

progress, new obligations had been imposed on him, in behalf of those powers whom the aggressions of a common enemy had compelled to unite their cause with his, and of others who had solicited his assistance and support in the vindication of their national independence. The interests of Portugal, Sicily, and Sweden, the document went on to state, were inseparably connected with those of his Majesty; and for these powers he claimed a participation in the negotiations. With Spain, indeed, no formal treaty had been executed; but he had contracted, in the face of the world, engagements with that nation not less sacred than the most formal treaties; and it was, therefore, indispensable that the government, acting in name and on behalf of the Spanish monarch, should be admitted as party to any negotiation in which his Majesty might engage.

The issue of this unpromising attempt to effect the general pacification of Europe is well known. The Russian minister, in his reply, declared the resolution of his Sovereign not to recognise the insurgent government of Spain as an independent power. The Emperor had already acknowledged the title of Joseph Buona-

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CHAP. XII. parte to the crown of Spain. He had united his interests with those of Napoleon, and was resolved to adhere to his engagements. The reply of M. Champagny was insulting. "How is it possible," said he, "for the French government to entertain the proposal of admitting the Spanish insurgents to the negotiation? What would the English government have said had it been proposed to them to admit the Catholic insurgents of Ireland? France, without having entered into formal treaties, had been in communication with them, and had frequently sent them succours."

The lameness of this attempt, at analogical reasoning, was ably exposed by Mr. Canning in his reply; and the correspondence concluded, as probably was expected by both parties, without any beneficial result.

Oct. 18. On the eighteenth of October, Napoleon returned to Paris; and on the twenty-fourth, he opened the session of the legislative body, by a speech from the throne, in which, after a brief and compendious review of the political situation of Europe, he made known his resolution of proceeding to Spain, "in order, with the aid of God, to crown his brother in Madrid, and to

plant his victorious eagles on the towers of Lisbon." CHAP. XII.

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Before Napoleon set forward with this purpose, above an hundred thousand French troops had already entered Spain, in order to reinforce the existing armies in that country. The flight of Joseph from Madrid had terminated at Vittoria; and there the head-quarters of the army were established.

It is now necessary we should turn to the previous operations of the Spanish armies.

Why a victory, so decisive as that of Baylen, should have been the signal for the universal inactivity of the Spanish armies, it is difficult to understand. The intrusive monarch had fled, terror-stricken, to the country behind the Ebro, where he could not muster above fifty thousand men. Had a speedy union been effected by the armies of Blake, Palafox, Castanos, Llamas, and Cuesta, their united force would have exceeded one hundred thousand men—a body, had their operations been directed with skill, at least numerically sufficient to have expelled the remains of the French army from the Spanish territory. But time passed on, and the French were suffered to remain un-

CHAP. XII. annoyed in their cantonments. The Murcian and Andalusian armies were inactive at Madrid.
 1808. The period of successful action was suffered to
 September. escape; and before anything approaching to a concentration of the Spanish forces had been effected, reinforcements had crossed the Pyrenees, and a total revolution had taken place in the prospects of the campaign.

It was not till the month of August, that the Biscayans, overawed by their proximity to France and the presence of a considerable force, had been able to take part in the general struggle for freedom. At length, deriving confidence from the favourable progress of events, the standard of resistance was raised throughout the province, and a Junta established at Bilboa. In order to restore obedience, a considerable body was despatched against the place, which routed and dispersed the patriots, and established in authority a Junta, whose members were known to be in the interest of France. This success was temporary. On the
 Sep. 20. twentieth of September, Bilboa was retaken, by a force under the Marquis de Portazgo, and the French garrison with difficulty effected their escape. But large bodies of the enemy had

already passed the Pyrenees ; and Marshal Ney, CHAP. XII.
 who had assumed the provisional command
 of the armies, determined, by another effort, to
 regain possession of the city. In order to de-
 ceive Portazgo, he first made demonstration of
 retiring on Vittoria, and then, by a rapid move-
 ment, advanced against Bilboa. The Span-
 ish general was not deluded by the stratagem.
 He withdrew the garrison from the city, and
 fell back on Valmaseda, where he was joined by
 a detachment of the Gallician army. Prepara-
 tions were immediately made for the recovery
 of the place ; but General Merlin, whom Ney
 had left in command, aware of the difficulty of
 maintaining himself in an unfortified city, with-
 drew his troops without waiting for attack.

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Oct. 11.

In the return of the Marquis de la Romana
 and his army, the Spanish nation had to re-
 joice in an event most favourable and impor-
 tant to their cause. When the insurrection
 first broke forth, that officer was in command of
 a corps of about fifteen thousand men, serving
 with the French army in Denmark. He had at
 first been induced to declare allegiance to the
 new government ; but on receiving, from Sir

CHAP. XII. Richard Keats, the British admiral commanding

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on the station, intelligence of the real character of the events then passing in Spain, he determined to return, and bear part in the noble struggle in which his countrymen were engaged. The army unanimously approved of the resolution of its chief; and a project for deceiving the vigilance of Bernadotte, the French commander in Jutland, and for the subsequent embarkation of the army, having been concerted with the British admiral, it was successfully carried into effect. Several battalions were surrounded and disarmed by the French army; but the remainder, amounting to about ten thousand, arrived safely at St. Andero, where they were disembarked.

When the Spanish army was at length concentrated on the Ebro, its position was as follows.

Blake, with the army of Galicia, occupied a line extending from Bilboa to Burgos, and constituted the left of the united army. He was directed to force the right of the French, and possess himself of the great road to Bayonne.

The centre, under Castanos, had its head-

quarters at Soria, and occupied Tarazona, Borja, and Tudela. CHAP. XII.

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The Aragonese and Valencian forces were stationed on the side of Zaragoza, with their right extending to Sangüessa, and formed the right of the army.

The Conde de Belvidere, commanding the levies of Estramadura, had his head-quarters at Burgos, and was destined, when joined by the British army—whose arrival was speedily anticipated—to advance on the centre of the French army.

Morla was at Madrid with the reserve, consisting of about twenty thousand men.

At this period the left wing of the French army, commanded by Marshal Moncey, was posted along the Aragon and the Ebro, having its head-quarters at Tafalla.—Marshal Ney was at Guardia; Bessieres at Miranda; and Lefebvre, on the right, occupied the heights of Durango and Mondragon.

While the armies were thus stationed, the Spanish government and people, alike buoyed up by an overweening confidence, became impatient for action. The former despatched commissioners to the army, in order to accelerate the adoption

CHAP. XII. of active measures for the expulsion of the enemy. No folly could be more egregious. The Spanish generals required no Mentor to counsel them into measures of folly and imprudence. But, incredible as it may appear, the only apprehension which seems, at this period, to have haunted the imagination of the Supreme Junta, and poisoned their repose, was, that the French, by a speedy and total evacuation of the Spanish territory, might baulk the just vengeance which the injured nation was prepared to wreak on its oppressors.

Though the advanced-posts of the armies, almost in presence of each other, were at many points separated only by a rivulet, no engagement had yet taken place. But this period of inaction was soon destined to cease. Palafox and Castanos had concerted a project of operations, in pursuance of which detachments of the central army were pushed on to Lerin and Viana, while the Aragonese, by a flank march, were closing on Sanguessa, with the view of advancing on Roncesvalles, and thus cutting off the communications of the French army. Monecy, alarmed at these movements, detached a force of infantry, under Generals

Habert and Razout, with General Wathier's brigade of cavalry, to thrust back the Spaniards, and regain the positions they had seized. An engagement in consequence took place. The Spanish detachments were driven back in confusion, and a battalion of light infantry, surrounded in Lerin, were made prisoners.

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At the same time, Ney advanced on Logrono, which was occupied by the Castilian force under Pignatelli. After an obstinate resistance the city was taken; and the French, crossing the Ebro, continued the pursuit for several leagues.

The attempt of the Spanish army on the left being thus defeated, Moncey, while observing the motions of Palafox and Castanos, was ordered to wait the issue of the attacks on Blake and Belvidere, with the view of subsequently advancing on Zaragoza. Of these operations we must now speak.

The main body of the western army was posted in front of the heights of Durango and Mondragon, which commanded the great road to Bayonne. Blake, trusting that the Asturian General Azevedo would cut off the communication between Durango and Vittoria by Ochandiana, resolved to make an effort to gain possession of

CHAP. XII. the heights of Mondragon, and thus to effect a
 1808. separation between the advanced-guard and
 October. main body of the army. With this view he
 advanced to Zornosa; and General Merlin, on
 his approach, thought it prudent to evacuate
 the town, and take post with his division on a
 range of heights in the rear. On the following
 day, a division of the Spanish army advanced
 from Rigoytia, with the intention of turning the
 right flank of Merlin's position, while the centre
 and right pushed forward to the attack in front.
 These measures were successful. The French
 abandoned the position, and fell back on Du-
 rango.

Lefebvre, alarmed by these movements, was
 induced to violate the orders of the Emperor,
 that he should content himself with keeping the
 enemy in check, and advanced with his whole
 force, amounting to about twenty-five thousand
 men, to the support of Merlin. For several days
 Oct. 31. the armies remained inactive. On the thirty-first,
 Lefebvre advanced to the attack. Blake's army
 was considerably inferior in number, and without
 cavalry or artillery. The issue of a battle, fought
 under circumstances so imprudent, may be antici-
 pated. After a gallant and strenuous resistance,

the Spaniards were defeated, and forced to retreat on Bilbao. This operation, though conducted in presence of a superior army, was effected in good order; and, on the day following, Blake crossed the Salcedon, and took up a position at Nava. CHAP. XII.
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The corps of Lefebvre, reinforced by that of Victor, continued to follow up the victory it had gained, and endeavoured to cut off the Asturian division of Azevedo. In this he was not successful; but Blake was driven from position to position. Encounters took place at Guenas, Valmaseda, and Espinosa; and his army, which for some days had been without provisions, and exposed to the most inclement weather, were at length thrown into confusion so complete, that, on the fourteenth of November, when the Marquis de la Romana traversed the district of Las Montanas, he encountered only a half-starved rabble, trusting to individual exertion for safety and support, and without even the semblance of a military body. Nov. 9.
Jones.

In persisting in his operations against a superior and continually increasing force, it is unquestionable that Blake was guilty of a capital error. The true policy of Lefebvre was, not to have fought him at Zornosa, but to have en-

CHAP. XII. couraged him to advance still farther from his
resources, by which means his whole army might
have been cut off. In the repeated engagements
which took place, the troops of Romana particularly distinguished themselves. Brought into action, after the first defeat, piecemeal and without skill, these veterans displayed a hardihood and courage worthy of all admiration. The new levies, on the other hand, generally fled without waiting for attack. The disorganization of the army was at last complete; and, destitute of magazines, clothing, and money, it was evident that a long time must elapse before it could again be in condition to take the field.

Nov. 8.

On the eighth of November, Napoleon arrived at Vittoria. He brought with him Marshal Soult; and that officer was immediately directed to assume the command of the second corps of the army. A few hours were sufficient to decide on the plan of operations to be adopted, and to direct the preliminary dispositions for its execution. It was determined to attack the centre, in order to isolate the two wings of the Spanish army; and, with this view, the corps of Marshal Soult was directed, by a rapid attack on Burgos, to drive back the Estramaduran

army under the Conde de Belvidere. On the tenth, the second corps was concentrated at the plateau of Monasterio and the Quintana la Pallia, and immediately set forward to attack the position of the Spanish army at Gamonal.

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On approaching the position, the French were received with a heavy fire from a battery of thirty pieces of cannon. But this did not impede their progress. The division of Mouton made a powerful attack on the centre of the Spanish line, where the best troops of the army were posted, and at once drove them back in confusion. Bessieres followed with the cavalry, and, having routed the wings, by a vigorous pursuit prevented the possibility of a rally. Victors and vanquished entered Burgos in a mingled and confused mass; and, some resistance being attempted from the houses, the city was given up to pillage.

Nov. 10.

This unfortunate action cost the Spanish army nearly three thousand in killed and prisoners, a great part of their artillery, and the whole of the stores and ammunition which were stationed in Burgos. The greater part of Belvidere's force consisted of raw levies, which fled without firing a shot. A battalion of students from Salamanca and Leon, alone displayed distinguished courage.

CHAP. XII. Animated by youthful zeal, they twice repulsed
 1808. the enemy, and at length overborne by the ca-
 November. valry, by far the greater proportion were cut to
 pieces.

The victory he had thus easily acquired was vigorously followed up by Marshal Soult. Two corps of his army were detached in pursuit; one towards Lerma, another towards Palencia and Valladolid, while he himself marched towards
 Nov. 10. Reynosa and St. Andero, where he hoped to intercept Blake's line of retreat to the plains of Leon.

In this hope he was disappointed. In spite of the rapidity of his march, he did not reach Reynosa till the day after Blake had quitted it with the remains of his army, having been successively beaten by Lefebvre at Guenas and Valmaseda, and by Victor at Espinosa. Soult, therefore, continued his march on St. Andero, where he left a division of his army; and, spreading the rest of his forces over the Montagna district, he continued to attack and disperse the insurgent bodies to be found in that district.

The left and centre of the Spanish armies being thus broken, the piquets of the French were now upon the Douro, and their cavalry

covered the plains of New Castile. Under these circumstances, Marshals Ney and Victor were ordered to advance from Burgos, by Aranda and Soria, to take the position of Castanos in reverse; while Marshal Lannes, with about forty thousand men, should attack him in front.

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On the approach of the French, Castanos abandoned Calahorra. On the twenty-third Lannes appeared in front of his position near Tudela.

Nov. 23.

The Spanish army, in number about forty-five thousand, was posted on a range of easy hills, extending from Tudela to Tarazona, distant about two leagues. The army of Aragon, which had joined but a few hours before the commencement of the action, was stationed on the right. The Andalusian army was on the left; those of Valencia and New Castile, in the centre. The artillery, consisting of forty pieces, was distributed along the front of the line.

The weakness, arising from the extreme extent of the position thus occupied, was too apparent not to be taken immediate advantage of by Marshal Lannes. The division commanded by General Maurice Mathieu, supported by the cavalry, commenced the action by a vehement

CHAP. XII. attack on the centre. This, after a short resistance, gave way ; and the cavalry, penetrating through the opening, wheeled up to the left, and thus succeeded in enveloping the right wing of the Spaniards. The Aragonese troops in that quarter had already repelled the attack of General Morlot's division, but were now thrown into irretrievable confusion. On the success of this manœuvre, an attack was immediately made by the division of Lagrange on the left. A detachment, occupying the town of Cascante, continued for some time to offer gallant resistance to the progress of the enemy ; but being at length driven back, the left wing was likewise dispersed, and fled in confusion to Tarazona, where three divisions of the army had been suffered to remain inactive during the action.

The French cavalry pursued the fugitives towards Soria on the one side, and towards Zaragoza on the other. The troops of Valencia, of New Castile, and part of those of Andalusia, directed their flight towards Valencia. Those of Palafox escaped to Zaragoza, where, by a second splendid defence, they were destined yet farther to consecrate their fame in the eyes of

posterity, and make glorious recompense to their country for the defeat of Tudela. CHAP. XII.

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November.

As soon as the wreck of the left wing had collected in Tarazona, Castanos directed the four divisions in that town, to retreat on Calatayud, by way of Borja. The march commenced at midnight, and was proceeding with all order and regularity, when a magazine blew up, and the report spread, that the French cavalry were at hand. A cry of treason arose, and was rapidly diffused among the dispirited soldiers. The columns were thrown into confusion, and the road to Borja was speedily covered with a disorganized and insubordinate crowd.

By the French accounts, the loss of the Spanish army, in the battle of Tudela, amounted to upwards of seven thousand men; and thirty pieces of cannon were captured by the victors. Their own loss was comparatively trifling.

That any portion of the Spanish army was enabled to rally at Calatayud is, confessedly, owing to the dilatory movements of Marshal Ney. That officer was ordered to be at Agreda on the twenty-third; and had he been so, the retreat of the fugitives on Madrid must have been cut off. The tardiness of his move-

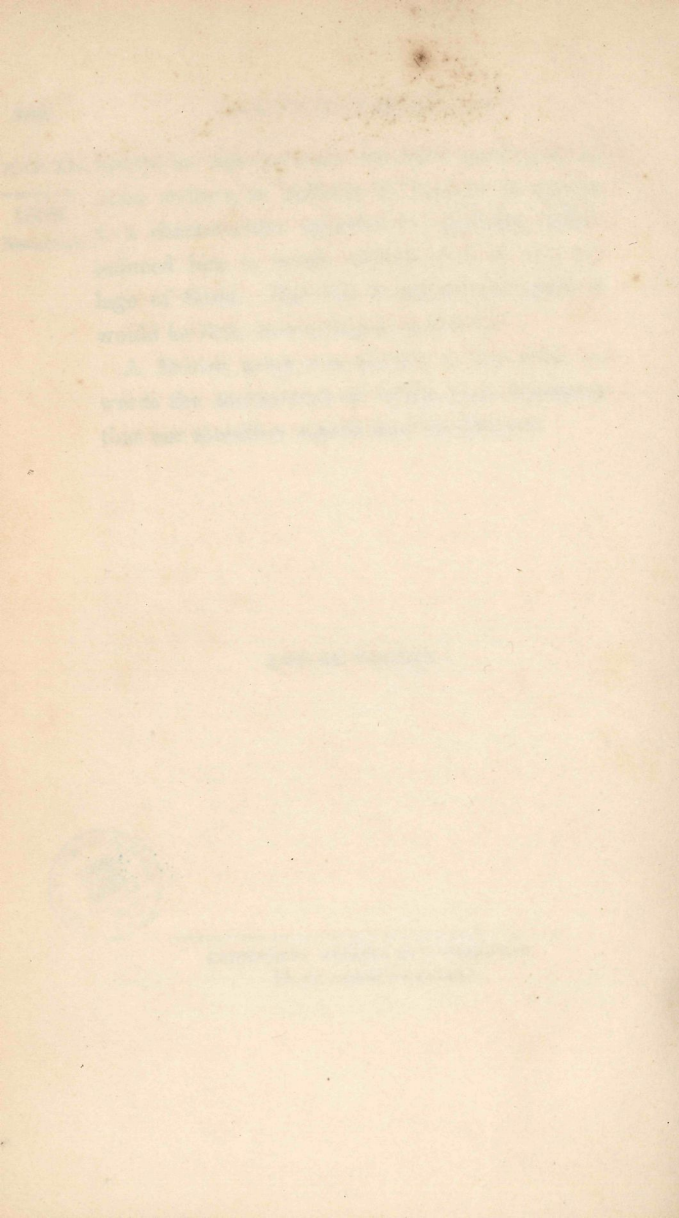
CHAP. XII. ments, on this occasion, has been attributed, by
 1808. some writers, to jealousy of Lannes, by others,
 November. to a characteristic appetite for plunder, which
 induced him to waste valuable time in the pil-
 lage of Soria. But this is matter on which it
 would be little interesting to speculate.

A British army was already in the field, to-
 wards the movements of which it is necessary
 that our attention should now be directed.

END OF VOLUME I.



EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY J. JOHNSTONE,
 18, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE.







Biblioteca Regional
de Madrid Joaquín Leguina



1357783

