

destroy his own armies! sacrifice forty thousand men, to disgrace a general whom he was not obliged to employ at all! St. Cyr acknowledges that when he received his instructions from the Emperor, he observed the affliction of the latter at the recent loss of Dupont's force, yet he would have it believed, that, in the midst of this regret, that monarch, with a singular malice, was preparing greater disasters for himself, merely to disgrace the commander he was talking to; and why? because the latter had formerly served with the army of the Rhine! Yet St. Cyr met with no reverses in Catalonia, and was afterwards made a Marshal by this implacable enemy.

2. That the seventh corps was not well supplied, and its commander thereby placed in a difficult situation, is not to be disputed in the face of the facts stated by St. Cyr; but if war were a state of ease and smoothness, the fame which attends successful generals would be unmerited. Napoleon selected St. Cyr because he thought him a capable commander; in feeble hands, he knew the seventh corps would be weak, but, with St. Cyr at its head, he judged it sufficient to overcome the Catalonians, nor was he much mistaken. Barcelona, the great object of solicitude, was saved; Rosas was taken; and if Tarragona and Tortosa did not also fall, the one after the battle of Molino del Rey, the other after that of Valls, it was because the French General did not choose to attack them. Those towns were without the slightest preparation for defence, moral or physical, and must have surrendered; nor can the unexpected and stubborn resistance of Gerona, Zaragoza, and Valencia be cited against this opinion; these cities were previously prepared and expectant of a siege, yet, in two instances, there was a moment of dismay and confusion, not fatal, only because the besieging generals wanted that ready vigor which is the characteristic of great captains.

3. St. Cyr, aware that a mere calculation of numbers and equipment is but a poor measure of the strength of armies, exalts the enthusiasm and the courage of the Catalans, and seems to tremble at the danger which, owing to Napoleon's suicidal jealousy, menaced, at that period, not only the seventh corps but even the south of France. In answer to this, it may be observed that M. de St. Cyr did not hesitate, with eighteen thousand men, having no artillery and carrying only sixty rounds of musket-ammunition, to plunge into the midst of those terrible armies; to march through the mountains for whole weeks; to attack the strongest positions with the bayonet alone, nay, even to dispense with the use of his artillery, when he did bring it into action, lest his men should not have a sufficient contempt for their enemies. And who were these

undaunted soldiers, so high in courage, so confident, so regardless of the great weapon of modern warfare? Not the select of the imperial guards, the conquerors in a hundred battles, but raw levies; the dregs and scrapings of Italy, the refuse of Naples and of Rome; states which to name as military was to ridicule. With such soldiers, the battles of Cardadeu, Molino, Igualada, and Valls were gained; yet St. Cyr does not hesitate to call the Migueletes, who were beaten at those places, the best light troops in the world. The best *light troops* are neither more nor less than the best troops in the world; but if, instead of fifteen thousand Migueletes, the four thousand men composing Wellington's light division had been on the heights of Cardadeu, St. Cyr's sixty rounds of ammunition would scarcely have carried him to Barcelona. The injurious force with which personal feelings act upon the judgment are well known, or it might excite wonder that so good a writer and so able a soldier should advance such fallacies.

4. St. Cyr's work, admirable in many respects, bears, nevertheless, the stamp of carelessness. Thus, he affirms that Dupont's march to Andalusia encouraged the tumults of Aranjuez, yet the tumults of Aranjuez happened in the month of March, nearly three months previous to Dupont's movement, which took place in May and June. Again, he says that Napoleon, to make a solid conquest in the Peninsula, should have commenced with Catalonia, instead of overrunning Spain by the northern line of operations; an opinion quite unsustainable. The progress of the seventh corps was impeded by the want of provisions, not by the enemy's force; twenty thousand men could beat the Spaniards in the field, but they could not subsist. To have increased the number would only have increased the difficulty. Would it have given a just idea of Napoleon's power, to employ the strength of his empire against the fortified towns in Catalonia? In what would the greater solidity of this plan have consisted? While the French were thus engaged, the patriots would have been organizing their armies; England would have had time to bring all her troops into line, and two hundred thousand men placed between Zaragoza and Tortosa, or breaking into France by the western Pyrenees, while the Austrians were advancing to the Rhine, would have sorely shaken the solidity of General St. Cyr's plan.

5. The French Emperor better understood what he was about. He saw a nation intrinsically powerful and vehemently excited, yet ignorant of war and wanting the aid which England was eager to give. All the elements of power existed in the Peninsula, and they were fast approximating to a centre, when Napoleon burst upon that country, and as the gathering of a water-spout is said to

be sometimes prevented by the explosion of a gun, so the rising strength of Spain was dissipated by his sudden and dreadful assault; if the war was not then finished, it was because his lieutenants were tardy and jealous of each other. St. Cyr also appears to have fallen into an error, common enough in all times, and one very prevalent among the French generals in Spain. He considered his task as a whole in itself, instead of a constituent part of a greater system. He judged very well what was wanting for the seventh corps, to subjugate Catalonia in a solid manner, but he did not discern that it was fitting that the seventh corps should forget Catalonia, to aid the general plan against the Peninsula. Rosas surrendered at the very moment when Napoleon, after the victories of Baylen, Espinosa, Tudela, and the Somosierra, was entering Madrid as a conqueror; the battles of Cardadeu and Molino del Rey may, therefore, be said to have completely prostrated Spain, because the English army was isolated, the Spanish armies destroyed, and Zaragoza invested. Was that a time to calculate the weight of powder and the number of pick-axes required for a formal siege of Tarragona? The whole Peninsula was shaken to the centre, the proud hearts of the Spaniards sunk with terror, and in that great consternation, to be daring was, on the part of the French generals, to be prudent. St. Cyr was not in a condition to besiege Tarragona formally, but he might have assaulted it with less danger than he incurred by his march to Barcelona. The battle of Valls was another epoch of the same kind; the English army had re-embarked, and the rout of Ucles had taken place; Portugal was invaded and Zaragoza had just fallen. That was a time to render victory fruitful, yet no attempt was made against Tortosa.

6. St. Cyr, who justly blames Palacios and Vives for remaining before Barcelona instead of carrying their army to the Ter and the Fluvia, seems inclined to applaud Reding for conduct equally at variance with the true principles of war. It was his own inactivity after the battle of Molino that produced the army of Reding, and the impatient folly of that army, and of the people, produced the plan which led to the rout of Igualada and the battle of Valls. Instead of disseminating thirty thousand men in a line of sixty miles, from Tarragona to the upper Llobregat, Reding should have put Tarragona and Tortosa into a state of defence, and leaving a small corps of observation near the former, have made Lerida the base of his operations. In that position, keeping the bulk of his force in one mass, he might have acted on St. Cyr's flanks and rear—actually, by the lines of Cervera and Mombanch—and without

danger to himself; nor could the French General have attempted aught against Tarragona.

But it is not with reference to the seventh corps alone that Lerida was the proper base of the Spanish army. Let us suppose that the Supreme Junta had acted for a moment upon a rational system; that the Valencian troops, instead of remaining at Morella, had been directed on Lerida, and that the Duke of Infantado's force had been carried from Cuença to the same place instead of being routed at Ucles. Thus, in the beginning of February, more than fifty thousand regular troops would have been assembled at Lerida, encircled by the fortresses of Monzon, Belaguer, Mequinenza, Tarragona, and Tortosa. Its lines of operations would have been as numerous as the roads. The Seu d'Urgel, called the granary of Catalonia, would have supplied corn, and the communication with Valencia would have been direct and open. From this central and menacing position, such a force might have held the seventh corps in check, and even raised the siege of Zaragoza; nor could the first corps have followed Infantado's movements without uncovering Madrid and abandoning the system of the Emperor's operations against Portugal and Andalusia.

7. The French General praises Reding's project for surrounding the French, and very gravely observes that the *only method* of defeating it was by taking the offensive himself. Nothing can be juster; but he should have added that it was a *certain method*; and, until we find a great commander acting upon Reding's principles, this praise can only be taken as an expression of civility towards a brave adversary. His own movements were very different; he disliked Napoleon personally, but he did not dislike his manner of making war. Bonaparte's campaign in the Alps against Beaulieu was not unheeded by his lieutenant. For one proceeding of St. Cyr's, however, there is no precedent, nor is it likely that it will ever be imitated. He stopped the fire of his artillery, when it was doing infinite execution, the better to establish the moral ascendancy of his troops. What a sarcasm on the courage of his enemies! What a complete answer to his own complaints that Napoleon had maliciously given him a hopeless task! But, he says, his adversaries were numerous and fought bravely! Surely he could not have commanded so long without knowing that *there is in all battles a decisive moment, when every weapon, every man, every combination of force that can be brought to bear, is necessary to gain the victory.* Wilfully to neglect the means of reducing the enemy's strength, previous to that critical period of an action, is a gross folly.

8. If General St. Cyr's own marches and battles did not sufficiently expose the fallacy of his opinions relative to the vigor of the Catalans, Lord Collingwood's correspondence would supply the deficiency. That able and sagacious man, writing at this period, says:

"In Catalonia, everything seems to have gone wrong since the fall of Rosas. The Spaniards are in considerable force, yet are dispersed and panic-struck whenever the enemy appears."—"The applications for supplies are unlimited; they want money, arms, and ammunition, of which no use appears to be made when they get them."—"In the English papers, I see accounts of successes, and convoys cut off, and wagons destroyed, which are not true. What has been done in that way has been by the boats of our frigates, which have, in two or three instances, landed men and attacked the enemy with great gallantry. The Somatenes range the hills in a disorderly way, and fire at a distance, but retire on being approached."—"The multitudes of men do not make a force."

Add to this the Spanish historian Cabanes' statements that the Migueletes were always insubordinate, detested the service of the line, and were many of them armed only with staves, and we have the full measure of the Catalans' resistance.

It was not the vigor of the Catalans, but of the English, that in this province, as in every part of the Peninsula, retarded the progress of the French. Would St. Cyr have wasted a month before Rosas; would he have been hampered in his movements by his fears for the safety of Barcelona; would he have failed to besiege and take Tarragona and Tortosa, if a French fleet had attended his progress by the coast, or if it could even have made two runs in safety? To Lord Collingwood, who, like the Roman Bibulus, perished of sickness on his decks rather than relax in his watching,—to his keen judgment, his unceasing vigilance, the resistance made by the Catalans was due. His fleet it was that interdicted the coast line to the French, protected the transport of the Spanish supplies from Valencia, assisted in the defence of the towns, aided the retreat of the beaten armies; in short, did that which the Spanish fleets in Cadiz and Carthage should have done. But the Supreme Junta, equally disregarding the remonstrances of Lord Collingwood, the good of their own country, and the treaty with England, by which they were bound to prevent their ships from falling into the hands of the enemy, left their fleets to rot in harbor, although money was advanced, and the assistance of the British seamen offered to fit them out for sea.

Having now related the principal operations that took place in

the eastern and central provinces of Spain, which were so suddenly overrun by the French Emperor; having shown that, however restless the Spaniards were under the yoke imposed upon them, they were unable to throw it off; I shall turn to Portugal, where the tide of invasion, still flowing onward, although with diminished volume, was first stayed, and finally forced back, by a counter flood of mightier strength.

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER I.

Transactions in Portugal—State of that country—Neglected by the English Cabinet—Sir J. Cradock appointed to command the British troops—Touches at Coruña—At Oporto—State of this city—Lusitanian Legion—State of Lisbon—Cradock endeavors to reinforce Moore—Mr. Villiers arrives at Lisbon—Pikes given to the populace—Destitute state of the army—Mr. Frere, and others, urge Cradock to move into Spain—The reinforcements for Sir J. Moore halted at Castello Branco—General Cameron sent to Almeida—French advanced guard reaches Merida—Cradock relinquishes the design of reinforcing the army in Spain, and concentrates his own troops at Saccavem—Discontents in Lisbon—Defenceless state and danger of Portugal—Relieved by Sir J. Moore's advance to Sahagun.

TRANSACTIONS IN PORTUGAL.

When Sir John Moore marched from Portugal, the Regency, established by Sir Hew Dalrymple, nominally governed that country; but the weak character of the members, the listless habits engendered by the ancient system of misrule, the intrigues of the Oporto faction, and the general turbulence of the people, soon produced an alarming state of anarchy. Private persons usurped the functions of government, justice was disregarded, insubordination and murder were hailed as indications of patriotism, and war was the universal cry; yet military preparations were wholly neglected, for the nation, in its foolish pride, believed that the French had neither strength nor spirit for a second invasion.*

In Lisbon there was a French faction; the merchants were apprehensive, the Regency unpopular, and the public mind unsettled; in Oporto, the violence of both people and soldiers was such that Sir Harry Burrard sent two British regiments there by sea, to preserve tranquillity; in fine, the seeds of disorder were widely cast and sprouting vigorously before the English Cabinet thought fit to accredit a responsible diplomatist near the government, or to place a permanent chief at the head of the forces left by Sir John Moore. The convention of Cintra was known in England in September; the Regency was established and the frontier fortresses occupied by British troops in the same month; yet it was not until the middle of December that Mr. Villiers and Sir John Cradock, charged with the

* Appendix, No. 32, § 1.

conduct of the political and military proceedings in Portugal reached Lisbon; thus the important interval between the departure of Junot and their arrival was totally neglected by the English Cabinet.

Sir Hew Dalrymple, who had nominated the Regency; Sir Arthur Wellesley, who to local knowledge and powerful talents added the influence of a victorious commander, Burrard, Spencer, were all removed from Portugal at the very moment when the presence of persons acquainted with the real state of affairs was essential to the well-being of the British interests in that country. And this error was the offspring of passion and incapacity; for, if the convention of Cintra had been rightly understood, the ministers, appreciating the advantages of that treaty, would have resisted the clamor of the moment, and the generals would not have been withdrawn from the public service abroad, to meet unjust and groundless charges at home.

It may be disputed whether Portugal was the fittest theatre for the first operations of a British army; but, when that country was actually freed from the presence of an enemy; when the capital and the frontier fortresses were occupied by English troops; when Sir John Moore, leaving his hospitals, baggage, and magazines there, as in a place of arms, had marched to Spain, the question was no longer doubtful. The ancient relations between England and Portugal, the greatness of the port of Lisbon, the warlike disposition of the Portuguese; above all, the singularly happy circumstance, that there was neither court nor monarch to balance the English influence, and that even the nomination of the Regency was the work of an English General, offered such great and obvious advantages as could nowhere else be obtained. It was a miserable policy that, neglecting such an occasion, retained Sir Arthur Wellesley in England, while Portugal, like a drunken man, at once weak and turbulent, was reeling on the edge of a precipice.

The 5th of December, 1808, Sir John Cradock, being on his voyage to Lisbon, touched at Coruña. Fifteen hundred thousand dollars had just arrived there in the *Lavinia* frigate, but Sir John Moore's intention to retreat upon Portugal being known, Cradock divided this sum, and carried away eight hundred thousand dollars proposing to leave a portion at Oporto, and to take the remainder to Lisbon, that Moore might find, on whatever line he retreated, a supply of money.

From Coruña he proceeded to Oporto, where he found that Sir Robert Wilson had succeeded in organizing, under the title of the Lusitanian Legion, about thirteen hundred men, and that others were on their way to reinforce him; but this excepted, nothing

civil or military bespoke either arrangement or common sense. The Bishop still intent upon acquiring supreme rule, was deeply engaged with secret intrigues, and under him, a number of factious and designing persons instigated the populace to violent actions with a view to profit from their excesses.*

The formation of this Lusitanian Legion was originally a project of the Chevalier da Souza, Portuguese Minister in London; he was one of the Bishop's faction, and this force was raised not so much to repel the enemy, as to support that party against the government. The men were promised higher pay than any other Portuguese soldiers, to the great discontent of the latter; and they were clad in uniforms differing in color from the national troops. The Regency, who dreaded the machinations of the turbulent priest, entertained the utmost jealousy of this legion, which, in truth, was a most anomalous force, and, as might be expected from its peculiar constitution, was productive of much embarrassment.

Sir John Cradock left three hundred thousand dollars at Oporto, and directed the two British battalions which were in that neighborhood to march to Almeida; then taking on board a small detachment of German troops, he set sail for Lisbon. Before his departure, he strongly advised Sir Robert Wilson to move such of his legionaries as were sufficiently organized to Villa Real, in *Tras os Montes*, a place appointed by the Regency for the assembly of the forces in the north; Sir Robert, tired of the folly and disgusted with the insolence and excesses of the ruling mob, readily adopted this advice, so far as to quit Oporto, but having views of his own, went to Almeida instead of Villa Real.

The state of the capital was little better than that of Oporto. There was arrangement neither for present nor for future defence, and the populace, albeit less openly encouraged to commit excesses, were quite uncontrolled by the government. The Regency had a keener dread of domestic insurrection than of the return of the French, whose operations they regarded with even less anxiety than the Bishop did, as being further removed than he was from the immediate theatre of war. Their want of system and vigilance was evinced by the following fact.† Sattaro and another person, having contracted for the supply of the British troops, demanded, in the name of the English General, all the provisions in the public stores of Portugal, and then sold them to the English commissaries for his own profit.

Sir John Cradock's instructions directed him to reinforce Moore's army, and not to interfere with that General's command if the course of events brought him back to Portugal. In fact, his operations were limited to the holding of Elvas, Almeida, and the

* Appendix, No. 32, § 2.

† *Ibid.* § 5.

capital; for, although he was directed to encourage the formation of a native army upon a good and regular system, and even to act in concert with it on the frontier, he was debarred from political interference; even his relative situation as to rank was left unsettled until the arrival of Mr. Villiers, to whose direction all political and many military arrangements were intrusted.*

It is evident that the influence of a general thus fettered, and commanding only a small scattered force, must be feeble and insufficient to produce any real amelioration in the military situation of the country; yet the English ministers, attentive only to the false information obtained from interested agents, still imagined that not only the Spanish, but the Portuguese armies were numerous, and to be relied upon; and they confidently expected that the latter would be able to take an active part in the Spanish campaign. Cradock, feeling the danger of this illusion, made it his first object to transmit home exact information of the real strength and efficiency of the native regular troops. They were nominally twenty thousand; but Miguel Pereira Forjas, military secretary to the Regency, and the ablest public man Portugal possessed, acknowledged that this force was a nullity, and that there were not more than ten thousand stand of serviceable arms in the kingdom, the greatest part of which were English.† The troops themselves were undisciplined and unruly; the militia and the "*ordenanza*," or armed peasantry, animated by the spirit of outrage rather than of enthusiasm, evinced no disposition to submit to regulation; neither was there any branch of administration free from the grossest disorder.

The Spanish dollar had a general acceptance in Portugal. The Regency, under the pretence that a debased foreign coin would drive the Portuguese coin out of circulation, deprived the dollar of its current value. This regulation, true in principle, and applicable, as far as the Portuguese gold coin (which is of peculiar fineness) was concerned, had, however, a most injurious effect. The Spanish dollar was in reality finer than the Portuguese silver *cruzado-nova*, and would finally have maintained its value, notwithstanding this decree, if the slur thus thrown upon it by the government had not enabled the money changers to run its value down for the moment; a matter of infinite importance, for the English soldiers and sailors being all paid in these dollars, at four shillings and sixpence, which was the true value, were thus suddenly mulcted fourpence in each, by the artificial depreciation of the moment. The men attributed this to fraud in the shop-keepers, the retail trade of Lisbon was interrupted, and quarrels between the tradesmen and the soldiers

* Appendix, No. 33, § 1.

† Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

took place hourly. To calm this effervescence, a second decree was promulgated, directing that the dollar should be received at the mint and in the public offices at its real value; it then appeared that the government could profit by coining the dollar of four shillings and sixpence into cruzado-novas, a circumstance which gave the whole affair the appearance of an unworthy trick to recruit the treasury. This happened in October, and as the financial affairs were ill-managed, and the Regency destitute of vigor or capacity, the taxes were unpaid, the hard cash exhausted, and the treasury paper at a heavy discount when Cradock arrived.

Upon the scroll thus unfolded he could only read confusion, danger and misfortune; such being the fruits of victory, what could be expected from disaster! And at this period (the middle of December) Sir John Moore was supposed to be in full retreat upon Portugal, followed by the Emperor with one French army, while another threatened Lisbon by the line of the Tagus. The English troops in the kingdom did not amount to ten thousand men, including the sick, and they were ill-equipped and scattered; moreover, the capital was crowded with women and children, with baggage and non-combatants, belonging as well to the army in Spain as to that in Portugal. There were in the river three Portuguese ships of the line, two frigates, and eight other smaller vessels of war; but none were in a state for sea, and the whole likely to fall into the hands of the enemy, for in the midst of this confusion Sir Charles Cotton was recalled, without a successor being appointed. The zeal and talents of Captain Halket, the senior officer on the station, amply compensated for the departure of the Admiral, as far as professional duties were concerned; but he could not aid the General, nor deal with the Regency, as vigorously as an officer of higher rank, and formally accredited, could have done.

Sir John Cradock, although fully sensible of his own difficulties, with a very disinterested zeal, resolved to make the reinforcing of Sir John Moore's army his first care, but his force at this time was, as I have already said, less than ten thousand men of all arms. It consisted of eight British and four German battalions of infantry, four troops of dragoons, and thirty pieces of artillery, of which, however, only six were horsed so as to take the field. There was, also, a battalion of the 60th regiment, composed principally of Frenchmen recruited from the prison ships, but it had been sent back from Spain, as the soldiers could not be trusted near their countrymen.* Of these thirteen battalions two were in Abrantes, one in Elvas, three at Lamego on the Duero, one in Almeida, and the remaining six at Lisbon. Three of the four battalions in

* Sir J. Cradock's Papers, MS.

the north were immediately directed to join Sir John Moore by the route of Salamanca, and of those in the south, two, accompanied by a demi-brigade of artillery, were sent to him from Abrantes, by the road of Castello Branco and Ciudad Rodrigo.

Meanwhile Mr. Villiers arrived, and Sir John Cradock forwarded to the Regency a strong representation of the dangerous state of Portugal. He observed that there was neither activity in the government nor enthusiasm among the people; that the army deficient in numbers, and still more in discipline, was scattered and neglected, and, notwithstanding that the aspect of affairs was so threatening, the Regency were apparently without any system, or fixed principle of action. He proposed, therefore, that a general enrolment of all the people should take place, and from the British stores he offered a supply of a thousand muskets and ten thousand pikes.* This giving of pikes to the people, which appears to have been in compliance with Mr. Villiers' wishes, betrayed more zeal than prudence; a general levy, and arming with pikes of the turbulent populace of a capital city, at such a conjuncture, was more likely to lead to confusion and mischief than to any effectual defence. The main objects pressing upon the General's attention were however sufficiently numerous and contradictory, to render it difficult for him to avoid errors.†

It was a part of his instructions, and of manifest importance, to send reinforcements to Sir John Moore; yet it was equally necessary to keep a force towards the frontier on the line of the Tagus, seeing that the fourth French corps had just passed that river at Almaraz, had defeated Galluzzo's army and menaced Badajos, which was without arms, ammunition, or provisions; moreover, the populace there were in commotion and slaying the chief persons. Now, Sir John Cradock's instructions directed him to keep his troops in a position that would enable him to abandon Portugal, if a very superior force should press him; but as, in such a case, he was to carry off the British army and the Portuguese navy and stores, destroying what he could not remove, and to receive on board his vessels all the natives who might be desirous of escaping, it was of pressing necessity to ship the women, children, baggage, and other encumbrances belonging to Moore's army, immediately, that his own rear might be clear for a sudden embarkation. In short, he was to send his troops to Spain, and yet defend Portugal; to excite confidence in the Portuguese, and yet openly to carry on the preparations for abandoning that country.‡

The populace of Lisbon were, however, already uneasy at the rumors of an embarkation, and it was doubtful if they would per-

* Sir J. Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

† Appendix, No. 31, § 1.

‡ Appendix, No. 33, § 1.

mit even the British non-combatants to get on board quietly, much less suffer the forts to be dismantled, and the ships of war to be carried off, without a tumult, which, at such a conjuncture, would have been fatal to all parties. Hence it was imperative to maintain a strong garrison in Lisbon and in the forts commanding the mouth of the river, and this draft, together with the troops absorbed by the fortresses of Almeida and Elvas, reduced the fighting men in the field to insignificance.

The Regency, knowing the temper of the people, and fearing to arm them, were not very eager to enforce the levy; anxious, however, to hide their weakness, they promised, at the urgent solicitations of the English General, to send six thousand troops to Alcantara, on the Spanish frontier, with a view to observe the march of the fourth corps, a promise which they never intended, and indeed were unable to perform. Forjas, who was supposed to be very inimical to the British influence, frankly declared that they neither could nor would move without an advance of money, and Sir John Cradock, although he recommended that this aid should be given, had no power to grant it himself.

Letters from Sir John Moore, dated at Salamanca, now reached Lisbon; they increased the anxiety to reinforce the army in Spain, but, as they clearly showed that reverses were to be expected, Cradock, although resolved to maintain himself in Portugal as long as it was possible to do so without a breach of his instructions, felt more strongly that timely preparation for an embarkation should be made; especially as the rainy season, in which the south-west winds prevail, had set in, and rendered the departure of vessels from the Tagus very uncertain.* Meanwhile the internal state of Portugal was in no wise amended, or likely to amend.

The government had, indeed, issued a decree, on the 23d of December, for organizing the population of Lisbon in sixteen legions, but only one battalion of each was to parade at the same moment for exercise, and those only on Sundays, nor were the legions, at any time, to assemble without the order of the general commanding the province; this regulation, which rendered the whole measure absurd, was dictated by the fears of the Regency. A proposal to prepare the Portuguese vessels for sea was acceded to, without any apparent dissatisfaction, but the government, secretly jealous of their allies, fomented or encouraged discontent and suspicion among the people. No efforts were made to improve the regular force, none to forward the march of troops to Alcantara, and so inactive or so callous were the Regency to the rights of humanity, that a number of French prisoners, captured at various

* Sir J. Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

periods by the Portuguese, and accumulated at Lisbon, were denied subsistence; Sir John Cradock, after many fruitless representations, was forced to charge himself with their supply, to avert the horror of seeing them starved to death. The provisions necessary for Fort La Lippe were also withheld, and General Leite, acting upon the authority of the Regency, strenuously urged that the British troops should evacuate that fortress.*

The march of the reinforcements for Sir John Moore left only three hundred dragoons and seven battalions available for the defence of Portugal, of which four were necessarily in garrison, and the remainder were unable to take the field in default of mules, of which animal the country seemed bereft; yet, at this moment, as if in derision, Mr. Frere, the Central Junta, the Junta of Badajoz, and the Regency of Portugal, were, with common and characteristic foolishness, pressing Sir John Cradock to march into the south of Spain, although there was scarcely a Spanish soldier there in arms to assist him; and such a movement, if it had been either prudent or practicable, was directly against his instructions.†

Towards the end of December, the communication with Sir John Moore was suddenly interrupted, and the line of the Tagus acquired great importance. The troops going from Elvas to the army in Spain were therefore directed to halt at Castello Branco, and General Richard Stewart, who commanded them, being reinforced with two hundred cavalry, was ordered, for the moment, to watch the roads by Salvatierra and the two Idanhas, and to protect the flying bridges at Abrantes and Vilha Velha from the enemy's incursions. At the same time, a promise was obtained from the Regency that all the Portuguese troops in the Alemtejo should be collected at Campo Mayor and Portalegre.

Sir John Cradock fixed upon Sacavem as the position in which his main body should be concentrated, intending to defend that point as long as he could with so few troops; and as he knew that Almeida, although full of British stores, and important in every way, was, with respect to its own defence, utterly neglected by the Regency, who regarded with jealousy even the presence of a British force there, he sent Brigadier-General A. Cameron, with instructions to collect the convalescents of Moore's army, to unite them with the two battalions still at Almeida, and then to make his way to the army in Spain; but if that should be judged too dangerous, he was to return to Lisbon.† In either case, the stores and the sick men lying at Almeida were to be directed upon Oporto.

The paucity of cavalry was severely felt on the frontier; it pre-

* Appendix 32, §§ 4, 5.

† Sir. J. Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

vented the General from ascertaining the real strength and objects of the enemy's parties, and the Portuguese reports were notoriously contradictory and false. The 14th dragoons, seven hundred strong, commanded by Major-General Cotton, had been disembarked since the 22d of December, and were destined for the army in Spain. But the commissary doubted if he could forward that small body even by detachments, such was the penury of the country, or rather the difficulty of drawing forth its resources; many debts of Sir John Moore's army were also still unpaid, and a want of confidence prevented the country people from bringing in supplies upon credit.

In the midst of these difficulties rumors of reverses in Spain became rife, and acquired importance, when it became known that four thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry, the advanced guard of thirty thousand French troops, were actually at Merida, on the road to Badajos; the latter town being, not only in a state of anarchy, but destitute of provisions, arms, and ammunition. Had the Portuguese force been assembled at Alcantara, Sir John Cradock would have supported it with the British brigades from Abrantes and Castello Branco, but not a man had been put in motion, and he, feeling no confidence either in the troops or promises of the Regency, resolved to concentrate his own army near Lisbon. General Stewart was, therefore, directed to destroy the bridges of Vilha Velha and Abrantes, and fall back to Sacavem. Meanwhile, the Lisbon populace, supposing that the English General designed to abandon them without necessity, were violently excited. The Regency, either from fear or folly, made no effort to preserve tranquillity, and the people proceeded from one excess to another, until it became evident that, in a forced embarkation, the British would have to fight their allies as well as their enemies. At this gloomy period, when ten marches would have brought the French to Lisbon, when a stamp of Napoleon's foot would have extinguished that spark of war which afterwards blazed over the Peninsula, Sir John Moore made his daring movement upon Sahagun, and Portugal, gasping as in a mortal agony, was instantly relieved.

CHAPTER II.

French retire from Merida—Send a force to Placentia—The direct intercourse between Portugal and Sir J. Moore's army interrupted—Military description of Portugal—Situation of the troops—Cradock again pressed, by Mr. Frere and others, to move into Spain—The ministers ignorant of the real state of affairs—Cradock hears of Moore's advance to Sahagun—Embarks two thousand men to reinforce him—Hears of the retreat to Coruña, and re-lands them—Admiral Berkeley arrives at Lisbon—Ministers more anxious to get possession of Cadiz than to defend Portugal—Five thousand men, under General Sherbrooke, embarked at Portsmouth—Sir George Smith reaches Cadiz—State of that city—He demands troops from Lisbon—General Mackenzie sails from thence, with troops—Negotiations with the Junta—Mr. Frere's weak proceedings—Tumult in Cadiz—The negotiation fails.

It was the advanced guard of the fourth corps that had approached Merida with the intention of proceeding to Badajos, and the Emperor was, as we have seen, preparing to follow; but, in the night of the 26th of December, an officer carrying the intelligence of Moore's movement reached Merida, and, next morning, the French marching hastily to the Tagus, crossed it, and rejoined their main body, from which another powerful detachment was immediately directed upon Placentia.* This retrograde movement obviated the immediate danger, and Sir John Cradock endeavored to pacify the people of Lisbon. Ordering Stewart's brigade, which had been strengthened by two German battalions, to halt at Santarem, he explained his own motives to the Portuguse, and urged the Regency to a more frank and vigorous system than they had hitherto followed; for, like the Spanish juntas, they promised everything, and performed nothing; neither would they, although consenting verbally to all the measures proposed, ever commit themselves by writing, having the despicable intention of afterwards disclaiming that which might prove disagreeable to the populace, or even to the French.† Sir John Cradock, however, had no power beyond his own personal influence to enforce attention to his wishes; no successor to Sir Charles Cotton had yet arrived, and Mr. Villiers seems to have wanted the decision and judgment required to meet such a momentous crisis.

In the north, General Cameron, having sent the sick men and part of the stores from Almeida towards Oporto, gave up that fortress to Sir Robert Wilson, and on the 5th of January marched, with two British battalions and a detachment of convalescents, by the Trás os Montes, to join the army in Spain. On the 9th, hearing of Sir John Moore's retreat to Coruña, he would have returned to Almeida, but Lapisse, who had taken Zamora, threatened to in

* Appendix 31, §§ 1, 2.

† Appendix 32, § 5.

tercept his line of march, whereupon he made for Lamego, and advised Sir R. Wilson to retire to the same place. Colonel Blunt, with seven companies, escorting a convoy for Moore's army, was likewise forced to take the road to Oporto, and on that city all the British stores and detachments were now directed.

Notwithstanding the general dismay, Sir R. Wilson, who had been reinforced by some Spanish troops, Portuguese volunteers, and straggling convalescents of the British army, rejected Cameron's advice, and proceeded to practise all the arts of an able partisan—that is to say, enticing the French to desert, spreading false reports of his own numbers, and, by petty enterprises and great activity, arousing a spirit of resistance throughout the Ciudad Rodrigo country.

The continued influx of sick men and stores at Oporto, together with the prospect of General Cameron's arrival there, became a source of uneasiness to Sir John Cradock. Oporto, with a shifting bar and shoal water, is the worst possible harbor for vessels to clear out, and one of the most dangerous for vessels to lie off, at that season of the year; hence, if the enemy advanced in force, a great loss, both of men and stores, was to be anticipated. The departure of Sir Charles Cotton had diminished the naval means, and, for seventeen successive days, such was the state of the wind that no vessel could leave the Tagus; Captain Halket, however, contrived at last to send to Oporto tonnage for two thousand persons, and undertook to keep a sloop of war off that place.* Sir Samuel Hood also dispatched some vessels from Vigo, but the weather continued for a long time so unfavorable that these transports could not enter the harbor, and the encumbrances hourly increasing, at last produced the most serious embarrassments.

Sir John Moore having now relinquished his communications with Portugal, Sir John Cradock had to consider how, relying on his own resources, he could best fulfil his instructions and maintain his hold of that country, without risking the utter destruction of the troops intrusted to his care. For an inferior army Portugal has no defensible frontier. The rivers generally running east and west, are fordable in most places, subject to sudden rises and falls, offering but weak lines of resistance, and, with the exception of the Zezere, presenting no obstacles to the advance of an enemy penetrating by the eastern frontier. The mountains, indeed, afford many fine and some impregnable positions, but such is the length of the frontier line and the difficulty of lateral communications, that a general who should attempt to defend it against superior forces would risk to be cut off from the capital if he concentrated

* Sir J. Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

his troops; and if he extended them his line would be immediately broken. The possession of Lisbon constitutes, in fact, the possession of Portugal, south of the Duero, and an inferior army can only protect Lisbon by keeping close to the capital.

Sensible of this truth, Sir John Cradock adopted the French Colonel Vincente's views for the defence of Lisbon, and proceeded, on the 4th of January, with seventeen hundred men, to occupy the heights behind the creek of Sacavem, leaving, however, three thousand men in the forts and batteries of Lisbon. At the earnest request of the Regency, who in return promised to assemble the native troops at Thomar, Abrantes, and Vilha Velha, he ordered General Stewart's brigade, two thousand seven hundred strong, to halt at Santarem; but the men had been marching for a month under incessant rain, their clothes were worn out, their equipments ruined, and, in common with the rest of the army, they wanted shoes.*

Cameron being now on the Douro, Kemmis with the 40th regiment at Elvas, and the main body under Cradock between Santarem and Lisbon, this army not exceeding ten thousand men, but with the encumbrances of an army of forty thousand, was placed on the three points of a triangle, the shortest side of which was above a hundred and fifty miles. The general commanding could not bring into the field above five thousand men, nor could that number be assembled in a condition for service at any one point of the frontier, under three weeks or a month; moreover, the uncertainty of remaining in the country at all, rendered it difficult to feed the troops, for the commissioners, being unable to make large contracts for a fixed time, were forced to carry on, as it were, a retail system of supply.

At this moment of extreme weakness, Mr. Frere, with indefatigable folly, was urging Sir John Cradock to make a diversion in Spain, by the line of the Tagus, and Mr. Villiers was as earnest that he should send a force by sea to Vigo. His own instructions prescribed the preservation of Lisbon, Elvas, and Almeida, the assembling, in concert with the native government, of an Anglo-Portuguese army on the frontier, and the sending of succors to Sir John Moore. Cradock's means were so scanty that the attainment of any one of those objects was scarcely possible, yet Mr. Caning, writing officially to Mr. Villiers, at this epoch, as if a mighty and well furnished army was in Portugal, enforced the "*necessity of continuing to maintain possession of Portugal as long as could be done with the force intrusted to Sir John Cradock's command, remembering always that not the defence of Portugal alone, but the employment of the enemy's military force, and the diver-*

* Sir John Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

sion which would be thus created in favor of the south of Spain, were objects not to be abandoned, except in case of the most extreme necessity." The enemy's military force! It was three hundred thousand men, and this despatch was a pompous absurdity. The ministers and their agents, eternally haunted by the phantoms of Spanish and Portuguese armies, were incapable of perceiving the palpable bulk and substance of the French hosts; the whole system of the Cabinet was one of shifts and expedients; every week produced a fresh project, and minister and agent alike followed his own views, without reference to any fixed principle; the generals were the only persons not empowered to arrange military operations.

The number of officers employed to discover the French movements enabled Cradock, although his direct communications were interrupted, to obtain intelligence of Moore's advance toward Sabagun; wherefore, he again endeavored to send a reinforcement into Spain by the way of Almeida. The difficulty of getting supplies, however, finally induced him to accede to Mr. Villiers' wishes, and on the 12th of January he shipped six hundred cavalry and thirteen hundred infantry, meaning to send them to Vigo; but while they were still in the Tagus, intelligence of the retreat upon Coruña was received, and the troops were disembarked.*

The 14th of January the Conqueror line-of-battle-ship, having Admiral Berkeley on board, reached Lisbon; and for the first time since Sir John Cradock took the command of the troops in Portugal, he received a communication from the ministers in England.† It now appeared that their thoughts were less intently fixed upon the defence of Portugal than upon getting possession of Cadiz. Their anxiety upon this subject had somewhat subsided after the battle of Vimiero, but it revived with greater vigor when Sir John Moore, contemplating a movement in the south, suggested the propriety of securing Cadiz as a place of arms; and in January an expedition was prepared to sail for that town, with the design of establishing a new base of operations for the English army. This project failed, but the following particulars of the transaction afford ample proof of the perplexed, unstable nature of the minister's policy.

NEGOTIATION FOR THE OCCUPATION OF CADIZ.

While it was still unknown in England that the Supreme Junta had fled from Aranjuez, Sir George Smith, who had conducted Spencer's negotiation in 1808, was again sent to Cadiz to prepare

* Sir John Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

† Cradock's Papers, MS.

the way for the reception of an English garrison.* Four thousand men destined for this service were then embarked at Portsmouth. General Sherbrooke, who commanded them, was first directed to touch at Lisbon on his way to Cadiz; he was afterwards desired to make for Coruña to be at the order of Sir John Moore; yet finally, his force being increased to five thousand men, he sailed on the 14th of January for Cadiz, under his first instructions.* Mr. Frere was then directed to negotiate for the admission of these troops into Cadiz, as the only condition upon which a British army could be employed to aid the Spanish cause in that part of the Peninsula.†

As the reverses in the north of Spain became known, the importance of Cadiz increased, and the importance of Portugal decreased, in the eyes of the English ministers. Sir John Cradock was made acquainted with Sherbrooke's destination, and was himself commanded to obey any requisition for troops that might be made by the Spanish Junta; and so independent of the real state of affairs were the ministerial arrangements, that Cradock, whose despatches had been one continued complaint of his inability to procure horses for his own artillery, was directed to furnish them for Sherbrooke's.‡

Sir George Smith, a man somewhat hasty, but of remarkable zeal and acuteness, left England about the middle of December; and on his arrival at Cadiz, at once discovered that there, as in every other part of the Peninsula, all persons being engaged in theories or intrigues, nothing useful for defence was executed. The ramparts of the city were in tolerable condition, but scarcely any guns were mounted, while, two miles in front of the town, an out-work had been commenced upon such a scale that it could not possibly be finished under four months, and, after the slow mode of Spanish proceedings, would have taken as many years to complete.

For a solid defence of all the fortifications, Sir George Smith judged that twenty thousand good troops would be requisite, but that ten thousand would suffice for the city; there were, however, only five thousand militia and volunteers in the place, and not a regular soldier under arms, neither any within reach. The number of guns mounted and to be mounted exceeded four hundred; to serve them, two hundred and fifty peasants and volunteers were enrolled, and, being clothed in uniforms, were called artillerymen.

Knowing nothing of Sir John Moore's march to Sahagun, Sir George Smith naturally calculated upon the immediate approach of the French; wherefore, seeing the helpless state of Cadiz, and

* Papers laid before Parliament, 1810.

† Appendix 4, Vol. II.

‡ Appendix 1, Vol. II.

being assured that the people would willingly admit an English garrison, he wrote to Sir John Cradock for troops. The latter, little thinking that, at such a conjuncture, the Supreme Junta would be more jealous of their allies than fearful of their enemies—judging also from the tenor of his latest instructions, that obedience to this requisition would be consonant to the minister's wishes—immediately ordered Colonel Kemmis to proceed from Elvas with the fortieth regiment, by the route of Seville, and at the same time, embarking three thousand of the best troops at Lisbon, sent them to Cadiz.* This force, commanded by Major-General Mackenzie, sailed the 2d February, and reached their destination the 5th of the same month.

Meanwhile, Mr. Frere, although acquainted with the sailing of Mackenzie's armament, was ignorant that Sir George Smith had applied to the governor of Cadiz for permission to take military possession of that town;† for Smith had no instructions to correspond with Mr. Frere, and the latter had opened a separate negotiation with the Central Junta at Seville, in which he endeavored to pave the way for the occupation by proposing to have the troops admitted as guests; and he sent Mr. Stuart to arrange this with the local authorities.‡ Mr. Frere had, however, meddled much with the personal intrigues of the day; he was, moreover, of too slender a capacity to uphold the dignity and just influence of a great power on such an occasion, and the flimsy thread of his negotiation snapped under the hasty touch of Sir George Smith. The Supreme Junta, averse to everything that threatened to interrupt their course of sluggish indolence, had sent the Marquis de Villed, a member of their own body, to Cadiz, avowedly to prepare the way for the admission of the troops, but, in reality, to thwart that measure; hence the circumstance of Mackenzie's arrival, with an object different from that announced by Mr. Frere, was instantly taken advantage of to charge England with treachery. The Junta, knowing Mr. Frere to be their own dupe, believed, or affected to believe, that he was also the dupe of the English minister, and that the whole transaction was an artifice, on the part of the latter, to get possession of the city with a felonious intent.§ The admission of the British troops was nevertheless earnestly desired by the inhabitants of Cadiz, and of the neighboring towns; and this feeling was so well understood by Mr. Stuart and Sir George Smith, that they would, notwithstanding the reluctance of the Supreme Junta, have brought the affair to a good conclusion; but, at the most critical

* Sir J. Cradock's Correspondence, MS.

† Parl. Papers, 1810.

‡ Appendix 5, Vol. II.

§ Parl. Papers, 1810.

period of the negotiation, the former was sent on a secret mission to Vienna, by the way of Trieste, and the latter, who was in bad health, died about the same period. Thus the negotiation failed for want of a head to conduct it.

General Mackenzie, like Sir George Smith, thought that the object might be attained. He observed, indeed, that the people, far from suspecting any danger, were ignorant or incredulous of the reverses in the north, that nothing had been done towards equipping the fleet for sea, and that, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrances of Admiral Purvis and Mr. Stuart, the Spaniards would neither work themselves nor permit the English sailors to work for them; but he also saw that the public feeling was favorable to the British troops, and the good will of the people openly expressed. The affair was, however, now in the hands of Mr. Frere.

In the course of the negotiations carried on by that minister, the Supreme Junta had proposed—

1. That the troops should land at Port St. Mary's, to be quartered there and in the neighboring towns.
2. That they should join Cuesta's army.
3. That they should go to Catalonia.
4. That they should be parcelled out in small divisions, to be attached to the different Spanish armies.

Nay, untaught by their repeated disasters, and pretending to hold the English soldiery cheap, those self-sufficient men proposed that the British should garrison the minor fortresses on the coast, in order to release an equal number of Spaniards for the field.

Mr. Frere wished to accept the first of these proposals, but General Mackenzie, Sir George Smith, and Mr. Stuart agreed that it would be injurious for many reasons; not the least urgent of which was that, as the troops could not have been embarked again without some national dishonor, they must have marched towards Cuesta, and thus have been involved in the campaign without obtaining that which was their sole object—the possession of Cadiz as a place of arms.

Mr. Frere then suggested a modification of the second proposal, namely, to leave a small garrison in Cadiz, and to join Cuesta with the remainder of the troops. At this time Sir G. Smith was dead, Mr. Stuart had embarked for Trieste, and General Mackenzie, reluctant to oppose Mr. Frere's wishes, consented to march, if the necessary equipments for his force could be procured; but he observed, that the plan was contrary to his instructions, and to the known wishes of the English government, and liable, in part, to the same objections as the first proposition. This was on the 18th of February; on the 22d, a popular tumult commenced in Cadiz.

The Supreme Junta, desirous to show that the city did not require

an English garrison for its protection, had sent there two regiments, composed of Poles, Germans, and Swiss, deserters or prisoners. The people, aware that the Junta disliked and intended to disarm the volunteers of Cadiz, were justly offended that deserters should be trusted in preference to themselves; they stopped the courier, opened the despatches from Seville, and imprisoned the Marquis of Villel, who was obnoxious, because, while mild to persons suspected of favoring the French, he had harshly or rather brutally punished some ladies of rank. Proceeding from one violence to another, the populace endeavored to kill the state prisoner, and being prevented in that, committed other excesses, and murdered Don Joseph Heredia, the collector of public rents. During the tumult, which lasted two days, the disembarkation of the English troops was repeatedly called for by the mob; and two British officers being sent on shore as mediators, were received with enthusiasm, and obeyed with respect—a manifest proof of the correct view taken by Sir George Smith.

The 24th, tranquillity was restored; the 25th, General Mackenzie, not having received from Mr. Frere an answer to his letter of the 18th, suggested that of the three English battalions then in the harbor, two should be placed in Cadiz, and that the third, proceeding to Seville, should there unite with the 40th regiment, and both together march to join Cuesta. Mr. Frere, however, instead of addressing the Junta with an authority and dignity becoming the representative of a great nation, on whose support the independence of the whole Peninsula rested, had been endeavoring to gain his end by subtlety. The object was one that England had a right to seek, the Spanish rulers no right to refuse; for the people wished to further it, and the threat of an appeal to them would soon have silenced the feeble negative of such a despicable and suspected government. Mr. Frere, incapable of taking a single and enlarged view, pressed a variety of trifling points, and discussed them with the secretary of the Junta, with more regard to epistolary dexterity than to useful diplomacy; and when his opponent conceded the great point of admitting troops at all, broke off the negotiation, upon the question whether the number to be admitted should be one or two thousand men; as if the way to drive a wedge was with the broad end foremost.

Self-baffled in that quarter, the British plenipotentiary, turning towards Cuesta, the avowed enemy of the Junta, and one much feared by them, sought to secure his assistance by holding out the lure of having a British force added to his command; but the sarcastic old General derided the diplomatist. "Although I do not," said he, "discover any great difficulty in the actual state of

things, which should prevent his British Majesty's troops from garrisoning Cadiz under such terms, and for the purpose which your excellency proposes, I am far from supposing that the Supreme Junta, which is fully persuaded of the importance of our union with England, is not grounded in its objections; and your excellency knows that it is sufficient that they should have them, to prevent my giving any opinion on so important a measure, *unless they should consult me.*

With regard to the 4,300 men, which your excellency is pleased to mention, there is no doubt that I stand in need of them; but I flatter myself, England, sensible of the importance of Estremadura, will even lend me much greater assistance, particularly if, from any change of circumstances, the Supreme Junta should no longer manifest the repugnance we speak of."

This answer having frustrated the projected intrigue, Mr. Frere, conscious perhaps of diplomatic incapacity, returned with renewed ardor to the task of directing the military affairs, in every part of the Peninsula. He had seen an intercepted letter of Soult's, addressed to the King, in which the project of penetrating into Portugal was mentioned; and immediately concluding that General Mackenzie's troops would be wanted for the defence of that kingdom, counselled him to abandon Cadiz and return to Lisbon; but the General, who knew that, even should he return, a successful defence of Portugal with so few troops would be impossible, and that every precaution was already taken for an embarkation in the last extremity, observed, that "the danger of Lisbon rendered the occupation of Cadiz more important."

General Mackenzie's reply was written the 26th of February. On the 3d of March he received another despatch from Mr. Frere. Cadiz, and the danger of Portugal, seemed to have passed from the writer's mind, and were unnoticed; entering into a minutely inaccurate statement of the situation of the French and Spanish armies, he observed, that Soult having failed in an attempt to penetrate Portugal by the Minho, *it was impossible from the position of the Spanish forces, assisted as they were by the Portuguese, that he could persevere in his plan.* Wherefore, he proposed that the British force then in the harbor of Cadiz should proceed immediately to Tarragona, to aid Reding; and this wild scheme was only frustrated by an unexpected despatch from Sir John Cradock, recalling the troops to Lisbon.* They arrived there on the 12th of March; and thus ended a transaction clearly indicating an unsettled policy, shallow combinations, and a bad choice of agents on the part of the English Cabinet, and a most unwise and unworthy disposition in the Supreme Junta.

* Appendix, No. 4, Vol. II.

General Mackenzie attributed the jealousy of the latter to French influence; Mr. Frere to the abrupt proceedings of Sir George Smith, and to fear, lest the Junta of Seville, who were continually on the watch to recover their ancient power, should represent the admission of the British troops as a treasonable proceeding on the part of the supreme government. It is, however, evident that the true cause was the false position in which the English ministers had originally placed themselves by inundating Spain with arms and money, without at the same time asserting a just influence, and making their assistance the price of good order and useful exertion.

CHAPTER III.

Weakness of the British army in Portugal—General Cameron marches to Lisbon—Sir R. Wilson remains near Ciudad Rodrigo—Sir J. Cradock prepares to take a defensive position at Passa d'Arcos—Double dealing of the Regency—The populace murder foreigners, and insult the British troops—Anarchy in Oporto—British government ready to abandon Portugal—Change their intention—Military system of Portugal—The Regency demand an English general—Beresford is sent to them—Sherbrooke's and Mackenzie's troops arrive at Lisbon—Beresford arrives there, and takes the command of the native force—Change in the aspect of affairs—Sir J. Cradock encamps at Lumiar—Relative positions of the allied and French armies—Marshal Beresford desires Sir J. Cradock to march against Soult—Cradock refuses—Various unwise projects broached by different persons.

THE effort made to secure Cadiz was an act of disinterested zeal on the part of Sir John Cradock. The absence of his best troops exposed him to the most galling peevishness from the Regency, and to the grossest insults from the populace; with his reduced force, he could not expect to hold even a contracted position at the extremity of the rock of Lisbon against the weakest army likely to invade Portugal; and as there was neither a native force nor a government to be depended upon, there remained for him only the prospect of a forced and, consequently, disgraceful embarkation, and the undeserved obloquy that never fails to follow disaster.

In this disagreeable situation, as Elvas and Almeida no longer contained British troops, his attention was necessarily fixed upon Lisbon and upon Oporto, which the violence of the gales had rendered a sealed port; meanwhile, the hospitals and magazines of Almeida, and even those of Salamanca, being sent to Lamego, had crowded that place with fifteen hundred sick men, besides escorts and hourly accumulating stores. The Douro had overflowed, the craft could not ply, one large boat attempting to descend was over-

set, and eighty persons, soldiers and others, had perished. General Cameron also, hearing of this confusion, relinquished the idea of embarking at Oporto, and, recrossing the Douro, made for Lisbon, where he arrived the beginning of February, with two thousand men, who were worn with fatigue, having marched eight hundred miles under continued rains. Sir Robert Wilson had sent his guns to Abrantes, by the road of Idanha Nova; but partly from a spirit of adventure, partly from an erroneous idea that Sir John Cradock wished him to defend the frontier, he remained with his infantry in the neighborhood of Ciudad Rodrigo.* His force had been increased by a Spanish detachment under Don Carlos d'España, and by some volunteers, but it was still weak, and his operations were necessarily confined to a few trifling skirmishes: yet, like many others, his imagination so far outstripped his judgment, that, when he had only felt the advanced post of a single division, he expressed his conviction that the French were going to abandon Spain altogether.

Sir John Cradock entertained no such false expectations. He was informed of the battle of Coruña and the death of Moore, and he knew too well the vigor and talent of that General to doubt that he had been oppressed by an overwhelming force; he knew also that Zaragoza had fallen, and that twenty-five thousand French troops were thus free to act in other quarters; he knew that Soult, with at least twenty thousand men, was on the Minho; that Romana was incapable of making any head; that Portugal was one wide scene of helpless confusion, and that a French army was again in the neighborhood of Merida, threatening Lisbon by the line of the Tagus; in fine, that his own embarrassments were hourly increasing, and that the moment was arrived when the safety of his troops was the chief consideration. The tenor of the few despatches he had received from England led him to suppose that the ministers designed to abandon Portugal; but, as their intentions on that head were never clearly explained, he resolved to abide by the literal interpretation of his first instructions, and to keep his hold of the country as long as it was possible to do so without risking the utter destruction of his army.† To avoid that danger, he put every encumbrance at Lisbon on board the transports in the Tagus; proceeded to dismantle the batteries at the mouth of the river, and in concert with the Admiral, made preparations for carrying away or destroying the military and naval stores in the arsenal. At the same time, he renewed his efforts to embark the sick men and stores at Oporto; but the weather continued so unfavorable, that he was finally obliged to remove the invalids and stores by land, yet he could not procure carriages for the whole.

* Appendix 2, § 1, Vol. II.

† Appendix 6, § 1, Vol. II.

After the arrival of Cameron's detachment, the effective British force under arms, including convalescents and fifteen hundred stragglers from Sir John Moore's army, was about eight thousand men;* yet when the security of the forts and magazines and the tranquillity of Lisbon were provided for, only five thousand men and those not in the best order, could be brought into the field. As this force was infinitely too weak to cover such a town as Lisbon, the General judged that it would be unwise to take up a position in advance, whence he should be obliged to retreat through the midst of a turbulent and excited population, which had already given too many indications of ill-temper to leave any doubt of its hostility under such circumstances. He, therefore, came to the resolution of withdrawing from Saccavem and Lisbon, to concentrate his whole force on a position at Passa d'Arcos, near the mouth of the river, where he could embark with least danger, and where he had the best chance of defending himself, if necessary, against superior numbers.†

This reasoning was sound, and Cradock's intention was, undoubtedly, not to quit Portugal, unless driven from it by force, or in pursuance of orders from England; his arrangements, however, seem to have carried more the appearance of alarm than was either politic or necessary; the position of Passa d'Arcos might have been prepared, and the means necessary for an embarkation secured, and yet the bulk of the troops kept in advance until the last moment. To display a bold and confident front in war is, of all things, the most essential, as well to impose upon friends as upon enemies; Sir John Cradock did not fail to experience the truth of this maxim. The population of Lisbon, alarmed by the reverses in Spain, yet, like all the people in the Peninsula, confident in their own prowess and resolution until the very moment of attack, became extremely exasperated; the Regency, partly from their natural folly and insincerity, but more from the dread of the lower orders, countenanced, if they did not instigate, the latter to commit excesses, and to interrupt the proceedings of the British naval and military authorities. The measures of precaution relative to the forts had originated with the Regency, yet they now formally protested against them, and, with a view to hamper the General, encouraged their subalterns to make many false and even ridiculous charges against the British executive officers; and it would appear that the remonstrances of the Admiral and Generals were but imperfectly supported by Mr. Villiers.‡

In this manner the people's violence was nourished until the city was filled with tumult; mobs, armed with English pikes and muskets, collected night and day in the streets and on the high-roads, and

* Appendix 7, Vol. II.

† Appendix 6, § 3, Vol. II.

‡ Appendix 32, § 5.

under the pretext of seeking for and killing Frenchmen, attacked indiscriminately all foreigners, even those in the British service wearing the British uniform. The guards, who endeavored to protect the victims of this ferocity, were insulted; couriers, passing with despatches, were intercepted and deprived of their papers; English officers were outraged in the streets, and such was the audacity of the people that the artillery was placed in the squares, in expectation of an affray.* The state of Lisbon was similar to what it had been at the period of Junot's convention, and if the British had abandoned the country at this time, they would have been assailed with as much obloquy by the Portuguese; for such has been, and will be, the fate of all unsuccessful auxiliaries,—a reflection that should render historians cautions of adopting accusations upon the authority of native writers on the like occasions.

This spirit was not confined to Lisbon. In Oporto the disposition to insult the British was more openly encouraged than in the capital; the government of the multitude was more decidedly pronounced. From the cities it spread to the villages. The people of the Alemtejo frontier were, indeed, remarkably apathetic; but, from the Minho to the Tagus, the country was in horrible confusion; the soldiers were scattered, without regard to military system, and, being unpaid, lived at free quarters; the peasantry of the country assembling in bands, and the populace of the towns in mobs, intercepted the communications, appointed or displaced the generals at their pleasure, and massacred all persons of whom they were suspicious; the ammunition which had been supplied from England was wasted by constant firing in token of insubordination, and, as if the very genius of confusion was abroad, some of the British troops, principally *malingersers*,† of Sir John Moore's army, added their quota of misconduct, to increase the general distress.‡

The leading instigator of the excesses at Oporto was one Raymond, a coadjutor and creature of the Bishop's, a turbulent and cruel fellow, who, by taking a share in the first insurrection against the French, obtained a momentary influence, and has since been elevated, by a very credulous writer, into a patriotic hero. He was, however, a worthless coward, fitted for secret villany, and incapable of a noble action.

This state of affairs, productive of so much misery and danger, continuing without intermission, caused many of the upper classes to despair of their country's safety by war, and increased the number of those who, wishing to attach themselves to the fortune of France, were ready to accept of a foreign prince for their sovereign,

* Appendix, No. 32, § 6.

† An appellation given among soldiers to men who, under pretence of sickness, shrink from the performance of their duties in the field.

‡ Appendix 2, § 2, Vol. II.

if with him they could obtain tranquillity and an ameliorated constitution; and when, soon afterwards, the edge of the enemy's sword, falling upon the senseless multitude, filled the streets of Oporto with blood, there was a powerful French party in Portugal. The bulk of the people were, however, stanch in their country's cause; they were furious and disorderly, but imbued with hatred of the French, ready at the call of honor, and susceptible of discipline, without any loss of energy.

The turbulence of the citizens, the remonstrances of the Regency, and the representations of Mr. Villiers, who was in doubt for the personal safety of the British subjects residing in Lisbon, convinced Sir John Cradock that political circumspection and adroitness were as important as military arrangements to prevent a catastrophe at this critical period; hence, as, contrary to what might have been expected, the enemy had not yet made any actual movement across the frontier, he suspended his design of falling back to Passa d'Arcos.

In this unsettled state affairs remained until March, when intelligence arrived that the French fleet was at sea, whereupon two of the line-of-battle ships in the Tagus were despatched to reinforce Sir Thomas Duckworth's squadron, and the batteries at the mouth of the river were again armed. Meanwhile, Soult was making progress in the north, the anarchy at Oporto was continually increasing, and the English government had certainly come to the resolution of abandoning Portugal if the enemy advanced; for, although Sir John Cradock was not informed of their views, an officer in England, well acquainted with Portuguese customs, actually received orders, and was embarking, to aid the execution of this measure, when suddenly the policy of the Cabinet once more changed, and it was resolved to reinforce the army. This resolution, which may be attributed partly to the Austrian war, partly to the failure at Cadiz, partly to the necessity of satisfying public opinion in England, was accompanied by a measure which laid the first solid basis on which to build a reasonable hope of success.

The Portuguese government, either spontaneously, or brought thereto by previous negotiation, had offered the command of their troops, with the title of Marshal, to an English general, and the British ministers accepted this offer, promised supplies of arms, ammunition, clothing, and a subsidy for the payment of a certain number of regular soldiers; thus obtaining a firm hold of the military resources of Portugal, and gaining for the first time a position in the Peninsula suitable to the dignity of England and the contest in which she was engaged.* The Portuguese desired to have Sir Arthur Wellesley, but he refused the offer, and it is said that Sir John Murray, (he who afterwards failed at Tarragona,) Sir John Doyle,

* Appendix, No. 2, Vol. II.

and even the Marquis of Hastings, a man undoubtedly well qualified, sought for the office, but that powerful parliamentary interest prevailing, Major-General Beresford was finally chosen, and at the same time received the local rank of Lieutenant-General; to the great discontent of several officers of superior rank, who were displeased that a man without any visible claim to superiority should be placed over their heads.

Information of this change was immediately sent to Sir John Cradock, and General Sherbrooke was ordered to repair to Lisbon. The latter was close to Cadiz harbor when the orders overtook him, and his and Mackenzie's divisions arrived together in the Tagus on the 12th of March; thus the fate of Portugal was again fixed by England. But if Mr. Frere's plan had been followed—if Mackenzie had proceeded to Tarragona, and nothing but foul weather prevented him—if Sherbrooke's voyage had not been delayed by storms, and that sailing about from port to port, he had, as is most probable, been engaged in some other enterprise—if Victor, obeying his orders, had marched to Abrantes—if any of these events had happened, Sir John Cradock must have abandoned Portugal, and then how infinitely absurd the proceedings of the English ministers would have appeared, and how justly their puerile combinations would have excited the scorn of Europe!

Marshal Beresford reached Lisbon early in March, and after some negotiation, received from the Regency power to appoint British officers to the command of regiments, and to act without control in any manner he should judge fitting to ameliorate the condition and discipline of the Portuguese forces; and this was the more important, as the military polity of Portugal, although fallen into disuse, was severe, precise, and admirably calculated to draw forth the whole strength of the nation. The army could be completed by coercion; the militia were bound to assemble by regiments, and liable to any service within the frontiers; and the whole of the remaining male population could be enrolled under the name of *ordenancas*, numbered by battalions in their different districts, and obliged under very severe penalties to assemble, at the orders of the local magistrates, either to work, to fight, to escort convoys, or in any manner to aid the operations of the army.

This affair arranged, Beresford fixed his quarters at Thomar, collected the Portuguese troops in masses, and proceeded to recast their system on the model of the British army; commencing, with stern but wholesome rigor, a reform that, in process of time, raised out of chaos an obedient, well disciplined, and gallant force, worthy of a high place among the best in Europe; for the Portuguese people, though easily misled and excited to wrath, are of a docile

orderly disposition, and very sensible of just and honorable conduct in their officers. This reform was, however, not effected at once, nor without many crosses and difficulties being raised by the higher orders and by the government—difficulties that General Beresford could never have overcome, if he had not been directed, sustained, and shielded by the master spirit under whom he was destined to work. The plan of giving to English officers the command of the Portuguese troops was at first proceeded on with caution; but after a time, the ground being supposed safe, it was gradually enlarged, until almost all the military situations of importance were held by Englishmen, which, combined with other causes, gave rise to numerous intrigues, not confined to the natives, and, as we shall find, in after times, seriously threatening the power of the Marshal, the existence of the British influence, and the success of the war.

Sir John Cradock's situation was now materially alleviated. The certainty of the Austrian war produced a marked change in the disposition of the Regency; the arrival of Sherbrooke's and Mackenzie's divisions increased the British force to fourteen thousand men, and the populace became more cautious of offering insults. About the middle of March, two thousand men being left to maintain tranquillity in Lisbon, the remainder of the army was encamped at Lumiar and Saccavem, and while these things were passing at Lisbon, the aspect of affairs changed also in other parts of the kingdom.

The bulk of the Portuguese regular troops, amounting to ten or twelve thousand men, was collected by Marshal Beresford between the Tagus and the Mondego. Beyond the valley of the Mondego, Colonel Trant had assembled a small corps of volunteers, students from the university, and General Vittoria was at the head of two regular battalions in Upper Beira. The Bishop of Oporto was preparing to defend that town, with a mixed, but ferocious and insubordinate multitude. General Silveira, with four or five thousand men, had taken post in the *Tras os Montes*, and Romana, who had collected seven or eight thousand at Monterey, was in communication with him. Sir Robert Wilson, who was at the head of about three thousand men, had withdrawn the legion from Almeida, and sent a detachment to Bejar, but remained himself on the *Agueda*, watching the advanced posts of Lapisse. A few Portuguese regiments were extended from *Salvatierra* and *Idanha* to *Alcantara*. A permanent bridge of boats was laid over the *Tagus* at *Abrantes*, and there were small garrisons in that town and at *Elvas*.

All these forces united would not, however, with the exception