the Adour the 1st, fought the battle of Aire on the evening of the 2d of March. But from Samadet to Aire is not longer than from Samadet to St. Savin, where he was on the 1st. He could, therefore, if his orders had prescribed it so, have seized Aire on the 1st, before Clausel arrived, and thus spared the obstinate combat at that place. It may also be observed that his attack was not well directed; it should have been towards the French left, because they were more weakly posted there; and the ridge held by their right was so difficult to retire from, that no troops would stay on it if any progress was made on the left. This was an accident of war. Hill had no time to inspect the ground, his orders were to attack: and to fall without hesitation upon a retiring enemy after such a defeat, was right; but it cannot be said, Wellington pushed the pursuit with vigor. Notwithstanding the storm on the evening of the 1st, he could have reinforced Hill, and should not have given the French army time to recover from their recent defeat. "The secret of war," says Napoleon, "is to march twelve leagues, fight a battle, and march twelve more in pursuit."

CHAPTER III.

Soult's perilous situation—He falls back to Tarbes—Napoleon sends him a plan of operations—His reply and views stated—Lord Wellington's embarrassments—Soult's proclamation—Observations upon it—Lord Wellington calls up Freyre's Gallicians, and detaches Beresford against Bordeaux—The mayor of that city revolts from Napoleon—Beresford enters Bordeaux, and is followed by the Duke of Angoulême—Fears of a reaction—The mayor issues a false proclamation—Lord Wellington expresses his indignation—Rebukes the Duke of Angoulême—Recalls Beresford, but leaves Lord Dalhousie with the seventh division and some cavalry—Decaen commences the organization of the army of the Gironde—Admiral Penrose enters the Garonne—Remarkable exploit of the Commissary Ogilvie—Lord Dalhousie passes the Garonne and the Dordogne, and defeats L'Huillier at Etauliers—Admiral Penrose destroys the French flotilla—The French set fire to their ships of war—The British seamen and marines land and destroy all the French batteries from Blaye to the mouth of the Garonne.

EXTREMELY perilous now and disheartening was the situation of the French marshal. His army reduced by losses in battle and by desertion of conscripts, had also three thousand stragglers, old soldiers; collected by the generals into whose districts they wandered, they were employed to strengthen detached corps, instead of being restored. All his magazines were taken; discontent, the natural offspring of misfortune, prevailed amongst his officers; a powerful enemy was in front; no certain resources of men or money behind, and his efforts were ill-seconded by the civil authorities. The troops, indignant at the people's apathy, behaved with so much

violence and insolence, especially during the retreat from St. Sever, that Soult, who wanted officers very badly, proposed to fill the vacancies from the national guards, that he might have "men who would respect property."* On the other hand, the people, comparing the conduct of their own army with the discipline of the Anglo-Portuguese; and contrasting the requisitions necessarily imposed by their countrymen with the ready and copious disbursements in gold made by their enemies—for now one commissary preceded each division to order rations for the troops, and another followed to arrange and pay on the spot—were become so absolutely averse to the French army, that Soult, writing to the minister of war, thus expressed himself: "If the population of the departments of the Landes, of Gers and the Lower Pyrenees, were animated with a good spirit, this is the moment to make the enemy suffer by carrying off his convoys and prisoners; but they appear more disposed to favor the invaders than to second the army. It is scarcely possible to obtain a carriage for transport, and I shall not be surprised to find in a short time these inhabitants taking arms against us."

Soult was however a man formed by nature and by experience to struggle against difficulties, always appearing greater when in a desperate condition than when more happily circumstanced. At Genoa, under Massena, at Oporto, and in Andalusia, he had been inured to military distress; and probably for that reason the emperor selected him to sustain this dangerous contest in preference to others accounted more ready tacticians. On the 3d and 4th, he retreated by Plaissance and Madiran to Rabastens, Marciac, and Maubourget, where he halted, covering Tarbes, for his design was to keep in mass, and await the development of the allies' plans. In this view, he called in the detachments of cavalry and infantry left on the side of Pau before the battle of Orthes; and hearing that Daricau was at Langon with a thousand men, he ordered him to march by Agen and join the army immediately. He likewise put the national guards and *gens-d'armes* in activity on the side of the Pyrenees, and directed the commanders of the military districts in his rear to keep their old soldiers, of which there were many scattered through the country, in readiness to aid the army.

While thus acting, he received a note dictated by the emperor.

"Fortresses," said Napoleon, "are nothing in themselves when the enemy, having the command of the sea, can collect as many shells and bullets and guns as he pleases to crush them. Leave, therefore, only a few troops in Bayonne; the way to prevent the siege is to keep the army close to the place. Resume the offensive, fall upon one or other of the enemy's wings, and though you should

* Soult's MSS.

have but twenty thousand men, if you seize the proper moment and attack hardily, you ought to gain some advantage. You have enough talent to understand my meaning."

This note came fourteen days too late. But what if it had come before? Wellington, after winning the battle of St. Pierre, the 13th of December, was firmly established on the Adour, above Bayonne, and able to interrupt the French convoys as they descended from the Port de Landes. It was evident then, that when dry weather enabled the allies to move, Soult must abandon Bayonne, to defend the passage of the Gaves; or risk being turned and driven upon the Landes, from whence it would be difficult for him to escape. Napoleon, however, desired him to leave only a few men in Bayonne, another division would thus have been added to his field army; and this diminution of the garrison would not have increased Wellington's active forces, because the investment of Bayonne would still have required three separate corps: moreover, until the bridge-head at Peyrehorade was abandoned, to concentrate at Orthes, Bayonne was not, rigorously speaking, left to its own defence.

To the emperor's observations, Soult replied, that several months before, he had told the minister of war, Bayonne was incapable of sustaining fifteen days open trenches, unless the entrenched camp was well occupied, and he had been by the minister authorized so to occupy it. Taking that as his base, he had left a garrison of thirteen thousand five hundred men, and now he knew the emperor's wishes, it was no longer in his power to withdraw them. With respect to keeping close to the place, he had done so as long as he could, without endangering the safety of the army; but Wellington's operations had forced him to abandon it; and he had only changed his line of operations at St. Sever when he was being pushed back upon Bordeaux, with little prospect of being able to pass the Garonne in time. He had for several months thought of establishing a pivot of support for his movements at Dax in the design of still holding by Bayonne; and with that view had ordered the old works of the former place to be repaired, and a camp to be fortified; but from poverty of means, even the body of the place was not completed or armed at the moment when the battle of Orthes forced him to relinquish it. Moreover, the insurgent levy of the Landes, upon which he depended to man the works, had failed: not more than two hundred men had come forward. Neither was he very confident of the advantage of such a position, because Wellington with superior numbers would probably have turned his left and forced him to retire precipitately towards Bordeaux by the desert of the greater Landes.

The emperor ordered him to take the offensive, were it only wtih twenty thousand men. He would obey, with this observation: that from the 14th of February to that moment, he had had no power to take the initiatory movement, having been constantly attacked by infinitely superior numbers. He had defended himself as he could, but had not expected to succeed against the enormous disproportion of force. It being thus impossible, even though he sacrificed his last man in the attempt, to stop the enemy, he now sought only to prolong the war as much as he could on the frontier; and by defending every position, to keep the invaders in check, and prevent them from attacking Bordeaux or Toulouse, save by detachments. He had taken his line of operations by the road of Tarbes, St. Gaudens and Toulouse, that is to say, by the roots of the Pyrenees; calculating that if Wellington sent small detachments against Bordeaux or Toulouse, the generals commanding at those places would be able, if the national guards would fight for their country, to defend them.

If the English made large detachments, an attack in front while thus weakened would certainly bring them back; if they marched in mass upon Bordeaux they could be followed and forced to face about; if they attempted to march by Auch against Toulouse they might be stopped by an attack in flank; if they remained stationary, they could be provoked by an advance to develope their objects. But if, as was to be expected, the French army was itself attacked, it would defend its position vigorously; and then retreating by St. Gaudens, draw the allies into a difficult mountain country; there the ground might be disputed step by step, the war be kept still on the frontier, and the passage of the Garonne be delayed. He had meditated deeply upon his task, and could find no better mode; but his army was weakened by combats, still more by desertion—the conscripts went off so fast that of five battalions lately called up from Toulouse, two-thirds were already gone, without having seen an enemy.

Soult, though in error as to the real force of the allies, here displayed clear views, and quickly re-organized his army in six divisions. Calling in his detachments, he urged the imperial commissioners and local authorities to hasten the levies and restore deserters, while he formed a plan of action for the partisans who had been organized in the mountains. But the new conscripts were for the most part unarmed, and he had no arms to give them, the imperial commissary, Cornudet, and the prefect of the Gironde quitted Bordeaux; and when L'Huillier attempted to remove the military stores belonging to the army, from Langon, Podensac, and Bordeaux, the inferior authorities opposed him; there was no

money, they said, to pay the expense: but in truth, Bordeaux was the focus of Bourbon conspiracy, and the mayor, Count Lynch, was eager to betray his sovereign.

Nor was Wellington without embarrassments. The weather had prevented him following up his victory while the French army was in confusion; now it was re-organized on a new line and could retreat for many days in a direction parallel to the Pyrenees with strong defensive positions. Should he press it closely? His army, weakened at every step, would have to move between the mountains and the Garonne, exposing its flanks and rear to the operations of any force which the French might be able to collect on those boundaries; that is to say, all the power of France beyond the Garonne. It was essential to find some counterpoise and increase his field army. To establish a Bourbon party at Bordeaux was an obvious mode of attaining the first object. Should he then seize that city by a detachment? He must employ twelve thousand men and remain with twenty-six thousand to oppose Soult, who he erroneously believed was being joined by the ten thousand men which Suchet had sent to Lyons. Five regiments which had been detached for clothing had rejoined the army, and all the reserves of cavalry and artillery were now called up; but the reinforcements from England and Portugal, amounting to twenty thousand men, upon which he had calculated, were detained by their respective governments. Wherefore, driven by necessity, he directed Freyre to join him by the Port de Landes with two divisions of the Gallician army; a measure which was instantly followed by innumerable complaints of outrages and excesses, although the Spaniards were entirely provided from the English military chest. It was at this time also Clinton had orders to send the British and Germans of the Anglo-Sicilian army to St. Jean de Luz.

Resolving however to seize Bordeaux, he repaired the broken bridges, brought up one of Morillo's brigades from Navarrens to the vicinity of Aire, sent Campbell's Portuguese dragoons to Roquefort, Fane with two regiments of cavalry and a brigade of infantry to Pau, and pushed posts towards Tarbes and Vic Bigorre. Meanwhile Soult fearing the general apathy and ill will would become fatal to him, endeavored to arouse the energies of the people and the army by the following proclamation, which has been unreasonably railed at by several English writers, for it was a judicious, well-timed and powerful address.

"Soldiers, at the battle of Orthes you did your duty, the enemy's losses surpassed yours, his blood moistened all the ground he gained. You may consider that feat of arms as an advantage.

Other combats are at hand; no repose for us until his army, formed of such extraordinary elements, shall evacuate the French territory or be annihilated. Its numbers and progress may be great, but at hand are unexpected perils; time will teach the enemy's general that French honor is not to be outraged with impunity.

"Soldiers, he has had the indecency to provoke you and your countrymen to revolt and sedition; he speaks of peace but firebrands of discord follow him! He speaks of peace and excites the French to a civil war! Thanks be to him for making known his projects; our forces are thereby centupled; and he himself rallies round the imperial eagles all those who deceived by appearances believed our enemies would make a loyal war. No peace with the disloyal and perfidious nation! no peace with the English and their auxiliaries until they quit the French territory! they have dared to insult the national honor, the infamy to incite Frenchmen to become perjured towards the emperor. Revenge the offence in blood. To arms! Let this cry resound through the south of France, the Frenchman that hesitates abjures his country and belongs to her enemies.

"Yet a few days and those who believe in English delicacy and sincerity will learn to their cost that cunning promises are made to abate their courage, to subjugate them. They will learn also that if the English pay to-day and are generous, they will to-morrow retake, and with interest, in contributions what they disburse. Let the pusillanimous beings who calculate the cost of saving their country remember that the English have in view to reduce Frenchmen to the same servitude as the Spaniards, Portuguese and Sicilians who groan under their domination. Past history will recall to those unworthy Frenchmen who prefer momentary enjoyment to the safety of the great family, how the English made Frenchmen kill Frenchmen at Quiberon; it will show them at the head of all conspiracies, all odious political intrigues, plots and assassinations, aiming to overthrow all principles, to destroy all grand establishments of trade to satisfy their immeasurable ambition, their insatiable cupidity. Does there exist upon the face of the globe a point known to the English where they have not destroyed by seditions and violence all manufactures which could rival their own? Thus they will do to the French establishments if they prevail.

"Devote then to opprobrium and execration all Frenchmen who favor their insidious projects, ay! even those who are under his power if they seek not to hurt him. Devote to opprobrium and reject as Frenchmen those who think under specious pretexts to avoid serving their country; and those also who from corruption or indolence hide deserters instead of driving them back to their

colors. With such men we have nothing in common, and history will pass their names with execrations to posterity. As to us soldiers our duty is clear. Honor and fidelity. This is our motto and we will fight to the last the enemies of our emperor and France. Respect persons and property. Grieve for those who have momentarily fallen under the enemy's yoke, hasten the moment of their deliverance. Be obedient and disciplined, and bear implacable hatred towards traitors and enemies of the French name! War to death against those who would divide us to destroy; and to those cowards who desert the imperial eagles to range themselves under another banner. Remember always that fifteen ages of glory, triumphs innumerable, have illustrated our country. Contemplate the prodigious efforts of our great sovereign, his signal victories which immortalize the French name. Be worthy of him and we can then bequeath without a taint to our posterity the inheritance we hold from our fathers. Be in fine Frenchmen, and die arms in hand sooner than survive dishonor."

Let the time and the occasion of this proclamation be considered. Let it be remembered that no English writer, orator or politician, had for many years used milder terms than robbers, murderers, atheists, and tyrant, when speaking of Frenchmen and their sovereign—that Wellington even at this time refused that sovereign his title of emperor, calling him Buonaparte—that on entering France he had published an order of the day accusing the French commanders of authorizing and encouraging the cruelties of their soldiers in Spain—that for six years the Spanish, Portuguese and English state papers were filled with most offensive ribald abuse of Napoleon, his ministers and commanders. Let all this be remembered and the acrimony of Soult's proclamation cannot be justly blamed; while the noble energy, the loyalty of the sentiments, the exciting, passionate feeling of patriotism which pervades it must be admired. Was he, sprung from the ranks, a soldier of the republic, a general of the empire, after fighting thirty years under the tricolor to be tame and measured to squeamishness in his phrases when he saw his country invaded by foreigners; and a pretender to the throne stalking behind their bayonets beckoning his soldiers to desert their eagles, inviting his countrymen to betray their sovereign and dishonor their nation! Why the man was surrounded by traitors, and proud and scornful of danger was his spirit to strive so mightily against defeat and treason combined.

It has been said in condemnation of him that the English general did not encourage the Bourbon party. Is that true? Did it so appear to the French general? Had not the Duke of Angoulême

come to the English head-quarters with mystery, following the invading army, and, protected by its arms, assembling round him all the ancient partisans of his house, sending forth agents, scattering proclamations even in Soult's camp, endeavoring to debauch his soldiers and to aid strangers to subjugate France. Soult not only knew this but was suffering under the effects. On every side he met with opposition and discontent from the civil authorities, his movements were made known to the enemy, his measures thwarted in all directions. At Bordeaux a party was vehemently calling upon the invaders for aid. At Tarbes the fear of provoking an action near the town had caused the dispersion of the insurrectional levy organized by the imperial commissioner Caffarelli. At Pau the aristocracy had secretly assembled to offer homage to the Duke of Angoulême, and it was rumored he was to be crowned at the castle of Henry the Fourth. Was Soult to disregard all these facts all these signs because his opponent had avoided any public declaration in favor of the Bourbon family? Wellington would have been the first to laugh at his simplicity if he had.

What was the reason that the English general did not openly call upon the Bourbon partisans to raise the standard of revolt? Simply that Napoleon's astounding genius had so baffled the banded sovereigns and their innumerable hordes that a peace seemed inevitable to avoid fatal disasters; Wellington had instructions from his government not to embarrass negotiations for peace by pledges to a Bourbon party.* Hence as an honest statesman and commander he could not excite men to their ruin for a momentary advantage; but so far from discouraging treason to Napoleon on other grounds he avowed his anxious desire for it, and his readiness to encourage every enemy of that monarch. He consulted with La Roche Jacquelin, with de Mailhos, and other vehement partisans for an immediate insurrection; and also with Viel Castel, an agent of Bernadotte's, until he found him intriguing against the Bourbons. He advised the Duke of Angoulême to form regular battalions, promised him arms, and actually collected eighty thousand stand to arm the insurgents. Finally he rebuked the timid policy of the English ministers, who having such an opportunity of assailing Napoleon refrained from doing it. Before Soult's proclamation appeared he thus wrote to Lord Bathurst.

"I find the sentiment as we advance in the country still more strong against the Buonaparte dynasty and in favor of the Bourbons, but I am quite certain there will be no declaration on the part of the people if the allies do not in some manner declare themselves." "*I cannot discover the policy of not hitting one's enemy*

* Secret instructions from Lord Bathurst, MSS.

as hard as one can and in the most vulnerable place. I am certain that he would not so act by us, he would certainly overturn the British authority in Ireland if it were in his power."

Soult and Wellington acted and wrote, each in the manner most suitable to their situation, but it was not a little remarkable that Ireland should so readily occur to the latter as a parallel case.

In this state of affairs Beresford was detached with twelve thousand men against Bordeaux, having instructions to occupy that city and acquire the Garonne as a port for the allies; but the French authorities were to declare whether they would or would not exercise their functions under the conditions announced by the proclamation. For hitherto Wellington had governed as he advanced in this public manner to nullify the misrepresentations of political intriguers, obviate false reports and rumors, and make his justice and moderation known to the poorest peasant; thus securing the French local authorities who continued to act under him from false representation of their conduct to the imperial government if peace should be made with Napoleon. This expedition, however, involved political interests. Beresford was instructed that, as there were many partisans of the Bourbons in that city who might wish to hoist the white standard and proclaim Louis the Eighteenth under protection of the troops, they were to be told the British nation and its allies wished well to their cause; and while public tranquillity was maintained in the districts occupied by the troops there would be no hindrance to their political proceedings: they or any party opposed to Napoleon would receive assistance. Nevertheless, as the allied sovereigns were negotiating with the French emperor, however well inclined the English general might be to support a party against the latter during war, he could give no help if peace were concluded, and this they must weigh well before they revolted. Beresford was therefore not to meddle with any declaration in favor of Louis the Eighteenth; but he was not to oppose it; and if revolt took place he was to supply the revolters with the arms and ammunition collected at Dax.

On the 8th Beresford marched towards Langon with the fourth and seventh divisions, Vivian's horsemen, and some guns; he was joined on the road by some of Vandeleur's cavalry from Bayonne; and he had orders to observe the enemy's movements towards Agen; for Soult could by a forced march cross the Garonne there, and enter Bordeaux before him. La Roche Jacquelin preceded the troops, and the Duke of Angoulême followed closely; his partisans in the city, frightened at the danger of their enterprise, now besought Beresford to delay his march; but La Roche Jacquelin vehemently condemned this hesitation; and his influence supported

by the consternation which the battle of Orthes had created amongst the Napoleonists, decided the question in favor of revolt.

It has been shown that Soult had previously given orders in detail for organizing the defence of Bordeaux, and he had urged it again when the imperial commissioner Cornudet arrived; but following the custom of all civilians who meddle with military matters, everything was promised and nothing done. Cornudet and the prefect quitted the city as early as the 4th, first burning with a silly affectation of vigor some ships of war upon the stocks. L'Huillier, unable to oppose the allies, then destroyed the fort of Medoc on the left bank of the Garonne, disarmed some of the river batteries, and passing in the night of the 11th to the right bank occupied the fortress of Blaye, the Paté, and other points. Beresford reached Langon on the 10th, left Lord Dalhousie there with the bulk of the forces, and advancing with eight hundred cavalry, entered Bordeaux the 12th. The municipality and a great body of Bourbonists met him, and at their head was the mayor, Count Lynch, decorated with the scarf of his office and the legion of honor, both conferred upon him, probably at his own solicitation, by the sovereign he was then going to betray. Beresford made known his instructions, and Lynch very justly tore the tricolor, the emblem of his country's glory, from his own shoulders; the white flag was then displayed and the allies took possession of the city. The Duke of Angoulême arrived the same day, and Louis the Eighteenth was proclaimed. This was not generally approved, and the mayor, conscious of weakness, issued with the connivance of Angoulême a proclamation, declaring that "the British, Portuguese and Spanish armies were united in the south, as the other nations were united in the north, solely to destroy Napoleon and replace him by a Bourbon king, who was conducted thither by these generous allies: and only by accepting that king could the French appease the resentment of the Spaniards." Then, as if master of the country, the duke appointed prefects and other authorities in districts beyond the limits of Bordeaux.

Both duke and mayor soon repented of their precipitancy. The English fleet which should have acted simultaneously with the troops had not arrived; the Regulus, French seventy-four, with several inferior vessels of war were anchored below Blaye, and Beresford was recalled with the fourth division and Vivian's cavalry. Lord Dalhousie remained with the seventh division and three squadrons to oppose L'Huillier's troops and other French corps now on the Garonne; he could not guard the river below Bordeaux, and some French troops again took possession of the fort of Grave near the mouth; a new army was forming under

Decaen beyond the Garonne; the Napoleonists began to stir themselves, and a partisan officer coming down to St. Macaire on the 18th, surprised fifty men sent by Lord Dalhousie across the Garonne to seize a French magazine. In the Landes the peasants burned the houses of the gentlemen who had joined the white standard, and in Bordeaux a counter-insurrection was prepared to aid Decaen.

Frightened at these symptoms of reaction, the prince desired Lord Dalhousie to bring his troops into Bordeaux to awe the Napoleonists, and each party strove to outvie the other in idle rumors Victories and defeats were invented or exaggerated. Napoleon was dead from illness, had committed suicide, was poisoned, stabbed; and all were related with most circumstantial details. Wellington, writing to the Duke of Angoulême, denied the veracity of the mayor's proclamation, and expressed his trust that the prince was not a party to such a mendacious document; but the latter, with some excuses about hurry and confusion, avowed his participation in its publication and defended the mayor's conduct. He also stated the danger and demanded men and money; supporting his application by a note of council, which argued, that as civil government could not be conducted without executive power, and Wellington had suffered the duke to assume the civil government at Bordeaux, he was bound to supply troops and furnish money until taxes could be levied under the protection of the soldiers!

Holding such sophistry in excuse for a breach of faith to be intolerable, Wellington replied, that he was sorry to find the principle by which he regulated his conduct towards the Bourbon party, though often stated, had made so little impression that the duke could not perceive how inconsistent it was with the mayor's proclamation; most cautious therefore must be his future conduct, seeing that as the chief of an army and the confidential agent of three independent nations, he could not permit his views to be misrepresented upon such an important question. He had occupied Bordeaux as a military point, but certain persons, contrary to his advice and opinion, thought proper to proclaim Louis the Eighteenth. Those persons made no exertions, subscribed no money, raised not a soldier; yet, because he would not extend the posts of his army beyond what was proper and convenient, merely to protect their families and property, exposed to danger, not on account of their exertions, for they had made none, but on account of their premature declaration contrary to his advice, they took him to task in a document delivered to Lord Dalhousie by the prince himself. The writer of that paper, and all such persons, however, might be assured that nothing should make him swerve from what he thought

his duty to the sovereigns who employed him; he would not risk even a company of infantry to save properties and families placed in a state of danger contrary to his advice. The duke then had better conduct his policy and compose his manifestoes in such a manner as not to force a public contradiction of them. His royal highness was free to act as he pleased for himself; but he was not free to adduce the name and authority of the allied governments in support of his measures when they had not been consulted, nor of their general when he had been consulted and had given his opinion against those measures.

He had told him that if any great town or extensive district declared in favor of the Bourbons, he would not interfere with the government of that town or district; and if there was a general declaration in favor of his house, he would deliver the civil government of all the country overrun by the army into his hands; but the fact was that even at Bordeaux the movement in favor of the Bourbons was not unanimous. The spirit had not spread elsewhere, not even to La Vendée, nor in any part occupied by the army. The events contemplated had not therefore occurred, and it would be a great breach of duty towards the allied sovereigns, and cruel to the inhabitants, if he were to deliver them over to his royal highness prematurely, or against their inclinations; he advised him therefore to withdraw his prefects and confine his government to Bordeaux. He could give him no money, and after what had passed, he was doubtful if he should afford him any countenance or protection; the argument of the note of council, affirming that he was bound to support the civil government of his royal highness, only rendered it more incumbent upon him to beware how he gave farther encouragement, or to speak plainly, *permission* to the Bourbonists to declare themselves. It was disagreeable to take any step which should publicly mark a want of good understanding between himself and the duke, but Count Lynch had not treated him with common fairness or with truth; wherefore, as he could not allow the character of the allied sovereigns or his own to be doubted, if his royal highness did not, within ten days, contradict the objectionable parts of the mayor's proclamation, he would do so himself.

Thus it appeared that with the French as with the Spaniards and Portuguese, neither enthusiastic declarations nor actual insurrection offered any guarantee for sense, truth or exertion; and most surely all generals and politicians of every country who trust to sudden popular commotions will find that noisy declamations, vehement demonstrations of feeling, idle rumors and boasting, the

life-blood of such affairs, are essentially opposed to useful public exertions.

When Beresford marched to rejoin the army, the line of occupation was too extensive for Dalhousie, and Wellington ordered him to avoid the city and hold his troops together, observing that his own projected operations on the upper Garonne would keep matters quiet on the lower part of that river. But if the war had continued for a month, that officer's situation would have been critical; for when Napoleon heard Bordeaux had fallen, he sent Decaen by post to Libourne to form the "*army of the Gironde;*"* General Despeaux, acting under Soult's orders, had already collected a body of gens-d'armes, custom-house officers and national guards on the upper Garonne, between Agen and La Reolle, and it was one of his detachments that surprised Dalhousie's men at St. Macaire. Eight guns were sent down from Narbonne, other batteries were despatched from Paris to arrive at Perigueux on the 11th of April, and three or four hundred cavalry, coming from the side of Rochelle, joined L'Huillier, who, with a thousand infantry, was in position at St. André de Cubsac, beyond the Dordogne. Behind these troops, all the national guards, custom-house officers and gens-d'armes of five departments were ordered to assemble, and march to the Dordogne; but the formidable part of the intended army was a body of Suchet's veterans, six thousand in number, under General Beurman, who had been turned from the road of Lyons, and directed upon Libourne.

Decaen entered Mucidan the 1st of April, Beurman's troops had not then reached Perigueux, Dalhousie's cavalry were in Libourne, between him and L'Huillier; the power of concentration was thus denied to the French, and, meanwhile, Admiral Penrose secured command of the Garonne. Wellington thought him dilatory, but, on the 27th, he arrived with a seventy-four and two frigates; whereupon the Regulus and other French vessels then at Royan, made sail up the river, and, though chased to the shoal of Talmont, escaped through the narrow channel on the north side, and cast anchor under some batteries. Previous to this event, Mr. Ogilvie, a commissary, being on the river in a boat manned with Frenchmen,† discovered the Requin sloop, half French, half American, pierced for twenty-two guns, lying at anchor below Bordeaux, and, seeing a sailor leap hastily into a boat and row for the vessel, seized him: he was the armorer of the Requin, and said there were not many men on board. Whereupon Ogilvie, observing his alarm, thought the crew would also be fearful, and, resolutely bearing

* Official Correspondence of General Decaen, MSS.
† Official Report by Mr. Ogilvie, MSS.

down upon the Requin, boarded and took her without opposition from her crew or his own, although she had fourteen guns mounted and eleven men with two officers on board!

When the naval co-operation was assured, Dalhousie crossed the Garonne above the city, drove the French posts beyond the Dordogne, and, sending his cavalry over, intercepted Decaen's and L'Huillier's communications; the former had then to remain at Macidan with two hundred and fifty gens-d'armes, awaiting the arrival of Beurman, and he found neither arms nor amunition nor a willing spirit for organizing the national guards. The English horsemen repassed the Dordogne, but Dalhousie crossed it again lower down near St. André de Cubzac, with three thousand men, and, hearing L'Huillier was at Etauliers, turned suddenly upon him. The French formed line on an open common, occupying a wood in front with detachments; overmatched in infantry, they had three hundred cavalry opposed to one weak squadron, yet none would stand the shock of battle. The wood was cleared in a moment, the artillery opened, and the main body retired in disorder, horsemen and infantry together, through Etauliers, leaving behind scattered masses, upon which the British cavalry galloped and made two or three hundred men and thirty officers prisoners. If the six thousand old troops under Beurman had, following Napoleon's orders, arrived at this time in Dalhousie's rear, his position would have been embarrassing, but they were delayed on the road until the 10th.

During these operations, Admiral Penrose, having, on the 2d, observed the French flotilla, consisting of fifteen armed vessels and gun-boats, coming down from Blaye to join the Regulus at Talmont, sent his boats to attack them; whereupon the French vessels run on shore, and the crews, aided by two hundred soldiers from Blaye, lined the beach to protect them; but Lieutenant Dunlop, landing the seamen and marines from the boats, beat the troops and carried off or destroyed the whole flotilla, with a loss of only six men wounded and missing. This operation completed, and the action at Etauliers known, the admiral, reinforced with a second ship of the line, resolved to attack the squadron and the shore batteries, but in the night of the 6th the French set fire to their vessels; whereupon Captain Harris, of the Belle Poule frigate, landed six hundred seamen and marines, and destroyed the batteries and forts on the right bank, from Talmont to the Courbe point. Blaye still held out, but at Paris treason had done its work: Napoleon, the man of mightiest capacity known for good, was overthrown to make room for despots, who, with minds enlarged only to cruelty, avarice and dissoluteness, were, at the very moment of

triumph, intent to defraud the people by whose strength and suffering they had conquered, of the only reward they demanded, *just government.* The war was virtually over, yet on the side of Toulouse, Bayonne and Barcelona, the armies, ignorant of this great event, were still battling with unabated fury.

CHAPTER IV.

Wellington's and Soult's situations and forces described—Folly of the English ministers—Freyre's Gallicians and Ponsonby's heavy cavalry join Lord Wellington—He orders Giron's Andalusians and Del Parque's army to enter France—Soult suddenly takes the offensive—Combats of cavalry—Partisan expedition of Captain Dania—Wellington menaces the peasantry with fire and sword if they take up arms—Soult retires—Lord Wellington advances—Combat of Vic Bigorre—Death and character of Colonel Henry Sturgeon—Daring exploit of Captain William Light*—Combat of Tarbes—Soult retreats by forced marches to Toulouse—Wellington follows more slowly—Cavalry combat at St. Gaudens—The allies arrive in front of Toulouse—Reflections.

WHILE Beresford was moving upon Bordeaux, Soult and Wellington remained in observation, each thinking the other stronger than himself. The latter, hearing of Beurman's march, thought he was to reinforce Soult and had actually joined. That marshal, hearing nothing of Beresford's march until the 13th, concluded Wellington still had the twelve thousand men thus detached to Bordeaux. The numbers, on each side, were however nearly equal. On the French side were thirty-one thousand infantry and cavalry, three thousand being however stragglers detained by the generals of the military districts; hence, exclusive of conscripts without arms, only twenty-eight thousand sabres and bayonets, with thirty-eight pieces of artillery were in line.† On the allies' side, twenty-seven thousand sabres and bayonets were under arms, with forty-two guns; but this included detachments sent to Pau on one side, Roquefort on the other, and the cavalry scouts pushed into the Landes and to the upper Garonne.

Wellington, expecting Soult would retreat upon Auch, and designing to follow him, had caused Beresford to keep the bulk of his troops towards the upper Garonne, that he might the sooner rejoin the army; but Soult, having early fixed his line of retreat by St. Gaudens, would have retaken the offensive on the 9th or 10th, if the loss of his magazines had not compelled him first to organize a system of requisition for subsistence. His equality of force soon ceased, for on the 13th Freyre came up with eight thousand Spa-

* Since colonel and surveyor-general of South Australia.

† Official Report, MSS.

nish infantry, and the next day Ponsonby's heavy cavalry arrived; Wellington was then the strongest, yet he still awaited Beresford, and was uneasy about his own situation. He dreaded the junction of Suchet's army; for it was at this time the Spanish regency referred the convention, proposed by that marshal for the evacuation of the fortresses, to his decision. He gave a peremptory negative, observing that it would furnish twenty thousand veterans for Soult, while the retention of Rosas and Figueras would bar the action of the Spanish armies of Catalonia in his favor; yet his anxiety was great, because he foresaw Ferdinand's return, and his engagement with Suchet, already related, together with the evident desire of Copons, that the garrisons should be admitted to a convention, would finally render that measure inevitable. His own army was likely to decrease. The English cabinet, less considerate even than the Spanish government, had sent the militia, permitted by the recent act of parliament to volunteer for foreign service, to Holland; and with them, the other reinforcements originally promised for the army in France; two or three regiments of militia only came to the Garonne when the war was over. To make amends, the ministers proposed that Lord William Bentinck should send four thousand men from Sicily, to land at Rosas, or some point in France, and so join Wellington, who was thus expected to extend his weakened force from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean, in order to cover the junction of this uncertain reinforcement! Experience had taught the English statesmen so little, that we find their general thus addressing them only one week previous to the termination of the war.

Having before declared that he should be, contrary to his wishes, forced to bring more Spaniards into France, he says:—

"There are limits to the numbers with which this army can contend, and I am convinced your lordship would not wish to see the safety and honor of this handful of brave men depend upon the doubtful exertions and discipline of an undue proportion of Spanish troops."—"The service in Holland may doubtless be more important to the national interest than that in this country, but I hope it will be considered that that which is most important of all is not *to lose the brave army which has struggled through its difficulties for nearly six years.*"

Soult's infantry was now re-organized in six divisions, under Daricau, D'Armagnac, Taupin, Maransin, Villatte and Harispe.* Paris' troops, hitherto acting as an unattached body, were thus absorbed; the cavalry, composed of Berton's and Vial's brigades, was under Pierre Soult, and there was a reserve of seven thousand

* Soult, MSS.

conscript infantry under Travot. The division of wings and a centre, each under a lieutenant-general, continued, but was not heeded in the movements; for Reille, though commanding the right wing, was at Maubourget on the left of the line of battle; D'Erlon, commanding the centre, was at Marsiac on the right, covering the road to Auch; Clausel was at Rabastens, forming a reserve to both. The advanced guards were towards Plaissance on the right, Madiran in the centre, Lembege on the left. Soult thus covered Tarbes, and could move on a direct line by good roads either to Auch or Pau.

Wellington, driven by necessity, now called Giron and Anglona from the Bastan, although Freyre's soldiers had, by their outrages, already created a wide-spread consternation. His head-quarters were fixed at Aire, his army was in position on each side of the Adour; he had repaired all the bridges behind him, restored that over the Lees in his front, and dispersed some small bands upon his left flank and rear; but a partisan system was organized on his right flank in the mountains, and only wanted money. The main bodies of the two armies were a long day's march asunder, yet their advanced posts were not very distant. The regular cavalry had frequent encounters, and in the night of the 7th, Soult, thinking Pau was weakly protected, sent a strong detachment to arrest the nobles who had assembled to welcome the duke of Angoulême. Fane, however, got there before the French with a brigade of infantry and two regiments of cavalry, and the stroke failed. The French, in returning, captured an officer and four of five English dragoons, and a second detachment penetrating between Pau and Aire carried off a post of correspondence. Two days after, when Fane had quitted Pau, a French officer, accompanied by only four hussars, captured there thirty-four Portuguese, with their commander and ten loaded mules. By these excursions, Soult procured intelligence of Beresford's march to Bordeaux, and resolved to attack, the more readily that Napoleon had recently directed him to draw the war to the side of Pau, keeping his left resting on the Pyrenees, which accorded with his own designs.

Wellington's main body was then concentrated around Aire and Barcelonne, but divided by the Adour, and the advanced guards were at Garlin, Conchez, Viella, Riscle and Pouydraguien, on a semicircle, and a half march in advance.* Soult therefore thought to strike a good blow. Gathering his divisions on the side of Maubourget the 12th, he marched the 13th, designing to throw himself upon the high tabular land between Pau and Aire, and then act according to circumstances. The country was suited for

* Plan 5, p. 81.

the action of all arms, offering long and nearly parallel ridges of moderate height, the sides of which were sometimes covered with vineyards, but the summits commonly so open that troops could move along them without much difficulty; and between these undulations small rivers with muddy bottoms descended from the Pyrenees to the Adour. This conformation determined the order of march, which followed the courses of these rivers. One regiment of cavalry being left to watch the valley of the Adour, the rest of the French army moved by Lembege upon Conchez down the smaller Lees. Clausel then seized the high land of Daisse and pushed troops to Portet; Reille supported him at Conchez, D'Erlon remained behind that place in reserve. The heads of the columns pointing direct upon Aire intercepted the line between Viella and Garlin, where Hill's right was, and menaced his posts on the great Lees. Meanwhile Pierre Soult, marching with three regiments of cavalry along the high land between the two Lees, reached Mascaras and the castle of Sault, where he covered the French left, and pushed Fane's cavalry posts back with the loss of two officers and a few men. Berton, advancing from Madiran with two regiments of cavalry towards Viella, on the right flank of the French army,* endeavored to cross the Saye river at a difficult muddy ford near the broken bridge, but Sir John Campbell with a squadron of Portuguese cavalry overthrew the head of his column.† However the Portuguese were too few to dispute the passage, and Berton, finally getting a regiment over higher up, gained the table-land above, and charging the rear of the retiring troops in a narrow way leading to the Aire road killed several and took some prisoners, amongst them Bernardo de Sà, since known as Count of Bandeira.

This terminated Soult's operations for the day, and Wellington imagining the arrival of Suchet's troops had made him thus bold, resolved to keep on the defensive until his reinforcements and detachments could come up. Hill however passed the greater Lees, partly to support his posts, partly to make out the force and true direction of the French movement; but he recrossed that river during the night and finally occupied the strong platform between Aire and Garlin which Soult had designed to seize. Wellington then brought the third and sixth division and the heavy cavalry over the Adour to his support, leaving the light division with the hussar brigade still on the right bank. The bulk of the army thus occupied a strong position parallel with the Pau road; the right at Garlin, the left at Aire, the front covered by the

* Memoir by General Berton, MSS.
† Note by Sir John Campbell, MSS.

greater Lees, a river difficult to pass; Fane's cavalry was extended on the Pau road as far as Boelho, and on the left of the Adour the hussars pushed the French cavalry regiment left there back upon Plaissance.

On the morning of the 14th Soult, intending to fall on Hill, whose columns he had seen in the evening before on the right of the Lees, drove in the advanced posts covering the retrograde movement, and examined the new position; but these operations wasted the day, and towards evening he disposed his army on the heights between the two Lees; placing Clausel and D'Erlon at Castle Pugon opposite Garlin, Reille in reserve at Portet. At the same time Pierre Soult moved with three cavalry regiments to Clarac on the Pau road, to intercept the communications with that town and menace the allies' right flank, against which the whole French army was now pointing. Fane's outposts retired with some loss at first, but they were soon supported and drove the French horsemen in disorder clear off the Pau road to Carere. Then Soult, seeing the strength of the position above Aire, and hearing from the peasants that forty or fifty thousand men were concentrated there, feared to attack. Changing his plan he resolved to hover about the right flank of the allies in the hopes of enticing them from their vantage-ground; but Wellington only drew his cavalry posts down the valley of the Adour, and massed his forces on the right in expectation of an attack. Each general acting upon false intelligence of the other's strength was afraid to strike. The English error as to the junction of Suchet's troops was encouraged by Soult, who had formed his battalions upon two ranks instead of three to give himself an appearance of strength; and in the same view had caused the reserve of conscripts to move in rear of his line of battle. But he also judged the allies' strength by what it might have been, not what it was;* for though Freyre's Spaniards and Ponsonby's dragoons were now up, the whole force did not exceed thirty-six thousand men, including the light division and the hussars on the right bank of the Adour. This number was however increasing every hour by the arrival of detachments and reserves; and it behoved Soult, who was entangled in a country extremely difficult if rain should fall, to watch that Wellington, while holding him in check with his right wing, did not strike with his left by Maubourget and Tarbes, and thus cast them upon the mountains about Lourdes.

This danger, and the intelligence now obtained of the fall of Bordeaux, induced him to retire before day on the 16th to Lembege and Simacourbe, where he occupied both sides of the two

* Morning States, MSS.

branches of the Lees and heights between them; his outposts remained at Conchez; and Pierre Soult again getting upon the Pau road detached a hundred chosen troopers under Captain Dania against the allies' communication with Orthes. They made a forced march, reached Hagetnau at nightfall, surprised six officers and eight medical men with their baggage, took a number of other prisoners and returned on the evening of the 18th. This enterprise at such a distance from the army was supposed to be executed by the bands, and seemed to indicate a disposition for insurrection; wherefore Wellington seized the civil authorities at Hagetnau, and declared he would hang all the peasants caught in arms and burn their villages. But Soult's offensive movement was now exhausted, he sent his conscripts to Toulouse and prepared for a retreat on that place; he had acted tardily, he should have been on the Lees the 10th or 11th when only twenty thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred cavalry could oppose him between Aire and Garlin. Wellington's passive state, too much prolonged, was now also at an end; his reinforcements and detachments were either up or close at hand; and he could put in motion six Anglo-Portuguese and three Spanish divisions, furnishing forty thousand bayonets, with six thousand cavalry, and from fifty to sixty pieces of artillery.

On the evening of the 17th, the English hussars were pushed up the valley of the Adour, towards Plaissance; the light division supported them, and was followed by the fourth division, coming from the side of Roquefort on its return from Langon. Next morning the whole army was in movement. The hussars with the light and fourth divisions forming together the left wing marched upon Plaissance; Hill commanding the right marched from Garlin to Conchez, keeping a detachment on the road to Pau in observation of Pierre Soult's cavalry. The centre, under Wellington in person, moved on Viella by the high road leading from Aire to Maubourget. The French right was thus turned by the valley of the Adour, while Hill with a sharp skirmish, in which eighty British were killed and wounded, drove back their outposts upon Lembege.

Soult retired during the night to a strong ridge, having a small river with rugged banks, called the Laiza, in his front; but his right under D'Erlon was extended towards Vic Bigorre on the great road of Tarbes.* Berton's cavalry, one regiment of which, in retreating from Viella the 16th, disengaged itself with some difficulty and loss, reached Maubourget and took post in column behind that place, the road being confined on each side by deep

* Berton's Memoir, MSS.

and wide ditches. In this situation, being pressed by Bock's German cavalry, which preceded the centre column of the allies, the French horsemen suddenly charged and took an officer and some men, but were ultimately beaten and retreated through Vic Bigorre. Soult, thinking a flanking column only was in the valley of the Adour, resolved to fall upon it with his whole army; but he recognized the skill of his opponent when he found the whole of the allies' centre had been thrown by Madiran on to the Tarbes road while he was retiring from Lembege.* This heavy mass was approaching Vic Bigorre, the light division, coming from Plaissance up the right bank of the Adour, was already near Auriebat, pointing to Rabastens; on which place the hussars had driven the French cavalry left in observation when the army first advanced. Vic Bigorre was thus turned, Berton's horsemen had passed it in retreat and the danger was imminent. Soult immediately ordered Berton to support the cavalry regiment at Rabastens and cover that road to Tarbes; D'Erlon to take post at Vic Bigorre and check the allies on the main road, while he hastily marched in person with Clausel's and Reille's divisions to Tarbes by a circuitous road leading through Ger-sur-landes. D'Erlon, not comprehending the crisis, moved slowly with his baggage in front; and having the river Lechez to cross rode on before his troops expecting to find Berton at Vic Bigorre, but he met the German cavalry there; then indeed he hurried his march; yet he had only time to place Daricau's division, now under Paris, amongst some vineyards two miles in front of Vic Bigorre, when hither came Picton to the support of the cavalry and fell upon him.

Combat of Vic Bigorre.—The French left was secured by the Lechez river, but their right towards the Adour was loose, and menaced by the German cavalry, while the front was attacked by Picton, who drove Paris back in disorder. But then D'Armagnac entered the line, and extending to the Adour, renewed the fight, which lasted until D'Erlon saw his right turned beyond the Adour by the light division and the hussars, who were now close to Rabastens, whereupon he retired behind Vic Bigorre and took post for the night. The action was vigorous; two hundred and fifty Anglo-Portuguese, men and officers, fell, and amongst them died Colonel Henry Sturgeon, so often mentioned in this History. Skilled to excellence in almost every branch of war, and possessing a variety of accomplishments, he used his gifts so gently for himself and so usefully for the service, that envy offered no bar to admiration, and the whole army felt painfully mortified that his merits were passed unnoticed in the public despatches.

* Soult, MSS.

Soult's march through the sandy plain of Ger was harassing, and would have been dangerous if Wellington had sent Hill's cavalry, now reinforced by two regiments of heavy dragoons, in pursuit; but the country was unfavorable for quick observation, and the French covered their movements with rear-guards whose real numbers it was difficult to ascertain. One of these bodies was posted on a hill, the end of which abutted on the high road, the slope being clothed with trees and defended by skirmishers; it was essential to know whether a small or a large force thus barred the way, but all who endeavored to ascertain the fact were stopped by the fire of the enemy. At last, Captain William Light, distinguished by the variety of his attainments, an artist, musician, mechanist, seaman and soldier, made the trial. He rode forward as if he would force his way through the French skirmishers, but in the wood dropped his reins and leaned back as if badly wounded; his horse appeared to canter wildly along the front of the enemy's light troops, and they, thinking him mortally hurt, ceased their fire, and took no further notice. He thus passed unobserved through the wood to the other side of the hill, where there were no skirmishers, and ascending to the open summit above, galloped along the French main line, counting their regiments as he passed. His sudden appearance, his blue undress, his daring confidence and his speed, made the French doubt if he was an enemy, and a few shots only were discharged; but he, dashing down the opposite declivity, broke from the rear through the very skirmishers whose fire he had at first essayed in front, and reaching the spot where Wellington stood, told him there were but five battalions on the hill.

Soult now felt that a rapid retreat on Toulouse by St. Gaudens was inevitable; yet being determined to dispute every position which offered the least advantage, his army was on the morning of the 20th again in line of battle on the heights of Oleac, two or three miles behind Tarbes, and covering Tournay on the road to St. Gaudens; he, however, still held Tarbes with Clausel's corps, which was extended on the right towards Trie, as if to retain a power of retreat by that road to Toulouse. The plain of Tarbes, apparently open, was full of deep ditches, which forbad the action of horsemen, wherefore he sent his brother with five regiments of cavalry to the Trie road, with orders to cover the right flank and observe the route to Auch. He feared lest Wellington should intercept his retreat by that line; but at daybreak, the allies' right wing, under Hill, advanced by the high road, while the left, under Wellington, moved by the road from Rabastens. Vivian's cavalry followed from Beaumarchez and La Deveze, sending detachments to watch

Pierre Soult on the side of Trie, and Cole was bringing the fourth division up by forced marches.

Combat of Tarbes.—The Adour separated Hill from Wellington, and the latter, approaching Tarbes, made the light division and hussars fall on Harispe's centre, which occupied the heights of Orliex, with two guns looking down the Rabastens road.* Under cover of this attack, Clinton made a flank movement to his left through the village of Dours, cannonaded Harispe's right, and endeavored to get between him and Soult's main position at Oleac, while Hill, moving by the other bank of the Adour, assailed the town and bridge of Tarbes, which was defended by Villatte's division. These operations were designed to crush Clausel's two divisions, which seemed easy, because there appeared only a fine plain between him and Soult; the latter, however, having sent his baggage and encumbrances off during the night, saw the movement without alarm, being better acquainted with the nature of the plain and having made roads to facilitate a retreat upon the second position without passing through Tarbes. Nevertheless, Clausel was in some danger, for while Hill menaced his left at Tarbes, the light division, supported with cavalry and guns, fell upon his centre at Orliex; and Clinton, passing with a brisk cannonade through Oleat and Boulin, penetrated between Harispe and Pierre Soult, and cut the latter off from the army.

About twelve o'clock, the fight began: Hill's artillery thundered on the right, Clinton's answered it on the left, and Alten threw the light division in mass upon the centre. Harispe's left brigade, posted on a strong hill, was suddenly assailed by the three rifle battalions, and the fight was wonderfully fierce and violent: for the French, probably thinking their opponents Portuguese, on account of their green dress, charged with great hardiness; and being encountered by men not accustomed to yield, they fought muzzle to muzzle, and it was difficult to judge at first who would win. At last, the French gave way, and Harispe's centre being thus suddenly overthrown, he retired rapidly through the fields, by the ways previously opened, before Clinton could get into his rear; Hill soon forced the passage of the Adour at Tarbes, then Villatte retreated along the high road to Tournay, under a continued cannonade, and then the flat country was covered with confused masses of pursuers and pursued, all moving precipitately with an eager musketry. The French guns replied as they could to the allies' artillery, but the situation of the retiring troops seemed desperate; yet, as Soult had foreseen, the deep ditches, enclosures, the small copses, villages and farm-houses prevented the British

* (Plan 5, page 181.)

cavalry from acting. Clausel, therefore, extricating his troops with great ability from their dangerous situation, finally gained the main position, where four fresh divisions were drawn up in order of battle, and immediately opened all their batteries on the allies; the pursuit was thus checked, and before Wellington could organize a new attack, darkness came on: he halted on the banks of the Larret and Larros rivers. The loss of the French is unknown, that of the allies did not exceed one hundred and twenty, twelve officers and eighty men being of the rifle battalions.

During the night, Soult retreated in two columns, one by the main road, the other on the left of it, guided by fires lighted on different hills as points of direction.* Next day, he reached St. Gaudens with D'Erlon's and Reille's corps, while Clausel, who had retreated across the fields, halted at Monrejean, and was there rejoined by Pierre Soult's cavalry.† This march of thirty miles was made with a view to gain Toulouse in the most rapid manner. For Soult had seen Wellington's infantry, his five thousand horsemen, and knew the fourth division and Vivian's cavalry were pointing towards Mielan on his right; hence he had to fear the allies would by Trie and Castlenau gain the plains of Muret, and cut him off from Toulouse, the knot of his future combinations, the only position where he could hope to make a successful stand.

The allies pursued in three columns by St. Gaudens, Galan and Trie, but their marches were short. On the 21st, Beresford, having the left column, was at Castlenau; Hill in the vicinity of Lannemezan; Wellington at Tournay. The 22d, Beresford was at Castlenau, Wellington at Galan, Hill at Monrejean. Fane's horsemen pushed forwards to St. Gaudens, where four squadrons of French cavalry were drawn up in front of the town, but overthrown by two squadrons of the thirteenth dragoons at one shock, they galloped in disorder through St. Gaudens; they rallied on the other side, yet were again broken and pursued for two miles, many being sabred, and above a hundred taken prisoners. In this action, the veteran Major Dogherty, of the thirteenth, was seen charging between his two sons at the head of the leading squadron.

On the 23d, Hill was at St. Gaudens, Beresford at Puymauren, Wellington at Boulogne. The 24th, Hill was in St. Martory, Beresford in Lombez, Wellington at Isle en Dodon. The 25th, Hill entered Caceres, Beresford reached St. Foy, and Wellington was at Samatan. The 26th, Beresford entered St. Lys, and marching in order of battle by his left, while his cavalry skirmished on the right, took post on the Auch road behind the Aussonnelle

* Official Report, MSS.
† Clausel's Orders, MSS.

stream facing the French army, which was on the Touch covering Toulouse. The allies thus took seven days to march what Soult had done in four.

This tardiness, idly characterized by French military writers as the sign of timidity and indecision of character, has been by English writers excused on the score of wet weather and the encumbrance of a large train of artillery and pontoons; but the rain equally affected the French; and the pontoons might have been as usefully waited for on the Garonne after the French army had been pressed in its retreat of ninety miles. It is more probable that, not exactly informed of Soult's numbers, nor of his true line of retreat, nor perfectly acquainted with the country, Wellington was cautious; because being then in acrimonious dispute with the Duke of Angoulême, he was also uneasy as to the state of the country behind him and on his flanks. The partisans were beginning to stir, the reinforcements from England and Portugal were stopped, Admiral Penrose had not then entered the Garonne; on the other hand, Ferdinand had entered Spain and formed his engagement with Suchet about the garrisons. In fine, he found himself with forty-five thousand men of different nations, the Spaniards almost as dangerous as useful to him, opposed to an obstinate enemy, on a line of operations running a hundred and fifty miles along the French frontier. His right flank might be vexed by partisans in the Pyrenees, his left by those behind the Garonne, on the right bank of which a considerable regular force was also collecting; the generals commanding the military districts beyond Toulouse were forming corps of volunteers, national guards and old soldiers of the regular dépôts—and ever he expected Suchet to arrive on his front and overmatch him in numbers. He was careful, therefore, to keep his troops well in hand, sparing them fatigue, that the hospitals might not increase. In battle, their bravery would bring him through any crisis; but if he wore them down by forced marches, and covered the country with small posts and hospital stations, the French people would be tempted to rise against him; so little, therefore, was his caution allied to timidity, that it was no slight indication of daring to have advanced at all. It does, however, seem that with his strong cavalry and superior artillery, he should not have let the French so entirely slip from his hands.

Soult proved himself an able commander. His halting on the Adour, his success in reviving the courage of his army, and the front he showed to prevent his adversary detaching troops against Bordeaux, evinced an unyielding temper and a ready judgment. For, though Wellington did send Beresford against Bordeaux, it was not on military grounds, but because treason was there; and

it compelled him to remain for fifteen days passive in face of an army he had just defeated. In that time, his adversary restored the discipline and courage of his troops, rallied the dispersed conscripts, prepared a partisan warfare, sent his encumbrances to Toulouse, and began fortifying that city as a final and secure retreat. Soult was even the first to retake the offensive after Orthes, too late indeed, and he struck no important blow, but twice placed his army in dangerous situations; yet his delay was a matter of necessity arising from the loss of his magazines; and if he got into difficulties that were inseparable from his operations, he soon extricated himself again. That he gained no advantages in fight is rather argument for Wellington, than against Soult; the latter sought, but found no opportunity to strike; yet he insulted the allied army with an inferior force, which, coupled with his energetic proclamation, encouraged the Napoleonists, and alarmed the Bourbonists; lastly, his retreat from Tarbes gained two days for establishing his grand position at Toulouse. And certainly he deceived his adversary: for so little did Wellington expect him to make a determined stand there, that in a letter written on the 26th to Hope, he says: "I fear the Garonne is too full and large for our bridge; if not, we shall be in Toulouse I hope immediately."

Soult cannot, however, be judged by merely considering his movements in the field. Having early proved the power of his adversary, he had never deceived himself about the ultimate course of the campaign, and therefore struggled without hope, a hard task; yet he showed no faintness, fighting continually, and always for delay, as thinking Suchet would finally discard personal feelings to strike for his country. Previous disappointments did not hinder his writing again, on the 9th of February, urging the imminent danger, the certainty that the allies' greatest efforts would be on the western frontier, and praying him to abandon Catalonia and come to Bearn; in the same strain he wrote to the minister of war, and his letters reached their destinations on the 13th. Suchet, having no orders to the contrary, could therefore have joined him with thirteen thousand men before the battle of Orthes; but giving a deceptive statement of his force in reply, he coldly observed that if he marched anywhere, it would be to join the emperor, not the Duke of Dalmatia. The latter continued, notwithstanding, to inform him of all his battles and his movements, and his accumulating distresses, yet in vain; Suchet's apathy would be incredible but for the unequivocal proofs of it furnished in the work of the French engineer Choumara.

CHAPTER V.

Views of the commanders on each side—Wellington designs to throw a bridge over the Garonne at Portet, above Toulouse, but below the confluence of the Arriege and Garonne—The river is found too wide for the pontoons—He changes his design—Cavalry action at St. Martyn de Touch—General Hill passes the Garonne at Pensaguel, above the confluent of the Arriege—Marches upon Cintegabelle—Crosses the Arriege—Finds the country too deep for his artillery and returns to Pensaguel—Recrosses the Garonne—Soult fortifies Toulouse and the Mont Rave—Lord Wellington sends his pontoons down the Garonne—Passes that river at Grenade, fifteen miles below Toulouse, with twenty thousand men—The river floods and his bridge is taken up—The waters subside—The bridge is again laid—The Spaniards pass—Lord Wellington advances up the right bank to Fenouilliet—Combat of cavalry—The eighteenth hussars win the bridge of Croix d'Orade—Lord Wellington resolves to attack Soult on the 9th of April—Orders the pontoons to be taken up and relaid higher up the Garonne, at Seilth, in the night of the 8th—Time is lost in the execution, and the attack is deferred—The light division cross at Seilth, on the morning of the 10th—Battle of Toulouse.

THE two armies being now once more in presence, with resolution to fight, it is fitting to show upon what the generals' combinations rested. Soult, born in the vicinity, knew the country, and chose Toulouse as a strategic post, because that ancient capital contained fifty thousand inhabitants, commanded the principal passage of the Garonne, was the centre of a great number of roads on both sides of that river, and the chief military arsenal of the south of France. Here he could easily feed his troops, arm and discipline the conscripts, control and urge the civil authorities, counteract the discontented. At Toulouse also he was master of various lines of operations. He could retire upon Suchet by Carcassone, or towards Lyons by Alby. He could take a new position behind the Tarn, and prolong the contest by defending successively that river and the Lot. He could from thence retreat upon Decaen's army of the Gironde, and thus draw the allies down the right bank of the Garonne as he had before drawn them up the left bank, well assured that Wellington must follow him, and with weakened forces, as it would be necessary to leave troops in observation of Suchet.

His first care was to place a considerable body of troops, collected from the dépôts and other parts of the interior, at Montauban, under the command of General Loverdo, with orders to construct a bridge-head on the left of the Tarn. The passage of that river, and a strong point of retreat and assembly for all the detachments sent to observe the Garonne below Toulouse were thus secured;

and withal the command of many great roads leading to the interior of France, consequently the power of making fresh combinations. To maintain Toulouse was however a great political object. It was the last point which connected him at once with Suchet and Decaen; and while he held it, the latter general and the partisans in the mountains about Lourdes could act, each on their own side, against the long lines of communications maintained by Wellington with Bordeaux and Bayonne. Suchet also could do the same by marching with his whole force, or sending a detachment through the Arriege department to the upper Garonne, where General Lafitte, having seven or eight hundred men, national guards and other troops, was already in activity. These operations Soult urged Suchet to adopt, but the latter treated the proposition, as he had done all those before made from the same quarter, with contempt.

Toulouse was not less valuable as a position of battle. The Garonne on the west presented to the allies a deep loop, at the bottom of which was the bridge, completely covered by the suburb of St. Cyprien, itself protected by an ancient brick wall three feet thick, and flanked by two massive towers; these defences Soult had improved, and added a line of exterior entrenchments. Beyond the bridge was the city, surrounded by an old wall, flanked with towers, and so thick as to admit sixteen and twenty-four pound guns. The great and celebrated canal of Languedoc, which joined the river Garonne a few miles below the town, wound for the most part within point-blank shot of the walls, covering them on the north and east as the Garonne and St. Cyprien did on the west; and the suburbs of St. Stephens and Guillermerie, between which the canal run, furnished outworks on the east; for they were entrenched and connected with the fortified hills of Sacarin and Cambon, which covered the suburbs and flanked the approaches to the canal above and below.

Eight hundred yards beyond these hills, a strong ridge, called the Mont Rave, run parallel with the canal, its outer slope, exceedingly rugged, overlooked a marshy plain, through which the Ers river flowed.

On the south, the town opened on a plain, but the suburb of St. Michel lying there, between the Garonne and the canal, furnished another advanced defence; and at some distance beyond the heights called the Pech David commenced, trending up the Garonne.

In this position Soult calculated, that as Wellington could not force the passage by the suburb of St. Cyprien without an enormous sacrifice of men, he must seek to turn the flanks above or below Toulouse; and leave a sufficient force to blockade St. Cyprien, under pain of having the French army issue on that side against

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