and might have been entrenched with works open to the rear; St. Pol's brigade would thus have incurred no more danger than when placed there without entrenchments. Beresford could not have moved up the left bank of the Ers until these works were carried, and this would have cost men; it is therefore probable want of time caused Soult to neglect this advantage. He committed a graver error during the battle by falling upon Beresford with Taupin's division only, when he could have employed D'Armagnac's and Villatte's likewise in that attack; he should have fallen on him also while in the deep country below, and before he had formed his lines at the foot of the heights. What hindered him? Picton was repulsed, Freyre defeated, the light division employed to protect the fugitives; and one of Maransin's brigades withdrawn from St. Cyprien had reinforced the victorious troops on the extreme left of the Calvinet platform. Beresford's column, entangled in the marshy ground, without artillery, and menaced both front and rear by cavalry, could not have resisted such an overwhelming mass; Wellington can scarcely escape criticism for placing him in that predicament.

A commander is not, indeed, to refrain from high attempts because of their perilous nature, the greatest have ever been the most daring; the English general could not remain inactive before Toulouse, and he was not to be deterred by danger or difficulty; twice he passed the broad and rapid Garonne, and worked his way to a crowning victory; this was hardihood, greatness. But in Beresford's particular attack, he did not overstep the rules of art, he hurtled against them, and that he was not damaged by the shock is owing to his good fortune, the fierceness of his soldiers, and the errors of his adversary. What if Beresford had been overthrown on the Ers? Wellington must have repassed the Garonne, happy if by rapidity he could reunite in time with Hill on the left bank: Beresford's failure would have been absolute ruin, and that alone refutes the French claim to a victory. Was there no other mode of attack? That can hardly be said. Beresford passed the Lavaur road to assail the platform of St. Sypiere, and he was probably so ordered to avoid an attack in flank by the Lavaur road, and because the platform of Calvinet on the side of the Ers river was more strongly entrenched than that of St. Sypiere. But for this gain, it was too much to throw his column into the deep ground without guns; and separated from the rest of the army, seeing the cavalry, intended to maintain the connexion, were unable to act in that miry labyrinth of water-courses. If the Spaniards were judged capable of carrying the strongest part of the Calvinet platform, Beresford's fine Anglo-Portuguese divisions were surely equal to

attacking this same platform on the immediate left of the Spaniards; and an advanced guard would have sufficed to protect the left flank. The assault would then have been made with unity, by a great mass, and on the most important point; for the conquest of St. Sypiere was but a step towards that of Calvinet, but the conquest of Calvinet would have rendered St. Sypiere untenable. It is however to be observed that the Spaniards attacked too soon, and their dispersion exceeded all reasonable calculation: so panic-stricken they were as to draw from Wellington, at the time, the bitter observation, that he had seen many curious spectacles, but never before saw ten thousand men running a race.

Soult's retreat from Toulouse, a model of order and regularity, was made in the night, which proves the difficulty of his situation. Nevertheless it was not desperate, nor was it owing to his adversary's generous forbearance that he passed unmolested under the allies' guns, as an English writer has erroneously assumed; for those guns had no ammunition, and that was one reason why Wellington, though eager to fall upon him the 11th, could not do so. On the 12th, Soult was gone, and his march, covered by the great canal, could scarcely have been molested, because the nearest point occupied by the allies was more than a mile and a half distant; nor is it credible that Soult, as some other writers have imagined, ever designed to hold Toulouse to the last. It would have been an avowal of military insolvency to which his proposal, that Suchet should join him at Carcassone, and retake the offensive, written on the night of the 11th, is quite opposed. Neither was it in the spirit of French warfare; the impetuous valor and susceptibility of that people are ill-suited for stern Numantian despair. Place an attainable object of war before the French soldier, and he will make supernatural efforts to gain it, but failing he becomes proportionately discouraged; let some new chance be opened, some fresh stimulus applied to his ardent, sensitive temper, and he will rush forward again with unbounded energy, the fear of death never checks him, he will attempt anything; but the unrelenting vigor of the British infantry in resistance wears his fury out. It was so proved in the Peninsula, where the sudden deafening shout, rolling over a field of battle with a more full and terrible sound than that of any other nation, and always followed by the strong, unwavering charge, startled and appalled those French columns before whose fierce and vehement assault all other troops had given way.

Napoleon's system of war was admirably adapted to draw forth and augment the military excellence, and to strengthen the weakness of the national character. His discipline, severe, but appealing to the feelings of hope and honor, wrought the quick temper

ament of the French soldiers to patience under hardships, and strong endurance under fire; he taught the generals to rely on their own talents, to look to the country wherein they made war for resources, and to dare everything, even with the smallest numbers, that the impetuous valor of France might have full play; hence the violence of their attacks. But he also taught them to combine all arms together, and to keep strong reserves, that sudden disorders might be repaired, and the discouraged troops have time to rally and recover their pristine spirit, certain that they would then renew the battle with the same confidence as before. He thus made his troops, not invincible, indeed, nature had put a bar to that in the character of the British soldier; yet so terrible and sure in war that the number and greatness of their exploits surpassed those of all other nations, the Romans not excepted if regard be had to the shortness of the period, nor the Macedonians if the quality of their opponents be considered.

Look at their amazing toils in the Peninsular war alone, which, though so great and important, was but an episode in their military history. "*In Spain, large armies will starve and small armies will be beaten,*" was the saying of Henri IV. of France, and it was not the light phrase of an indolent king, but the profound conclusion of a sagacious general. Yet Napoleon's enormous armies were so wonderfully organized that they existed and fought in Spain for six years, and without cessation, for to them winters and summers were alike; they endured incredible toils and privations, yet were not starved out, nor were their small armies beaten by the Spaniards. And for their daring and resource, a single fact recorded by Wellington will suffice. They captured more than one strong place in Spain without any provision of bullets save those fired at them by their enemies, having trusted to that chance when they formed the siege! Before the British troops they fell; but how terrible was the struggle, how many defeats they recovered from, how many brave men they slew; what changes and interpositions of fortune occurred before they could be rolled back upon their own frontiers! And this is the glory of England, that her soldiers, and hers only, were capable of overthrowing them in equal battle. I seek not to defraud the Portuguese of his well-earned fame, nor to deny the Spaniard the merit of his constancy; but what battle except Baylen did the Peninsulars win? What fortress did they take by siege? What place defend? Sir Arthur Wellesley twice delivered Portugal. Sir John Moore's march to Sahagun saved Andalusia and Lisbon from invasion at a critical moment. Sir Arthur's march to Talavera delivered Gallicia. Graham saved Cadiz. Smith saved Tarifa. Wellington recaptured Ciudad and

Badajos, rescued Andalusia from Soult, and Valencia from Suchet; the Anglo-Sicilian army preserved Alicant, and finally recovered Tarragona and Barcelona under the influence of the northern operations, which at the same time reduced Pampeluna and St. Sebastian. England, indeed, could not alone have triumphed in the struggle, but for her share let this brief summary speak.

She expended more than one hundred millions sterling on her own operations, she subsidized both Spain and Portugal, and with her supplies of clothing, arms, and ammunition maintained the armies of each, even to the guerillas. From thirty up to seventy thousand British troops were employed by her; and while her naval squadrons harassed the French with descents upon the coasts, and supplied the Spaniards with arms and stores and money after every defeat, her land forces fought and won nineteen pitched battles and innumerable combats, made or sustained ten sieges, took four great fortresses, twice expelled the French from Portugal, preserved Alicant, Carthagena, Tarifa, Cadiz, Lisbon; they killed, wounded and took two hundred thousand enemies, and the bones of forty thousand British soldiers lie scattered on the plains and mountains of the Peninsula. For Portugal, she re-organized a native army, and supplied officers who led it to victory; and to the whole Peninsula she gave a general whose like has seldom gone forth to conquer. And all this and more was necessary to redeem that land from France!

Wellington's campaigns furnish lessons for generals of all nations, but they must always be especial models for British commanders in future continental wars; because he modified and reconciled the great principles of art with the peculiar difficulties which attend generals controlled by politicians who prefer parliamentary intrigue to national interests. An English commander must not trust his fortune. He dare not risk much, however conscious he may be of personal resources, when one disaster will be his ruin at home; his measures must be subordinate to this primary consideration. Wellington's caution, springing from that source, has led friends and foes alike into wrong conclusions as to his system of war; the French call it want of enterprise, timidity; the English have denominated it the Fabian system. These are mere phrases. His system was the same as that of all great generals. He held his army in hand, keeping it with unmitigated labor always in a fit state to march or to fight, and acted indifferently as occasion offered on the offensive or defensive, displaying in both a complete mastery of his art. Sometimes he was indebted to fortune, sometimes to his natural genius, always to his untiring industry, for he was emphatically a painstaking man.

That he was less vast in his designs, less daring in execution, neither so rapid nor so original a commander as Napoleon, must be admitted; and being later in the field of glory it is to be presumed he learned something of the art from that greatest of all masters. Yet something besides the difference of genius must be allowed for the difference of situation; Napoleon was never, even in his first campaign of Italy, so harassed by the French as Wellington was by the English, Spanish and Portuguese governments; their systems of war were however alike in principle, their operations being only modified by their different political positions. Great bodily exertion, unceasing watchfulness, exact combinations to protect their flanks and communications without scattering their forces; these were common to both; in defence firm, cool, enduring, in attack fierce and obstinate; daring when daring was politic, yet always operating by the flanks in preference to the front; in these things they were alike: in following up a victory the English general fell short of the French emperor. The battle of Wellington was the stroke of a battering-ram, down went the wall in ruins; the battle of Napoleon was the swell and dash of a mighty wave before which the barrier yielded and the roaring flood poured onwards, covering all.

But there was nothing of timidity or natural want of enterprise to be discerned in the English general's campaigns. Neither was he of the Fabian school. He recommended that commander's system to the Spaniards, he did not follow it himself; his military policy more resembled that of Scipio Africanus. Fabius, dreading Hannibal's veterans, red with the blood of four consular armies, hovered on the mountains, refused battle, and to the unmatched skill and valor of the great Carthaginian opposed the almost inexhaustible military resources of Rome. Wellington was never loth to fight when there was any equality of numbers; he landed in Portugal with only nine thousand men, with intent to attack Junot, who had twenty-four thousand; at Roriça he was the assailant; at Vimiero he was assailed, but he would have changed to the offensive during the battle if others had not interfered. At Oporto he was again the daring and successful assailant; in the Talavera campaign he took the initiatory movements, although in the battle itself he sustained the shock. His campaign of 1810 in Portugal was entirely defensive, because the Portuguese army was young and untried; but his pursuit of Massena in 1811 was entirely aggressive although cautiously so, as well knowing that in mountain warfare those who attack labor at a disadvantage. The operations of the following campaign, including the battles of Fuentes Onoro and Albuera, the first siege of Badajos and the combat of Guinaldo,

were of a mixed character; so was the campaign of Salamanca; but the campaign of Vittoria and that in the south of France were entirely and eminently offensive.

Slight therefore is the resemblance to the Fabian warfare. And for the Englishman's hardiness and enterprise, bear witness the passage of the Douro at Oporto, the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, the storming of Badajos, the surprise of the forts at Mirabete, the march to Vittoria, the passage of the Bidassoa, the victory of the Nivelle, the passage of the Adour below Bayonne, the fight of Orthes, the crowning battle of Toulouse! To say that he committed faults is only to say that he made war; to deny him the qualities of a great commander is to rail against the clear mid-day sun for want of light. How few of his combinations failed. How many battles he fought, victorious in all! Iron hardihood of body, a quick and sure vision, a grasping mind, untiring power of thought, and the habit of laborious minute investigation and arrangement: all these qualities he possessed, and with them that most rare faculty of coming to prompt and sure conclusions on sudden emergencies. This is the certain mark of a master-spirit in war; without it a commander may be distinguished, he may be a great man, he cannot be a great captain: where troops nearly alike in arms and knowledge are opposed, the battle generally turns upon the decision of the moment.

At the Somosierra, Napoleon sent the Polish cavalry successfully charging up the mountain, when more studied arrangements with ten times that force might have failed. At Talavera, if Joseph had not yielded to the imprudent heat of Victor the fate of the allies would have been sealed. At the Coa, Montbrun's refusal to charge with his cavalry saved Crawford's division, the loss of which would have gone far towards producing the evacuation of Portugal. At Busaco, Massena would not suffer Ney to attack the first day, and thus lost the only favorable opportunity for assailing that formidable position. At Fuentes Onoro, the same Massena suddenly suspended his attack when a powerful effort would probably have been decisive. At Albuera, Soult's column of attack, instead of pushing forward halted to fire from the first height they had gained on Beresford's right, which saved that general from an early and total defeat; again at a later period of that battle the unpremeditated attack of the fusileers decided the contest. At Barosa with a wonderful promptitude Graham snatched the victory at the moment when a terrible defeat seemed inevitable. At Sabugal, not even the astonishing fighting of the light division could have saved it, if Reynier had possessed this essential quality of a general. At El Bodon, Marmont failed to seize the most favorable

opportunity which occurred during the whole war for crushing the allies. At Orthes, Soult let slip two opportunities of falling upon the allies with advantage, and at Toulouse he failed to crush Beresford.

At Vimiera, Wellington was debarred by Burrard from giving a signal illustration of this intuitive generalship; but at Busaco and the heights of San Christoval, near Salamanca, he suffered Massena and Marmont to commit glaring faults unpunished. On the other hand he has furnished many examples of that successful improvisation in which Napoleon seems to have surpassed all mankind. His sudden retreat from Oropesá across the Tagus by the bridge of Arzobispo; his passage of the Douro in 1809; his halt at Guinaldo in the face of Marmont's overwhelming numbers; the battle of Salamanca, his sudden rush with the third division to seize the hill of Arinez at Vittoria; his counter-stroke with the sixth division at Sauroren; his battle of the 30th, two days afterwards; his sudden passage of the Gave below Orthes. Add to these his wonderful battle of Assye, and the proofs are complete that he possesses in an eminent degree that intuitive perception which distinguishes the greatest generals.

Fortune, however, always asserts her supremacy in war, and often from a slight mistake such disastrous consequences flow, that in every age and every nation the uncertainty of arms has been proverbial. Napoleon's march upon Madrid in 1808 before he knew the exact situation of the British army is an example. By that march he lent his flank to his enemy, Sir John Moore seized the advantage, and though the French Emperor repaired the error for the moment by his astonishing march from Madrid to Astorga, the fate of the Penninsula was then decided. If he had not been forced to turn against Moore, Lisbon would have fallen, Portugal could not have been organized for resistance, and the jealousy of the Spaniards would never have suffered Wellington to establish a solid base at Cadiz: that general's after successes would then have been with the things that are unborn. It was not so ordained, Wellington was victorious, the great conqueror was overthrown, England stood the most triumphant nation of the world. But with an enormous debt, a dissatisfied people, gaining peace without tranquillity, greatness without intrinsic strength, the present time uneasy, the future dark and threatening. Yet she rejoices in the glory of her arms! And it is a stirring sound! War is the condition of this world. From man to the smallest insect all are at strife, and the glory of arms, which cannot be obtained without the exercise of honor, fortitude, courage, obedience, modesty, and temperance, excites the brave man's patriotism and is a chastening cor-

rective for the rich man's pride. It is yet no security for power. Napoleon, the greatest man of whom history makes mention—Napoleon, the most wonderful commander, the most sagacious politician, the most profound statesman, lost by arms, Poland, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and France. Fortune, that name for the unknown combinations of infinite power, was wanting to him, and without her aid the designs of man are as bubbles on a troubled ocean.

NOTE.

A reference to my text will show, that I disputed the correctness of General Vandoncourt's return of the French numbers at the battle of Toulouse, as set down by the engineer Choumara, in his elaborate and able account of that action. I had no authentic documents, but from a comparison of statements in several French authors and deductions from the authentic numbers of a previous period, allowing for losses during the intermediate operations, I obtained what I thought a nearer approximation to accuracy than General Vandoncourt. Since this edition went to press, an authentic document has been placed in my hands, which proves that I did very nearly indeed attain the true figures in my approximate calculation. This document, viz., a return of the French troops disposable before the battle, of those actually engaged, and of the loss sustained, was, when the French army evacuated Toulouse, left by Marshal Soult's secretary in the house of Monsieur Courtois, a banker of Toulouse, who allowed Robert J. Graves, M. D, F. R. S., the eminent Dublin physician, to copy it, but with an injunction not to make it public for a certain number of years.

The time having elapsed, Dr. Graves has placed it at my disposal, and I give it below in juxtaposition with the numbers attained by myself.

In the Document.		*In the History.*
Force avant la bataille.....	54,000	
Desquelles il y avaient aux hôpitaux....	5,000	
Reste sous Mar. Soult.....	49,000.....	....50,000 disposable.
Desquelles ils etaient.. Actuellement engagées Officers 1427, soldats...	39,166.....	....38,000 fighting men.
Chevaux de cavalerie	2,699	
Do. de trains.....	3,937	
Perte à la bataille ....Tués	3,199 hommes..... 40 officiers	.....3,000 killed and wounded.
Blessés	179 officiers 1,526 soldats	

This statement requires explanation. The French not unfrequently put down all their loss as *tués*, and it must have been so here; because the *blessés* evidently bear no proportion to the killed, if *tués* be taken literally. But taking blessés to mean the wounded left to the generosity of the victors in the abandoned city, the amount tallies most accurately with the number of 1600 which Lord Wellington says, in his despatch, he found in the hospitals when he entered Toulouse, because some must have died in the interim.

W. Napier, 1850.

CONTROVERSIAL PIECES.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF ABRANTES.

September 11, 1833.

MADAM,—In the eighth volume of your *Mémoires* I find the following passages:—

"Toutefois, pourquoi donc m'étonner de la conduite des Portugais? N'ai-je pas vu *ici, en France*, un des frères d'armes de Junot souffrir qu'on imprimât, dans un ouvrage traduit de l'Anglais, des choses révoltantes de fausseté sur lui et sur le Maréchal Ney? . . . . . Cet ouvrage, fait par un Colonel Napier, et qui a trouvé grâce devant le ministère de la guerre, parcequ'il dit du bien du ministre, m'a été donné *à moi, à moi, la veuve de Junot*, comme renfermant des documents *authentiques*. J'ai dû y lire une indécente attaque contre la vie privée d'un homme dont on ne pouvait dire aucun mal comme militaire dans cette admirable affaire de la Convention de Cintra, puisque les Anglais ont fait passer à une commission militaire ceux qui l'avaient signée pour l'Angleterre; et les beaux vers de Child Harold suffisent seuls à la gloire de Junot, quand l'original de cette convention ne serait pas là pour la prouver. Heureusement que je le possède, moi, cet original, et même dans les deux langues. Il n'est pas dans M. Napier."—

It is not permitted to a man to discover ill-humor at the expressions of a lady; yet when those expressions are dishonoring to him, and reputation and wit joined to beauty give them a wide circulation, it would indicate insensibility to leave them unnoticed.

To judge of the talents of a general by his conduct in the field has always been the undisputed right of every military writer. I will not therefore enter upon that subject, because I am persuaded that your grace could not mean to apply the words "*revolting falsehoods*" to a simple judgment of the military genius of the Duke of Abrantes. Indeed you intimate that the offensive passages are those directed against his private life, and touching the Convention of Cintra. I think, however, your grace has not perused my work with much attention, or you would scarcely have

failed to perceive that I have given the Convention of Cintra at length in the Appendix.

But in truth I have only alluded to General Junot's private qualities when they bore directly upon his government of Portugal, and with a fresh reference to my work you will find I have affirmed nothing of my own knowledge. The character of the late Duke of Abrantes, given by me, is that ascribed to him by the Emperor Napoleon, (see *Las Cases*,) and the authority of that great man is expressly quoted. It is against Napoleon therefore, and not against me, who but repeat his uncontradicted observations, that your resentment should be directed.

If your grace should deign to dispose of any further thought upon me or my work, I would venture to suggest a perusal of the Portuguese, and English, and Spanish, and German histories of the invasion of Portugal; or even a slight examination of only a small part of the innumerable, some of them very celebrated periodicals which treat of that event. You will be then convinced, that so far from having wantonly assailed the character of General Junot I have made no slight effort to stem the torrent of abuse with which he has been unjustly overwhelmed; and believe me, madam, that the estimation in which an eminent man will be held by the world is more surely to be found in the literature of different countries than in the fond recollections of his own family. I admired General Junot's daring character, and having enough of the soldier in me to like a brave enemy, I have, wherever the truth of history would permit, expressed that feeling towards him and towards other French generals whose characters and whose acts have been alike maligned by party writers in this country: such indeed has been my regard for justice on this point, that I have thereby incurred the charge of writing with a French rather than a national bias, as your grace will discover by referring to my Lord Mahon's "History of the War of the Succession;" in which his lordship has done me the honor to observe that I have written "*by far the best* FRENCH *account* yet published of the Peninsular War."

For my own part I still think that to refrain from vulgar abuse of a gallant enemy will not be deemed un-English, although Lord Mahon considers it wholly French; but his lordship's observation incontestibly proves that I have discovered no undue eagerness to malign any of the French generals. And with respect to the Duke of Abrantes, I could show that all the offensive passages in my work rest upon the published authority of his own countrymen, especially the Emperor Napoleon; and that they are milder in expression than those authorities would have warranted. It is

however so natural and so amiable in a lady to defend the reputation of her deceased husband, that rather than appear to detract in any manner from the grace of such a proceeding I choose to be silent under the unmitigated severity of your observations.

Not so with respect to that part of your remarks which relate to Marshal Ney. After carefully re-examining every sentence I have written, I am quite unable to discover the slightest grounds for your grace's accusations. In all parts of my work, the name of Ney is mentioned with praise. I have not, indeed, made myself a partisan of Marshal Ney in relating his disputes with Marshals Soult and Massena, because I honestly believed that he was mistaken; neither have I attributed to him unbounded talents for the higher parts of war; but this is only matter of opinion which the world is quite capable of appreciating at its true value; upon all other points, I have expressed admiration of Marshal Ney's extraordinary qualities, his matchless valor, his heroic energy!

In the hope that your grace will now think it reasonable to soften the asperity of your feelings towards my work, I take my leave, with more of admiration for your generous warmth in defence of a person so dear to you, than of resentment for the harsh terms which you have employed towards myself.

I remain, madam, your very obedient servant,

WILLIAM NAPIER, *Colonel.*

IN an article on the *Duke of Wellington's Despatches*, the *British and Foreign Quarterly Review*, after describing Colonel Gurwood's proceedings to procure the publication of the despatches, says—

"*We here distinctly state*, that no other person ever had access to *any* documents of the duke, by his grace's permission, for any historical or other purpose, and that all inferential pretensions to such privilege are not founded in fact."

This assertion, which if not wholly directed against my history, certainly includes it with others, *I distinctly state to be untrue.*

The Duke of Wellington gave me the original morning states of his army for the use of my History.

The Duke of Wellington voluntarily directed me to apply to Sir George Murray for the "*orders of movements.*" That is to say the orders of battle issued by him to the different generals previous to every great action. Sir George Murray thought proper, as the reader will see in the justificatory pieces belonging to this volume, to deny all knowledge of these "*orders of movements.*" I have

since obtained some of them from others; but the permission to get all of them was given at Strathfieldsaye, in the presence of Lord Fitzroy Somerset, who was directed to lend me the morning states also, and he did do so.

Lord Fitzroy Somerset, with the consent of the Duke of Wellington, put into my hands King Joseph's portfolio, taken at Vittoria, and containing that monarch's correspondence with the emperor, with the French minister of war, and with the marshals and generals who, at different periods, were employed in the Peninsula. All these were documents of no slight importance for a history of the war.

Before I commenced this History, I applied verbally to the Duke of Wellington to give me papers in aid of my undertaking. His answer was in substance, that he had arranged all his papers with a view to publication himself—that he had not decided in what form they should be given to the world, or when, probably not during his lifetime, but he thought his plan would be to "*write a plain didactic history*," to be published after his death—that he was resolved never to publish anything, unless he could tell the whole truth; but at that time he could not tell the whole truth without wounding the feelings of many worthy men—without doing mischief—adding in a laughing way, "*I should do as much mischief as Buonaparte.*" Then he related many anecdotes illustrative of errors committed by generals and others acting with him, or under him, especially at Waterloo; errors so affecting his operations that he could not do justice to himself if he suppressed them; yet, by publicity, he would ungraciously affect the fame of many worthy men, whose only fault was dulness.

For these reasons, he would not give me his private papers, but he did give me the documents I have already noticed, and told me he would then, and always, answer any questions as to facts which I might, in the course of my work, think necessary to put. And he has fulfilled that promise rigidly, for I put questions to him, and took notes of his answers, and many of the facts in my History cavilled at and denied by would-be critics have been related solely upon his authority. Moreover, I have at various times sent to the duke questions in writing, and always they have been carefully answered without delay, though often this must have been done when his attention was deeply occupied by public affairs.

But though the Duke of Wellington denied access to his own peculiar documents, the greatest part of those documents existed in duplicate; they were in other persons' hands, and in two instances were voluntarily transferred, with other interesting papers, to mine. Of this truth, the reader may easily satisfy himself by referring to

my early volumes, some of which were published years before Colonel Gurwood's compilation appeared. He will find in them frequent allusions to the substance of the duke's private communications with the governments he served; and in the Appendix a number of his letters, printed precisely as they have since been given by Colonel Gurwood; and I could have augmented the number if I had been disposed so to swell my work. Another proof will be found further on, in my Justificatory Note in reply to Colonel Gurwood, where I have restored the whole reading of a remarkable letter of the duke's relative to Almaraz. It is garbled in Colonel Gurwood's compilation. Not from any unworthy desire to promulgate what the Duke of Wellington desired to suppress have I restored it, but having long before attributed, on the stregth of that passage, certain strong opinions to his grace, I was bound in defence of my own probity as an historian to reproduce my authority.

W. F. P NAPIER.

March 28th, 1840.

JUSTIFICATORY NOTES.

The following controversial pieces are all I think fit to publish in reply to assailants. Most of them have been published as pamphlets: one of them in the *London and Westminster Review*. They will be found to sustain the accuracy of a work, which, written honestly from good materials, cost sixteen years of unremitted labor. The account of the Austrian, Prussian and Russian secret policy in 1809, given in one of the replies to the *Quarterly Review*, was drawn from original secret diplomatic despatches placed at my disposal.

W. N.

ALISON.

SOME extracts from Alison's *History of the French Revolution* reflecting upon the conduct of Sir John Moore have been shown to me by a friend; in one of them I find, with reference to the magazines at Lugo, a wilful misquotation from my work, to support a censure on that general; and also the following specimen of disingenuous writing which shall not pass with impunity.

Speaking of the prevalent opinion that England could not succeed militarily on the continent, Mr. Alison says:—

"In Sir John Moore's case this universal and perhaps unavoidable error was greatly enhanced by his connexion with the opposition party, by whom the military strength of England had been always underrated, the system of continental operations uniformly decried, and the power and capacity of the French emperor, great as they were, unworthily magnified."

Mr. Alison here proves himself to be one of those enemies to Sir John Moore who draw upon their imaginations for facts and upon their malice for conclusions. Sir John Moore never had any connexion with any political party, though during the short time he was in parliament in early life, he voted with the Tory government. He may in society have met with some of the leading men of opposition thus grossly assailed by Mr. Alison, yet it is doubtful if he ever conversed with any of them; unless perhaps Mr. Wyndham, with whom, when the latter was secretary at war, he had a dispute upon a military subject. He was however the intimate friend of Mr. Pitt and of Mr. Pitt's family. It is untrue

that he entertained or even leaned towards exaggerated notions of French prowess; his experience and his natural spirit and greatness of mind swayed him the other way. In his journal he thus speaks of the relative merits of the French and British troops after the battle of Maida.

"No action for the numbers engaged was ever more brilliant, and when coupled with the Egyptian campaign is a proof that if our armies were equally large, our superiority over the French would be as apparent on shore as it is at sea." How indeed could the man who stormed the forts of Fiorenza and the breach of Calvi in Corsica, he who led the disembarkation at Aboukir Bay, the advance to Alexandria on the 13th, and defended the ruins of the camp of Cæsar on the 21st of March, he who had never been personally foiled in any military exploit, feel otherwise than confident in arms? Mr. Alison may calumniate but he cannot hurt Sir John Moore.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

In the last volume of Sir Walter Scott's *Life* by Mr. Lockhart, page 143, the following passage from Sir Walter's diary occurs:—

"He (Napier) has however given a bad sample of accuracy in the case of Lord Strangford, *where* his pointed affirmation has been as pointedly repelled."

This peremptory decision is false in respect of grammar, of logic, and of fact.

Of grammar because *where*, an adverb of place, has no proper antecedent. Of logic, because a truth may be pointedly repelled without ceasing to be a truth. Of fact, because Lord Strangford did not repel but admitted the essential parts of my affirmation; namely, that he had falsified the date and place of writing his despatch, and attributed to himself the chief merit of causing the royal emigration from Lisbon. Lord Strangford, indeed, published two pamphlets to prove that the merit really attached to him; but the hollowness of his pretensions are exposed in my reply to his *first pamphlet*, and the accuracy of my statement was supported by the testimony of disinterested persons;* moreover many writers, professing to know the facts, did, at the time, in the newspapers, contradict Lord Strangford's statements.

The chief point of his *second pamphlet* was the reiterated assertion that he accompanied the prince regent over the bar of Lisbon. To this I could have replied, 1. That I had seen a letter, written

* Vide Times, Morning Chronicle, Sun, &c., 1828.

at the time by Mr. Smith, the naval officer commanding the boat which conveyed Lord Strangford from Lisbon to the prince's ship; in which letter it was distinctly stated, *that they did not reach that vessel until after she had passed the bar.* 2. That I possessed letters from other persons present at the emigration, of the same tenor, and that between the writers of those letters and the writer of the Bruton-street despatch, to decide which were the better testimony offered no difficulty.

Why did I not so reply? For a reason twice before published, namely, that Mr. Justice Bayley had done it for me. Sir Walter takes no notice of the judge's answer, neither does Mr. Lockhart; and yet it was the most important point of the case. Let the reader judge.

The editor of the *Sun* newspaper, after quoting an article from the *Times* upon the subject of the controversy with Lord Strangford, remarked, that his lordship "*would hardly be believed upon his oath, certainly not upon his honor at the Old Bailey.*"*

Lord Strangford obtained a rule to show cause why a criminal information should not be filed against the editor for a libel. The present Lord Brougham appeared for the defence, and justified the offensive passage by references to Lord Strangford's own admissions in the controversy: and the judges thinking the justification good, discharged the rule by the mouth of Lord Tenterden!

During the proceedings in court the attorney-general, on the part of Lord Strangford, referring to that nobleman's despatch, which though purporting to be written on the 29th November from H.M.S. Hibernia off the Tagus, was really written the 29th of December in Bruton-street, said "Everybody knew that in diplomacy there were two copies prepared of all documents, No. 1 for the minister's inspection, No. 2 for the public."†

Mr. Justice Bayley shook his head in disapprobation.

Attorney-general—"Well, my lord, it is the practice of these departments and may be justified by necessity."

Mr. Justice Bayley—"*I like honesty in all places,* Master Attorney-general."

And so do I, wherefore I recommend this pointed repeller to Mr. Lockhart when he publishes another edition of his father-in-law's life.

* Vide Sun newspaper, Nov. 28, 1828.
† Report in the Sun newspaper.

COLONEL GURWOOD.

In the eighth volume of the *Duke of Wellington's Despatches*, Colonel Gurwood has inserted the following as a note:—

"Lieutenant Gurwood, fifty-second regiment, led the 'forlorn hope' of the light division in the assault of the lesser breach. He afterwards took the French Governor-general Barrié in the citadel; and from the hands of Lord Wellington on the breach by which he had entered, he received the sword of his prisoner. The permission accorded by the Duke of Wellington to compile this work has doubtless been one of the distinguished consequences resulting from this service, and Lieutenant Gurwood feels pride as a soldier of fortune in here offering himself as an encouraging example to the subaltern in future wars."—"The detail of the assault of Ciudad Rodrigo by the lesser breach is of too little importance except to those who served in it to become a matter of history. The compiler, however, takes this opportunity of observing that Colonel William Napier has been misinformed respecting the conduct of the 'forlorn hope,' in the account given of it by him as it appears in the Appendix to that volume of his History of the Peninsular War. A correct statement and proofs of it have been since furnished to Colonel William Napier for any future edition of his book which will render any further notice of it *here* unnecessary."—P. 531.

My account is not to be disposed of in so summary a manner; nor shall this note, though put forth as it were with the weight of the Duke of Wellington's name, by being inserted amongst his Despatches, remain without an answer.

Colonel Gurwood sent me a letter, containing what he calls "*a correct statement and proofs of it*." But I know of no *proofs*, and the correctness of his statement depends on his own recollections, which the wound he received in the head at the time seems to have rendered extremely confused; at least the following recollections of other officers are directly at variance with Colonel Gurwood. In his "*correct statement*" he says, "When I first went up the breach there were still some of the enemy in it, it was very steep and on my arrival at the top of it under the gun I was knocked down either by a shot or stone thrown at me. I can assure you that not a lock was snapped as you describe; but finding it impossible that the breach from its steepness and narrowness could be carried by the bayonet, I ordered the men to load, certainly before the arrival of the storming party: and having placed some of the men on each side of the breach I went up the middle with the remainder, and when in the act of climbing over the disabled gun at the top of the breach which you describe, I was wounded

in the head by a musket shot fired so close to me that it blew my cap to pieces, and I was tumbled over senseless from the top to the bottom of the breach. When I recovered my senses I found myself close to George,* who was sitting on a stone with his arm broken. I asked him how the thing was going on, &c., &c."

Now to the above statement I oppose the following letters from the authors of the statement given in the Appendix relating to the storming of Badajos.

Major-general Sir GEORGE NAPIER *to Colonel* WILLIAM NAPIER.

"I am sorry our gallant friend Gurwood is not satisfied with, and disputes the accuracy of your account of the assault of the lesser breach at Ciudad Rodrigo as detailed in your work. I can only say, that account was principally, if not wholly, taken from Colonel Fergusson's (he being one of my storming captains) and my own narrative of that transaction up to the period when we were each of us wounded. *I adhere to the correctness of all I stated to you*, and beg further to say that my friend Colonel Mitchell, who was also one of my captains in the storming party, told me the last time I saw him at the commander-in-chief's levee, that my statement was '*perfectly correct.*' And both he and Colonel Fergusson recollected the circumstance of my not permitting the party to load; and also, that upon being checked when nearly two-thirds up the breach by the enemy's fire, the men, forgetting their pieces were not loaded, snapped them off, but I called to them and reminded them of my orders to force their way with the bayonet alone! It was at that moment I was wounded and fell, and I never either spoke to or saw Gurwood afterwards during that night, as he rushed on with the other officers of the party to the top of the breach. Upon looking over a small manuscript of the various events of my life as a soldier, written many years ago, I find all I stated to you corroborated in every particular. Of course, as Colonel Gurwood tells you he was *twice* at the top of the breach before any of the storming party entered it, I cannot take upon myself to contradict him, but I certainly do not conceive how it was possible, as he and myself jumped into the ditch together; I saw him wounded, and spoke to him *after* having mounted the fausse-braye with him, and *before* we rushed up the breach in the body of the place. I never saw him or spoke to him after I was struck down; the whole affair did not last above twenty-five or thirty minutes; but as I fell when about two-thirds up the breach, I can only answer for the correctness of my account to that period; soon after, I was assisted to get down the breach by the Prince of Orange (who kindly gave his

* The present Major-general Sir George Napier.

sash to tie up my shattered arm, and which sash is now in my possession), by the present Duke of Richmond and Lord Fitzroy Somerset, all three of whom I believe were actively engaged in the assault. Our friend Gurwood did his duty like a gallant and active soldier, but I cannot admit of his having been *twice in the breach before the other officers of the storming party and myself!*

I believe yourself and every man in the army with whom I have the honor to be acquainted will acquit me of any wish or intention to deprive a gallant comrade and brother-officer of the credit and honor due to his bravery; more particularly one with whom I have long been on terms of intimate friendship, and whose abilities I admire as much as I respect and esteem his conduct as a soldier; therefore, this statement can or ought only to be attributed to my sense *of what is due* to the other gallant officers and soldiers who were under my command in the assault of the lesser breach of Ciudad Rodrigo, and not to any *wish* or *intention* on my part to detract from the distinguished services of, or the laurels gained by Colonel Gurwood on that occasion. Of course, you are at liberty to refer to me if necessary, and to make what use you please of this letter, privately or publicly, either now or at any future period. *I steadily adhere to all I have ever stated to you or any one else*, and I am, &c. &c. GEORGE NAPIER.

Extract of a letter from Colonel JAMES FERGUSSON, *fifty-second regiment (formerly a captain of the forty-third, and one of the storming party). Addressed to Sir* GEORGE NAPIER.

"I send you a memorandum I made some time back from memory, and in consequence of having seen various accounts respecting our assault. You are perfectly correct as to Gurwood, and your description of the way we carried the breach is accurate; and now I have seen your memorandum, I recollect the circumstance of the men's arms not being loaded and the snapping of the firelocks."—"I was not certain when you were wounded, but your description of the scene on the breach and the way in which it was carried is perfectly accurate."

Extract of a letter from Colonel FERGUSSON *to Colonel* WILLIAM NAPIER.

"I think the account you give in your History, of the attack of the little breach at Ciudad Rodrigo is as favorable to Gurwood as he has any right to expect, and agrees perfectly both with your brother George's recollections of that attack and with mine. Our late friend Alexander Steele, who was one of my officers, declared he was with Gurwood the whole of the time, for a great part of the

storming party of the forty-third joined Gurwood's party, who were placing the ladders against the work, and it was the engineer officer calling out that they were wrong, and pointing out the way to the breach in the fausse-braye that directed our attention to it. Jonathan Wyld* one of the forty-third was the first man that run up the fausse-braye, and we made directly for the little breach, which was defended *exactly as you describe.* We were on the breach some little time, and when we collected about thirty men (some of the third battalion rifle-brigade in the number) we made a simultaneous rush, cheered, and run in, so that positively no claim could be made as to the first who entered the breach. I do not want to dispute with Gurwood, but I again say (in which your brother agrees) that some of the storming party were *before* the forlorn hope. I do not dispute that Gurwood and some of his party were among the number that rushed in at the breach, but as to his having twice mounted the breach before us, *I cannot understand it,* and Steele always *positively denied it.*"

Having thus justified myself from the charge of writing upon bad information about the assault of the little breach, I shall add something about that of the great breach.

Colonel Gurwood offers himself as an encouraging example for the subalterns of the British army in future wars; but the following extract from a statement of the late Major Mackie, so well known for his bravery, worth and modesty, and who as a subaltern led the forlorn hope at the great breach of Ciudad Rodrigo, denies Colonel Gurwood's claim to the particular merit upon which he seems inclined to found his good fortune in after life.

Extracts from a memoir addressed by the late Major MACKIE *to Colonel* NAPIER. *October,* 1838.

"The troops being immediately ordered to advance, were soon across the ditch and upon the breach at the same instant with the ninety-fourth who had advanced along the ditch. To mount under the fire of the defenders was the work of a moment, but when there difficulties of a formidable nature presented themselves; on each flank a deep trench was cut across the rampart isolating the breach, which was enfiladed with cannon and musketry; while in front, from the rampart into the streets of the town, was a perpendicular fall of ten or twelve feet; the whole preventing the soldiers from making that bold and rapid onset so effective in facilita-

* A private—a splendid soldier.

ting the success of such an enterprise. The great body of the fire of defence being from the houses and from an open space in front of the breach, in the first impulse of the moment I dropt from the rampart into the town. Finding myself here quite alone and no one following, I discovered that the trench upon the right of the breach was cut across the whole length of the rampart, thereby opening a free access to our troops and rendering what was intended by the enemy as a defence completely the reverse. By this opening I again mounted to the top of the breach and led the men down into the town. The enemy's fire, which I have stated had been, after we gained the summit of the wall, confined to the houses and open space alluded to, now began to slacken, and ultimately they abandoned the defence. Being at this time in advance of the whole of the third division, I led what men I could collect along the street, leading in a direct line from the great breach into the centre of the town, by which street the great body of the enemy were precipitately retiring. Having advanced considerably and passed across a street running to the left, a body of the enemy came suddenly from that street, rushed through our ranks and escaped. In pursuit of this body, which after passing us held their course to the right, I urged the party forwards in that direction until we reached the citadel, where the governor and garrison had taken refuge. The outer gate of the enclosure being open, I entered at the head of the party composed of men of different regiments who by this time had joined the advance. Immediately on entering I was hailed by a French officer asking for an English general to whom he might surrender. Pointing to my epaulettes in token of their security, the door of the keep or stronghold of the place was opened, and a sword presented to me in token of surrender, which sword I accordingly received. This I had scarcely done when two of their officers laid hold of me for protection, one on each arm, and *it was while I was thus situated that Lieutenant Gurwood came up and obtained the sword of the governor.*

"In this way, the governor, with Lieutenant Gurwood and the two officers I have mentioned still clinging to my arms, the whole party moved towards the rampart. Having found, when there, that in the confusion incident to such a scene, I had lost, as it were by accident, that prize which was actually within my reach, and which I had justly considered as my own, in the chagrin of the moment I turned upon my heel and left the spot. The following day, in company with Captain Lindsay of the eighty-eighth regiment, I waited upon Colonel Pakenham, then assistant-adjutant-general to the third division, to know if my name had been mentioned by General Picton as having led the advance of the right brigade.

He told me that it had, and I therefore took no further notice of the circumstance, feeling assured that I should be mentioned in the way of which all officers in similar circumstances must be so ambitious. My chagrin and disappointment may be easily imagined when Lord Wellington's despatches reached the army from England to find my name altogether omitted, and the right brigade deprived of their just meed of praise."—"Sir, it is evident that the tendency of this note" (Colonel Gurwood's note quoted from the Despatches) "is unavoidably, though I do him the justice to believe by no means intentionally upon Colonel Gurwood's part, to impress the public with the belief that he was himself the first British officer that entered the citadel of Ciudad Rodrigo, consequently the one to whom its garrison surrendered. This impression, the language he employs is the more likely to convey, inasmuch as to his exertions and good fortune in this particular instance he refers the whole of his professional success, to which he points the attention of the future aspirant as a pledge of the rewards to be expected from similar efforts to deserve them. To obviate this impression, and in bare justice to the right brigade of the third division, and, as a member of it, to myself, I feel called on to declare that though I do not claim for that brigade exclusively the credit of forcing the defences of the great breach, the left brigade having joined in it, contrary to the intention of Lord Wellington under the circumstances stated, yet I do declare on the word of a man of honor, that *I was the first individual who effected the descent from the main breach into the streets of the town, that I preceded the advance into the body of the place, that I was the first who entered the citadel, and that the enemy there assembled had surrendered to myself and party before Lieutenant Gurwood came up.* Referring to the inference which Colonel Gurwood has been pleased to draw from his own good fortune as to the certainty and value of the rewards awaiting the exertions of the British soldier, permit me, sir, in bare justice to myself, to say that at the time I volunteered the forlorn hope on this occasion, I was senior lieutenant of my own regiment, consequently the first for promotion. Having as such succeeded so immediately after to a company, I could scarcely expect, nor did I ask further promotion at the time, but after many years of additional service, I did still conceive and do still maintain, that I was entitled to bring forward my services on that day as a ground for asking that step of rank which every officer leading a forlorn hope had received with the exception of myself."

"May I, sir, appeal to your sense of justice in lending me your aid to prevent my being deprived of the only reward I had hitherto enjoyed, in the satisfaction of thinking that the services which I am

now compelled, most reluctantly, to bring in some way to the notice of the public, had, during the period that has since elapsed, never once been called in question. It was certainly hard enough that a service of this nature should have been productive of no advantage to me in my military life. I feel it however infinitely more annoying that I should now find myself in danger of being stript of any credit to which it might entitle me, by the looseness of the manner in which Colonel Gurwood words his statement. I need not say that this danger is only the more imminent, from his statement appearing in a work which, as being published under the auspices of the Duke of Wellington as well as of the Horse Guards, has at least the appearance of coming in the guise of an official authority."—"I agree most cordially with Colonel Gurwood in the opinion he has expressed in his note, that he is himself an instance where reward and merit have gone hand in hand. I feel compelled however, for the reasons given, to differ from him materially as to the precise ground on which he considers the honors and advantages that have followed his deserts to be, not only the distinguished but the just and natural consequences of his achievements on that day. *I allude to the claim advanced by Colonel Gurwood to be considered the individual by whom the governor of Ciudad Rodrigo was made prisoner of war.* It could scarcely be expected that at such a moment I could be aware that the sword which I received was not the governor's, being in fact that of one of his aide-de-camps. I repeat however that before Lieutenant Gurwood and his party came up, the enemy had expressed their wish to surrender, that a sword was presented by them in token of submission, and received by me as a pledge, on the honor of a British officer, that according to the laws of war, I held myself responsible for their safety as prisoners under the protection of the British arms. Not a shadow of resistance was afterwards made, and I appeal to every impartial mind in the least degree acquainted with the rules of modern warfare if, under these circumstances I am not justified in asserting, that before and at the time Lieutenant Gurwood arrived, the whole of the enemy's garrison, within the walls of the citadel, governor included, were both *de jure* and *de facto* prisoners to myself. In so far, therefore, as he being the individual who made its owner captive, could give either of us a claim to receive that sword to which Colonel Gurwood ascribes such magic influence in the furthering of his after fortunes, I do maintain that at the time it became *de facto* his, it was *de jure* mine.

Something still remains to set Colonel Gurwood right upon matters which he has apparently touched upon without due consi-

deration. In a note appended to that part of the Duke of Wellington's *Despatches* which relate to the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo he says, that the late Captain Dobbs of the fifty-second, at Sabugal, "recovered the howitzer, taken by the forty-third regiment, but retaken by the enemy." This is totally incorrect. The howitzer was taken by the forty-third, and retained by the forty-third. The fifty-second regiment never even knew of its capture until the action was over. Captain Dobbs was a brave officer and a very generous-minded man, he was more likely to keep his own just claims to distinction in the back-ground than to appropriate the merit of others to himself. I am therefore quite at a loss to know upon what authority Colonel Gurwood has stated a fact inaccurate and unsupported by the Duke of Wellington's despatch, which distinctly says the howitzer was taken by the forty-third regiment.

Here I must state, that, treating of General Hill's enterprise against the French forts at Almaraz, I quoted the Duke of Wellington as complaining to the ministers that his generals were so fearful of responsibility, the slightest movements of the enemy deprived them of their judgment. Trusting that the despatches then in progress of publication would bear me out, I did not give my authority at large in the Appendix; since then, the letter on which I relied has been published by Colonel Gurwood in the despatches, but purged of the passage to which I alluded, and without any indication of its being so garbled. This omission might hereafter give a handle to accuse me of bad faith, wherefore I now give the letter in full, the Italics marking the restored passages—

From Lord Wellington to the Earl of Liverpool.

FUENTE GUINALDO, May 28th, 1812.

MY DEAR LORD,—You will be as well pleased as I am at General Hill's success, which certainly would have been still more satisfactory if he had taken the garrison of Mirabete; which he would have done if General Chowne had gone on a little better in the night of the 16th, and if Sir William Erskine had not very unnecessarily alarmed him, by informing him that Soult's whole army were in movement, and in Estremadura. Sir Rowland, therefore, according to his instructions, came back on the 21st, whereas if he had stayed a day or two, he would have brought his heavy howitzers to bear on the castle, and he would either have stormed it under his fire, or the garrison would have surrendered. *But notwithstanding all that has passed, I cannot prevail upon the general officers to feel a little confidence in their situation. They take alarm at the least movement of the enemy, and then spread the*

alarm, and interrupt everything, and the extraordinary circumstance is, that if they are not in command they are as stout as any private soldiers in the army. Your lordship will observe that I have marked some passages in Hill's report not to be published. My opinion is that the enemy must evacuate the tower of Mirabete, and, indeed, it is useless to keep that post, unless they have another bridge, which I doubt. But if they see that we entertain a favorable opinion of the strength of Mirabete, they will keep their garrison there, which might be inconvenient to us hereafter, if we should wish to establish there our own bridge. I enclose a Madrid Gazette, in which you will see a curious description of the state of King Joseph's authority, and his affairs in general, from the most authentic sources.

Ever, my dear lord, &c., &c.

WELLINGTON.

VILLA MURIEL.

THE following statement of the operations of the fifth division at the combat of Muriel, 25th October, 1812, is inserted at the desire of Sir John Oswald. It proves that I have erroneously attributed to him the first and, as it appeared to me, unskilful disposition of the troops; but with respect to the other portions of his statement, without denying or admitting the accuracy of his recollections, I shall give the authority I chiefly followed, first printing his statement.

Affair of Villa Muriel.

On the morning 25th of October, 1812, Major-General Oswald joined and assumed the command of the fifth division at Villa Muriel on the Carrion. Major-General Pringle had already posted the troops, and the greater portion of the division were admirably disposed of about the village, as also in the dry bed of a canal running in its rear in some places parallel to the Carrion. Certain of the corps were formed in columns of attack supported by reserves, ready to fall upon the enemy if in consequence of the mine failing he should venture to push a column along the narrow bridge. The river had at some points been reported fordable, but these were said to be at all times difficult and in the then rise of water, as they proved, hardly practicable. As the enemy closed towards the bridge, he opened a heavy fire of artillery on the village. At that moment Lord Wellington entered it and passed the formed columns well sheltered both from fire and observation. His lordship approved of the manner the post was occupied and

of the advantage taken of the *canal and village* to mask the troops. The French supported by a heavy and superior fire rushed gallantly on the bridge, the mine not exploding and destroying the arch till the leading section had almost reached the spot. Shortly after, the main body retired, leaving only a few light troops. Immediately previous to this an orderly officer announced to Lord Wellington that Palencia and its bridges were gained by the foe. He ordered the main body of the division immediately to ascend the heights in its rear, and along the plateau to move towards Palencia in order to meet an attack from that quarter. Whilst the division was in the act of ascending, a report was made by Major Hill of the eighth caçadores, that the ford had been won, passed by a body of cavalry causing the caçadores to fall back on the broken ground. The enemy, it appears, were from the first acquainted with these fords, for his push to them was nearly simultaneous with his assault on the bridge. The division moved on the heights towards Palencia; it had not however proceeded far, before an order came directing it to retire and form on the right of the Spaniards, and when collected to remain on the heights till further orders. About this time the cavalry repassed the river, nor had either infantry or artillery passed by the ford to aid in the attack, but in consequence of the troops being withdrawn from the village and canal a partial repair was given to the bridge, and small bodies of infantry were passed over skirmishing with the Spaniards whose post on the heights was directly in front of Villa Muriel. No serious attack from that quarter was to be apprehended until an advance from Palencia. It was on that point therefore that attention was fixed. Day was closing when Lord Wellington came upon the heights and said all was quiet at Palencia and that the enemy must now be driven from the right bank. General Oswald inquired if after clearing the village the division was to remain there for the night. His lordship replied, the village was to be occupied in force and held by the division till it was withdrawn, which would probably be very early in the morning. He directed the first brigade under Brigadier-General Barnes to attack the enemy's flank, the second under Pringle to advance in support extending to the left so as to succor the Spaniards who were unsuccessfully contending with the enemy in their front. The casualties in the division were not numerous, especially when the fire it was exposed to is considered. The enemy sustained a comparative heavy loss. The troops were by a rapid advance of the first brigade cut off from the bridge and forced into the river, where many were drowned. The allies fell back in the morning unmolested.

JOHN OSWALD, &c., &c., &c.

Memoir on the Combat of Muriel by Captain Hopkins, fourth regiment.

As we approached Villa Muriel the face of the country upon our left flank as we were then retrograding appeared open; in our front ran the river Carrion, and immediately on the opposite side of the river and parallel to it there was a broad, deep dry canal. On our passing the bridge at Villa Muriel we had that village on our left, from the margin of the canal the ground sloped gradually up into heights, the summit forming a fine plateau. Villa Muriel was occupied by the brigadier Pringle with a *small* detachment of infantry, but at the time we considered that it required a larger force, as its maintenance appeared of the utmost importance to the army; we were aware that the enemy had passed the Carrion with cavalry and also that Hill's caçadores had given way at another part of the river. Our engineers had partly destroyed the bridge of Villa Muriel, the enemy attacked the village, (at the time the brigadier and his staff were there,*) passing the ruins of the bridge by means of ladders, &c. The enemy in driving the detachment from the village made some prisoners. We retired to the plateau of the heights, under a fire of musketry and artillery, where we halted in close column; the enemy strengthened the village.

Lord Wellington arrived with his staff on the plateau, and immediately reconnoitred the enemy whose reinforcements had arrived and were forming strong columns on the other side of the river. Lord Wellington immediately ordered some artillery to be opened on the enemy. I happened to be close to the head-quarter staff and heard Lord Wellington say to an aide-de-camp, "Tell Oswald I want him." On Sir John Oswald arriving he said, "Oswald, you will get the division under arms and drive the enemy from the village and retain possession of it." He replied, "My lord, if the village should be taken I do not consider it as tenable." Wellington then said, "It is my orders, General." Oswald replied, "My lord, as it is your orders they shall be obeyed." Wellington then gave orders to him "that he should take the second brigade of the division and attack in line, that the first brigade should in column first descend the heights on the right of the second, enter the canal and assist in clearing it of the enemy," and saying, "I will tell you what I will do, Oswald. I will give you the Spaniards and Alava into the bargain, headed by a company of the ninth regiment upon your left." The attack

* A false stopping here misled me about the bridge. I made the allies pass by ladders instead of the French.

was made accordingly, the second battalion of the fourth regiment being left in reserve in column on the slope of the hill exposed to a severe cannonade which for a short time caused them some confusion. The enemy were driven from the canal and village, and the prisoners which they made in the morning were retaken. The enemy lost some men in this affair, but General Alava was wounded, the officer commanding the company of Brunswickers killed, and several of the division killed and wounded. During the attack Lord Wellington sent the Prince of Orange under a heavy fire for the purpose of preventing the troops exposing themselves at the canal, two companies defended the bridge with a detachment just arrived from England. The possession of the village proved of the utmost importance, as the retrograde movement we made that night could not have been effected with safety had the enemy been on our side of the river; as it was we were enabled to pass along the river with all arms in the most perfect security.