then suddenly wheeling, rode off in a different direction; yet at every turn new enemies appeared, and at last the hunted men dismounted and fled on foot through the thickest of the low oaks; but again they were met by infantry, who had been detached in small parties down the sides of the pass, and were directed in their chase by the waving of the French officers' hats on the ridge above. At last Leon fell exhausted, and the barbarians who first came up, killed him in despite of his companion's entreaties.

Grant himself they carried, without injury, to Marmont, who, receiving him with apparent kindness, invited him to dinner. The conversation turned upon the prisoner's exploits, and the French Marshal affirmed that he had been for a long time on the watch, that he knew all his haunts and his disguises, and had discovered that, only the night before, he had slept in the French head-quarters, with other adventures, which had not happened, for this Grant never used any disguise; but there was another Grant, a man also very remarkable in his way, who used to remain for months in the French quarters, using all manner of disguises; hence the similarity of names caused the actions of both to be attributed to one, which is the only palliative for Marmont's subsequent conduct.

Treating his prisoner, as I have said, with great apparent kindness, the French General exacted from him an especial parole, that he would not consent to be released by the partidas while on his journey through Spain to France, which secured his captive, although Lord Wellington offered two thousand dollars to any guerilla chief who should rescue him. The exaction of such a parole, however harsh, was in itself a tacit compliment to the man; but Marmont also sent a letter, with the escort, to the Governor of Bayonne, in which, still laboring under the error that there was only one Grant, he designated his captive as a dangerous spy, who had done infinite mischief to the French army, and whom he had only not executed on the spot, out of respect to something resembling a uniform which he wore at the time of his capture. He therefore desired, that at Bayonne he should be placed in irons and sent up to Paris.

This proceeding was too little in accord with the honor of the French army to be supported, and before the Spanish frontier was passed, Grant, it matters not how, was made acquainted with the contents of the letter. Now the custom at Bayonne, in ordinary cases, was for the prisoner to wait on the authorities, and receive a passport to travel to Verdun, and all this was duly accomplished, meanwhile, the delivering of the fatal letter being by certain means delayed, Grant, with a wonderful readiness and boldness, resolved not to escape towards the Pyrenees, thinking that he would natu-

rally be pursued in that direction. He judged that if the Governor of Bayonne could not recapture him at once, he would for his own security suppress the letter in hopes the matter would be no further thought of; judging, I say, in this acute manner, he on the instant inquired at the hotels if any French officer was going to Paris, and finding that General Souham, then on his return from Spain, was so bent, he boldly introduced himself, and asked permission to join his party. The other readily assented; and while thus travelling, the General, unacquainted with Marmont's intentions, often rallied his companion about his adventures, little thinking that he was then himself an instrument in forwarding the most dangerous and skilful of them all.

In passing through Orleans, Grant, by a species of intuition, discovered an English agent, and from him received a recommendation to another secret agent in Paris, whose assistance would be necessary to his final escape; for he looked upon Marmont's double dealing, and the expressed design to take away his life, as equivalent to a discharge of his parole, which was moreover only given with respect to Spain. When he arrived at Paris, he took leave of Souham, opened an intercourse with the Parisian agent, from whom he obtained money, and by his advice avoided appearing before the police, to have his passport examined. He took a lodging in a very public street, frequented the coffee-houses, and even visited the theatres without fear, because the secret agent, who had been long established and was intimately connected with the police, had ascertained that no inquiry about his escape had been set on foot.

In this manner he passed several weeks, at the end of which the agent informed him that a passport was ready for one Jonathan Buck, an American, who had died suddenly, on the very day it was to have been claimed. Seizing this occasion, Grant boldly demanded the passport, with which he instantly departed for the mouth of the Loire, because certain reasons, not necessary to mention, led him to expect more assistance there than at any other port. However, new difficulties awaited him, and were overcome by fresh exertions of his surprising talents, which fortune seemed to delight in aiding.

He first took a passage for America in a ship of that nation, but its departure being unexpectedly delayed, he frankly explained his true situation to the captain, who desired him to assume the character of a discontented seaman, and giving him a sailor's dress and forty dollars, sent him to lodge the money in the American consul's hands as a pledge that he would prosecute the captain for ill usage when he reached the United States; this be

ing the custom on such occasions, the consul gave him a certificate which enabled him to pass from port to port as a discharged sailor seeking a ship.

Thus provided, after waiting some days, Grant prevailed upon a boatman, by a promise of ten Napoleons, to row him in the night towards a small island, where, by usage, the English vessels watered unmolested, and in return permitted the few inhabitants to fish and traffic without interruption. In the night the boat sailed, the masts of the British ships were dimly seen on the other side of the island, and the termination of his toils appeared at hand, when the boatman, either from fear or malice, suddenly put about and returned to port. In such a situation, some men would have striven in desperation to force fortune, and so have perished; the spirit of others would have sunk in despair, for the money which he had promised was all that remained of his stock, and the boatman, notwithstanding his breach of contract, demanded the whole; but with inexpressible coolness and resolution, Grant gave him one Napoleon instead of ten, and a rebuke for his misconduct. The other, having threatened a reference to the police, soon found that he was no match in subtlety for his opponent, who told him plainly that he would then denounce him as aiding the escape of a prisoner of war, and would adduce the great price of his boat as a proof of his guilt!

This menace was too formidable to be resisted, and Grant in a few days engaged an old fisherman, who faithfully performed his bargain; but now there were no English vessels near the island; however, the fisherman cast his nets and caught some fish, with which he sailed towards the southward, where he had heard there was an English ship of war. In a few hours they obtained a glimpse of her, and were steering that way, when a shot from a coast-battery brought them to, and a boat with soldiers put off to board them; the fisherman was steadfast and true; he called Grant his son, and the soldiers by whom they expected to be arrested were only sent to warn them not to pass the battery, because the English vessel they were in search of was on the coast. The old man, who had expected this, bribed the soldiers with his fish, assuring them he must go with his son or they would starve, and that he was so well acquainted with the coast he could always escape the enemy. His prayers and presents prevailed, he was desired to wait under the battery till night, and then depart; but under pretence of arranging his escape from the English vessel, he made the soldiers point out her bearings so exactly, that when the darkness came, he ran her straight on board, and the intrepid officer stood in safety on the quarter-deck.

After this Grant reached England, and obtained permission to choose a French officer of equal rank with himself, to send to France, that no doubt might remain about the propriety of his escape; and great was his astonishment to find, in the first prison he visited, the old fisherman and his real son, who had meanwhile been captured, notwithstanding a protection given to them for their services. Grant, whose generosity and benevolence were as remarkable as the qualities of his understanding, soon obtained their release; and, having sent them with a sum of money to France, returned himself to the Peninsula, and within four months from the date of his first capture was again on the Tormes, watching Marmont's army! Other strange incidents of his life I could mention, were it not more fitting to quit a digression already too wide; yet I was unwilling to pass an occasion of noticing one adventure of this generous and spirited, and yet gentle-minded man, who, having served his country nobly and ably in every climate, died not long since, exhausted by the continual hardships he had endured.

Having now shown the prudence of Lord Wellington with respect to the campaign generally, it remains to consider the siege of Badajos, which has so often been adduced in evidence that not skill, but fortune plumed his ambitious wing; a proceeding indeed most consonant to the nature of man; for it is hard to avow inferiority, by attributing an action so stupendous to superior genius alone. A critical scientific examination would be misplaced in a general history; but to notice some of the leading points which involve the general conception will not be irrelevant. The choice of the line of attack has been justified by the English engineers, as that requiring least expenditure of means and time; but this has by the French engineer been denied. Colonel Lamarre affirms that the front next the castle was the one least susceptible of defence, because it had neither ravelin nor ditch to protect it, had fewer flanks, and offered no facility of retrenching behind it; a view which is confirmed by Phillipon, who, being the best judge of his own weak points, did for many days imagine that this front was the true object of the allies' approaches. But Lamarre advances a far more interesting question, when he affirms that the English General might have carried Badajos by escalade and storm, on the first night of the siege, with less difficulty than he experienced on the 7th of April. On that night, he says, the defences were not so complete, that the garrison was less prepared, and the surprise would have availed somewhat; whereas at the second period the breaches were the strongest part of the town, and, as no other advantage had been gained by the besiegers, the chances were in favor of the first period.

This reasoning appears sound, yet the fact is one which belongs not to the rules, but the secrets of the art, and they are only in the keeping of great captains. That the breaches were impregnable has indeed been denied by the English engineers. Colonel Jones affirms that the centre breach had not the slightest interior retrenchment, and that the sword-blades in the Trinidad might have been overturned by the rush of a dense mass of troops. This opinion is quite at variance with that of the officers and men engaged; it is certain also that all the breaches were protected by the sword-blades, and if the centre breach was not retrenched, it was rendered very difficult of approach by the deep holes digged in front, and it was more powerfully swept by flank fire than the others were.* It is also a mistake to suppose that no dense rush was made at the great breach. Engineers intent upon their own art sometimes calculate on men as they do on blocks of stone or timber; nevertheless where the bullet strikes, the man will fall. The sword-blades were fitted into ponderous beams, and these last, chained together, were let deep into the ground; how then was it possible for men to drag or push them from their places, when behind them stood resolute men, whose fire swept the foremost ranks away? This fire could not be returned by the soldiers engaged in removing the obstacles, nor by those in rear, because, from the slope of the breach, they could only see their own comrades of the front ranks; and then the dead bodies, and the struggling wounded men, and still more the spiked planks, rendered a simultaneous exertion impossible. The breaches were impregnable!

And why was all this striving in blood against insurmountable difficulties? Why were men sent thus to slaughter, when the application of a just science would have rendered the operation comparatively easy? Because the English ministers, so ready to plunge into war, were quite ignorant of its exigencies; because the English people are warlike without being military, and under the pretence of maintaining a liberty which they do not possess, oppose in peace all useful martial establishments. Expatiating in their schools and colleges upon Roman discipline and Roman valor, they are heedless of Roman institutions; they desire, like that ancient republic, to be free at home and conquerors abroad, but start at perfecting their military system, as a thing incompatible with a constitution, which they yet suffer to be violated by every minister who trembles at the exposure of corruption. In the beginning of each war, England has to seek in blood for the knowledge necessary to insure success, and, like the fiend's progress towards Eden, her conquering course is through chaos followed by death!

But it is not in the details of this siege we must look for Well

* Appendix 11. § 2.

lington's merits. The apportioning of the number of guns, the quantity of ammunition, the amount of transport, the tracing of the works, and the choice of the points of attack, are matters within the province of the engineer; the value and importance of the place to be attacked, in reference to other objects of the campaign, the time that can be spared to effect its reduction, the arrangements necessary to elude or to resist the succoring army, the calculation of the resources from whence the means of attack are to be drawn, these are in the province of the general. With him also rests the choice of shortening the scientific process, and the judging of how much or how little ought to be risked, how much trusted to the valor and discipline of his army, how much to his own genius for seizing accidents, whether of ground, of time, or of conjunction, to accelerate the gain of his object.

Now all armies come to the siege of a town with great advantages; for, first, the besieged cannot but be less confident than the assailants; they are a few against many, and, being on the defensive, are also an excised portion of their own army, and without news, which damps the fiery spirit. They are obliged to await their adversary's time and attack, their losses seem more numerous in proportion to their forces, because they are more concentrated, and then the wounded are not safe even in the hospitals. No troops can hope to maintain a fortress eventually, without the aid of a succoring army; their ultimate prospect is death or captivity. The besiegers, on the contrary, have a certain retreat, know the real state of affairs, feel more assured of their object, have hope of profit, and a secure retreat if they fail, while the besieged faintly look for succor, and scarcely expect life. To this may be added, that the inhabitants are generally secret enemies of the garrison, as the cause of their own sufferings.

The number of guns and quantity of ammunition in a fortress are daily diminished; the besiegers' means, originally calculated to overpower the other, may be increased. Time and materials are therefore against the besieged, and the scientific foundation of the defence depends on the attack, which may be varied, while the other is fixed. Finally, the firmness and skill of the defence generally depends upon the governor, who may be killed, whereas many officers amongst the besiegers are capable of conducting the attack; and the general, besides being personally less exposed, is likely, as chief of an army, to be a man of more spirit and capacity than a simple governor. It follows, then, that fortresses must fall if the besiegers sit down before them according to the rules of art; and when no succoring army is nigh, the time necessary to reduce any place may be calculated with great exactness. When these

rules cannot be attended to, when everything is irregular and doubtful, when the general is hurried on to the attempt, be it easy or difficult, by the force of circumstances, we must measure him by the greatness of the exigency, and the energy with which he acts.

This is the light in which to view the siege of Badajos. Wellington's object was great, his difficulties foreseen, his success complete. A few hours' delay, an accident, a turn of fortune, and he would again have been foiled; ay! but this is war, always dangerous and uncertain, an ever-rolling wheel, and armed with scythes. Was the object worth the risk—did its gain compensate the loss of men—was it boldly, greatly acquired? These are the true questions, and they may be answered thus. Suchet had subjugated Aragon by his mildness, Catalonia and Valencia by his vigor. In Andalusia, Soult had tranquillized the mass of the people, and his genius, solid and vast, was laying the deep foundation of a kingdom close to Portugal. He was forming such great establishments, and contriving such plans, as would, if permitted to become ripe, have enabled him to hold the Peninsula, alone, should the French armies fail in all other parts. In the centre of Spain, the King, true to his plan of raising a Spanish party, was likely to rally round him all those of the patriots whom discontent, or weakness of mind, or corruption, might induce to seek a plausible excuse for joining the invaders; and on the northern line the French armies, still powerful, were strengthening their hold of the country by fortifying all the important points of Leon and Old Castile. Meanwhile the great army, which the Emperor was carrying to Russia, might or might not be successful, but in either case, it was the only moment when an offensive war against his army in Spain could have been carried on with success.

But how could any extensive offensive operation have been attempted while Badajos remained in the enemy's possession? If Wellington had advanced in the north, Soult, making Badajos his base, would have threatened Lisbon; if Wellington marched against the French centre, the same thing would have happened, and the army of the north would also have acted on the left flank of the allies or have retaken Ciudad Rodrigo. If an attempt had been made against Soult, it must have been by the lower Guadiana, when the French army of Portugal, coming down to Badajos, could have either operated against the rear of the allies, or against Lisbon.

Badajos was therefore the key to all offensive operations by the allies, and to take it was an indispensable preliminary. Yet how take it? By regular, or by irregular operations? For the first a certain time was required, which from the experience of former

sieges it was not to be expected that the enemy would allow. What then would have been the result, if thus, year after year, the allies showed they were unable even to give battle to their enemies, much less to chase them from the Peninsula? How was it to be expected that England would bear the expense of a protracted warfare, affording no hope of final success? How were the opposition clamors to be replied to in Parliament? How were the secret hopes of the continental governments to be upheld if the military power of England, Portugal, and Spain united was unable to meet even a portion of the secondary armies of Napoleon, while with four hundred thousand men he stalked, a gigantic conqueror, over the wastes of Russia? To strike irregularly then was Wellington's only resource. To strike without regard to rules, trusting to the courage of his men and to fortune to bear him through the trial triumphant. Was such a crisis to be neglected by a general who had undertaken on his own judgment to fight the battle of the Peninsula? Was he to give force to the light declamation of the hour, when general officers in England were heard to say that every defeat of the French was a snare to decoy the British further into Spain? Was he, at such a moment, to place the probable loss of a few thousand men, more or less, in opposition to such a conjuncture, and by declining the chance offered, show that he despaired of success himself? What if he failed? He would not have been, save the loss of a few men, worse off than if he had not attacked. In either case, he would have been a baffled general with a sinking cause. But what if he succeeded? The horizon was bright with the coming glory of England!

BOOK XVII.

CHAPTER I.

Summary of the political state of affairs—Lord Wellesley resigns—Mr. Perceval killed—New administration—Story of the war resumed—Wellington's precautionary measures described—He relinquishes the design of invading Andalusia and resolves to operate in the north—Reasons why—Surprise of Almaraz by General Hill—False alarm given by Sir William Erskine prevents Hill from taking the fort of Mirabete—Wellington's discontent—Difficult moral position of English generals.

GREAT and surprising as the winter campaign had been, its importance was not understood, and therefore not duly appreciated by the English ministers. But the French generals saw with anxiety that Lord Wellington, having snapped the heavy links of the chain which bound him to Lisbon, had acquired new bases of operation on the Guadiana, the Agueda, and the Douro, that he could now choose his own field of battle, and Spain would feel the tread of his conquering soldiers. Those soldiers, with the confidence inspired by repeated successes, only demanded to be led forward, but their general had still to encounter political obstacles, raised by the governments he served.

In Spain, the leading men, neglecting the war at hand, were entirely occupied with intrigues, with the pernicious project of reducing their revolted colonies, or with their new constitution. In Portugal, and in the Brazils, a jealous opposition to the General on the part of the native authorities had kept pace with the military successes In England, the Cabinet, swayed by Mr. Perceval's narrow policy, was still vacillating between its desire to conquer and its fear of the expense. There also the Whigs, greedy of office and dexterous in parliamentary politics, deafened the country with their clamors, while the people, deceived by both parties as to the nature of the war, and wondering how the French should keep the field at all, were, in common with the ministers, still doubtful if their commander was truly a great man or an impostor.

The struggle in the British Cabinet having ended with the resignation of Lord Wellesley, the consequent predominance of the

Perceval faction left small hopes of a successful termination to the contest in the Peninsula. Wellington had, however, carefully abstained from political intrigues, and his brother's retirement, although a subject of regret, did not affect his own personal position; he was the general of England, untrammelled, undegraded by factious ties, and responsible to his country only for his actions. The ministers might, he said, relinquish or continue the war, they might supply his wants, or defraud the hopes of the nation by their timorous economy: his efforts must be proportioned to his means; if the latter were great, so would be his actions; under any circumstances he would do his best; yet he was well assured the people of England would not endure to forego triumph at the call of a niggard parsimony. It was in this temper that he had undertaken the siege of Badajos, in this temper he had stormed it, and meanwhile political affairs in England were brought to a crisis.

Lord Wellesley had made no secret of Mr. Perceval's mismanagement of the war, and the public mind being unsettled, the Whigs were invited by the Prince Regent, his year of restrictions having now expired, to join a new administration. But the heads of that faction would not share with Mr. Perceval, and he, master of the secrets relating to the detestable persecution of the Princess of Wales, was too powerful to be removed. However, on the 11th of May, Perceval was killed in the House of Commons, and this act, which was a horrible crime, but politically no misfortune either to England or the Peninsula, produced other negotiations, upon a more enlarged scheme, with regard both to parties and to the system of government. Personal feelings again prevailed. Lord Liverpool would not unite with Lord Wellesley, the Grey and Grenville faction would not serve their country without having the disposal of all the household offices, and Lord Moira, judging a discourtesy to the Prince Regent too high a price to pay for their adhesion, refused that condition. The materials of a new cabinet were therefore drawn from the dregs of the Tory faction, and Lord Liverpool became Prime Minister.

It was unfortunate that a man of Lord Wellesley's vigorous talent should have been rejected for Lord Liverpool; but this remnant of a party being too weak to domineer, proved less mischievous with respect to the Peninsula than any of the preceding governments. There was no direct personal interest opposed to Lord Wellington's wishes, and the military policy of the Cabinet, yielding by degrees to the attraction of his ascending genius, was finally absorbed in its meridian splendor. Many practical improvements had also been growing up in the official departments, especially in that of war and colonies, where Colonel Bunbury, the

Under-Secretary, a man experienced in the wants of an army on service, had reformed the incredible disorders that pervaded that department during the first years of the contest. The result of the political crisis was therefore comparatively favorable to the war in the Peninsula, the story of which shall now be resumed.

It has been shown how the danger of Gallicia, and the negligence of the Portuguese and Spanish authorities with reference to Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, stopped the invasion of Andalusia, and brought the allies back to Beira. But if Wellington, pursuing his first plan, had overthrown Soult on the banks of the Guadalquivir, and destroyed the French arsenal at Seville, his campaign would have ranked amongst the most hardy and glorious that ever graced a general; and it is no slight proof of the uncertainty of war, that combinations, so extensive and judicious, should have been marred by the negligence of a few secondary authorities at points distant from the immediate scenes of action. The English General had indeed under-estimated the force opposed to him, both in the north and south; but the bravery of the allied troops, aided by the moral power of their recent successes, would have borne that error; and in all other particulars his profound military judgment was manifest.

Yet to obtain a true notion of his views, the various operations which he had foreseen and provided against must be considered, inasmuch as they show the actual resources of the allies, the difficulty of bringing them to bear with due concert, and the propriety of looking to the general state of the war, previous to each of Wellington's great movements. For his calculations were constantly dependent upon the ill-judged operations of men over whom he had little influence, and his successes, sudden, accidental, snatched from the midst of conflicting political circumstances, were as gems brought up from the turbulence of a whirlpool.

Castaños was Captain-General of Gallicia, as well as of Estremadura, and when Ciudad Rodrigo fell, Lord Wellington, expecting from his friendly feeling some efficient aid, had counselled him upon all the probable movements of the enemy during the siege of Badajos.

First. He supposed Marmont might march into Estremadura, either with or without the divisions of Souham and Bonnet. In either case, he advised that Abadia should enter Leon, and, according to his means, attack Astorga, Benevente, Zamora, and the other posts fortified by the enemy in that kingdom; and that Carlos d'España, Sanchez, Saornil, in fine all the partidas in Castile and the Asturias, and even Mendizabel, who was then in the Montaña Santander, should come to Abadia's assistance. He promised also

that the regular Portuguese cavalry, under Silveira and Baccellar, should pass the Spanish frontier. Thus a force of not less than twenty-five thousand men would have been put in motion on the rear of Marmont, and a most powerful diversion effected in aid of the siege of Badajos and the invasion of Andalusia.

The next operation considered, was that of an invasion of Gallicia, by five divisions of the army of Portugal, the three other divisions, and the cavalry, then in the valley of the Tagus and about Bejar, being left to contend. in concert with Soult, for Badajos. To help Abadia to meet such an attack, Baccellar and Silveira had orders to harass the left flank and rear of the French, with both infantry and cavalry, as much as the nature of the case would admit, regard being had to the safety of their raw militia, and to their connection with the right flank of the Gallician army, whose retreat was to be by Orense.

Thirdly. The French might invade Portugal north of the Douro. Abadia was then to harass their right flank and rear, while the Portuguese opposed them in front; and whether they fell on Gallicia, or Portugal, or Estremadura, Carlos d'España, and the partidas, and Mendizabel, would have an open field in Leon and Castile.

Lastly. The operation which really happened was considered, and to meet it Lord Wellington's arrangements were, as we have seen, calculated to cover the magazines on the Douro and the Mondego, and to force the enemy to take the barren difficult line of country, through Lower Beira, towards Castello Branco, while Abadia and the guerilla chiefs entered Castile and Leon on his rear. Carlos d'España had also been ordered to break down the bridges on the Yeltes and the Huerba, in front of Ciudad Rodrigo, and that of Barba de Puerco on the Agueda to the left of that fortress. Marmont would thus have been delayed two days, and the magazines both at Castello Branco and Celerico saved by the near approach of the allied army.

España did none of these things, neither did Abadia nor Mendizabel operate in a manner to be felt by the enemy, and their remissness, added to the other faults noticed in former observations, entirely marred Wellington's defensive plan in the north, and brought him back to fight Marmont. And when that General had passed the Agueda in retreat, the allied army, wanting the provisions which had been so foolishly sacrificed at Castello Branco, was unable to follow. The distant magazines on the Douro and the Mondego were its only resource. Then also it was found that Ciudad and Almeida were in want, and before those places could be furnished, and the intermediate magazines on the lines of communi-

cation restored, it was too late to march against Andalusia. For the harvest, which ripens the beginning of June in that province, and a fortnight later in Estremadura, would have enabled the army of Portugal to follow the allies march by march.

Now Marmont, as Napoleon repeatedly told him, had only to watch Lord Wellington's movements, and a temporary absence from Castile would have cost him nothing of any consequence, because the army of the north would have protected the great communication with France. The advantages of greater means, and better arrangements for supply, on which Wellington had calculated, would thus have been lost, and moreover, the discontented state of the garrison of Ciudad Rodrigo, and the approach of a new battering train from France, rendered it dangerous to move far from that fortress. The invasion of Andalusia, judicious in April, would in the latter end of May have been a false movement; and the more so that Castaños having, like his predecessors, failed to bring forward the Gallician army, it was again made painfully evident, that in critical circumstances, no aid could be obtained from that quarter.

Such being the impediments to an invasion of Andalusia, it behooved the English General to adopt some other scheme of offence more suitable to the altered state of affairs. He considered that as the harvest in Leon and Castile, that is to say, in the districts north of the Gredos and Gata mountains, was much later than in Estremadura and Andalusia, he should be enabled to preserve his commissariat advantages over the French in the field for a longer period in the north than in the south. And if he could strike a decisive blow against Marmont, he would relieve Andalusia as securely as by a direct attack, because Madrid would then fall, and Soult, being thus cut off from his communications with France, would fear to be hemmed in on all sides. Wherefore, to make the Duke of Ragusa fight a great battle, to calculate the chances, and prepare the means of success, became the immediate objects of Lord Wellington's thoughts.

The French General might be forced to fight by a vigorous advance into Castile, but a happy result depended upon the relative skill of the generals, and the number and goodness of the troops. Marmont's reputation was great, yet hitherto the essays had been in favor of the Englishman's talents. The British infantry was excellent, the cavalry well horsed, and more numerous than it had ever been. The French cavalry had been greatly reduced by drafts made for the Russian contest, by the separation of the army of the north from that of Portugal, and by frequent and harassing marches. Marmont could indeed be reinforced with horsemen from

the army of the centre, and from the army of the north, but his own cavalry was weak, and his artillery badly horsed, whereas the allies' guns were well and powerfully equipped. Every man in the British army expected victory, and this was the time to seek it, because without pitched battles the French could never be dispossessed of Spain, and they were now comparatively weaker than they had yet been, or were expected to be; for such was the influence of Napoleon's stupendous genius, that his complete success in Russia, and return to the Peninsula with overwhelming forces, was not doubted even by the British commander. The time, therefore, being propitious, and the chances favorable, it remained only to combine the primary and secondary operations in such a manner, that the French army of Portugal should find itself isolated long enough for the allies to force it singly into a general action. If the combinations failed to obtain that result, the march of the French succoring corps would still relieve various parts of Spain, giving opportunities to the Spaniards to raise new obstacles; and it is never to be lost sight of, that this principle was always the base of Wellington's plans. Ever, while he could secure his retreat into the strongholds of Portugal without a defeat, offensive operations, beyond the frontiers, could not fail to hurt the French.

To effect the isolating of Marmont's army, the first condition was, to be as early in the field as the rainy season would permit, and before the coming harvest enabled the other French armies to move in large bodies. But Marmont could avail himself, successively, of the lines of the Tormes and the Douro to protract the campaign until the ripening of the harvest enabled reinforcements to join him, and hence the security of the allies' flanks and rear during the operations, and of their retreat if overpowered, was to be previously looked to. Soult, burning to avenge the loss of Badajos, might attack Hill with superior numbers, or detach a force across the Tagus, which, in conjunction with the army of the centre, now directed by Jourdan, could advance upon Portugal by the valley of the Tagus, and so turn the right flank of the allied army in Castile. Boats and magazines supplied from Toledo and Madrid, were already being collected at the fort of Luger Nueva, near Almaraz, and from hence, as from a place of arms, the French could move upon Coria, Placentia, and Castello Branco, menacing Abrantes, Celerico, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Almeida, while detachments from the army of the north reinforced the army of Portugal. But to obviate this last danger, Wellington had planned one of those enterprises which, as they are successful principally because of their exceeding boldness, are beheld with astonishment when achieved, and are attributed to madness when they fail.

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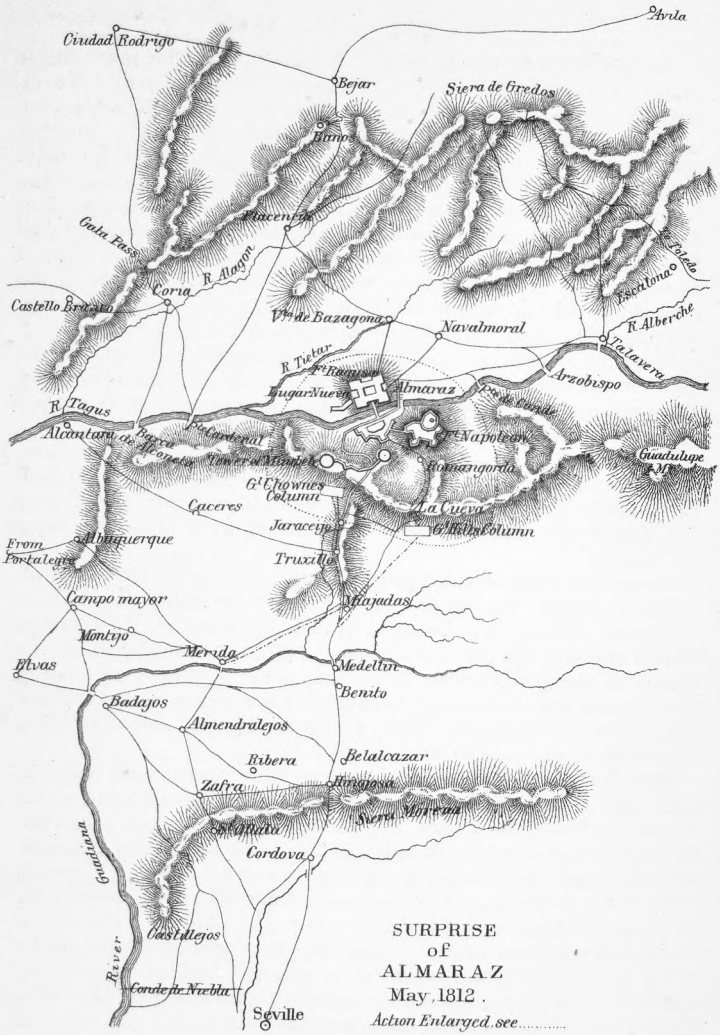

Drawn by Gen.l Napier.

SURPRISE OF ALMARAZ.

For a clear understanding of this event, the reader must call to mind, 1st, that the left bank of the Tagus, from Toledo to Almaraz, is lined with rugged mountains, the ways through which, impracticable for an army, are difficult even for small divisions; 2d, that from Almaraz to the frontier of Portugal, the banks, although more open, were still difficult, and the Tagus was only to be crossed at certain points, to which bad roads leading through the mountains descended. But from Almaraz to Alcantara, all the bridges had been long ruined, and those of Arzobispo and Talavera, situated between Almaraz and Toledo, were of little value, because of the ruggedness of the mountains above spoken of. Soult's pontoon equipage had been captured in Badajos, and the only means of crossing the Tagus possessed by the French, from Toledo to the frontier of Portugal, was a boat-bridge laid down at Almaraz by Marmont, and to secure which he had constructed three strong forts and a bridge-head.

The first of these forts, called Ragusa, was a magazine, containing many stores and provisions, and it was, although not finished, exceedingly strong, having a loopholed stone tower, twenty-five feet high within, and being flanked without by a field-work near the bridge.

On the left bank of the Tagus the bridge had a fortified head of masonry, which was again flanked by a redoubt, called Fort Napoleon, placed on a height a little in advance. This redoubt, though imperfectly constructed, inasmuch as a wide berm in the middle of the scarp offered a landing place to troops escalading the rampart, was yet strong, because it contained a second interior defence or retrenchment, with a loopholed stone tower, a ditch, draw-bridge, and palisades.

These two forts, and the bridge-head, were armed with eighteen guns, and they were garrisoned by above a thousand men, which seemed sufficient to insure the command of the river; but the mountains on the left bank still precluded the passage of an army towards lower Estremadura, save by the royal road to Truxillo, which road, at the distance of five miles from the river, passed over the rugged Mirabete ridge, and to secure the summit of the mountain the French had drawn another line of works across the throat of the pass. This line consisted of a large fortified house, connected by smaller posts with the ancient watch tower of Mirabete, which itself contained eight guns, and was surrounded by a rampart twelve feet high.

If all these works, and a road which Marmont, following the

traces of an ancient Roman way, was now opening across the Gredos mountains, had been finished, the communication of the French, although circuitous, would have been very good and secure. Indeed Wellington, fearing the accomplishment, intended to have surprised the French at Almaraz previous to the siege of Badajos, when the redoubts were far from complete, but the Portuguese government neglected to furnish the means of transporting the artillery from Lisbon, and he was baffled. General Hill was now ordered to attempt it with a force of six thousand men, including four hundred cavalry, two field brigades of artillery, a pontoon equipage, and a battering train of six iron twenty-four-pound howitzers.

The enterprise, at all times difficult, was become one of extreme delicacy. When the army was round Badajos, only the resistance of the forts themselves was to be looked for; now Foy's division of the army of Portugal had returned to the valley of the Tagus, and was in no manner fettered, and d'Armagnac, with troops from the army of the centre, occupied Talavera. Drouet also was, with eight or nine thousaud men of the army of the south, at Hinojosa de Cordoba, his cavalry was on the road to Medellin, he was nearer to Merida than Hill was to Almaraz, he might intercept the latter's retreat, and the King's orders were imperative that he should hang upon the English army in Estremadura. Soult could also detach a corps from Seville by St. Ollalla to fall upon Sir William Erskine, who was posted with the cavalry and the remainder of Hill's infantry near Almendralejos. However, Lord Wellington placed General Graham near Portalegre, with the first and sixth divisions, and Cotton's cavalry, all of which had crossed the Tagus for the occasion; and thus, including Erskine's corps, above twenty thousand men were ready to protect Hill's enterprise.

Drouet by a rapid march might still interpose between Hill and Erskine, and beat them in detail before Graham could support them, wherefore the English General made many other arrangements to deceive the enemy. First, he chose the moment of action when Soult, having sent detachments in various directions, to restore his communications in Andalusia, had marched himself with a division to Cadiz, and was consequently unfavorably placed for a sudden movement. Secondly, by rumors adroitly spread, and by demonstrations with the Portuguese militia of the Alemtejo, he caused the French to believe that ten thousand men were moving down the Guadiana, towards the Niebla, preparatory to the invasion of Andalusia, a notion upheld by the assembling of so many troops under Graham, by the pushing of cavalry parties towards the Morena, and by restoring the bridge at Merida, with the avowed in-

tention of sending Hill's battering and pontoon train, which had been formed at Elvas, to Almendralejos. Finally, many exploring officers, taking the roads leading to the province of Cordoba, made ostentatious inquiries about the French posts at Belalcazar and other places, and thus everything seemed to point at Andalusia.

The restoration of the bridge at Merida, proving unexpectedly difficult, cost a fortnight's labor, for two arches having been destroyed the opening was above sixty feet wide, and large timber was scarce. Hill's march was thus dangerously delayed, but on the 12th of May, the repairs being effected and all else being ready, he quitted Almendralejos, passed the Guadiana at Merida, with near six thousand men and twelve field-pieces, and joined his pontoons and battering train. These last had come by the way of Montijo, and formed a considerable convoy, nearly fifty country carts, besides the gun and limber carriages, being employed to convey the pontoons, the ladders, and the ammunition for the howitzers.

The 13th the armament reached the Burdalo river on the road to Truxillo; the 14th it was at Villa Mesias; the 15th at Truxillo. Meanwhile, to mislead the enemy on the right bank of the Tagus, the guerillas of the Guadalupe mountains made demonstrations at different points between Almaraz and Arzobispo, as if they were seeking a place to cast a bridge that Hill might join Lord Wellington. General Foy was deceived by these operations, and though his spies at Truxillo had early informed him of the passage of the Guadiana by the allies, they led him to believe that Hill had fifteen thousand men, and that two brigades of cavalry were following in his rear; one report even stated that thirty thousand men had entered Truxillo, whereas they were less than six thousand of all arms.

Hill having reached Jaraicejo early on the 16th, formed his troops in three columns, and made a night march, intending to attack by surprise and at the same moment the tower of Mirabete, the fortified house in the pass, and the forts at the bridge of Almaraz. The left column, directed against the tower, was commanded by General Chowne. The centre column, with the dragoons and the artillery, moved by the royal road, under the command of General Long. The right column, composed of the 50th, 71st, and 92d regiments, under the direction of Hill in person, was intended to penetrate by the narrow and difficult way of La Cueva and Roman Gordo, against the forts at the bridge. But the day broke before any of the columns reached their destination, and all hopes of a surprise were extinguished. This untoward beginning was unavoidable on the part of the right and centre column, because of the bad

roads; but it would appear that some negligence had retarded General Chowne's column, and that the castle of Mirabete might have been carried by assault before daylight.

The difficulty, great before, was now much increased. An attentive examination of the French defences convinced Hill that to reduce the works in the pass, he must incur more loss than was justifiable, and finish in such a plight that he could not afterwards carry the forts at the bridge, which were the chief objects of his expedition. Yet it was only through the pass of Mirabete that the artillery could move against the bridge. In this dilemma, after losing the 17th and part of the 18th in fruitless attempts to discover some opening through which to reach the valley of Almaraz with his guns, he resolved to leave them on the Sierra with the centre column, and to make a false attack upon the tower with General Chowne's troops, while he himself, with the right column, secretly penetrated by the scarcely practicable line of La Cueva and Roman Gordo to the bridge, intent, with infantry alone, to storm works which were defended by eighteen pieces of artillery and powerful garrisons!

This resolution was even more hardy and bold than it appears without a reference to the general state of affairs. Hill's march had been one of secrecy, amidst various divisions of the enemy; he was four days' journey distant from Merida, which was his first point of retreat; he expected that Drouet would be reinforced, and advance towards Medellin, and hence, whether defeated or victorious at Almaraz, that his own retreat would be very dangerous; exceedingly so if defeated, because his fine British troops could not be repulsed with a small loss, and he should have to fall back through a difficult country, with his best soldiers dispirited by failure, and burthened with numbers of wounded men. Then, harassed on one side by Drouet, pursued by Foy and D'Armagnac on the other, he would have been exposed to the greatest misfortunes; every slanderous tongue would have been let loose on the rashness of attacking impregnable forts, and a military career, hitherto so glorious, might have terminated in shame. But General Hill, being totally devoid of interested ambition, was necessarily unshaken by such fears.

The troops remained concealed in their position until the evening of the 18th, and then the General, reinforcing his own columns with the 6th Portuguese regiment, a company of the 60th rifles, and the artillery-men of the centre column, commenced the descent of the valley. His design was to storm Fort Napoleon before daylight, and the march was less than six miles, but his utmost efforts could only bring the head of the troops to the fort a little before day

light; the rear was still distant, and it was doubtful if the scaling-ladders, which had been cut in halves to thread the short narrow turns in the precipitous descent, would serve for an assault. Fortunately some small hills concealed the head of the column from the enemy, and at that moment General Chowne commenced the false attack on the castle of Mirabete. Pillars of white smoke rose on the lofty brow of the Sierra, the heavy sound of artillery came rolling over the valley, and the garrison of Fort Napoleon, crowding on the ramparts, were anxiously gazing at these portentous signs of war, when, quick and loud, a British shout broke on their ears, and the gallant 50th regiment, aided by a wing of the 71st, came bounding over the nearest hills.

The French were surprised to see an enemy so close while the Mirabete was still defended, yet they were not unprepared, for a patrol of English cavalry had been seen from the fort on the 17th in the pass of Roman Gordo; and in the evening of the 18th a woman of that village had carried very exact information of Hill's numbers and intentions to Lugar Nueva. This intelligence had caused the commandant Aubert to march in the night with reinforcements to Fort Napoleon, which was therefore defended by six companies, including the 39th French and the voltigeurs of a foreign regiment. These troops were ready to fight, and when the first shout was heard, turning their heads, they, with a heavy fire of musketry and artillery, smote the assailants in front, while the guns of Fort Ragusa took them in flank from the opposite side of the river; in a few moments, however, a rise of ground, at the distance of only twenty yards from the ramparts, covered the British from the front fire, and General Howard, in person, leading the foremost troops into the ditch, commenced the escalade. The great breadth of the berm kept off the ends of the shortened ladders from the parapet, but the soldiers who first ascended jumped on to the berm itself, and drawing up the ladders planted them there, and thus, with a second escalade, forced their way over the rampart; then, closely fighting, friends and enemies went together into the retrenchment round the stone tower. Colonel Aubert was wounded and taken, the tower was not defended, and the garrison fled towards the bridge-head, but the victorious troops would not be shaken off, and entered that work also in one confused mass with the fugitives, who continued their flight over the bridge itself. Still the British soldiers pushed their headlong charge, slaying the hindmost, and they would have passed the river if some of the boats had not been destroyed by stray shots from the forts, which were now sharply cannonading each other, for the artillery-men had turned the guns of Fort Napoleon on Fort Ragusa.

Many of the French leaped into the water and were drowned, but the greatest part were made prisoners, and to the amazement of the conquerors, the panic spread to the other side of the river; the garrison of Fort Ragusa, although perfectly safe, abandoned that fort also, and fled with the others along the road to Naval Moral. Some grenadiers of the 92d immediately swam over and brought back several boats, with which the bridge was restored, and Fort Ragusa was gained. The towers and other works were then destroyed, the stores, ammunition, provisions, and boats were burned in the course of the day, and in the night the troops returned to the sierra above, carrying with them the colors of the foreign regiment, and more than two hundred and fifty prisoners, including a commandant and sixteen other officers. The whole loss on the part of the British was about one hundred and eighty men, and one officer of artillery was killed by his own mine, placed for the destruction of the tower; but the only officer slain in the actual assault was Captain Candler, a brave man, who fell while leading the grenadiers of the 50th on to the rampart of Fort Napoleon.

This daring attack was executed with a decision similar to that with which it had been planned. The first intention of General Hill was, to have directed a part of his column against the bridge-head, and so to have assailed both works together; but when the difficulties of the road marred this project, he attacked the nearest work with the leading troops, leaving the rear to follow as it could. This rapidity was an essential cause of the success, for Foy hearing on the 17th that the allies were at Truxillo, had ordered d'Armagnac to reinforce Lugar Nueva with a battalion which, being at Naval Moral the 18th, might have entered Fort Ragusa early in the morning of the 19th; but instead of marching before daybreak, this battalion did not move until eleven o'clock, and meeting the fugitives on the roud, caught the panic and returned.

The works of Mirabete being now cut off from the right bank of the Tagus, General Hill was preparing to reduce them with his heavy artillery, when a report from Sir William Erskine caused him, in conformity with his instructions, to commence a retreat on Merida, leaving Mirabete blockaded by the guerillas of the neighborhood. It appeared that Soult, being at Chiclana, heard of the allies' march the 19th, and then only desired Drouet to make a diversion in Estremadura without losing his communication with Andalusia; for he did not perceive the true object of the enterprise, and thinking he had to check a movement which the King told him was made for the purpose of reinforcing Wellington in the north, resolved to enforce Hill's stay in Estremadura. In this view he recalled his own detachments from the Niebla, where they had

just dispersed a body of Spaniards at Castillejos, and then forming a large division at Seville, he purposed to strengthen Drouet, and enable him to fight a battle. But that General, anticipating his orders, had pushed an advance guard of four thousand men to Dom Benito the 17th, and his cavalry patrols passing the Guadiana on the 18th had scoured the roads to Miajadas and Merida, while Lallemand's dragoons drove back the British outposts from Ribera, on the side of Zafra.

Confused by these demonstrations, Sir William Erskine immediately reported to Graham, and to Hill, that Soult himself was in Estremadura with his whole army, whereupon Graham came up to Badajos, and Hill, fearful of being cut off, retired, as I have said, from Mirabete on the 21st, and on the 26th reached Merida unmolested. Drouet then withdrew his advance guards, and Graham returned to Castello de Vide. Notwithstanding this error, Wellington's precautions succeeded, for if Drouet had been aware of Hill's real object, instead of making demonstrations with a part of his force, he would with the whole of his troops, more than ten thousand, have marched rapidly from Medellin to fall on the allies as they issued out of the passes of Truxillo, and before Erskine or Graham could come to their aid; whereas, acting on the supposition that the intention was to cross the Tagus, his demonstrations merely hastened the retreat and saved Mirabete. To meet Hill in the right place would, however, have required very nice arrangements and great activity, as he could have made his retreat by the road of Caceres as well as by that of Merida.

Lord Wellington was greatly displeased that this false alarm given by Erskine should have rendered the success incomplete; yet he avoided any public expression of discontent, lest the enemy, who had no apparent interest in preserving the post of Mirabete, should be led to keep it, and so embarrass the allies when their operations required a restoration of the bridge of Almaraz. To the ministers, however, he complained that his generals, stout in action, personally, as the poorest soldiers, were commonly so overwhelmed with the fear of responsibility when left to themselves, that the slightest movement of the enemy deprived them of their judgment, and they spread unnecessary alarm far and wide. But instead of expressing his surprise, he should rather have reflected on the cause of this weakness. Every British officer of rank knew, that without powerful interest, his future prospects, and his reputation for past services, would have withered together under the first blight of misfortune; that a selfish government would instantly offer him up, a victim to a misjudging public and a ribald press, with whom success is the only criterion of merit. English

generals are and must be prodigal of their blood to gain a reputation, but they are necessarily timid in command, when a single failure, even without a fault, consigns them to an old age of shame and misery. It is, however, undeniable that Sir William Erskine was not an able officer.

On the other side, the King was equally discontented with Soult, whose refusal to reinforce Drouet he thought had caused the loss of Almaraz, and he affirmed that if Hill had been more enterprising the arsenal of Madrid might have fallen as well as the dépôt of Almaraz, for he thought that General had brought up his whole corps instead of a division only six thousand strong.

CHAPTER II.

Progress of the war in different parts of Spain—State of Gallicia—French precautions and successes against the partidas of the north—Marmont's arrangements in Castile—Maritime expedition suggested by Sir Howard Douglas—He stimulates the activity of the northern partidas—The curate Merino defeats some French near Aranda de Duero—His cruelty to the prisoners—Mina's activity—Harasses the enemy in Aragon—Is surprised at Robres by General Pannetier—Escapes with difficulty—Re-appears in the Rioja—Gains the defiles of Navas Tolosa—Captures two great convoys—Is chased by General Abbé and nearly crushed, whereby the partidas in the north are discouraged—Those in other parts become more enterprising—The course of the Ebro from Tudela to Tortosa so infested by them that the army of the Ebro is formed by drafts from Suchet's forces and placed under General Reille to repress them—Operations of Palombini against the partidas—He moves towards Madrid—Returns to the Ebro—Is ordered to join the King's army—Operations in Aragon and Catalonia—The Catalonians are cut off from the coast line—Eroles raises a new division in Talarn—Advances into Aragon—Defeats General Bourke at Rhoda—Is driven into Catalonia by Severoli—Decaen defeats Sarsfield and goes to Lerida—Lacy concentrates in the mountains of Olot—Descends upon Mattaro—Flies from thence disgracefully—Lamarque defeats Sarsfield—Lacy's bad conduct—Miserable state of Catalonia.

While the Anglo-British army was thus cleansing and strengthening its position on the frontier of Portugal, the progress of the war in other parts had not been so favorable to the common cause. It has already been shown that Gallicia, in the latter part of 1811, suffered from discord, poverty, and ill-success in the field; that an extraordinary contribution imposed upon the province, had been resisted by all classes, and especially at Coruña, the seat of government; finally, that the army torn by faction was become hateful to the people. In this state of affairs, Castaños having at the desire of Lord Wellington assumed the command, removed the seat of government to St. Jago, leaving the troops in the Bierzo under the Marquis of Portazgo.

Prudent conduct and the personal influence of the new Captain-General soothed the bitterness of faction, and stopped, or at least checked for the moment, many of the growing evils in Gallicia, and the Regency at Cadiz assigned an army of sixty thousand men for that province. But the revenues were insufficient even to put the few troops already under arms in motion, and Castaños, although desirous to menace Astorga while Marmont was on the Agueda, could not, out of twenty-two thousand men, bring even one division into the field. Nevertheless, so strange a people are the Spaniards, that a second expedition against the colonies, having with it all the field-artillery just supplied by England, would have sailed from Vigo but for the prompt interference of Sir Howard Douglas.

When Castaños saw the penury of his army, he as usual looked to England for succor; at the same time, however, he and the Junta made unusual exertions to equip their troops, and the condition of the soldiers was generally ameliorated. But it was upon the efforts of the partidas that the British agent chiefly relied. His system, with respect to those bodies, has been before described, and it is certain that under it greater activity, more perfect combination, more useful and better timed exertions, had marked their conduct, and their efforts, directed to the proper objects, were kept in some subordination to the operations of the allies. This was, however, so distasteful to the regular officers, and to the predominant faction, always fearful of the priestly influence over the allies, that Sir Howard was offered the command of six thousand troops to detach him from the guerilla system; and the partidas of the northern provinces would now have been entirely suppressed, from mere jealousy, by the general government, if Lord Wellington and Sir H. Wellesley had not strenuously supported the views of Douglas, which were based on the following state of affairs.

The French line of communication, extending from Salamanca to Irun, was never safe while the Gallician and Asturian forces, the English squadrons, and the partidas in the Montaña, in Biscay, in the Rioja, and in the mountains of Burgos and Leon, menaced it from both sides. The occupation of the Asturias, the constant presence of a division in the Montaña, the employment of a corps to threaten Gallicia, and the great strength of the army of the north, were all necessary consequences of this weakness. But though the line of communication was thus laboriously maintained, the lines of correspondence, in this peculiar war of paramount importance, were, in despite of numerous fortified posts, very insecure, and Napoleon was always stimulating his generals to take advantage of each period of inactivity on the part of the British

army, to put down the partidas. He observed, that without English succors they could not remain in arms, that the secret of their strength was to be found on the coast, and that all the points which favored any intercourse with vessels should be fortified. And at this time, so anxious was he for the security of his correspondence, that he desired, if necessary, the whole army of the north should be employed merely to scour the lines of communication.

In accordance with these views, Santona, the most important point on the coast, had been rendered a strong post in the summer of 1811, and then Castro, Portagalete at the mouth of the Bilbao river, Bermeo, Lesquito, and Guetaria, were by degrees fortified. This completed the line eastward from Santander to St. Sebastian, and all churches, convents, and strong houses, situated near the mouths of the creeks and rivers between those places, were intrenched. The partidas being thus constantly intercepted while attempting to reach the coast, were nearly effaced in the latter end of 1811, and a considerable part of the army of the north was, in consequence, rendered disposable for the aid of the army of Portugal. But when Bonnet, because of the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, evacuated the Asturias, the French troops in the Montaña were again exposed to the enterprise of the seventh army, which had been immediately succored by Douglas, and which, including guerillas, was said to be twenty-three thousand strong. Wherefore Napoleon had so early as March directed that the Asturias should be re-occupied, and one of Bonnet's brigades, attached to the army of the north, rejoined him in consequence; but the pass of Pajares being choked with snow, Bonnet, who was then on the Orbijo, neglected this order until the approach of finer weather.

In May, Marmont having returned from Portugal, the Emperor's order was reiterated, and the French troops on the Orbijo, being augmented to fifteen thousand, drew the attention of the Gallicians to that quarter, while Bonnet, passing the mountains of Leon with eight thousand men, re-occupied Oviedo, Grado, and Gihon, and established small posts communicating through the town of Leon with the army of Portugal. Thus a new military line was established which interrupted the Gallicians' communications with the partidas, the chain of sea-port defences was continued to Gihon, a constant intercourse with France was maintained, and those convoys came safely by water which otherwise would have had to travel by land escorted by many troops, and in constant danger.

Meanwhile Marmont, having distributed his division in various parts of Leon, was harassed by the partidas, especially Porlier's, yet he proceeded diligently with the fortifying of Toro and Zamora, on the Douro, and converted three large convents at Sala-

manca into so many forts capable of sustaining a regular siege; the works of Astorga and Leon were likewise improved, and strong posts were established at Benevente, La Baneza, Castro-Contrigo, and intermediate points. The defensive lines of the Tormes and the Douro were thus strengthened against the British General, and as four thousand men sufficed to keep the Gallician forces of the Bierzo and Puebla Senabria in check, the vast and fertile plains of Leon, called the *Tierras de Campos*, were secured for the French, and their detachments chased the bands from the open country.

Sir Howard Douglas, observing the success of the enemy in cutting off the partidas from the coast, and the advantage they derived from the water communication; considering also that, if Lord Wellington should make any progress in the coming campaign, new lines of communication with the sea would be desirable, proposed that a powerful squadron, with a battalion of marines and a battery of artillery, should be secretly prepared for a littoral warfare on the Biscay coast. The suggestion was approved of, and Sir Home Popham was sent from England, in May, with an armament well provided with scaling-ladders, arms, clothing, and ammunition for the partidas, and all means to effect sudden disembarkations. But the ministers were never able to see the war in its true point of view; they were always desponding, or elated and sanguine, beyond what reason warranted in either case. Popham was ordered not only to infest the coast, but, if possible, to seize some point, and hold it permanently as an entrance into Biscay, by which the French positions might be turned if, as in 1808, they were forced to adopt the line of the Ebro! Now at this period three hundred thousand French soldiers were in the Peninsula, one hundred and twenty thousand were in the northern provinces, and without reckoning the army of the centre which could also be turned in that direction, nearly fifty thousand were expressly appropriated to the protection of this very line of communication, on which a thousand marines were to be permanently established, in expectation of the enemy being driven over the Ebro by a campaign which was not yet commenced!

While Marmont was in Beira the activity of the seventh army, and of the partidas, in the Montaña, was revived by the supplies which Sir Howard Douglas, taking the opportunity of Bonnet's absence, had transmitted to them through the Asturian ports. The ferocity of the leaders was remarkable. Mina's conduct was said to be very revolting; and on the 16th of April the curate Merino coming from the mountains of Espinosa, to the forests between Aranda de Duero and Hontorica Valderados, took several hundred prisoners and hanged sixty of them, in retaliation for three mem-

bers of the local junta, who had been put to death by the French; he executed the others also in the proportion of ten for each of his own soldiers who had been shot by the enemy. The ignorance and the excited passions of the guerilla chiefs may be pleaded in mitigation of their proceedings, but, to the disgrace of England, these infamous executions by Merino were recorded with complacency in the newspapers, and met with no public disapprobation.

There are occasions when retaliation, applied to men of rank, may stop the progress of barbarity; yet the necessity should be clearly shown, and the exercise restricted to such narrow limits that no reasonable ground should be laid for counter-retaliation.

Here, sixty innocent persons were deliberately butchered to revenge the death of three, and no proof offered that even those three were slain contrary to the laws of war; and though it is not to be doubted that the French committed many atrocities, some in wantonness, some in revenge, such savage deeds as the curate's are inexcusable. What would have been said if Washington had hanged twenty English gentlemen of family in return for the death of Captain Handy; or if Sir Henry Clinton had caused twenty American officers to die for the execution of André? Like atrocities are, however, the inevitable consequence of a guerilla system, not subordinate to the regular government of armies, and ultimately they recoil upon the helpless people of the country, who cannot fly from their enemies. When the French occupied a district, famine often ensued, because, to avoid distant forages, they collected large stores of provisions from a small extent of country; and thus the guerilla system, while it harassed the French without starving them, both harassed and starved the people. And many of the chiefs of bands, besides their robberies, when they dared not otherwise revenge affronts or private feuds, would slay some prisoners or stragglers, so as to draw down the vengeance of the French on an obnoxious village or district. This in return produced associations of the people for self-defence in many places, by which the enemy profited.

Soon after this exploit, a large convoy having marched from Burgos towards France, Merino endeavored to intercept it, and Mendizabel, who, notwithstanding his defeat by Bonnet, had again gathered twelve hundred cavalry, came from the Liebana and occupied the heights above Burgos. The French immediately placed their baggage and followers in the castle and recalled the convoy, whereupon the Spaniards, dispersing in bands, destroyed the fortified posts of correspondence at Sasamon and Gamonal, and then returned to the Liebana. But Bonnet had now reoccupied the Asturias, the remnant of the Spanish force in that quarter fled

to Mendizabel, and the whole shifted as they could in the hills. Meanwhile Mina displayed great energy. In February he repulsed an attack near Lodosa, and having conveyed the prisoners taken at Huesca to the coast, returned to Aragon and maintained a distant blockade of Zaragoza itself. In March he advanced with a detachment to Pina, and captured one of Suchet's convoys going to Mequinenza; but having retired, with his booty, to Robres, a village on the eastern slopes of the Sierra de Alcubierre, he was there betrayed to General Pannetier, who, with a brigade of the army of the Ebro, came so suddenly upon him that he escaped death with great difficulty.

He reappeared in the Rioja, and although hotly chased by troops from the army of the north, escaped without much loss, and, having five thousand men, secretly gained the defiles of Navas Tolosa, behind Vittoria, where, on the 7th of April, he defeated with great loss a Polish regiment, which was escorting the enormous convoy that had escaped the curate and Mendizabel at Burgos. The booty consisted of treasure, Spanish prisoners, baggage, followers of the army, and officers retiring to France. All the Spanish prisoners, four hundred in number, were released and joined Mina, and it is said that one million of francs fell into his hands besides the equipages, arms, stores, and a quantity of church plate.

On the 28th he captured another convoy going from Valencia to France, but General Abbé, who had been recently made Governor of Navarre, now directed combined movements from Pampeluna, Jaca, and Sanguessa, against him. And so vigorously did this General, who I have heard Mina declare to be the most formidable of all his opponents, urge on the operations, that after a series of actions on the 25th, 26th, and 28th of May, the Spanish chief, in bad plight, and with the utmost difficulty, escaped by Los Arcos to Guardia, in the Rioja. Marshal Victor seized this opportunity to pass into France, with the remains of the convoy shattered on the 7th, and all the bands in the north were discouraged. However, Wellington's successes, and the confusion attending upon the departure of so many French troops for the Russian war, gave a powerful stimulus to the partisan chiefs in other directions. The Empecinado, ranging the mountains of Cuença and Guadalaxara, pushed his parties close to Madrid; Duran entered Soria, and raised a contribution in the lower town; Villa Campa, Bassecour, and Montijo, coming from the mountains of Albaracin, occupied Molino and Orejuella, and invested Daroca; the Catalonian Gayan, taking post in the vicinity of Belchite, made excursions to the very gates of Zaragoza; the Frayle, haunting the mountains of Alcañiz and the Sierra de Gudar, interrupted Suchet's lines of communica-

tion by Morella and Teruel, and along the right bank of the Ebro towards Tortosa. Finally, Gay and Miralles infested the Garriga on the left bank.*

It was to repress these bands that the army of the Ebro, containing twenty thousand men, of whom more than sixteen thousand were under arms, was formed by drafts from Suchet's army, and given to General Reille. That commander immediately repaired to Lerida, occupied Upper Aragon with his own division, placed Severoli's division between Lerida and Zaragoza, and General Frere's between Lerida, Barcelona, and Tarragona; but his fourth division, under Palombini, marched direct from Valencia towards the districts of Soria and Calatayud, to form the link of communication between Suchet and Caffarelli. The latter now commanded the army of the north, but the imperial guards, with the exception of one division, had quitted Spain, and hence, including the government's and the reserve of Monthion, this army was reduced to forty-eight thousand under arms. The reserve at Bayonne was therefore increased to five thousand men, and Palombini was destined finally to reinforce Caffarelli, and even to march, if required, to the aid of Marmont in Leon. However, the events of the war soon caused Reille to repair to Navarre, and broke up the army of the Ebro, wherefore it will be clearer to trace the operations of these divisions successively and separately, and in the order of the provinces towards which they were at first directed.

Palombini having left a brigade at the intrenched bridge of Teruel, relieved Daroca on the 23d of February, and then deceiving Villa Campa, Montijo, and Bassecour, who were waiting about the passes of Toralva to fall on his rear-guard, turned them by the Xiloca, and reached Calatayud. This effected, he fortified the convent of La Peña, which, as its name signifies, was a rocky eminence, commanding that city and forming a part of it. But on the 4th of March, having placed his baggage and artillery in this post, under a guard of three hundred men, he dispersed his troops to scour the country and to collect provisions, and the partidas, seeing this, recommenced operations. Villa Campa cut off two companies at Campillo on the 8th, and made a fruitless attempt to destroy the Italian Colonel Pisa at Ateca. Five hundred men were sent against him, but he drew them towards the mountains of Albaracin, and destroyed them at Pozonhonda on the 28th; then marching another way, he drove the Italians from their posts of communication as far as the town of Albaracin on the road to Teruel, nor did he regain the mountains until Palombini came upon his rear and killed some of his men. The Italian General, then changing his plan, concentrated his division on the plains of Hused, where he

* Plan 5.

suffered some privations, but remained unmolested until the 14th of April, when he again marched to co-operate with Suchet in a combined attempt to destroy Villa Campa. The Spanish chief evaded both by passing over to the southern slopes of the Albaracin mountains, and before the Italians could return to Hused, Gayan, in concert with the alcalde of Calatayud, had exploded a plot against the convent of La Peña.

Some of the Italian officers, including the commandant, having rashly accepted an invitation to a feast, were sitting at table, when Gayan appeared on a neighboring height; the guests were immediately seized, and many armed citizens ran up to surprise the convent, and sixty soldiers were made prisoners, or killed in the tumult below; but the historian, Vacani, who had declined to attend the feast, made a vigorous defence, and on the 1st of May General St. Pol and Colonel Schiazzetti, coming from Hused and Daroca, raised the siege. Schiazzetti marched in pursuit, and as his advanced guard was surprised at Mochales by a deceit of the alcalde, he slew the latter, whereupon the Spaniards killed the officers taken at the feast of Calatayud.

Gayan soon baffled his pursuers, and then moved by Medina Celi and Soria to Navarre, thinking to surprise a money convoy going to Burgos for the army of Portugal; but being followed on one side by a detachment from Hused, and met on the other by Caffarelli, he was driven again to the hills above Daroca. Here he renewed his operations in concert with Villa Campa and the Empecinado, who came up to Medina Celi, while Duran descended from the Moncayo hills, and this menacing union of bands induced Reille, in May, to detach General Paris, with a French regiment and a troop of hussars, to the aid of Palombini. Paris moved by Calatayud, while Palombini, briskly interposing between Duran and Villa Campa, drove the one towards Albaracin and the other towards Soria; and in June, after various marches, the two French generals uniting, dislodged the Empecinado from Siguenza, chasing him so sharply that his band dispersed and fled to the Somosierra.

During these operations, Mina was pressed by Abbé, but Duran, entering Tudela by surprise, destroyed the artillery parc, and carried off a battering train of six guns. Palombini was only a few marches from Madrid, and the King, alarmed by Lord Wellington's preparations for opening the campaign, ordered him to join the army of the centre; but these orders were intercepted, and the Italian General retraced his steps, to pursue Duran. He soon recovered the guns taken at Tudela, and drove the Spanish chief through the Rioja into the mountains beyond the sources of the

Duero; then collecting boats, he would have passed the Ebro, for Caffarelli was on the Arga, with a division of the army of the north, and a brigade had been sent by Reille to the Aragon river with the view of destroying Mina. This chief, already defeated by Abbé, was in great danger, when a duplicate of the King's orders having reached Palombini, he immediately recommenced his march for the capital, which saved Mina. Caffarelli returned to Vittoria, and the Italians, reaching Madrid the 21st of July, became a part of the army of the centre, having marched one hundred and fifty miles in seven days without a halt. Returning now to the other divisions of the army of the Ebro, it is to be observed, that their movements being chiefly directed against the Catalans, belong to the relation of that warfare.

OPERATIONS IN ARAGON AND CATALONIA.

After the battle of Altafulla, the fall of Peniscola, and the arrival of Reille's first division on the Ebro, Decaen, who had succeeded Macdonald in Upper Catalonia, spread his troops along the coast, with a view to cut off the communication between the British navy and the interior, where the Catalan army still held certain positions.

Lamarque, with a division of five thousand men, first seized and fortified Mattaro, and then driving Milans from Blanes, occupied the intermediate space, while detachments from Barcelona fortified Moncada, Mongat, and Molino del Rey, thus securing the plain of Barcelona on every side.

The line from Blanes to Cadagues, including Canets, St. Filieu, Palamos, and other ports, was strengthened, and placed under General Bearman.

General Clement was posted in the vicinity of Gerona, to guard the interior French line of march from Hostalrich to Figueras.

Tortosa, Mequinenza, and Tarragona were garrisoned by detachments from Severoli's division, which was quartered between Zaragoza and Lerida, and in communication with Bourke's and Pannetier's brigades of the first division of the army of reserve.

General Frere's division was on the communication between Aragon and Catalonia, and there was a division under General Quesnel, composed partly of national guards, in the Cerdaña. Finally there was a movable reserve, of six or eight thousand men, with which Decaen himself marched from place to place as occasion required; but the supreme command of Valencia, Aragon and Catalonia was with Suchet.

The Catalans still possessed the strongholds of Cardona, Busa, Seu d'Urgel, and the Medas islands, and they had ten thousand