

the centre, looked down the valley which separated Baird's right from the hills occupied by Franceschi's cavalry; a battalion detached from the reserve kept these horsemen in check, and was itself connected with the main body by a chain of skirmishers extended across the valley. Fraser's division held the heights immediately before the gates of Coruña, watching the coast road, but it was also ready to succor any point.

These dispositions were dictated by the nature of the ground, which was very favorable to the enemy; for Franceschi's cavalry reached nearly to the village of San Cristoval, a mile beyond Baird's right, and hence Sir John Moore was forced to weaken his front and keep Fraser's division in reserve until Soult's attack should be completely unfolded. There was, however, one advantage on the British side: many thousand new English muskets, found in the Spanish stores, were given to the troops in lieu of their rusty, battered arms, and as their ammunition was also fresh, their fire was far better sustained than that of the enemy.

BATTLE OF CORUNA.

When Laborde's division arrived, the French force was not less than twenty thousand men, and the Duke of Dalmatia made no idle evolutions of display, for distributing his lighter guns along the front of his position, he opened a fire from the heavy battery on his left, and instantly descended the mountain with three columns, covered by clouds of skirmishers. The British piquets were driven back in disorder, and the village of Elvina was carried by the first French column, which then, dividing, attempted to turn Baird's right by the valley, and to break his front at the same time. The second column made against the English centre, and the third attacked Hope's left at the village of Palavia Abaxo. The weight of Soult's guns overmatched the English six-pounders, and the shot swept the position to the centre; but Sir John Moore, observing that, according to his expectations, the enemy did not show any body of infantry beyond that which moving up the valley outflanked Baird's right, ordered General Paget to carry the whole of the reserve to where the detached regiment was posted, and, as he had before arranged with him, to turn the left of the French attack and menace the great battery. Meanwhile, he directed Fraser to support Paget, and then throwing back the fourth regiment, which formed the right of Baird's division, he opened a heavy fire upon the flank of the troops penetrating up the valley, while the fiftieth and forty-second regiments met those breaking through Elvina. The ground about that village being intersected by stone walls and hollow roads, a severe scrambling fight ensued, the French were

forced back with great loss, and the fiftieth regiment, entering the village with them, after a second struggle drove them beyond it. Seeing this, the General ordered up a battalion of the guards to fill the void in the line made by the advance of those regiments, whereupon the forty-second, with the exception of its grenadiers, mistaking his intention, retired, and at that moment the enemy, being reinforced, renewed the fight beyond the village; the officer commanding the fiftieth* was wounded and taken prisoner, and Elvina then became the scene of a second struggle, which being observed by the commander-in-chief, he addressed a few animating words to the forty-second, and caused it to return to the attack. During this time Paget, with the reserve, had descended into the valley, and the line of the skirmishers being thus supported, vigorously checked the advance of the enemy's troops in that quarter, while the fourth regiment galled their flank; at the same time the centre and left of the army also became engaged, Sir David Baird was severely wounded, and a furious action ensued along the line, in the valley, and on the hills.

Sir John Moore, while earnestly watching the result of the fight about the village of Elvina, was struck on the left breast by a cannon shot; the shock threw him from his horse with violence, but he rose again in a sitting posture, his countenance unchanged, and his steadfast eye still fixed upon the regiments engaged in his front, no sigh betraying a sensation of pain. In a few moments, when

* The author's eldest brother; he was said to be slain. When the French renewed the attack on Elvina, he was somewhat in advance of that village, and alone, for the troops were scattered by the nature of the ground. Being hurt in the leg, he endeavored to retire, but was overtaken, and thrown to the ground with five wounds; a French drummer rescued him, and when a soldier with whom he had been struggling made a second attempt to kill him, the drummer once more interfered. The morning after the battle Marshal Soult sent his own surgeon to Major Napier, and, with a kindness and consideration very uncommon, wrote to Napoleon, desiring that his prisoner might not be sent to France, which, from the system of refusing exchanges, would have ruined his professional prospects; the drummer also received the cross of the Legion of Honor. When the second corps quitted Coruña, Marshal Soult recommended his prisoner to the attention of Marshal Ney, and the latter treated him rather with the kindness of a friend than the civility of an enemy; he lodged him with the French Consul, supplied him with money, gave him a general invitation to his house, and not only refrained from sending him to France, but when by a flag of truce he knew that Major Napier's mother was mourning for him as dead, he permitted him, and with him the few soldiers taken in the action, to go at once to England, merely exacting a promise that none should serve until exchanged. I would not have touched at all upon these private adventures, were it not that gratitude demands a public acknowledgment of such generosity, and that demand is rendered more imperative by the after misfortunes of Marshal Ney. That brave and noble-minded man's fate is but too well known! He who had fought five hundred battles for France, not one against her, was shot as a traitor! Could the bitterest enemy of the Bourbons have more strongly marked the difference between their interests and those of the nation?

he was satisfied that the troops were gaining ground, his countenance brightened, and he suffered himself to be taken to the rear. Then was seen the dreadful nature of his hurt. The shoulder was shattered to pieces, the arm was hanging by a piece of skin, the ribs over the heart were broken and bared of flesh, and the muscles of the breast torn into long strips, which were interlaced by their recoil from the dragging of the shot. As the soldiers placed him in a blanket his sword got entangled, and the hilt entered the wound; Captain Hardinge, a staff officer, who was near, attempted to take it off, but the dying man stopped him, saying, "*It is as well as it is. I had rather it should go out of the field with me;*" and in that manner, so becoming to a soldier, Moore was borne from the fight.*

Meanwhile the army was rapidly gaining ground. The reserve, overthrowing everything in the valley, obliged La Houssaye's dragoons, who had dismounted, to retire, turned the enemy on that side, and even approached the eminence upon which the great battery was posted; on the left, Colonel Nicholls, at the head of some companies of the fourteenth, carried Palavia Abaxo, which General Foy defended but feebly; in the centre, the obstinate dispute for Elvina had terminated in favor of the British, and when the night set in, their line was considerably advanced beyond the original position of the morning, while the French were falling back in confusion. If at this time General Fraser's division had been brought into action along with the reserve, the enemy could hardly have escaped a signal overthrow; for the little ammunition Soult had been able to bring up was nearly exhausted, the river Mero, with a full tide, was behind him, and the difficult communication by the bridge of El Burgo was alone open for a retreat. On the other hand, to continue the action in the dark was to tempt fortune; the French were still the most numerous, and their ground was strong; moreover the disorder they were in offered such a favorable opportunity to get on board the ships, that Sir John Hope, upon whom the command of the army had devolved, satisfied with having repulsed the attack, judged it more prudent to pursue the original plan of embarking during the night. This operation was effected without delay, the arrangements being so complete that neither confusion nor difficulty occurred. The piquets, kindling a number of fires, covered the retreat of the columns, and being themselves withdrawn at daybreak, were embarked, under the protection of General Hill's brigade, which was posted near the ramparts of the town.

* Mr. James Moore's Narrative. Hardinge's Letter.

When the morning dawned, the French, observing that the British had abandoned their position, pushed forward some battalions to the heights of St. Lucie, and about midday succeeded in establishing a battery, which playing upon the shipping in the harbor caused a great deal of disorder among the transports; several masters cut their cables, and four vessels went ashore, but the troops being immediately removed by the men-of-war's boats, the stranded vessels were burnt, and the whole fleet at last got out of harbor. General Hill's brigade then embarked from the citadel, while General Beresford, with a rear-guard, kept possession of that work until the 18th, when the wounded being all put on board, his troops likewise embarked; the inhabitants faithfully maintained the town against the French, and the fleet sailed for England. The loss of the British was never officially published, but was estimated at eight hundred, and that of the French at three thousand. The latter is undoubtedly an exaggeration, yet it must have been very great, for the arms of the English were all new, the ammunition fresh, and whether from the peculiar construction of our muskets, the physical strength and coolness of the men, or from all combined, it is certain that the fire of an English line is the most destructive known. The nature of the ground also prevented any movement of artillery on either side, and the French columns in their attack were exposed to grape, which they could not return because of the distance of their batteries.

Thus ended the retreat to Coruña; a transaction which, up to this day, has called forth as much of falsehood and malignity as servile and interested writers could offer to the unprincipled leaders of a base faction, but which posterity will regard as a genuine example of ability and patriotism. From the spot where he fell, the General who had conducted it was carried to the town by a party of soldiers; his blood flowed fast, and the torture of his wound was great, yet such was the unshaken firmness of his mind, that those about him, judging from the resolution of his countenance that his hurt was not mortal, expressed a hope of his recovery; hearing this, he looked steadfastly at the injury for a moment, and then said "*No, I feel that to be impossible.*"* Several times he caused his attendants to stop and turn him round, that he might behold the field of battle; and when the firing indicated the advance of the British, he discovered his satisfaction, and permitted the bearers to proceed. Being brought to his lodgings, the surgeons examined his wound, but there was no hope, the pain increased, and he spoke with great difficulty. At intervals he asked if the French were beaten, and addressing his old friend, Colonel Anderson, he said,

* Captain Hardinge's Letter.

"*You know that I always wished to die this way.*"* Again he asked if the enemy were defeated, and being told they were, observed, "*It is a great satisfaction to me, to know we have beaten the French.*" His countenance continued firm and his thoughts clear; once only, when he spoke of his mother, he became agitated; but he often inquired after the safety of his friends, and the officers of his staff, and he did not even in this moment forget to recommend those whose merit had given them claims to promotion. His strength failed fast, and life was just extinct, when with an unsubdued spirit, as if anticipating the baseness of his posthumous calumniators, he exclaimed, "*I hope the people of England will be satisfied! I hope my country will do me justice!*" In a few minutes afterwards he died, and his corpse, wrapped in a military cloak, was interred by the officers of his staff in the citadel of Coruña, the guns of the enemy paid his funeral honors, and Soult, with a noble feeling of respect for his valor, raised a monument to his memory.

Thus ended the career of Sir John Moore, a man whose uncommon capacity was sustained by the purest virtue, and governed by a disinterested patriotism more in keeping with the primitive than the luxurious age of a great nation. His tall graceful person, his dark searching eyes, strongly defined forehead, and singularly expressive mouth, indicated a noble disposition and a refined understanding, while the lofty sentiments of honor habitual to his mind, being adorned by a subtle playful wit, gave him, in conversation, an ascendancy that he always preserved by the decisive vigor of his actions. He maintained the right with a vehemence bordering on fierceness, and every important transaction in which he was engaged increased his reputation for talent, and confirmed his character as a stern enemy to vice, a steadfast friend to merit, a just and faithful servant of his country. The honest loved him, the dishonest feared him; for while he lived he did not shun, but scorned and spurned the base, and with characteristic propriety, they spurned at him when he was dead.

A soldier from his earliest youth, Moore thirsted for the honors of his profession, and feeling that he was worthy to lead a British army, hailed the fortune that placed him at the head of the troops destined for Spain. As the stream of time passed, the inspiring hopes of triumph disappeared, but the austerer glory of suffering remained, and with a firm heart he accepted that gift of a severe fate. Confiding in the strength of his genius, he disregarded the clamors of presumptuous ignorance, and opposing sound military views to the foolish project so insolently thrust upon him by the

* Mr. James Moore's Narrative.

ambassador, he conducted his long and arduous retreat with sagacity, intelligence, and fortitude; no insult disturbed, no falsehood deceived him, no remonstrance shook his determination; fortune frowned without subduing his constancy; death struck, but the spirit of the man remained unbroken when his shattered body scarcely afforded it a habitation. Having done all that was just towards others, he remembered what was due to himself; neither the shock of the mortal blow, nor the lingering hours of acute pain which preceded his dissolution, could quell the pride of his gallant heart, or lower the dignified feeling with which, conscious of merit, he at the last moment asserted his right to the gratitude of the country he had served so truly.

If glory be a distinction, for such a man death is not a leveller

CHAPTER VI.

OBSERVATIONS—GENERAL VIEW OF THE CAMPAIGN.

Observations—The conduct of Napoleon and that of the English Cabinet compared—The Emperor's military dispositions examined—Propriety of Sir John Moore's operations discussed—Diagram, exposing the relative positions of the Spanish, French, and English armies—Propriety of Sir John Moore's retreat discussed; and the question, whether he should have fallen back on Portugal or Galicia, investigated—Sir John Moore's judgment defended; his conduct calumniated by interested men for party purposes; eulogized by Marshal Soult, by Napoleon, by the Duke of Wellington.

MR. CANNING, in an official communication to the Spanish deputies in London, observed, that "the conduct of the campaign in Portugal was unsatisfactory, and inadequate to the brilliant successes with which it opened." In the relation of that campaign, it has been shown how little the activity and foresight of the Cabinet contributed to those successes, and the following short analysis will prove that, with respect to the campaign in Spain also, the proceedings of the ministers were marked alike by tardiness and incapacity.

Joseph abandoned Madrid the 3d of August, and on the 11th of the same month, the French troops from the most distant parts of Europe were in motion to remedy the disasters in the Peninsula.

The 1st of September a double conscription, furnishing one hundred and sixty thousand men, was called out to replace the troops withdrawn from Poland and Germany.

The 4th of September the Emperor announced to the Senate, that "he was resolved to push the affairs of the Peninsula with the

greatest activity, and to destroy the armies which the English had disembarked in that country."

The 11th, the advanced guard of the army coming from Germany reached Paris, and was there publicly harangued by the Emperor.

The 8th of November that monarch broke into Spain at the head of three hundred thousand men, and the 5th of December, not a vestige of the Spanish armies remaining, he took possession of Madrid.

Now the Asturian deputies arrived in London the 6th of June, and yet on the 20th of August—the battle of Vimiero being then unfought, and, consequently, the fate of the campaign in Portugal uncertain—the English minister invited Sir Hew Dalrymple to discuss three plans of operations in Spain, each founded upon data utterly false, and all objectionable in detail. He also desired that Sir Arthur Wellesley should go to the Asturias to ascertain what facilities that country offered for the disembarkation of an English army; and the whole number of troops disposable for the campaign, exclusive of those already in Portugal, he stated to be twenty thousand, of which one half was in England and the other in Sicily. He acknowledged that no information yet received had enabled the Cabinet to decide as to the application of the forces at home, or the ulterior use to be made of those in Portugal, yet, with singular rashness, the whole of the southern provinces, containing the richest cities, finest harbors, and most numerous armies, were discarded from consideration; and Sir Hew Dalrymple, who was well acquainted with that part of Spain, and in close and friendly correspondence with the chiefs, was directed to confine his attention to the northern provinces, of which he knew nothing.

The reduction of Junot's army in Portugal, and the discomfiture of Joseph on the Ebro, were regarded as certain events, and the observations of the minister were principally directed, not to the best mode of attack, but to the choice of a line of march that would insure the utter destruction or captivity of the whole French army; nay, elated with extravagant hopes, and strangely despising Napoleon's power, he instructed Lord William Bentinck to urge the Central Junta to an invasion of France, as soon as the army on the Ebro should be annihilated. Thus it appears that the English ministers were either profoundly ignorant of the real state of affairs, or that, with a force scattered in England, Portugal, and Sicily, and not exceeding forty-five thousand men, they expected in one campaign, first to subdue twenty-six thousand French under Junot, then to destroy eighty thousand under Joseph, and turning the tide of war, to invade France.

The battle of Vimiero took place, and Sir Arthur Wellesley naturally declined a mission more suitable to a staff captain than a victorious commander; but before Sir Hew's answer, exposing the false calculations of the minister's plans, could be received in England, a despatch, dated the 2d of September, announced the resolution of the government to employ an army in the northern provinces of Spain, and directed twenty thousand men to be held in readiness to unite with other forces to be sent from England. Nevertheless, this project also was so immature, that no intimation was given how the junction was to be effected, whether by sea or land; nor had the minister even ascertained that the Spaniards would permit English troops to enter Spain at all. Three weeks later, Lord William Bentinck, writing from Madrid, says, "I had an interview with Florida Blanca; he expressed his surprise that there should be a doubt of the Spaniards wishing for the assistance of the English army." Such also was the confusion at home, that Lord Castlereagh repeatedly expressed his fears lest the embarkation of Junot's troops should have absorbed all the means of transport in the Tagus, when a simple reference to the transport office in London would have satisfied him that, although the English army should also be embarked, there would still remain a surplus of twelve thousand tons.

When the popular cry rose against the convention of Cintra, the generals-in-chief were recalled in succession, as rapidly as they had been appointed; the despatches addressed to one generally fell into the hands of his successor; but the plans of the ministers becoming at last mature, on the 6th of October Sir John Moore was finally appointed to lead the forces into Spain. At this period the head of the grand French army was already in the passes of the Pyrenees, the hostile troops on the Ebro coming to blows, the Spaniards weak and divided, and the English forty marches from the scene of action: yet, said the minister to Sir John Moore, "there will be full time to concert your plan of operations with the Spanish generals before the equipment of your army can be completed." Was this the way to oppose Napoleon? Could such proceedings lead to aught but disaster? It has been said that Sir Hew Dalrymple's negligence was the cause of this delay—that he should have had the troops in readiness. But that general could not prudently incur the expense of equipping, for a march, an army that was likely to be embarked; he could not, in short, divine the plans of the ministers before they were formed, and it is evident that the error attaches entirely to the government.

The incapacity of the Spanish generals has been already sufficiently exposed by occasional observations in the narrative; their

faults, glaring and fatal, call for no further remark ; but the exact combinations, the energy and rapidity of the French Emperor, merit the most careful examination. His operations were not—as they have been generally considered—a pompous display of power, to create an appearance of conquest that was unreal ; not a mere violent irruption with a multitude of men, but a series of skilful and scientific movements, worthy of so great a general and politician. It is true that his force was immense, and that the Spaniards were but contemptible soldiers, yet he never neglected the lessons of experience, nor deviated from the strictest rules of art. With astonishing activity, and, when we consider the state of his political relations on the continent, we may add, with astonishing boldness, he first collected ample means to attain his object, then, deceiving his enemies with regard to his numbers, position, and intentions, and choosing his time with admirable judgment, he broke through the weak part of their line and seized Burgos, a central point, which enabled him to envelop and destroy the left wing of the Spaniards before their right could hear of his attack, the latter being itself turned by the same movement, and exposed to a like fate. This position also enabled him to menace the capital, to keep the English army in check, and to cover the formation of those magazines and stores which were necessary to render Burgos the base and pivot of further operations.

Napoleon's forces were numerous enough to have attacked Castaños and Palafox, while Blake was being pursued by the first and fourth corps ; but trusting nothing to chance, he waited for twelve days, until the position of the English army was ascertained, the strength of the northern provinces quite broken, and a secure place of arms established. Then leaving the second corps to cover his communication, and sending the fourth corps into the flat country, to coast, as it were, the heads of the English columns, and to turn the passes of the Carpentino mountains, he caused the Spanish right wing to be destroyed, and himself approached the capital at a moment when not a vestige of a national army was left—when he had good reason to think that the English were in full retreat—when the whole of his own corps were close at hand—and consequently when the greatest moral effect could be produced, and the greatest physical power concentrated at the same time to take advantage of it. Napoleon's dispositions were indeed surprisingly skilful ; for, although Marshal Lefebre's precipitation at Zornoza, by prolonging Blake's agony, lost six days of promise, it is certain that even reverses in battle could neither have checked the Emperor nor helped the Spaniards.

If Soult had been beaten at Gamonal, Napoleon was close at

hand to support the second corps, and the sixth corps would have fallen upon the flank and rear of the Spaniards.

If the first corps had been defeated at Espinosa, the second and fourth corps and the Emperor's troops would have taken Blake in flank and rear.

If Lasnes had been defeated at Tudela, he could have fallen back on Pampeluna. The fifth and eighth corps were marching to support him, and the sixth corps would have taken the Spaniards in flank.

If the Emperor had been repulsed at the Somosierra, the sixth corps would have turned that position by Guadalajara, and the fourth corps by Guadarama.

If Sir John Moore had retreated on Portugal, the fourth corps was nearer to Lisbon than he was ; and if he had overthrown Soult, the fifth and eighth corps were ready to sustain that Marshal, while Napoleon, with fifty thousand men, as we have seen, was prepared to cut the British line of retreat into Galicia. In short, no possible event could have divided the Emperor's forces ; and he constantly preserved a central position, which enabled him to unite his masses in sufficient time to repair any momentary disaster. By a judicious mixture of force and policy also, he obliged Madrid to surrender in two days, and thus prevented the enthusiasm which would doubtless have arisen if the capital had been defended for any time, and the heart-burnings if it had been stormed. The second sweep that he was preparing to make when Sir John Moore's march called off his attention from the south, would undoubtedly have put him in possession of the remaining great cities of the Peninsula. Then the civil benefits promised in his decrees and speeches would have produced their full effect, and the result may be judged of by the fact that, in 1811 and '12, Aragon, Valencia, and Andalusia were, under the able administration of Marshals Soult and Suchet, as submissive as any department of France. Both generals raised Spanish battalions, and employed them not only to preserve the public peace, but to chase and put down the guerillas of the neighboring provinces.

Sir John Moore's talents saved the Peninsula at this crisis ; and here only a military error of Napoleon's may be detected. Forgetting his own maxim that war is not a conjectural art, he took for granted that the English army was falling back to Portugal, and without ascertaining that it was so, acted upon the supposition. This apparent negligence, so unlike his usual circumspection, leads to the notion that through Morla he might have become acquainted with the peculiar opinions and rash temper of Mr. Frere, and trusted that the treacherous arts of the Spaniard, in conjunction with the

presumptuous disposition of the plenipotentiary, would so mislead the English General as to induce him to carry his army to Madrid, and thus deliver it up entire and bound. It was an error; but Napoleon could be deceived or negligent only for a moment. With what vigor he recovered himself, and hastened to remedy his error! How instantaneously he relinquished his intentions against the south, turned his face away from the glittering prize, and bent his whole force against the only man among his adversaries that had discovered talent and decision! Let those who have seen the preparations necessary to enable a small army to act, even on a preconceived plan, say what uncontrollable energy that man possessed, who, suddenly interrupted in such great designs, could, in the course of a few hours, put fifty thousand men in movement on a totally new line of operations, and in the midst of winter execute a march of two hundred miles, with a rapidity hardly to be equalled under the most favorable circumstances.

The indefatigable activity of the Duke of Dalmatia greatly contributed to the success of the whole campaign; and it is a remarkable circumstance, that Soult and Napoleon, advancing from different bases, should have so combined their movements, that, after marching, the one above a hundred, and the other above two hundred miles, through a hostile country, they effected their junction at a given point, and at a given hour, without failure: nor is it less remarkable, that such a decided and well-conducted operation should have been baffled by a general at the head of an inexperienced army.

When Sylla, after all his victories, styled himself a happy, rather than a great general, he discovered his profound knowledge of the military art. Experience had taught him that the speed of one legion, the inactivity of another, the obstinacy, the ignorance, or the treachery of a subordinate officer, was sufficient to mar the best concerted plan—nay, that the intervention of a shower of rain, an unexpected ditch, or any apparently trivial accident, might determine the fate of a whole army. It taught him that the vicissitudes of war are so many, that disappointment will attend the wisest combinations; that a ruinous defeat, the work of chance, often closes the career of the boldest and most sagacious of generals, and that to judge of a commander's conduct by the event alone, is equally unjust and unphilosophical, a refuge for vanity and ignorance.

These reflections seem to be peculiarly applicable to Sir John Moore's campaign, which has by sundry writers been so unfairly discussed. Many of the subsequent disasters of the French can now be distinctly traced to the operations of the British army. It can be demonstrated that the reputation of that excellent man was basely

sacrificed at the period of his death, and that the virulent censures passed upon his conduct have been as inconsiderate as they were unmerited and cruel. The nature of the commands held by Sir John Moore in the years 1807-8-9 forced him into a series of embarrassments, from which few men could have extricated themselves. After refusing the charge of the absurd expedition to Egypt in 1806, which ended, as he judged it must do, unfavorably, he succeeded to the command of the troops in Sicily, a situation which immediately involved him in unpleasant discussions with the Queen of Naples and the British envoy; discussions to which the subsequent well-known enmity of the Cabinet of that day may be traced. By his frank conduct, clear judgment, and firm spirit, he soon obtained an influence over the wretched court of Palermo, that promised the happiest results; the Queen's repugnance to a reform was overcome, the ministers were awed, and the miserable intrigues of the day abated; the Sicilian army was reorganized, and a good military system was commenced under the advice of the British general.

This promising state of affairs lasted but a short time; the Russian fleet put into the Tagus, the French threatened Portugal, and Sicily was no longer considered! Sir John Moore was ordered to quit that island, and to assemble a large force at Gibraltar for a special service; but the troops to be gathered were dispersed in the Mediterranean from Egypt to the Straits, and their junction could not be effected at all, unless the English ambassador at Constantinople should succeed in bringing a negotiation, then pending between the Turks and Russia, to a happy issue.* Now this special service in question had two objects: 1, to aid Sir Sidney Smith in carrying off the royal family of Portugal to the Brazils; 2, to take possession of Madeira; yet neither was made known to the General before his arrival at Gibraltar, which was not until after Junot had taken possession of Lisbon. Sir John Moore then, following his instructions, proceeded home, and thus our interests in Sicily were again abandoned to the vices and intrigues of the court of Palermo. On the passage he crossed General Spencer going with a force against Ceuta, and soon after he had reached England he was despatched to Sweden, without any specific object, and with such vague instructions, that an immediate collision with the unfortunate Gustavus was the consequence.

Having with much dexterity and judgment withdrawn himself and his army from the capricious violence of that monarch, Sir John was superseded and sent to Portugal, with the third rank in an army which at that time no man had such good claims to command as himself; the mode of doing this was also offensive, and it was

* Sir John Moore's Journal, MS.

evident that the ministers desired to drive him into private life. Their efforts were, however, powerless against his pure and elevated patriotism. In a personal conference with Lord Castlereagh, he expressed his indignation at the insults offered to him, and then repaired to his station at Portsmouth, where an official letter followed him, the purport being, that his remonstrance being disrespectful, it would be referred to the King for reprehension, and that measures would be taken to remove him from what appeared to be a disagreeable situation: in other words, that his resignation was demanded. Without a moment's hesitation he replied to this menace, in a letter which breathed the very spirit of manly dignity and patriotism. "I am," he wrote, "this moment honored with your Lordship's letter (by messenger) of yesterday's date. As I have already had the honor to express my sentiments to your Lordship fully at my last interview, it is, I think, unnecessary to trouble you with a repetition of them now. I am about to proceed on the service on which I have been ordered, and it shall be my endeavor to acquit myself with the same zeal by which I have ever been actuated when employed in the service of my country. The communication which it has been thought proper to make to his Majesty cannot fail to give me pleasure; I have the most perfect reliance on his Majesty's justice, and shall never feel greater security than when my conduct, my character, and my honor are under his Majesty's protection." He heard no more on that subject.

The good fortune of England was never more conspicuous than at this period, when her armies and fleets were thus bandied about, and a blind chance governed the councils at home. For first a force collected from all parts of the Mediterranean was transported to the Baltic at a time when an expedition composed of troops, which had but a short time before come back from the Baltic, was sailing from England to the Mediterranean. An army intended to conquer South America was happily assembled in Ireland at the moment when an unexpected event called for their services in Portugal. A division destined to attack the Spaniards at Ceuta, arrived at Gibraltar at the instant when the insurrection of Andalusia fortunately prevented them from making an attempt that would have materially aided Napoleon's schemes against the Peninsula. Again, three days after Sir John Moore had withdrawn his army from Sweden, orders arrived to employ it in carrying off the Spanish troops under Romana—an operation for which it was not required, and which would have retarded, if not entirely frustrated, the campaign in Portugal; but the ministers were resolved at any cost to prevent Moore from commanding the army destined for Portugal. Nor was it the least part of England's fortune that in

such long-continued voyages in bad seasons, no disaster befell the huge fleets thus employed in bearing her strength from one extremity of Europe to the other.

After the convention of Cintra, Moore was again placed at the head of an army, an appointment unexpected by him, for the frank and bold manner in which he expressed himself to the ministers left him little to hope; but the personal good-will of the King, and his own towering reputation, crushed all opposition. Thus, in a few months after he had quitted Sweden, Moore, with an army not exceeding twenty-four thousand men, was in the heart of Spain, opposed to Napoleon, who, having passed the Pyrenees at the head of three hundred and thirty thousand men, could readily bring two hundred thousand to bear on the British; a vast disproportion of numbers, and a sufficient answer to all the idle censures passed upon the retreat to Coruña.

The most plausible grounds of accusation against Sir John Moore's conduct, rest on three alleged errors:—

1st. That he divided his forces.

2dly. That he advanced against Soult.

3dly. That he made a precipitate and unnecessary retreat.

When a general, aware of the strength of his adversary, and of the resources to be placed at his own disposal, arranges a plan of campaign, he may be strictly judged by the rules of art; but if, as in the case of Sir John Moore, he is suddenly appointed to conduct important operations without a plan being arranged, or the means given to arrange one, then it is evident that his capacity or incapacity must be judged of by the energy he displays, the comprehensive view he takes of affairs, and the rapidity with which he accommodates his measures to events, that the original vice of his appointment will not permit him to control. Sir Walter Scott, in his *Life of Napoleon*, with that intrepidity of error which marks the work, has asserted, "that Moore sent ten thousand men, under Sir D. Baird, by sea, to Coruña." That "the general science of war, upon the most extended scale, seems to have been so little understood or practised by the English generals at this time, that instead of the country being carefully reconnoitred by officers of skill, the march of the army was arranged by such hasty and inaccurate information as could be collected from the peasants;" and that "by these reports Sir John Moore was induced to divide his army."

The second of these assertions is devoid of reason, and both are contrary to fact. Sir David Baird was never at Lisbon, but was sent with his troops by the ministers direct from England to Coruña. The "general science of war upon the most extended scale," is an

inflated and unmeaning expression; the most contracted operation requires that good information should be obtained; and as to the fact, Sir John Moore employed his own staff officers to examine the roads, sought information equally from noble and peasant, and, like all great commanders, regulated his proceedings by the general result of his inquiries.*

The first dividing of the army was, therefore, the act of the ministers, who sent Baird to Coruña; the after separation of the artillery was Sir John Moore's, the reasons for which have been already stated; but it is worth while to examine what the effect of that measure was, and what it might have been. And here it may be observed, that, although a brigade of light six-pounders did accompany the troops to Almeida, the road, in a military sense, was *not practicable*, for the guns were in some places let down the rocks by ropes, and in others carried over the difficult places! a practicable affair with one brigade, but how could the great train of guns and ammunition-wagons that accompanied Sir John Hope, have passed such places without a loss of time that would have proved more injurious to the operations than the separation of the artillery? The advance of the army was guided by three contingent cases, any one of which arising would have immediately influenced the operations: 1. Blake on the left, or Castaños and Palafox upon the right, might have beaten the French, and advanced to the Pyrenees. 2. They might have maintained their position on the Ebro. 3. The arrival of reinforcements from France might have forced the Spaniards to fall back upon the upper Duero, on one side, and to the mountains of Guadalaxara on the other. In the first case, there was no risk of marching by divisions towards Burgos, which was the point of concentration given by the British and Spanish ministers. In the second case, the army could safely unite at Valladolid. In the third case, if the division of Sir David Baird had reached Toro early in November,—and this it was reasonable to expect, because that General arrived at Coruña the 13th of October,—the retrograde movement of the Spanish armies would probably have drawn the English to the Guadarama, as a safe and central point between the retiring Spanish wings.

Now the artillery, marching from the Alemtejo by the roads of Talavera and Naval Carnero to Burgos, would pass over one hundred and two Spanish leagues; to Aranda de Duero, eighty-nine leagues; to Valladolid, ninety-two leagues; while the columns that marched by Almeida and Salamanca would pass over one hundred and sixteen leagues to Burgos, and ninety-eight to Valladolid. Wherefore, supposing the Spaniards successful, or even holding their own, the separation of the artillery was an advantage, and if the

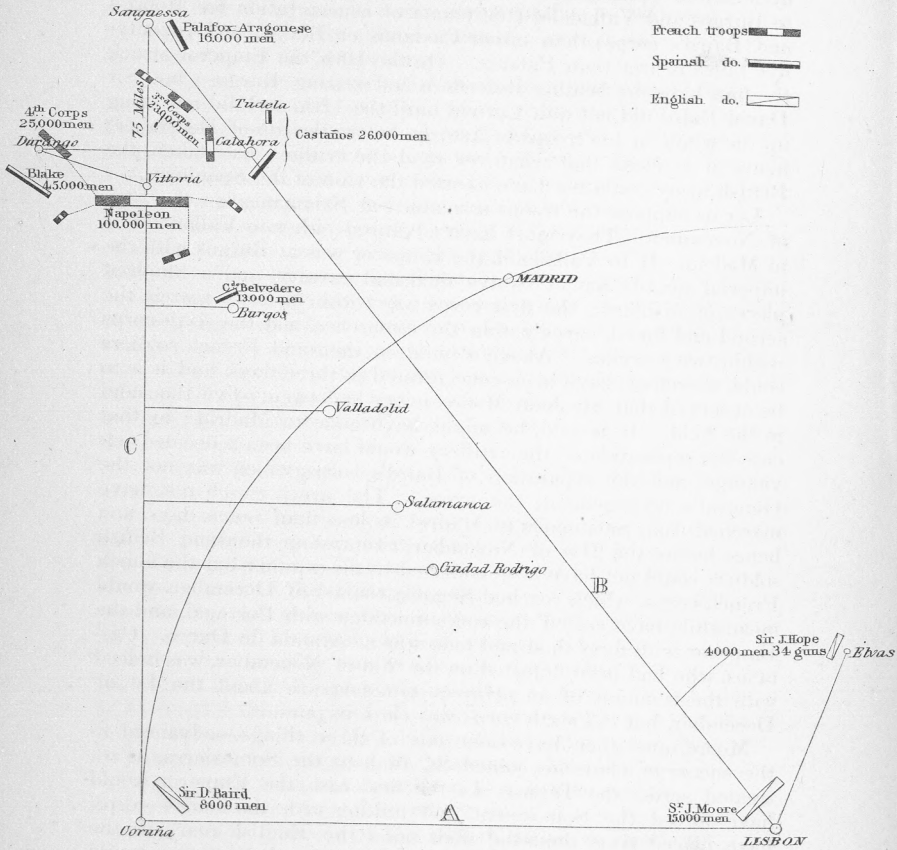
* Appendix, No. 13, § 2.

Spaniards were driven back, their natural line of retreat would have brought them towards Madrid, Blake by Aranda to the Somosierra, and Castaños and Palafox by Sigüenza and Tarazona, to cover the capital, and to maintain an interior communication between the Somosierra and the Henares river. The British artillery would then have halted at Espinar, after a march of only eighty leagues, and Baird and Moore's corps, uniting at Salamanca early in November, might, by a flank march to Arevalo, have insured the concentration of the whole army.

Thus, in the three anticipated cases, the separation of the artillery was prudent, and promised to be advantageous. There was, indeed, a fourth case, that which really happened. All the Spanish armies were dispersed in an instant! utterly effaced! But Sir John Moore could not have divined such a catastrophe, while his ears were ringing with the universal clamor about the numbers and enthusiasm of the patriots; and if he had foreseen even a part of such disasters, he would never have advanced from Portugal. With the plans of the Spanish government he was unacquainted, but he was officially informed that above one hundred and forty thousand Spanish soldiers were between him and a feeble dispirited enemy; and as the intercepted letter from the Governor of Bayonne stated that the reinforcements would only arrive between the 18th of October and the 18th of November, it was reasonable to suppose the French would not commence offensive operations before the latter period, and that ample time would be afforded to concentrate the English troops under the protection of the Spanish armies.

If Sir John Moore could have suspected the delusion under which the British government acted; if he could have divined the incredible folly of the Central Junta and the Spanish generals, or the inaccuracy of the military agents; if he could have supposed that the Spanish armies were weak in numbers, weaker in spirit, and destitute of food and clothing, or that, while the Spanish authorities were pressing him to advance, they would wantonly detain Sir David Baird's troops seventeen days on board the transports; if he could have imagined all this, undoubtedly his arrangements ought and would have been different, his army would have been kept together, and the road to Salamanca through Coria, however difficult, would have been preferred to a divided march.

Now the dangerous and absurd position of the Spanish armies, and the remote situation of the British troops in October, may be explained by the annexed diagram. Lisbon being taken as a centre, and the distance A between Lisbon and Coruña being the radius, let a circle passing through Madrid be described, and let



the tangential line *c* be drawn perpendicular to the radius *A*, meeting the secant *B* at Sanguessa. Then it will be seen that as the extreme right of the Spaniards was posted at Sanguessa, and Castaños at Calahorra, while Blake was near Durango, and the main body of the French was at Vittoria, the latter not only divided the Spaniards, but was actually twenty-five miles nearer to Burgos and Valladolid (the points of concentration for Moore's and Baird's corps) than either Castaños or Blake; and seventy-five miles nearer than Palafox. On the 10th, the Emperor struck the first blow, by beating Belvedere and seizing Burgos; but Sir David Baird did not quit Coruña until the 12th, and did not bring up the whole of his troops to Astorga before the 4th of December; hence it is clear, that whatever road the artillery had taken, the British army could not have averted the ruin of the Spaniards.

Let us suppose the troops assembled at Salamanca on the 13th of November. They must have advanced either to Valladolid or to Madrid. If to Valladolid, the Emperor was at Burgos with the imperial guards, ten or twelve thousand cavalry, and a hundred pieces of artillery; the first corps was within a day's march, the second and fourth corps within three marches, and the sixth corps within two marches. Above a hundred thousand French soldiers could, therefore, have been concentrated in three days, and it is to be observed that Sir John Moore never had twenty-five thousand in the field. It is said, he might have gone to Madrid; in that case the separation of the artillery would have been a decided advantage, and the separation of Baird's corps, which was not the General's arrangement, the error. The army could not have marched from Salamanca to Madrid in less than seven days, and hence before the 21st of November, twenty-four thousand British soldiers could not have been collected in the capital; but the fourth French corps, which reached Segovia the 1st of December, would meanwhile have cut off the communication with Portugal, and the Emperor with forty thousand men was at Aranda de Duero. Castaños, who had been defeated on the 23d of November, was indeed with the remnant of an army at Guadalaxara about the 1st of December, but the sixth corps was close in pursuit.

Moore must then have done one of three things—advanced to the succor of Castaños, joined St. Juan at the Somosierra, or retreated across the Tagus. In the first case, the Emperor would have forced the Somosierra, and uniting with the fourth corps, have placed sixty thousand men upon the English rear; in the second case, the sixth and fourth corps, turning both flanks, would have effected a junction behind the Somosierra, and cut them off from Madrid, while Napoleon, with forty thousand men, assailed

them in front. To retreat over the Tagus was to adopt the southern provinces for a new base of operations, and might have been useful if the Spaniards would have rallied round him with enthusiasm and courage; but would they have done so when the Emperor was advancing with his enormous force? After-experience proves that they would not. The Duke of Dalmatia, in 1810, with an army very inferior to that under Napoleon, reached the gates of Cadiz without a serious blow being struck to oppose him, and at this time the people of the south were reckless of the opportunity procured for them by Sir John Moore's march on Sahagun.

It has, however, been said, that twenty-four thousand British troops, acting vigorously, could have checked the Emperor, and raised the courage of the Spaniards. To such an observation I will oppose a fact. In 1815, Napoleon crossed the Sambre with one hundred and fifteen thousand men, and the two hundred and ten thousand regular troops in his front, among which were more than thirty thousand English, could with difficulty stop his progress after four days' fighting, in three of which he was successful. If Sir John Moore, at a subsequent period, was willing to risk the danger of a movement on the capital, it was because he was misinformed of the French strength, and the Spaniards were represented to be numerous and confident; he was also unacquainted with the defeat at Tudela. His object was, by assisting Castaños, to arouse the spirit of the patriots, and nothing more strongly evinces his hardihood and prompt judgment; for, in his letter to Mr. Frere, he distinctly stated the danger to be incurred, and carefully separating the military from the political reasons, only proposed to venture the army, if the envoy was satisfied that the Spanish government and people would answer to such an appeal, and that the British Cabinet would be willing to incur the risk for such an object. If he did not follow up his own proposal, it was because he had discovered that the army of Castaños was, not simply defeated, but destroyed; because the Somosierra had been forced by a charge of cavalry; and because the passes of the Guadarama, on his line of march to Madrid, were seized by the enemy before his own army could be concentrated.

Why then did he not retreat into Portugal? Because, Napoleon having directed his forces against the capital, the British army was unable to concentrate; because Madrid had shut her gates; because Mr. Frere and the Spanish authorities endeavored to deceive him by false information; because the solemn declaration of the Junta of Toledo, that they would bury themselves under the ruins of that town rather than surrender, joined to the fact that Zaragoza was fighting heroically, seemed to guarantee the

constancy and vigor of that patriotic spirit which was apparently once more excited; because the question was again become political, and it was necessary to satisfy the English people, that nothing was left undone to aid a cause which they had so much at heart; because the peculiar position of the French army at the moment, afforded the means of creating a powerful diversion in favor of the southern provinces. These are the unanswerable reasons for the advance towards Sahagun. In the details of execution, that movement may be liable to some trifling objections; perhaps it would have been better to have carried the army on the 21st at once to Carrion and neglected Sahagun and Saldanha; but in its strategic and political character, it was well conceived and well timed, hardy and successful.

The irritating interference that Sir John Moore was called upon to repel, and the treachery and the folly, equal in its effects to treachery, that he was obliged to guard against, have been sufficiently dwelt upon already; yet before discussing the retreat from Astorga, it may be of some military interest to show that the line of Portugal, although the natural one for the British army to retire upon, was not at this period necessarily either safe or useful, and that greater evils than those incurred by a retreat through Galicia would probably have attended a retrograde march upon Lisbon.

The rugged frontier of Portugal, lying between the Duero and the Tagus, is vulnerable in many points to an invading army of superior force. It may be penetrated between the Duero and Pinhel, and between Pinhel and Guarda, by roads leading into the valleys of the Zezere and the Mondego; between the Sierra de Estrella and the Sierra de Gata, by the road from Alfayates to Sabugal and Panamacor, or that by Guarda and Coria. Again, it may be pierced between the Sierra de Gata and the Tagus by Idanha Velha, Castello Branco, and Sobreira Formosa; and from the Tagus to the Guadiana, a distance of about twenty leagues, the Alemtejo presents an open country without any strong fortress, save La Lippe, which may be disregarded and passed without danger. Now Sir John Moore commenced his forward movement from Salamanca on the 12th of December, and at that period the fourth corps, being at Talavera de la Reyna, was much nearer to Lisbon than the British army was, and the Emperor was preparing to march on that capital with the sixth corps, the guards, and the reserve. He could, as the Duke of Berwick did, penetrate by both sides of the Tagus; and what was to prevent him from reaching Lisbon before the British force, if the latter had retreated from Salamanca? He marched on a shorter line and a better road, and he could supply his troops by requisitions, a system that, however

fatal it may be in the end, is always advantageous at first; but Moore must, from a scanty military chest, have purchased his supplies from a suspicious peasantry, rendered more distrustful by the retreat.

It is true that in Lisbon, Sir John Cradock commanded six thousand infantry and two hundred and fifty-eight cavalry; but the Portuguese provisional government, who had only organized a few ill-composed battalions, were so inactive, that it was not until the 11th of December that a proclamation, calling on the people to arm, was issued. In the arsenal there were scarcely muskets and equipments for eight thousand men, and the new levies were only required to assemble when the country should be actually invaded. Sir Robert Wilson, having with great activity organized about two thousand of the Lusitanian legion, had marched in the middle of December from Oporto, and this was all that could be opposed to an army more numerous, and more favorably situated for invasion, and incomparably better commanded than that with which Massena invaded the country in 1810. Thus it may be affirmed, that if a retreat upon Lisbon was advisable before Napoleon took Madrid, it was not a safe operation after that event, and it is clear that Sir John Moore neither lightly nor injudiciously adopted the line of Galicia.

The arguments of those who deny the necessity of falling back, even behind the Esla, are scarcely worth notice; a simple reference to the numbers under the Emperor, and the direction of his march, is sufficient to expose their futility; but the necessity of the continued and, as it has been unjustly called, the precipitate retreat to Coruña, may not be quite so obvious. The advance to Sahagun was intended to create a diversion, and give the Spaniards an opportunity of making head in the south; it succeeded in drawing away the enemy, yet the Spaniards did not make any head, the Central Junta displayed no energy or wisdom; a few slight demonstrations by the Marquis of Palacios, on the side of the Sierra Morena, and by the Duke of Infantado on the side of Cuença, scarcely disturbed the first corps which remained in La Mancha; ten thousand men were sufficient to maintain Madrid in perfect tranquillity, and a part of the fourth corps even marched from Talavera by Placentia on Salamanca. By the letters of Mr. Stuart, and the reports of his own spies, the English General was informed of all these disheartening circumstances, yet the intelligence arrived slowly and at intervals, and he, hoping that the Spaniards would finally make an effort, announced his intention to hold the Gallicias; Mr. Stuart's correspondence at last deprived him of that hope, and the presence of the Emperor, the great amount of his force,

and the vehemence with which he pressed forward, confirmed the unhappy truth that nothing could be expected from the south.

Sir John Moore could not with twenty-three thousand men maintain himself against the whole French army, and until he reached Astorga his flanks were always exposed; from thence he retreated in comparative security, but the natural strength of the country between that town and Coruña misled persons of shallow judgment, who have since inconsiderately advanced many vague accusations, such as that passes where a hundred men could stop an army were lightly abandoned; that the retreat was a flight, and the General's judgment clouded by the danger of his situation. There might be some foundation for such observations if military commanders were like prize-fighters, bound to strike always at the front; but as long as armies are dependent for their subsistence and ammunition upon lines of communication, the safety of their flanks and rear must be considered as of consequence. Moore was perfectly aware that he could fight any number of men in some of the mountainous positions on the road to Coruña; yet unless he could make a permanent defence, such battles would have been worse than useless, and a permanent defence was impossible, inasmuch as there were none but temporary magazines nearer than Coruña, and there were neither carriages of transport, nor money to procure them; moreover a severe winter had just set in, the people were disinclined to aid the troops, and as the province was poor, few resources could be drawn from the vicinity. Neither was there a single position that could be maintained for more than a few days against a superior force.

That of Rodrigatos could be turned by the old road leading to Villa Franca, Villa Franca itself by the valley of the Syl, and from thence the whole line to Coruña might be turned by the road of Orense, which also led directly to Vigo; and until he reached Nogales, Moore's intention was to retire to Vigo. The French could have marched through the richest part of Galicia to St. Jago and Coruña on the left, or from the Asturias, by the way of Mondonedo, on the right; and if it be asked, why they did not do so? the answer is prompt: the Emperor having quitted the army, the jealousies and misunderstandings usual between generals of equal rank impeded the operations. A coolness subsisted between Marshal Ney and the Duke of Dalmatia, and without entering into the grounds of their difference, it is plain that, in a military point of view, the judgment of the latter was the soundest. The former committed a great error by remaining at Villa Franca instead of pushing his corps, or a part of it, as recommended by Soult, along the valley of Orense to St. Jago de Compostella; the British army would have been lost if the sixth corps had reached Coruña before

it; and what would have been the chances in the battle if three additional French divisions had been engaged? Granting, therefore, that the troops could have been nourished during the winter, Villa Franca, Nogales, Constantino and Lugo were not permanently defensible by any army whose base of operations was at Coruña. Hence it was that Sir John Moore resolved to regain his ships with the view to renew the war in the south, and Hannibal himself could have done no more.

Nor was the mode of executing the retreat at all unbecoming the character of an able officer. Lord Bacon observes that "honorable retreats are no ways inferior to brave charges, as having less of fortune, more of discipline, and as much of valor." That is an honorable retreat in which the retiring general loses no trophies in flight sustains every charge without being broken, and finally, after a severe action, re-embarks his army in the face of a superior enemy, without being seriously molested. It would be honorable to effect this before a foe only formidable from numbers, but it is infinitely more creditable, when the commander, while struggling with bad weather and worse fortune, has to oppose veterans with inexperienced troops, and to contend against an antagonist of eminent ability, who scarcely suffers a single advantage to escape him during this long and vigorous pursuit. All this Sir John Moore did, and finished his work by a death as firm and glorious as any that antiquity can boast of.

Put to Lord Bacon's test, in what shall the retreat to Coruña be found deficient? Something in discipline perhaps, but that fault does not attach to the general. Those commanders who have been celebrated for making fine retreats were in most instances well acquainted with their armies; and Hannibal, speaking of the elder Scipio, derided him, although a brave and skilful man, for that, being unknown to his own soldiers, he should presume to oppose himself to a general who could call to each man under his command by name; thus inculcating, that unless troops be trained in the peculiar method of a commander, the latter can scarcely achieve anything great. Now Moore had a young army suddenly placed under his guidance, and it was scarcely united, when the superior numbers of the enemy forced it to a retrograde movement under very harassing circumstances; he had not time, therefore, to establish a system of discipline, and it is in the leading events, not the minor details, that the just criterion of his merits is to be sought for.

Was the retreat uncalled for? Was it unnecessarily precipitate? Was any opportunity of crippling the enemy lost? Was any weakness to be discovered in the personal character of the General? These are the questions that sensible men will ask. The first has been already examined; the second is a matter of simple calcula-

tion. The rear-guard quitted Astorga on the 1st of January; on the 3d it repulsed the enemy in a sharp skirmish at Calcabellos; the 6th it rejoined the main body at Lugo, having three times checked the pursuers during the march; it was unbroken, had lost no gun, suffered no misfortune. The whole army offered battle at Lugo for two successive days, and it was not accepted, and the retreat recommencing, the troops reached Betanzos on the morning of the 10th, and Coruña on the 11th; thus in eleven days, three of which were days of rest, a small army passed over a hundred and fifty miles of good road. Now Napoleon, with fifty thousand men, left Madrid on the 22d of December, and the 28th he was at Villepando, having performed a march, on bad roads, of a hundred and sixty-four miles in seven days. The retreat to Coruña was consequently not precipitate, unless it can be shown that it was unnecessary to retreat at all beyond Villa Franca; neither can it be asserted, that any opportunity of crippling the enemy was lost. To fight a battle was the game of the French Marshal, and if any censure will apply to his able campaign, it is that he delayed to attack at Lugo; victorious or beaten, it would have increased the embarrassments of his adversary, who must, have continued his retreat encumbered with the wounded, or the latter must have been abandoned without succor in the midst of winter.

At Coruña the absence of the fleet necessarily brought on a battle. That it was honorable to the British troops is clear from the fact that they embarked without loss after the action. That it was absolutely necessary to embark notwithstanding the success, is a certain proof how little advantage could have been derived from any battle fought farther inland, and of Sir John Moore's prudence in declining an action the moment he had rallied his army at Lugo and restored that discipline which the previous movements had shaken. But, notwithstanding the clamor with which this campaign has been assailed, as if no army had ever yet suffered such misfortunes, it is certain that the nominal loss was small—the real loss smaller—and that it sinks into nothing when compared with the advantages gained. An army which, after marching in advance or retreat above five hundred miles before an enemy of immensely superior force, has only lost, including those killed in battle, four thousand men, or a sixth part of its numbers, cannot be said to have suffered severely; nor would the loss have been so great but for the intervention of the accidental occurrences mentioned in the narrative.* Night marches are seldom happy; that from Lugo to Betanzos cost the army in stragglers more than double the number of men lost in all the preceding operations; nevertheless, the reserve in that, as in all the other movements, suffered little, and

* Appendix, No. 26.

it is a fact, that the light brigades detached by the Vigo road, which were not pursued, made no forced marches, slept under cover, and were well supplied, left, in proportion to their strength, as many men behind as any other part of the army; thus proof upon proof accumulates that inexperience was the primary and principal cause of the disorders which attended the retreat. Those disorders were sufficiently great, but many circumstances contributed to produce an appearance of suffering and disorganization which was not real.

Sir John Moore's intention was to have proceeded to Vigo, in order to restore order before he sailed for England, instead of which the fleet steered home directly from Coruña, and a terrible storm scattered it; many ships were wrecked; and the remainder, driving up the channel, were glad to put into any port. The soldiers, thus thrown on shore, were spread from the Land's End to Dover. Their haggard appearance, ragged clothing, and dirty accoutrements, things common enough in war, struck a people only used to the daintiness of parade with surprise; the usual exaggerations of *laen* just escaped from perils and distresses were increased by the uncertainty in which all were as to the fate of their comrades; a deadly fever, the result of anxiety, and of the sudden change from fatigue to the confinement of a ship, filled the hospitals at every port with officers and soldiers, and thus the miserable state of Sir John Moore's army became the topic of every letter, and the theme for every country newspaper along the coast. The nation, at that time unused to great operations, forgot that war is not a harmless game, and judging of the loss positively, instead of comparatively, was thus disposed to believe the calumnies of interested men, who were eager to cast a shade over one of the brightest characters that ever adorned the country. Those calumnies triumphed for a moment, but Moore's last appeal to his country for justice will be successful; posterity, revering and cherishing his name, will visit such of his odious calumniators as are not too contemptible to be remembered, with a just and severe retribution; for thus it is that time freshens the beauty of virtue and withers the efforts of baseness. And if authority be sought for in a case where reason speaks so plainly, future historians will not fail to remark, that the man whose talents exacted the praises of Soult, of Wellington, and of Napoleon, could be no ordinary soldier.

"Sir John Moore," says the first, "took every advantage that the country afforded to oppose an active and vigorous resistance, and he finished by dying in a combat that must do credit to his memory."*

Napoleon more than once affirmed, that if he committed a few trifling errors, they were to be attributed to his peculiar situation,

* Appendix, No. 14.

for that his talents and firmness alone had saved the English army from destruction.*

“In Sir John Moore’s campaign,” said the Duke of Wellington, “I can see but one error: when he advanced to Sahagun, he should have considered it as a movement of retreat, and sent officers to the rear to mark and prepare the halting places for every brigade. But this opinion I have formed after long experience of war, and especially of the peculiarities of a Spanish war, which must have been seen to be understood: finally, it is an opinion formed after the event.”

* Vivian’s Conversations at Elba. Voice from St Helena.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

Slight effect produced in England by the result of the campaign—Debate in Parliament—Treaty with Spain—Napoleon receives addresses at Valladolid—Joseph enters Madrid—Appointed the Emperor's lieutenant—Distribution of the French army—The Duke of Dantzic forces the bridge of Almaraz—Toledo entered by the first corps—Infantado and Palacios ordered to advance upon Madrid—Cuesta appointed to the command of Galluzzo's troops—Florida Blanca dies at Seville—Succeeded in the presidency by the Marquis of Astorga—Money arrives at Cadiz from Mexico—Bad conduct of the Central Junta—State of the Spanish army—Constancy of the soldiers—Infantado moves on Tarancon—His advanced guard defeated there—French retire towards Toledo—Disputes in the Spanish army—Battle of Ucles—Retreat of Infantado—Cartojal supersedes him, and advances to Ciudad Real—Cuesta takes post on the Tagus, and breaks down the bridge of Almaraz.

THE effect produced in England, by the unfortunate issue of Sir John Moore's campaign, was not in proportion with the importance of the subject. The people, trained to party politics and possessed of no real power to rebuke the folly of the Cabinet, regarded both disasters and triumphs with factious rather than with national feelings, and it was alike easy to draw their attention from affairs of weight or to fix it on matters of little moment. Thus, the Duke of York's conduct being at this time made the object of parliamentary inquiry, to drag his private frailties before the world was thought essential to the welfare of the nation, while the incapacity which had caused England and Spain to mourn in tears of blood, was left unprobed. An insular people, who are by their situation protected from the worst evils of war, may suffer themselves to be thus deluded; but if an unfortunate campaign were to bring a devastating enemy into the heart of the country, the honor of a general and the military policy of the Cabinet would no longer be considered as mere subjects for a vile sophist's talents in misrepresentation.

It is true that the misfortunes of the campaign were by many orators, in both houses of Parliament, treated with great warmth, but the discussions were chiefly remarkable as examples of astute eloquence without any knowledge of facts. The opposition speakers, eager to criminate the government, exaggerated the disasters of the retreat, and comprehending neither the motives nor the

movements of Sir John Moore, urged several untenable charges against the ministers, who, disunited by personal feelings, did not all adopt the same grounds of defence. Thus, Lord Castlereagh and Lord Liverpool, passing over those errors of the Cabinet which left the General only a choice of difficulties at his outset, asserted, and truly, that the advantages derived from the advance to Sahagun more than compensated the loss in the subsequent retreat; and both those statesmen paid an honorable tribute to the merits of the commander; but Mr. Canning, unscrupulously resolute to defend Mr. Frere, assented to all the erroneous statements of the opposition, and then with malignant dexterity endeavored to convert them into charges against the fallen general. Sir John Moore was, he said, wholly answerable for the campaign. Whether glorious or distressing, whether to be admired or deplored, it was his own; he had kept the government quite ignorant of his proceedings! Being closely pressed on this point by Mr. C. Hutchinson and Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Canning deliberately repeated the assertion; yet, not long afterwards, Sir John Moore's letters to the ministers, written almost daily, and furnishing exact and copious information of all that was passing in the Peninsula, were laid before the house!

While the dearest interests of the nation were thus treated in Parliament, the ardor of the English people was somewhat abated; yet the Spanish cause, so rightful in itself, was still popular, and a treaty was concluded with the Supreme Junta, by which the contracting powers bound themselves to make common cause against France, and to agree to no peace except by common consent. But the ministers, although professing unbounded confidence in the result of the struggle, already looked upon the Peninsula as a secondary object; for the warlike preparations of Austria, and the reputation of the Archduke Charles, whose talents were foolishly said to exceed Napoleon's, had awakened the dormant spirit of coalitions; and it was more agreeable to the aristocratic feeling of the English Cabinet, that the French should be defeated by a monarch in Germany than by a plebeian insurrection in Spain. The obscure intrigues of the Princess of Tour and Taxis, and the secret societies on the Continent emanating as they did from patrician sources, excited the sympathy of the ministers, engaged their attention, and nourished those distempered feelings which made them see only weakness and disaffection in France, when throughout that mighty empire few desired and none dared to oppose the Emperor's wishes; when even secret discontent was confined to some royalist chiefs and splenetic republicans, whose influence was never felt until after Napoleon had suffered the direst reverses.

Unable to conceive the extent of that monarch's views, or to measure the grandeur of his genius, the ministers attributed the results of his profound calculations to a blind chance, his victories to treason, to corruption, to anything but that admirable skill with which he wielded the most powerful military force that ever obeyed the orders of a single chief. Thus self-deluded, and misjudging the difficulties to be encountered, they adopted every idle project, and squandered their resources without any great or decided effort. While negotiating with the Spanish Junta for the occupation of Cadiz, they were planning an expedition against Italy, and while loudly asserting their resolution to defend Portugal, reserved their principal force for a secret blow in Holland; their preparations being however marked by a pomp and publicity totally unsuited to war. With what a mortal calamity that pageant closed, shall be noticed hereafter; at present it is fitting to trace the operations in Spain, which were coincident with the retreat of Sir John Moore.

It has already been stated that when Madrid surrendered, Napoleon refused to permit Joseph to return there unless the public bodies and the heads of families would unite to demand his restoration, and swear, without any mental reservation, to be true to him.* Registers had consequently been opened in the different quarters of the city, and twenty-eight thousand six hundred heads of families inscribed their names, and voluntarily swore in presence of the host, that they were sincere in their desire to receive Joseph.† After this, deputations from all the councils, from the junta of commerce and money, the hall of the Alcaldes, and from the corporation, waited on the Emperor at Valladolid, and being there joined by the municipality of that town, and by deputies from Astorga, Leon, and other places, presented the oath, and prayed that Joseph might be king. Napoleon, thus entreated, consented that his brother should reassume his kingly functions.

It would be idle to argue from this apparently voluntary submission to the French Emperor, that a change favorable to the usurpation had been produced in the feelings of the Spanish people; but it is evident that Napoleon's victories and policy had been so far effectual, that in the capital, and many other great towns, the multitude as well as the notables were, either from fear or conviction, submissive to his will; and it is but reasonable to suppose, that if his conquests had not been interrupted by extraneous circumstances, this example would have been generally followed, in preference to the more glorious, but ineffectual, resistance made by the inhabitants of those cities, whose fortitude and whose calamity

* Nellerto.

† Azanza and O'Farril.

ties have forced from mankind a sorrowful admiration. The cause of Spain at this moment was in truth lost, if any cause, depending upon war, which is but a succession of violent changes, can be called so; for the armies were dispersed, the government bewildered, the people dismayed, the cry of resistance hushed, and the stern voice of Napoleon, answered by the tread of three hundred thousand French veterans, was heard throughout the land. But the hostility of Austria arrested the conqueror's career, and the Spanish energy revived at the abrupt cessation of his terrific warfare.

Joseph, escorted by his French guards, in number between five and six thousand, entered Madrid the 23d of January. He was, however, a king without revenues, and he would have been without even the semblance of authority, if he had not been likewise nominated the Emperor's lieutenant in Spain, by virtue of which title he was empowered to move the French army at his will. This power was one extremely unacceptable to the marshals, and he would have found it difficult to enforce it, even though he had restrained the exercise to the limits prescribed by his brother; but disdaining to separate the general from the monarch, he conveyed his orders to the French army through his Spanish ministers, and the army in its turn disdained and resisted the assumed authority of men, who, despised for their want of military knowledge, were also suspected as favoring interests essentially differing from those of the troops.*

The iron grasp that had compressed the pride and the ambitious jealousy of the marshals being thus relaxed, the passions which had ruined the patriots began to work among their enemies, producing indeed less fatal effects, because their scope was more circumscribed, but sufficiently pernicious to stop the course of conquest. The French army, no longer a compact body, terrible alike from its massive strength and its flexible activity, became a collection of independent bands, each formidable in itself, but, from the disunion of the generals, slow to combine for any great object; and plainly discovering, by irregularities and insubordination, that they knew when a warrior and when a voluptuous monarch was at their head. These evils were however only felt at a later period, and the distribution of the troops, when Napoleon quitted Valladolid, still bore the impress of his genius.

The first corps was quartered in La Mancha.

The second corps was destined to invade Portugal.

The third and fifth corps carried on the siege of Zaragoza.

The fourth corps remained in the valley of the Tagus.

* King's Correspondence captured at Vittoria, MSS.