

Let us suppose that Marmont had aided Soult, and that the army of the centre had also sent men. If they had made any error in their combinations, the English General would have defeated them separately; if they had effected their junction, he would have retreated, and Badajos would have been succored. But then eighty thousand French would have been assembled by long marches in the winter rains, to the great detriment of their affairs elsewhere, and, unless they came prepared to take Elvas, without any adequate object; for Lord Wellington could, after the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, have repeated this operation as often as he pleased, which, besides the opening thus made for insurrection in Spain, would have stamped a character of weakness on the French arms, extremely injurious, since character is half the strength of an army.

The Emperor judged better; he disliked such timid operations;

he desired that his powerful armies should throw the allies on the defensive, and he indicated the means of doing so. Wellington, he said, expecting an effort to retake Ciudad Rodrigo, had called Hill across the Tagus, and to prevent that movement Soult was directed to send twenty thousand men against the Alemtejo. The fall of Ciudad had thus, by obliging the allies to defend it, given the French their choice of ground for a battle, and at a distance from the sea; it was for Marmont to avail himself of the occasion, not by marching to aid Soult, who had eighty thousand excellent troops, and at the worst could be only driven from Andalusia upon Valencia or Madrid; whereas if the army of Portugal or a part of it should be defeated on the Guadiana, the blow would be felt in every part of Spain. Marmont's business was, he said, first to strengthen his own position at Salamanca, as a base of operations, and then to keep the allies constantly engaged on the Agueda until he was prepared to fight a general battle. Meanwhile Soult should either take the fortresses of the Alemtejo, or draw off Hill's corps from Wellington, who would then be very inferior to Marmont, and yet Hill himself would be unequal to fight Soult.

"Fix your quarters," said the Emperor, "at Salamanca, work day and night to fortify that place—organize a new battering train—form magazines—send strong advanced guards to menace Ciudad and Almeida—harass the allies' outposts, even daily—threaten the frontier of Portugal in all directions, and send parties to ravage the nearest villages—repair the ways to Almeida and Oporto, and keep the bulk of your army at Toro Zamora, Benevente, and Avila, which are fertile districts, and from whence, in four days, you can concentrate the whole upon Salamanca. You will thus keep the allies in check on the Agueda, and your troops will repose, while you prepare for great operations. You have nothing to do with the south. Announce the approach of your new battering train, and if Wellington marches to invest Badajos with a few divisions, Soult will be able to relieve it; but if Wellington goes with all his forces, unite your army, march straight upon Almeida, push parties to Coimbra, overrun the country in various directions, and be assured he will return. Twenty-four hours after the receipt of this letter you should be on your way to Salamanca, and your advanced guards should be in march towards Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida."

Now, if Marmont had thus conceived the war himself, he could have commenced operations before the end of January; but this letter, written the 15th of February, reached him in the latter end of that month, and found him desponding and fearful even in defence. Vacillating between his own wishes and the Emperor's

orders, he did nothing; but had he, as his despatch recommended, commenced his operations in twenty-four hours, his advanced posts would have been near Ciudad early in March, that is, at the moment when the allies were, as I have before shown, disseminated all over Portugal, and when only the fifth division was upon the Coa to oppose him. The works of Almeida were then quite indefensible, and the movement upon Badajos must have necessarily been suspended. Thus the winter season would have passed away uselessly for the allies unless Wellington turned to attack Marmont, which was a difficult operation in itself, and would have been dangerous to the Alemtejo, while Soult held Badajos, for that Marshal, as we have seen, had received orders to attack Hill with twenty thousand men. Here then the errors were of execution, not of design, and the first part of the Emperor's combinations was evidently just and solid. It remains to test the second part, which was to have been executed if Lord Wellington invested Badajos.

It must be remembered, that Marmont was so to hold his army, that he could concentrate in four days; that he was to make an incursion into Beira the moment Wellington crossed the Tagus; that Oporto was to be menaced, Almeida to be attacked, Coimbra to be occupied. These operations would undoubtedly have brought the allies back again at the commencement of the siege, because the fall of Badajos could not be expected under three weeks, which would have been too long to leave Beira and the fortresses at the mercy of the invader. Now Marmont did not reach the Agueda before the 31st March, when the siege of Badajos was approaching its conclusion; he did not storm Almeida, nor attack Ciudad Rodrigo, nor enter Coimbra, nor menace Oporto; and yet his operation, feebly as it was executed, obliged Lord Wellington to relinquish his meditated attack on Andalusia, and return to the assistance of Beira. Again therefore the error was in the execution. And here we may observe how inferior in hardihood the French General was to his adversary. Wellington with eighteen thousand men had escaladed Badajos, a powerful fortress and defended by an excellent governor with five thousand French veterans; Marmont with twenty-eight thousand men would not attempt to storm Ciudad, although its breaches were scarcely healed, and its garrison disaffected. Nor did he even assail Almeida, which, hardly meriting the name of a fortress, was only occupied by three thousand militia, scarcely able to handle their arms; and yet if he had captured Almeida, as he could scarcely have failed to do with due vigor, he would have found a battering train with which to take Ciudad Rodrigo, and thus have again balanced the campaign.

The Duke of Ragusa was averse to serving in the Peninsula; he

wished to be employed in the Russian expedition, and he had written to the Emperor to desire his recall, or that the whole of the northern district from Sebastian to Salamanca, including Madrid, should be placed under his orders. Unless that were done, he said, he could only calculate the operations of his own troops. The other generals would make difficulties, would move slowly, and the King's court was in open hostility to the French interest. The army of the north had in retiring from Leon scrupulously carried away everything that could be useful to him, in the way of bridge, or battering equipages, or of ammunition or provisions, although he was in want of all these things.

Then he painted all the jealousies and disputes in the French armies, and affirmed that his own force, care being had for the posts of communication, and the watching of the army of Galicia, would not furnish more than thirty-four thousand men for the field; a calculation contradicted by the imperial muster-rolls, which on the 1st of March bore sixty thousand fighting men present with the eagles. He also rated the allies at sixty thousand, well provided with everything and ready to attack him, whereas the returns of that army gave only fifty-two thousand men including Hill's corps; about thirty-five thousand only could have passed the Agueda, and their penury of means had, as we have seen, prevented them from even holding together on the northern frontier. In like manner he assumed that two of the allied divisions were left upon the Agueda, when the army marched against Badajos, whereas no more than six hundred cavalry remained there. All these things prove that Marmont, either from dislike to the war, or natural want of vigor, was not equal to his task, and it is obvious that a diversion, begun so late, and followed up with so little energy, could have had little effect upon the siege of Badajos; it would have been far better to have followed his own first design of detaching three divisions to aid Soult, and retained the other two to menace Ciudad Rodrigo.

It is fitting now to test the operations of the armies of the south, and of the centre. The latter is easily disposed of. The secret of its inactivity is to be found in Marmont's letter. Everything at Madrid was confusion and intrigue, waste and want of discipline; in fine, the union of a court and an army had destroyed the latter. Not so at Seville. There the hand of an able general and indefatigable administrator were visible, and the unravelling the intricate combinations, which produced such an apparent want of vigor in the operations of the Duke of Dalmatia, will form at once the apology for that General, and the just eulogium of Lord Wellington.

First, it must be held in mind that the army of the south, so powerful in appearance, did not furnish a proportionate number of men for field-service, because the reinforcements, although borne on the rolls, were for the most part retained in the northern governments. Soult had sixty-seven thousand French and six thousand "Escopeteros" present under arms in September; but then followed the surprise of Girard at Aroyo de Molinos, the vigorous demonstrations of Hill in December, the failure of Godinot at Gibraltar, the check sustained by Sémélé at Bornos, and the siege of Tarifa, which diminished the number of men, and occasioned fresh arrangements on the different points of the circle. The harvest of 1811 had failed in Andalusia, as in all other parts, and the inhabitants were reduced to feed on herbs; the soldiers had only half rations of bread, and neither reinforcements of men, nor convoys of money, nor ammunition, nor clothes, had come either from France or from Madrid for a long period.

It was under these circumstances that Soult received the order to send twenty thousand men against the Alemtejo. But the whole of the Polish troops, and the skeletons of regiments, and the picked men for the imperial guards, in all fifteen thousand, after being collected at the Despeñas Perros, while Suchet was before Valencia, had now marched to Talavera de la Reyna, on the way to France; at that moment also Ballesteros appeared with the fourth Spanish army, twelve thousand strong, in the Ronda, and his detachments defeated Maransin at Cartaña, which of necessity occasioned another change in the French dispositions. Moreover, the very success of Suchet had at this time increased Soult's difficulties, because all the fugitives from Valencia gathered on the remains of the Murcian army; and fifteen thousand men, including the garrisons of Carthagena and Alicant, were again assembled on the frontiers of Granada, where, during the expedition to Estremadura, the French had only three battalions and some cavalry.

Thus the army of the south was, if the garrison of Badajos be excluded, reduced to forty-eight thousand French sabres and bayonets present with the eagles, and this at the very moment when its enemies were augmented by twenty-five thousand fresh men. Soult had, indeed, besides this force, five thousand artillerymen and other attendant troops, and six thousand "Escopeteros" were capable of taking the field, while thirty thousand civic guards held his fortified posts. Nevertheless he was forced to reduce all the garrisons, and even the camp before the Isla, to the lowest numbers consistent with safety, ere he could bring twenty-four thousand French into the field for the succor of Badajos, and even then, as we have seen, he was upon the point of losing Seville. These

things prevented him from coming against the Alemtejo in March, when his presence with an army would have delayed the commencement of the siege until a battle had been fought; but he was the less fearful for the fortress, because Marmont on the 22d of February, and Foy on the 28th, had announced that if Badajos should be menaced, three divisions of the army of Portugal, then in the valley of the Tagus, would enter Estremadura; and these divisions, uniting with Daricau's and Drouet's troops, would have formed an army of thirty thousand men, and consequently would have sufficed to delay the operations of the allies. But Marmont, having subsequently received the Emperor's orders to move into Beira, passed the Gredos mountains instead of the Tagus river, and thus unintentionally deceived Soult; and whether his letters were intercepted, or carelessly delayed, it was not until the 8th of April that the Duke of Dalmatia was assured of his departure for Salamanca.

On the other hand, Lord Wellington's operations were so rapidly pushed forward, that Soult cannot be censured for false calculations. No general could suspect that such an outwork as the Picurina would be taken by storm without being first battered; still less that Badajos, with its lofty walls, its brave garrison, and its celebrated governor, would in like manner be carried before the counterscarp was blown in, and the fire of the defences ruined. In fine, no man accustomed to war could have divined the surpassing resolution, and surpassing fortune also, of the British General and his troops; neither is it impertinent to observe here, that as the French never use iron ordnance in a siege, their calculations were necessarily formed upon the effect of brass artillery, which is comparatively weak and slow; with brass guns the breaches would have been made three days later.

The fall of Badajos may therefore be traced partly to the Russian war, which drew fifteen thousand men from the army of the south, partly to the irresolution of Marmont, who did neither execute the Emperor's plan nor his own; finally, to the too great extent of country occupied, whereby time and number were swallowed. And here the question arises, if Soult, acting upon the principles laid down in his letter to Joseph, just before the battle of Talavera, should not have operated against the allies in great masses, relinquishing possession of Granada, Malaga, in fine of everything, save Seville and the camp before the Isla. If beaten, he would have lost Andalusia and fallen back on Suchet, but then the head of the French invasion might have been more formidable at Valencia than at Seville, and Marmont could have renewed the battle. And such a chequered game, Lord Wellington's political

situation both in England and Portugal being considered, would have gone near to decide the question of the British troops remaining in the latter country. This, however, is a grave and difficult matter to resolve.

In whatever light this campaign is viewed, the talent of the English General is conspicuous. That fortune aided him is true, but it was in the manner she favors the pilot, who watching every changing wind, every shifting current, makes all subservient to his purpose. Ascertaining with great pains the exact situation of each adversary, he had sagaciously met their different modes of warfare, and with a nice hand had adapted his measures to the successive exigencies of the moment. The army of the centre, where disorder was paramount, he disregarded; Marmont, whose temperament was hasty, he deceived by affected slowness; and Soult he forestalled by quickness. Twice he induced the Duke of Ragusa to send his divisions into distant quarters, when they should have been concentrated, and each time he gained a great advantage; once when he took Ciudad Rodrigo, and again when, using a like opportunity to obviate the difficulties presented by the conduct of the Portuguese government, he spread his own troops over the country, in an unmilitary manner, that he might feed and clothe them on their march to the Alemtejo. This he could not have done if the French had been concentrated; neither could he have so well concealed that march from the enemy.

In Estremadura, he kept his force compact and strong to meet Soult, from whose warfare he expected a powerful opposition, hard indeed to resist, yet not likely to abound in sudden strokes, and therefore furnishing more certain ground for calculation as to time; and then he used that time so wonderfully at the siege, that even his enemies declared it incomprehensible, and he who had hitherto been censured for over caution, was now dreaded as over daring! This daring was, however, in no manner allied to rashness; his precautions multiplied as his enterprises augmented. The divisions of the army of Portugal, quartered in the valley of the Tagus, could, by moving into Estremadura in March, have delayed if not prevented the siege; Lord Wellington had, therefore, with forecast of such an event, designed that Hill should, when the allies entered the Alemtejo, make a forced march to surprise the bridge and forts at Almaraz, which would have obliged the French divisions to make a long circuit by the bridges of Arzobispo and Talavera to reach the scene of action in Estremadura.

This bold and skilful stroke was balked by the never-ceasing misconduct of the Portuguese government, with respect to means of transport; for the battering-guns intended for Hill's enterprise

were thus prevented passing Evora. Nevertheless, the siege was commenced, because it was ascertained that Marmont was still ignorant of the allies' march, and had made no change in his extended quarters indicating a design to aid Soult. Hill also soon drove Drouet back towards the Morena, and by occupying Merida, intercepted the line of communication with Almaraz, which answered the same purpose. But the best testimony to the skill of the operation is to be found in the enemy's papers. "So calculated," said Soult, "was this affair (the siege of Badajoz), that it is to be supposed Lord Wellington had intercepted some despatches which explained to him the system of operations and the irresolution of Marmont."*

Nor when the Duke of Ragusa was ravaging Beira, and both Almeida and Ciudad appeared in the utmost danger, did Lord Wellington's delay in Estremadura arise from any imprudence; he had good grounds for believing that the French would not attempt the latter place, and that the loss of a few days would not prove injurious. For when the first intelligence that the army of Portugal was concentrating on the Tormes reached him, he sent Captain Colquhoun Grant, a celebrated scouting officer, to watch Marmont's proceedings. That gentleman, in whom the utmost daring was so mixed with subtlety of genius, and both so tempered by discretion, that it is hard to say which quality predominated, very rapidly executed his mission; and the interesting nature of his adventures on this occasion will perhaps excuse a digression concerning them.

Attended by Leon, a Spanish peasant of great fidelity and quickness of apprehension, who had been his companion on many former occasions of the same nature, Grant arrived in the Salamanca district, and passing the Tormes in the night, remained in uniform, for he never assumed any disguise, three days in the midst of the French camp. He thus obtained exact information of Marmont's object, and more especially of his preparations of provisions and scaling ladders, notes of which he sent to Lord Wellington from day to day by Spanish agents. However, on the third night, some peasants brought him a general order, addressed to the French regiments, and saying, that the notorious Grant being within the circle of their cantonments, the soldiers were to use their utmost exertions to secure him, for which purpose also guards were placed as it were in a circle round the army.

Nothing daunted by this news, Grant consulted with the peasants, and the next morning, before daylight, entered the village of Huerta, which is close to a ford on the Tormes, and about six

* Intercepted despatch of Marshal Soult, 1812, MS.

miles from Salamanca. Here there was a French battalion, and on the opposite side of the river cavalry videttes were posted, two of which constantly patrolled back and forward, for the space of three hundred yards, meeting always at the ford. When day broke the French battalion assembled on its alarm-post; and at that moment Grant was secretly brought with his horse behind the gable of a house, which hid him from the infantry, and was opposite to the ford. The peasants, standing on some loose stones and spreading their large cloaks, covered him from the cavalry videttes, and thus he calmly waited until the latter were separated the full extent of their beat; then putting spurs to his horse he dashed through the ford between them, and receiving their fire without damage, reached a wood, not very distant, where the pursuit was baffled, and where he was soon rejoined by Leon, who in his native dress met with no interruption.

Grant had already ascertained that the means of storming Ciudad Rodrigo were prepared, and that the French officers openly talked of doing so, but he desired still further to test this project, and to discover if the march of the enemy might not finally be directed by the pass of Perales, towards the Tagus; he wished also to ascertain more correctly their real numbers, and therefore placed himself on a wooded hill, near Tamames, where the road branches off to the passes, and to Ciudad Rodrigo. Here lying perdué, until the whole French army had passed by in march, he noted every battalion and gun, and finding that all were directed towards Ciudad, entered Tamames after they had passed, and discovered that they had left the greatest part of their scaling-ladders behind, which clearly proved that the intention of storming Ciudad Rodrigo was not real. This it was which allayed Wellington's fears for that fortress.

When Marmont afterwards passed the Coa, in this expedition, Grant preceded him with intent to discover if his further march would be by Guarda upon Coimbra, or by Sabugal upon Castello Branco; for to reach the latter it was necessary to descend from a very high ridge, or rather succession of ridges, by a pass, at the lower mouth of which stands Penamacor. Upon one of the inferior ridges in the pass, this persevering officer placed himself, thinking that the dwarf oaks, with which the hills were covered, would effectually secure him from discovery; but from the higher ridge above, the French detected all his movements with their glasses. In a few moments Leon, whose lynx-eyes were always on the watch, called out "*The French! the French!*" and pointed to the rear, whence some dragoons came galloping up. Grant and his follower instantly darted into the wood for a little space, and