

guns, and the assault was ordered; but from the height of the tower, which overlooked the works at a short distance, the preparations were early discovered; the Spaniards, collecting on the breach, repaired it with sand-bags, and, regardless of the French fire, with loud cries provoked the attack. At five o'clock, four hundred men rushed forward as swiftly as the steepness of the ascent would permit. Soon, however, the head of the column was checked, the rear began to fire, the whole got into confusion; and when one-half had fallen without making the slightest impression on the defenders, the attempt was abandoned. After this signal failure the French erected a second battery of six pieces, one hundred and forty yards from the tower, and endeavored to push the approach close to the foot of the breach; yet the plunging fire of the besieged baffled them; meanwhile Andriani, the governor, having communication by signal with the ships in the Grao, was encouraged to continue his gallant defence, and was informed that he was already promoted for what he had done. But to understand Suchet's embarrassments from the protracted resistance of Saguntum, we must take a view of Lacy's contemporary operations in Catalonia, and the proceedings of the partidas against the French communications and posts in Aragon.

#### CATALONIA.

It will be recollected that the blockade of Figueras produced sickness in Macdonald's army, and that the return of Suchet to Aragon, and the parcelling of his troops on the lines, from Lerida to Montserrat, Tortosa, and Tarragona, had completely extinguished the French power in the field; because the divisions of the army of Aragon, which still remained in Lower Catalonia, being destined for the enterprise against Valencia, could not be employed in harassing expeditions. Lacy was therefore enabled, notwithstanding the troubles which followed the fall of Tarragona, to reorganize about eight thousand men in two divisions, the one under Eroles, the other under Sarsfield; the Junta also called out the tercios of reserve, and, arms and ammunition being supplied by the English navy, Lacy was soon in a condition to act offensively. Thus the taking of Montserrat was very injurious to the French; for it is generally supposed that Frere's division, if held together in the field, would have prevented this reaction in the principality. Lacy at first suggested to the British navy the recapture of the Medas Islands, and it was effected in the latter end of August, by the Undaunted, Lavinia, and Blossom, aided by a small party of Spaniards, the whole under the command of Captain Thomas. The enterprise itself was one of more labor than danger, and the Spanish allies

were of little use; but the naval officers, to whose exertions the success was entirely due, were indignant at finding that Colonel Green, who served as a volunteer, endeavored to raise his own reputation with the Catalans by injuring the character of those under whom he served.\*

Immediately after the fall of Montserrat, Lacy and the Junta had proposed the fortifying of Palamos or Blanes, to be held as a marine dépôt and stronghold, in common with the British navy; but, with a strange folly, expected that Sir E. Pellew, who had no troops, would defend them from the enemy while establishing this post. Finding this scheme received coldly by the Admiral, they turned their attention inland, and, blowing up the works of Berga, fixed upon the position of Busa, as a place of strength and refuge. This remarkable rock, which is situated between the Cardener and Bindasaes rivers, and about twenty miles from Cardona, could be reached by one road only, and that a very rugged one.† The rock itself, fourteen miles in circumference, healthy and full of springs, is fertile, and produces abundance of forage and fuel. It is cut off from the rest of the world by frightful precipices, and could neither be forced nor starved into a surrender. Busa, Cardona, Solsona, and Seu d'Urgel were therefore guarded by the tercios of reserve, and Lacy soon commenced offensive excursions with the regular army against the long lines of the French communication.

In September, while the Somatenes interrupted the passage of the convoys to Montserrat, Eroles made an unsuccessful attack on the fort of Moncada, near Barcelona; Lacy, who had returned from an incursion in the French Cerdaña, where he had gathered some booty, then united Eroles and Sarsfield's troops, and surprised the town of Igualada, where he killed two hundred French; but, not daring to attack the castle, retired to Calaf, and from thence again detached Eroles to Jorbas, to attack a French convoy coming to Igualada. Eroles beat the escort, and captured the convoy; and then the French quitted the fortified convent of Igualada, and joined the garrison of Montserrat, when the whole, fearful of being invested, and so starved, abandoned that important point, and marched through Barcelona to Tarragona; the Spaniards immediately occupied Montserrat, and recovered a large store of clothing and cavalry equipments, which had been hidden in a vault and were undiscovered by the enemy. Eroles, pursuing his success, forced the garrisons of Belpuig and Cervera, about five hundred in all, to surrender; and thus the whole line of communication between Lerida and Barcelona fell into the power of the Catalonians. The confidence of the people then revived; Sarsfield occupied Gra-

\* Appendix 5, § 2.

† Memoir upon Busa, by Capt. Zeupfinning, MS.

nollers and the passes leading into the valley of Vich; Manso and Rovira menaced the Ampurdan; and Eroles, suddenly passing by Seu d'Urgel into the Cerdaña, defeated at Puigcerda some national guards commanded by General Gareau, who had been sent there after Lacy's invasion. He afterwards raised large contributions on the frontier, burnt a French town, and, returning with his spoil by the way of Ribas and Ripol, took post in the pass of Garriga, while Milans occupied Mattaro; and both watched to intercept a convoy which Macdonald was preparing for Barcelona.

Sarsfield at the same time embarked his division, and sailed to the coast of the Ampurdan; but the weather would not permit him to land. Nevertheless the attention of the French General was distracted, and the convoy did not move. Lacy then recalled Sarsfield, and projected the surprise of Barcelona itself; but, after putting his troops in march, feared the execution, and relinquished the attempt. Meanwhile one swarm of the smaller partidas menaced the French communication between Mequinenza and Tortosa, and another swarm settled on the plains above Lerida.

The state of Aragon was equally alarming. Duran and the Empecinado had received Blake's orders to unite near Cuença, for the purpose of invading Aragon; but the secret Junta of the district were averse to the plan, and the troops of the latter chief refused to move, and even came to blows with the Junta's people. In this confusion General d'Armanac, who had retired from Cuença, returned, and dispersed the whole. The Empecinado however collected them again, and having joined Duran, their united powers being about six thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred horse, moved against Calatayud; Mina also, acting in concert with them, quitted the mountains of Leon and entered Navarre with about five thousand men, and some minor partisans were already acting against different parts of Aragon. The whole were in want of clothing and ammunition, but Mr. Tupper, the consul at Valencia, having safe means of communication with the interior, supplied them.

General Musnier's force was so scattered that he could not fight either of the large partidas, without exposing some important point to the other, and the 29th of September the Empecinado took possession of the pass of Frasnó, while Duran invested the fortified convent of Calatayud. This place was garrisoned by some French and Italian troops, who differed upon the defence, and when the explosion of two mines had killed a number of them they surrendered. Musnier collected some men to succor the place, but unable to force the pass of Frasnó, retired; yet being reinforced on the 5th, he again advanced, and a column sent from Navarre by Gen-

eral Reille also came up; whereupon the Spaniards disappeared until the French retired, and then reoccupied Calatayud. They were now in full communication with Mina, and a general plan of invasion was discussed, but as Duran and Mina could not accord, each acted separately.

Severoli's division, eight thousand strong, and just arrived from Italy, then reinforced Musnier, and on the 9th, driving the Spaniards from Calatayud, pursued them on the roads to Molino, Daroca, and Medinaceli. On the other side of the Ebro however Mina fell on the post of Exca in the Cinco Villas; the garrison broke through his investment in the night, but he pursued them almost to the gates of Zaragoza, and then turning off towards Ayerbe, attacked that post and menaced the communication by Jaca. The commandant of Zaragoza had sent an Italian battalion to look after the flying garrison of Exca, which was found at Zuera, and the united forces amounting to eleven hundred infantry and sixty cavalry followed Mina and came up with him at Ayerbe; the guerilla chief instantly turned with a part of his troops, and the Italians retreated towards Huesca, but having to cross a plain were all killed or taken.

Reille and Musnier, hearing of this misfortune, spread their columns in all directions to intercept Mina, but he evaded their toils, and although sharply chased and several times engaged, reached Motrico on the Biscay coast with his prisoners. The *Iris* frigate, which was then harassing the enemy's coast line, took some of them off his hands, and the remainder, three hundred in number, were sent to Coruña by the Asturian mountains; but only thirty-six arrived, the rest were shot by the escort, under pretence that they made a noise near a French post!

While these events were passing on the left of the Ebro, Mazzuchelli's brigade followed the Empecidado, and having defeated him in a sharp action, at Cubilejos de la Sierra, brought off the garrison of Molino and dismantled that fort; but the smaller partidas infested the road between Tortosa and Oropesa, and in this disturbed state of affairs reports were rife that an English force was to disembark at Peniscola. Blake also sent Obispo's division against Teruel, which was thus menaced on all sides, for Mahy was still in those parts. Thus the partisan warfare seemed interminable, and Suchet's situation would really have been very dangerous, if he had been opposed by a man of ability. He had an inferior force, and was cooped between the enemy's fortresses; his communications were all interrupted; he had just met with two signal failures at Saguntum, and he was menaced by a formidable army which was entirely master of its operations. Blake however soon relieved him of his difficulties.



Palacios with the Junta had retired to Alcira, and in concert with the friars of his faction had issued a manifesto, intended to raise a popular commotion to favor his own restoration to the command, but Blake was now become popular; the Valencians, elated by the successful resistance of Saguntum, called for a battle, and the Spanish General, urged partly by his courage, the only military qualification he possessed, partly that he found his operations on the French rear had not disturbed the siege, acceded to their desire. Mahy and Bassecour's divisions had arrived at Valencia, Obispo was called in to Betera, eight thousand irregulars were thrown upon the French communications, and the whole Spanish army, amounting to about twenty-two thousand infantry, two thousand good cavalry, and thirty-six guns, made ready for battle.

Previous to this, Suchet, although expecting such an event, had detached several parties to scour the road of Tortosa, and had directed Palombini's division to attack Obispo and relieve Teruel. Obispo skirmished at Xerica on the 21st, and then rapidly marched upon Liria with a view to assist in the approaching battle; but Blake, who might have attacked while Palombini was absent, took little heed of the opportunity, and Suchet, now aware of his adversary's object, instantly recalled the Italians, who arrived the very morning of the action.

The ground between Murviedro and Valencia was a low flat, interspersed here and there with rugged isolated hills; it was also intersected by ravines, torrents, and water-cuts, and thickly studded with olive trees; but near Saguntum it became straitened by the mountain and the sea, so as to leave an opening of not more than three miles, behind which it again spread out. In this narrow part Suchet resolved to receive the attack, without relinquishing the siege of Saguntum; and he left a strong detachment in the trenches with orders to open the fire of a new battery, the moment the Spanish army appeared.

His left, consisting of Habert's division and some squadrons of dragoons, was refused to avoid the fire of some vessels of war and gun-boats which flanked Blake's march. The centre, under Harispe, was extended to the foot of the mountains, so that he offered an oblique front, crossing the main road from Valencia to Murviedro. Palombini's division and the dragoons were placed in second line behind the centre, and behind them the cuirassiers were held in reserve.

This narrow front was favorable for an action in the plain, but the right flank of the French, and the troops left to carry on the siege, were liable to be turned by the pass of Espiritus, through which

the roads from Betera led to Gilet, directly upon the line of retreat. To prevent such an attempt Suchet posted Chlopiski with a strong detachment of infantry and the Italian dragoons in the pass, and placed the Neapolitan brigade of reserve at Gilet: in this situation, although his fighting troops did not exceed seventeen thousand men, and those cooped up between two fortresses, hemmed in by the mountains on one side, the sea on the other, and with only one narrow line of retreat, the French General did not hesitate to engage a very numerous army. He trusted to his superiority in moral resources, and what would have been mad madness in other circumstances, was here a proof of skilful daring.

Blake, having issued a fine address to his soldiers, on the 25th of October advanced to fight. His right wing under Zayas, composed of the Albuera divisions, marched by a road leading upon the village of Puzzol, and Blake followed in person, with a weak reserve, commanded by General Velasco.

The centre under Lardizabal, supported by the cavalry of Loy and Caro, moved by the main road.

The left, consisting of Miranda's and Villa Campa's infantry, and of St. Juan's cavalry, and supported by Mahy's division, which came from the side of Betera, moved against the defile of Espiritus. Obispo, also coming from Betera, acted as a flanking corps, and, entering the mountains by Naquera, menaced the right of Chlopiski; but he was met by a brigade under General Robert.

The Spaniards moved on rapidly and in good order, driving the French outposts over a ravine called the Piccador, which covered Suchet's front. Zayas and Lardizabal immediately passed this obstacle, as did also Caro and Loy; and the first took possession of Puzzol, while the flotilla ranged along the coast and protected his right flank. Blake, with Velasco's reserve, halted at El Puig, an isolated hill on the sea-coast behind the Piccador; but Lardizabal and the cavalry, forming an oblique line, in order to face the French front, occupied the ground between Puzzol and the Piccador. Thus the Spanish order of battle was cut in two by the ravine; for on the hither side of it St. Juan, Miranda, and Villa Campa were drawn up, and Mahy took possession of a height called the Germanels, which was opposite the mouth of St. Espiritus.

By this disposition the Spanish line, extending from Puzzol to the Germanels, was not less than six miles, and the division of Obispo was separated from the left by about the same distance. Blake's order of battle was therefore feeble, and he was without any efficient reserve; for Velasco was distant and weak, and Mahy's was actually in the line. The French order of battle, covering less than three miles, was compressed and strong, the

reserves were well placed and close at hand; and Chlopiski's division, although a league distant from the main body, was firmly posted, and able to take a direct part in the battle, while the interval between him and Suchet was closed by impassable heights.

#### BATTLE OF SAGUNTUM.

The fight was commenced by Villa Campa, who was advancing against the pass of Espiritus, when the Italian dragoons, galloping out, overthrew his advanced guard, and put his division into confusion. Chlopiski, seeing this, moved down with the infantry, drove Mahy from the Germanels, and then detached a regiment to the succor of the centre, where a brisk battle was going on to the disadvantage of Suchet.

That general had not judged his ground well at first; and when the Spaniards had crossed the Piccador, he too late perceived that an isolated height in advance of Harispe's division could command all that part of the field. Prompt, however, to remedy his error, he ordered the infantry to advance, and galloped forward himself with an escort of hussars to seize the hill; the enemy was already in possession, and their guns opened from the summit; but the head of Harispe's infantry then attacked, and after a sharp fight, in which General Paris and several superior officers were wounded, gained the height.

At this time Obispo's guns were heard on the hills far to the right, and Zayas, passing through Puzzol, endeavored to turn the French left; and as the day was fine, and the field of battle distinctly seen by the soldiers in Saguntum, they crowded on the ramparts, regardless of the besiegers' fire, and, uttering loud cries of Victory! Victory! by their gestures seemed to encourage their countrymen to press forward. The critical moment of the battle was evidently approaching. Suchet ordered Palombini's Italians and the dragoons to support Harispe, and, although wounded himself, galloped to the cuirassiers and brought them into action. Meanwhile the French hussars had pursued the Spaniards from the height to the Piccador, where, however, the latter rallied upon their second line and again advanced; and it was in vain that the French artillery poured grape-shot into their ranks; their march was not checked. Loy and Caro's horsemen overthrew the French hussars in a moment, and in the same charge sabred the French gunners and captured their battery. The crisis would have been fatal, if Harispe's infantry had not stood firm, while Palombini's division, marching on the left under cover of a small rise of ground, suddenly opened a fire upon the flank of the Spanish cavalry which was still in pursuit of the hussars. These last immediately

turned, and the Spaniards, thus placed between two fires, and thinking the flight of the hussars had been feigned, to draw them into an ambuscade, hesitated; the next moment a tremendous charge of the cuirassiers put everything into confusion. Caro was wounded and taken, Loy fled with the remainder of the cavalry over the Piccador, the French guns were recovered, the Spanish artillery was taken, and Lardizabal's infantry, being quite broken, laid down their arms, or, throwing them away, saved themselves as they could. Harispe's division immediately joined Chlopiski's, and both together pursued the beaten troops.

This great and nearly simultaneous success, in the centre and on the right, having cut the Spanish line in two, Zayas' position became exceedingly dangerous. Suchet was on his flank, Habert advancing against his front, and Blake had no reserve in hand to restore the battle; for the few troops and guns under Velasco remained inactive at El Puig. However, such had been the vigor of the action in the centre, and so inferior were Suchet's numbers, that it required two hours to secure his prisoners and to rally Palombini's division for another effort. Meanwhile Zayas, whose left flank was covered in some measure by the water-cuts, fought stoutly, maintained the village of Puzzol for a long time, and, when fairly driven out, although he was charged several times by some squadrons attached to Habert's division, effected his retreat across the Piccador, and gained El Puig. Suchet had however re-formed his troops, and Zayas, now attacked in front and flank, fled along the sea-coast to the Grao of Valencia, leaving his artillery and eight hundred prisoners.

During this time, Chlopiski and Harispe had pursued Mahy, Miranda, Villa Campa, and Lardizabal, as far as the torrent of Caraixet, where many prisoners were made; but the rest, being joined by Obispo, rallied behind the torrent, and the French cavalry, having outstripped their infantry, were unable to prevent the Spaniards from reaching the line of the Guadalaviar. The victors had about a thousand killed and wounded, and the Spaniards had not more; but two generals, five thousand prisoners, and twelve guns were taken; and Blake's inability to oppose Suchet in the field being made manifest by this battle, the troops engaged were totally dispirited, and the effect reached even to Saguntum, for the garrison surrendered that night.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1. In this campaign the main object on both sides was Valencia. That city could not be invested until Saguntum was taken, and the Spanish army defeated; hence to protect Saguntum without en-

dangering his army, was the problem for Blake to solve, and it was not very difficult. He had at least twenty-five thousand troops, besides the garrisons of Peniscola, Oropesa, and Segorbe, and he could either command or influence the movements of nearly twenty thousand irregulars; his line of operations was direct, and secure, and he had a fleet to assist him, and several secure harbors. On the other hand the French General could not bring twenty thousand men into action, and his line of operation, which was long and difficult, was intercepted by the Spanish fortresses. It was for Blake therefore to choose the nature of his defence: he could fight, or he could protract the war.

2. If he had resolved to fight, he should have taken post at Castellon de la Plana, keeping a corps of observation at Segorbe, and strong detachments towards Villa Franca and Cabanes, holding his army in readiness to fall on the heads of Suchet's columns, as they came out of the mountains. But experience had, or should have, taught Blake, that a battle in the open field between the French and Spanish troops, whatever might be the apparent advantage, was uncertain; and this last and best army of the country ought not to have been risked. He should therefore have resolved upon protracting the war, and have merely held that position to check the heads of the French columns, without engaging in a pitched battle.

3. From Castellon de la Plana and Segorbe, the army might have been withdrawn, and concentrated at Murviedro in one march, and Blake should have prepared an intrenched camp in the hills close to Saguntum, placing a corps of observation in the plain behind that fortress. These hills were rugged, very difficult of access, and the numerous water-cuts and the power of forming inundations in the place, were so favorable for defence, that it would have been nearly impossible for the French to have dislodged him; nor could they have invested Saguntum while he remained in his camp.

4. In such a strong position, with his retreat secure upon the Guadalaviar, the Spanish General would have covered the fertile plains from the French foragers, and would have held their army at bay while the irregulars operated upon their communication. He might then have safely detached a division to his left, to assist the partidas, or to his right, by sea, to land at Peniscola. His forces would soon have been increased and the invasion would have been frustrated.

5. Instead of following this simple principle of defensive warfare consecrated since the days of Fabius, Blake abandoned Saguntum, and from behind the Guadalaviar sent unconnected detach-

ments on a half circle round the French army, which being concentrated, and nearer to each detachment than the latter was to its own base at Valencia, could and did, as we have seen, defeat them all in detail.

6. Blake, like all the Spanish generals, indulged vast military conceptions far beyond his means, and, from want of knowledge, generally in violation of strategic principles. Thus his project of cutting the communication with Madrid, invading Aragon, and connecting Mina's operations between Zaragoza and the Pyrenees with Lacy's in Catalonia, was gigantic in design, but without any chance of success. The division of Severoli being added to Musnier's, had secured Aragon; and if it had not been so, the reinforcements then marching through Navarre, to different parts of Spain, rendered the time chosen for these attempts peculiarly unfavorable. But the chief objection was, that Blake had lost the favorable occasion of protracting the war about Saguntum; and the operations against Valencia were sure to be brought to a crisis, before the affairs of Aragon could have been sufficiently embarrassing to recall the French General. The true way of using the large guerilla forces, was to bring them down close upon the rear of Suchet's army, especially on the side of Teruel, where he had magazines; which could have been done safely, because these partidas had an open retreat, and if followed would have effected their object, of weakening and distressing the army before Valencia. This would have been quite a different operation from that which Blake adopted, when he posted Obispo and O'Donnell at Benaquazil and Segorbe; because these generals' lines of operations, springing from the Guadalaviar, were within the power of the French; and this error alone proves that Blake was entirely ignorant of the principles of strategy.

7. Urged by the cries of the Valencian population, the Spanish General delivered the battle of the 25th, which was another great error, and an error exaggerated by the mode of execution. He who had so much experience, who had now commanded in four or five pitched battles, was still so ignorant of his art, that with twice as many men as his adversary, and with the choice of time and place, he made three simultaneous attacks, on an extended front, without any connection or support; and he had no reserves to restore the fight or to cover his retreat. A wide sweep of the net without regard to the strength or fierceness of his prey, was Blake's only notion, and the result was his own destruction.

8. Suchet's operations, especially his advance against Saguntum, leaving Oropesa behind him, were able and rapid. He saw the errors of his adversary, and made them fatal. To fight in front



of Saguntum was no fault; the French General acted with a just confidence in his own genius, and the valor of his troops. He gained that fortress by the battle, but he acknowledged that such were the difficulties of the siege, the place could only have been taken by a blockade, which would have required two months.

---

### CHAPTER III.

Suchet resolves to invest the city of Valencia—Blake reverts to his former system of acting on the French rear—Napoleon orders General Reille to reinforce Suchet with two divisions—Lacy disarms the Catalan Somatenes—Their ardor diminishes—The French destroy several bands, blockade the Medas islands, and occupy Mattaro—Several towns affected to the French interest—Bad conduct of the privateers—Lacy encourages assassination—Suchet advances to the Gaudalaviar—Spanish defences described—The French force the passage of the river—Battle of Valencia—Mahi flies to Alcira—Suchet invests the Spanish camp—Blake attempts to break out, is repulsed—The camp abandoned—The city is bombarded—Commotion within the walls—Blake surrenders with his whole army—Suchet created Duke of Albufera—Shameful conduct of the Junta of the province—Montbrun arrives with three divisions—Summons Alicant, and returns to Toledo—Villa Campa marches from Carthagena to Albaracin—Grandia and Denia taken by the French—They besiege Peniscola—Lacy menaces Tarragona—Defeats a French battalion at Villa Seca—Battle of Altafulla—Siege of Peniscola—The French army in Valencia weakened by draughts—Suchet's conquests cease—Observations.

SAGUNTUM having fallen, Suchet conceived the plan of inclosing and capturing the whole of Blake's force, together with the city of Valencia, round which it was encamped; and he was not deterred from this project by the desultory operations of the partidas in Aragon, nor by the state of Catalonia. Blake, however, reverting to his former system, called up to Valencia all the garrisons and dépôts of Murcia, and directed the Conde de Montijo, who had been expelled by Soult from Granada, to join Duran. He likewise ordered Freire to move upon Cuença, with the Murcian army, to support Montijo, Duran, and the partida chiefs, who remained near Aragon after the defeat of the Empecinado. But the innumerable small bands, or rather armed peasants, immediately about Valencia, he made no use of, neither harassing the French nor in any manner accustoming these people to action.

In Aragon his affairs turned out ill. Mazzuchelli entirely defeated Duran in a hard fight, near Almunia, on the 7th of November; on the 23d, Campillo was defeated at Añadon; and a partida having appeared at Peñarova, near Morella, the people rose against

it: Finally Napoleon, seeing that the contest in Valencia was coming to a crisis, ordered General Reille to reinforce Suchet not only with Severoli's Italians, but with his own French division, in all fifteen thousand good troops.

Meanwhile in Catalonia Lacy's activity had greatly diminished. He had, including the tercios, above sixteen thousand troops, of which about twelve thousand were armed, and in conjunction with the Junta he had classed the whole population in reserves; but he was jealous of the people, who were generally of the church party, and, as he had before done in the Ronda, deprived them of their arms, although they had purchased them, in obedience to his own proclamation. He also discountenanced as much as possible the popular insurrection, and he was not without plausible reasons for this, although he could not justify the faithless and oppressive mode of execution.

He complained that the Somatenes always lost their arms and ammunition, that they were turbulent, expensive, and bad soldiers, and that his object was to incorporate them by just degrees with the regular army, where they could be of service; but then he made no good use of the latter himself, and hence he impeded the irregulars without helping the regular warfare. His conduct disgusted the Catalonians. That people had always possessed a certain freedom and loved it; but they had been treated despotically and unjustly, by all the different commanders who had been placed at their head, since the commencement of the war; and now, finding that Lacy was even worse than his predecessors, their ardor sensibly diminished; many went over to the French, and this feeling of discouragement was increased by some unfortunate events.

Henriod, Governor of Lerida, had on the 25th of October surprised and destroyed, in Balaguer, a swarm of partidas which had settled on the plain of Urgel, and the partisans on the left bank of the Ebro had been defeated by the escort of one of the convoys. The French also intrenched a post before the Medas Islands, in November, which prevented all communication by land, and in the same month Maurice Mathieu surprised Mattaro. The war had also now fatigued so many persons, that several towns were ready to receive the enemy as friends. Villa Nueva de Sitjes and other places were in constant communication with Barcelona; and the people of Cadaques openly refused to pay their contributions to Lacy, declaring that they had already paid the French and meant to side with the strongest.\* One Guinart, a member of the Junta, was detected corresponding with the enemy; counter guerrillas, or rather freebooting bands, made their appearance near Berga; privateers of all nations infested the coast, and these pirates

\* Appendix 4, § 3.

of the ocean, the disgrace of civilized warfare, generally agreed not to molest each other, but robbed all defenceless flags without distinction. Then the continued bickerings between Sarsfield, Eroles, and Milans, and of all three with Lacy, who was, besides, on bad terms with Captain Codrington, greatly affected the patriotic ardor of the people, and relieved the French armies from the alarm which the first operations had created.

In Catalonia, the generals-in-chief were never natives, nor identified in feeling with the natives. Lacy was unfitted for open warfare, and had recourse to the infamous methods of assassination. Campo Verde had given some countenance to this horrible system, but Lacy and his coadjutors have been accused of instigating the murder of French officers in their quarters, the poisoning of wells, the drugging of wines and flour, and the firing of powder-magazines, regardless of the safety even of the Spaniards who might be within reach of the explosion; and if any man shall doubt the truth of this allegation, let him read "*The History of the Conspiracies against the French Armies in Catalonia.*" That work, printed in 1813 at Barcelona, contains the official reports of the military police, upon the different attempts, many successful, to destroy the French troops; and when due allowance for an enemy's tale and for the habitual falsifications of police agents is made, ample proof will remain that Lacy's warfare was one of assassination.

The facility which the great size of Barcelona afforded for these attempts, together with its continual cravings and large garrison, induced Napoleon to think of dismantling the walls of the city, preserving only the forts. This simple military precaution has been noted by some writers as an indication that he even then secretly despaired of final success in the Peninsula; but the weakness of this remark will appear evident, if we consider, that he had just augmented his immense army, that his generals were invading Valencia, and menacing Galicia, after having relieved Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo; and that he was himself preparing to lead four hundred thousand men to the most distant extremity of Europe. However, the place was not dismantled, and Maurice Mathieu contrived both to maintain the city in obedience, and to take an important part in the field operations.

It was under these circumstances that Suchet advanced to the Guadalaviar, although his losses and the escorts for his numerous prisoners had diminished his force to eighteen thousand men, while Blake's army, including Freire's division, was above twenty-five thousand, of which near three thousand were cavalry. He first summoned the city, to ascertain the public spirit; he was answered in lofty terms, yet he knew by his secret communications, that the

enthusiasm of the people was not very strong; and on the 3d of November, he seized the Grao and the suburb of Serranos, on the left of the Guadalaviar. Blake had broken two out of five stone bridges on the river, had occupied some houses and convents which covered them on the left bank, and protected those bridges which remained whole with regular works. Suchet immediately carried the convents which covered the broken bridges in the Serranos, and fortified his position there and at the Grao, and thus blocked the Spaniards on that side with a small force, while he prepared to pass the river higher up with the remainder of his army.

The Spanish defences on the right bank consisted of three posts,

1. The city itself, which was surrounded by a circular wall thirty feet in height and ten in thickness, with a road along the summit, the platforms of the bastions being supported from within by timber scaffolding. There was also a wet ditch and a covered way with earthen works in front of the gates.

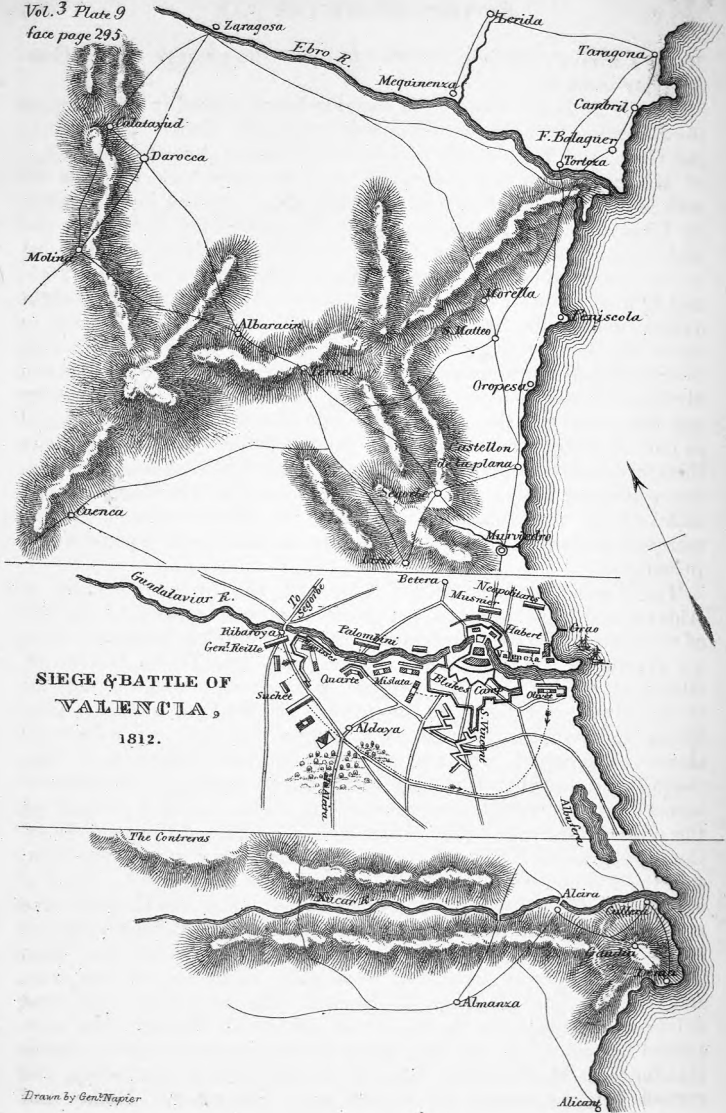
2. An intrenched camp of an irregular form five miles in extent. It inclosed the city and the three suburbs of Quarte, San Vicente, and Ruzafa. The slope of this work was so steep as to require scaling ladders, and there was a ditch in front twelve feet deep.

3. The lines which extended along the banks of the river to the sea at one side, and to the villages of Quarte and Manisses on the other.

The whole line, including the city and the camp, was about eight miles; the ground was broken with deep and wide canals of irrigation, which branched off from the river just above the village of Quarte, and the Spanish cavalry was posted at Aldaya behind the left wing to observe the open country. Suchet could not venture to force the passage of the river until Reille had joined him, and therefore contented himself with sending parties over to skirmish, while he increased his secret communications in the city, and employed detachments to scour the country in his rear. In this manner nearly two months passed; the French waited for reinforcements, and Blake hoped that while he thus occupied his enemy a general insurrection would save Valencia. But in December, Reille, having given over the charge of Navarre and Aragon to General Caffarelli, marched to Teruel, where Severoli with his Italians had already arrived.

The vicinity of Freire and Montijo, who now appeared near Cuença, obliged Reille to halt at Teruel until General D'Armanac with a detachment of the army of the centre, had driven those Spanish generals away; but then he advanced to Segorbe, and as Freire did not rejoin Blake, and as the latter was ignorant of







Reille's arrival, Suchet resolved to force the passage of the Guadalaviar instantly.

On the 25th, the Neapolitan division being placed in the camp at the Serranos, to hold the Spaniards in check, Habert took post at the Grao, and Palombini's division was placed opposite the village of Mislata, which was about half way between Valencia and the village of Quarte. Reille at the same time made a forced march by Liria and Benaguazil, and three bridges being thrown in the night, above the sources of the canals, opposite Ribaroya, the rest of the army crossed the Guadalaviar with all diligence on the 26th, and formed in order of battle on the other side. It was then eight o'clock, and Reille had not arrived, but Suchet, whose plan was to drive all Blake's army within the intrenched camp, fearing that the Spanish General would evade the danger, if he saw the French divisions in march, resolved to push at once with Harispe's infantry and the cavalry to the Albufera or salt-lake, beyond Valencia, and so cut off Blake's retreat to the Xucar river. Robert's brigade therefore halted to secure the bridges, until Reille should come up, and while the troops, left on the other bank of the Guadalaviar, attacked all the Spanish river line of intrenchments, Suchet marched towards the lake as rapidly as the thick woods would permit.

The French hussars soon fell in with the Spanish cavalry at Aldaya, and were defeated, but this charge was stopped by the fire of the infantry, and the remainder of the French horsemen coming up overthrew the Spaniards. During this time Blake, instead of falling on Suchet with his reserve, was occupied with the defence of the river, especially at the village of Mislata, where a false attack, to cover the passage at Ribaroya, had first given him the alarm. Palombini, who was at this point, had passed over some skirmishers, and then throwing two bridges, attacked the intrenchments; but his troops were repulsed by Zayas, and driven back on the river in disorder; they rallied and had effected the passage of the canals, when a Spanish reserve coming up restored the fight, and the French were finally driven quite over the river. At that moment Reille's division, save one brigade which could not arrive in time, crossed at Ribaroya, and, in concert with Robert, attacked Mahy in the villages of Manisses and Quarte, which had been fortified carefully in front, but were quite neglected on the rear, and on the side of Aldaya. Suchet, who had been somewhat delayed at Aldaya by the aspect of affairs at Mislata, then continued his march to the lake, while Reille, meeting with a feeble resistance at Manisses and Quarte, carried both at one sweep, and turned Mislata, where he united with Palombini. Blake and

Zayas retired towards the city, but Mahy driven from Quarte took the road to Alcira, on the Xucar, and thus passing behind Suchet's division, was entirely cut off from Valencia.

All the Spanish army, on the upper Guadalaviar, was now entirely beaten, with the loss of its artillery and baggage, and below the city, Habert was likewise victorious. He had first opened a cannonade against the Spanish gun-boats near the Grao, and this flotilla, although in sight of an English seventy-four and a frigate, and closely supported by the Papillon sloop, fled without returning a shot; the French then passed the water, and carried the intrenchments, which consisted of a feeble breast-work, defended by the irregulars who had only two guns. When the passage was effected, Habert fixed his right, as a pivot, on the river, and sweeping round with his left, drove the Spaniards towards the camp; but before he could connect his flank with Harispe's troops, who were on the lake, Obispo's division, flying from Suchet's cavalry, passed over the rice grounds between the lake and the sea, and so escaped to Cullera. The remainder of Blake's army, about eighteen thousand of all kinds, retired to the camp, and were closely invested during the night.

Three detachments of French dragoons, each man having an infantry soldier behind him, were then sent by different roads to Alcira, Cullera, and Cuença, the first in pursuit of Mahy and Obispo, the latter to observe Freire. Mahy was found in a position at Alcira, and Blake had already sent him orders to maintain the line of the Xucar; but he had lost his artillery, his troops were disheartened, and at the first shot he fled, although the ground was strong and he had three thousand men while the French were not above a thousand. Obispo likewise abandoned Cullera and endeavored to rejoin Mahy, when a very heavy and unusual fall of snow not only prevented their junction, but offered a fine advantage to the French. For the British consul, thinking the Xucar would be defended, had landed large stores of provisions and ammunition at Denia, and was endeavoring to re-embark them, when the storm drove the ships of war off the coast, and for three days fifty cavalry could have captured Denia and all the stores.

In this battle, which cost the French less than five hundred men, Zayas alone displayed his usual vigor and spirit, and while retiring upon the city, he repeatedly proposed to Blake to retreat by the road Mahy had followed, which would have saved the army; yet the other was silent, for he was in every way incapable as an officer. With twenty-three thousand infantry, a powerful cavalry, and a wide river in his front; with the command of several bridges by which he could have operated on either side; with strong

intrenchments, a secure camp, with a fortified city in the centre, where his reserves could have reached the most distant point of the scene of operation in less than two hours—with all these advantages he had permitted Suchet, whose force, seeing that one of Reille's brigades had not arrived, scarcely exceeded his own, to force the passage of the river, to beat him at all points, and to inclose him, by a march which spread the French troops on a circuit of more than fifteen miles or five hours' march; and he now rejected the only means of saving his army. But Suchet's operations, which indeed were of the nature of a surprise, prove that he must have had a supreme contempt for his adversary's talents, and the country people partook of the sentiment; the French parties which spread over the country for provisions, as far as Zativa, were everywhere well received, and Blake complained that Valencia contained a bad people.

The 2d of December, the Spanish General, finding his error, attempted at the head of ten thousand men to break out by the left bank of the Guadalaviar; but his arrangements were unskilful, and when his advanced guard of five thousand men had made way, it was abandoned, and the main column returned to the city. The next day many deserters went over to the French, and Reille's absent brigade now arrived and reinforced the posts on the left bank of the river. Suchet fortified his camp on the right bank, and having in the night of the 30th repulsed two thousand Spaniards who made a sally, commenced regular approaches against the camp and city.

#### SIEGE OF VALENCIA.

It was impossible for Blake to remain long in the camp; the city contained one hundred and fifty thousand souls besides the troops, and there was no means of provisioning them, because Suchet's investment was complete. Sixty heavy guns with their parcs of ammunition which had reached Saguntum, were transported across the river Guadalaviar to batter the works; and as the suburb of San Vincente and the Olivet offered two projecting points of the intrenched camp, which possessed but feeble means of defence, the trenches were opened against them in the night of the 1st of January.

The fire killed Colonel Henri, the chief engineer, but in the night of the 5th, the Spaniards abandoned the camp and took refuge in the city; the French, perceiving the movement, escaladed the works, and seized two of the suburbs so suddenly, that they captured eighty pieces of artillery and established themselves within twenty yards of the town wall, when their mortar batteries opened

upon the place. In the evening, Suchet sent a summons to Blake, who replied, that he would have accepted certain terms the day before, but that the bombardment had convinced him that he might now depend upon both the citizens and the troops.

This answer satisfied Suchet. He was convinced the place would not make any defence, and he continued to throw shells until the 8th; after which he made an attack upon the suburb of Quarte, but the Spaniards still held out, and he was defeated. However, the bombardment killed many persons, and set fire to the houses in several quarters; and as there were no cellars or caves, as at Zaragoza, the chief citizens begged Blake to capitulate. While he was debating with them, a friar bearing a flag, which he called the Standard of the Faith, came up with a mob, and insisted upon fighting to the last, and when a piquet of soldiers was sent against him, he routed it and shot the officer; nevertheless his party was soon dispersed. Finally, when a convent of Dominicans close to the walls was taken, and five batteries ready to open, Blake demanded leave to retire to Alicant with arms, baggage, and four guns.

These terms were refused, but a capitulation guaranteeing property, and oblivion of the past, and providing that the unfortunate prisoners in the island of Cabrera should be exchanged against an equal number of Blake's army, was negotiated and ratified on the 9th. Then Blake, complaining bitterly of the people, gave up the city. Above eighteen thousand regular troops, with eighty stand of colors, two thousand horses, three hundred and ninety guns, forty thousand muskets, and enormous stores of powder were taken; and it is not one of the least remarkable features of this extraordinary war, that intelligence of the fall of so great a city took a week to reach Madrid, and it was not known in Cadiz until one month after!

On the 14th of January, Suchet made his triumphal entry into Valencia, having completed a series of campaigns in which the feebleness of his adversaries somewhat diminished his glory, but in which his own activity and skill were not the less conspicuous. Napoleon created him Duke of Albufera, and his civil administration was strictly in unison with his conduct in the field, that is to say, vigorous and prudent. He arrested all dangerous persons, especially the friars, and sent them to France, and he rigorously deprived the people of their military resources; but he proportioned his demands to their real ability, kept his troops in perfect discipline, was careful not to offend the citizens by violating their customs, or shocking their religious prejudices, and endeavored, as much as possible, to govern through the native authorities. The

archbishop and many of the clergy aided him, and the submission of the people was secured.

The errors of the Spaniards contributed as much to this object, as the prudent vigilance of Suchet; for although the city was lost, the kingdom of Valencia might have recovered from the blow, under the guidance of able men. The convents and churches were full of riches, the towns and villages abounded in resources, the line of the Xucar was very strong, and several fortified places and good harbors remained unsubdued; the partidas in the hills were still numerous, the people were willing to fight, and the British agents and the British fleets were ready to aid, and to supply arms and stores.\* The Junta however dissolved itself, the magistrates fled from their posts, the populace were left without chiefs; and when the Consul, Tupper, proposed to establish a commission of government, having at its head the Padre Rico, the author of Valencia's first defence against Moncey, and the most able and energetic man in those parts, Mahy evaded the proposition; he would not give Rico power, and showed every disposition to impede useful exertion. Then the leading people either openly submitted or secretly entered into connection with the French, who were thus enabled tranquilly to secure the resources of the country; and as the Regency at Cadiz refused the stipulated exchange of prisoners, the Spanish army was sent to France, and the horrors of the Cabrera were prolonged.

During the siege of Valencia, Freire, with his Murcians, including a body of cavalry, had abandoned the passes of the Contreras district and retired across the Xucar to Almanza; Mahy occupied Alcoy, and Villa Campa had marched to Carthagená. Suchet wished to leave them undisturbed until he was ready to attack Alicant itself. But to insure the fall of Valencia, Napoleon had directed Soult to hold ten thousand men in the Despeñas Perros, ready to march if necessary to Suchet's assistance; and at the same time Marmont was ordered to detach Montbrun with two divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, from the valley of the Tagus, to co-operate with the army of Aragon. These last-named troops should have interposed between Valencia and Alicant before the battle of the 26th, but they were delayed, and only reached Almanza on the 9th, the very day Valencia surrendered. Freire retreated before them, and Mahy, who was preparing to advance again to Alcira, took shelter in Alicant. Montbrun knew that Valencia had fallen, and was advised by Suchet to return immediately, but ambitious to share in the glory of the hour he marched against Alicant, and throwing a few shells summoned it to surrender. The municipal authorities, the governor and many of the leading people, were disposed to yield, yet Montbrun did not press them, and when

\* Appendix 4.

he retired, the place was, as Suchet had foreseen, put into a state of defence. The Consul, Tupper, and Roche, the military agent, by distributing clothes and food to the naked famishing soldiers, restored their courage, drew many more to Alicant, and stopped the desertion, which was so great that in one month Freire's division alone had lost two thousand men. Montbrun's attempt therefore hurt the French interests, and his troops on their return to Toledo wasted and pillaged the country through which they passed in a shameful manner.

Villa Campa now abandoned Carthagena and returned to the mountains of Albarazin: and Suchet, embarrassed by the failure at Alicant, and dreading the fever at Carthagena, posted Harispe's division on the Xucar, to guard against the pestilence rather than to watch the enemy. Yet he seized Gandia and Denia, which now was strangely neglected both by the Spaniards and by the British squadron after the stores were removed; for the castle had sixty guns mounted, and many vessels were in the port; and as a post it was important, and might easily have been secured until a Spanish garrison could be thrown in. When these points were secured, Suchet detached a brigade on the side of Cabrillas to preserve the communication with Cuença, and then directed Musnier's division to form the siege of Peniscola; but at the moment of investing that place, intelligence arrived that Tarragona, the garrison of which, contrary to orders, had consumed the reserve provisions, was menaced by Lacy; wherefore Severoli's division moved from Valencia to replace Musnier, and the latter marched to Tortosa in aid of Tarragona. Previous to Musnier's arrival, Lafosse, governor of Tortosa, had advanced with some cavalry and a battalion of infantry to the fort of Balaguer, to observe Lacy, and being falsely told that the Spaniards were in retreat, entered Cambril the 19th, and from thence pushed on with his cavalry to Tarragona. Lacy was nearer than he imagined.

It will be remembered that the Catalan army was posted in the valley of the Congosta and at Mattaro, to intercept the French convoy at Barcelona. In December, Maurice Mathieu seized Mattaro, while Dacaen, who had received some reinforcements, brought down the long expected convoy, and the Spaniards being thus placed between two fires, after a slight action, opened the road. When Dacaen returned to Gerona, they resumed their position, but Lacy, after proposing several new projects, which he generally relinquished at the moment of execution, at last decided to fall on Tarragona, and afterwards to invade Aragon. With this view, he drew off Eroles' division and some cavalry, in all about six thousand men, from the Congosta, and took post about the 18th of January at



Reus. The stores from Cadiz were landed from the English vessels at Cape Salou; Captain Codrington repaired to the Spanish quarters on the 19th, to concert a combined operation with the fleet, and it was at this moment the scouts brought word that Lafosse had entered Tarragona with the cavalry, and that the French infantry, about eight hundred in number, were at Villa Seca, ignorant of the vicinity of the Spanish army.

Lacy immediately put his troops in motion, and Captain Codrington would have returned to his ship, but a patrol of French dragoons chased him back, and another patrol pushing to Salou made two captains and a lieutenant of the squadron prisoners, and brought them to Villa Seca. By this time, however, Lacy had fallen upon the French infantry in front, and Eroles turning both their flanks, and closing upon their rear, killed or wounded two hundred, when the remainder surrendered.

The naval officers thus freed immediately regained their ships, and the squadron was that night before Tarragona; but a gale of wind off shore impeded its fire, the Spaniards did not appear on the land-side, and the next day the increasing gale obliged the ships to anchor to the eastward. Lacy had meanwhile abandoned the project against Tarragona, and after sending his prisoners to Busa, went off himself towards Montserrat, leaving Eroles' division, reinforced by a considerable body of armed peasantry, in a position at Altafulla, behind the Gaya. Here the bridge in front being broken, and the position strong, Eroles, who had been also promised the aid of Sarsfield's division, awaited the attack of three thousand men who were coming from Barcelona. He was however ignorant that Dacaen, finding the ways from Gerona open, because Sarsfield had moved to the side of Vich, had sent General Lamarque with five thousand men to Barcelona, and that Maurice Mathieu was thus in march, not with three but eight thousand good troops.

#### BATTLE OF ALTAFULLA.

The French generals, anxious to surprise Eroles, took pains to conceal their numbers, and while Maurice Mathieu appeared in front, Lamarque was turning the left flank. They marched all night, and at daybreak on the 24th, having forded the river, made a well combined and vigorous attack, by which the Spaniards were defeated with a loss of more than one thousand killed and wounded. The total dispersion of the beaten troops baffled pursuit, and the French in returning to Barcelona suffered from the fire of the British squadron, but Eroles complained that Sarsfield had kept away with a settled design to sacrifice him.

While this was passing in lower Catalonia, Dacaen secured the

higher country about Olot, and then descending into the valley of Vich defeated Sarsfield at Centellas, and that General himself was taken, but rescued by one of his soldiers. From Centellas Dacæa marched by Caldas and Sabadel upon Barcelona, where he arrived the 27th January; meanwhile Musnier re-victualled Tarragona. Thus the Catalans were again reduced to great straits, for the French knowing that they were soon to be reinforced, occupied all the sea-coast, made new roads out of reach of fire from the ships, established fresh posts at Moncado, Mattaro, Palamos, and Cadaques, placed detachments in the higher valleys, and obliged their enemies to resort once more to an irregular warfare; which was however but a feeble resource, because from Lacy's policy the people were now generally disarmed and discontented.

Milans, Manso, Eroles, Sarsfield, and Rovira, indeed, although continually quarrelling, kept the field; and being still supplied with arms and stores which the British navy contrived to land and send into the interior, sustained the war as partisans until new combinations were produced by the efforts of England; but Lacy's intrigues and unpopularity increased, a general gloom prevailed, and the foundations of strength in the principality were shaken. The patriots indeed still possessed the mountains, but the French held all the towns, all the ports, and most of the lines of communication; and their movable columns without difficulty gathered the harvests of the valleys, and chased the most daring of the partisans. Meanwhile Suchet, seeing that Tarragona was secure, renewed his operations.

#### SIEGE OF PENISCOLA.

This fortress, crowning the summit of a lofty rock in the sea, was nearly impregnable, and the only communication with the shore was by a neck of land sixty yards wide and two hundred and fifty long. In the middle of the town there was a strong castle, well furnished with guns and provisions, and some British ships of war were at hand to aid the defence. The rock yielded copious springs of water, and deep marshes covered the approach to the neck of land, which being covered by the waves in heavy gales, had also an artificial cut, defended by batteries and flanked by gun-boats. Garcia Novarro, who had been taken during the siege of Tortosa, but had escaped from France, was now governor of Peniscola, and his garrison was sufficiently numerous.

On the 20th, ground was broken, and mortar-batteries being established twelve hundred yards from the fort, opened their fire on the 28th.

In the night of the 31st, a parallel five hundred yards long was

built of fascines and gabions, and batteries were commenced on either flank.

In the night of the second of February the approaches were pushed beyond the first parallel, and the breaching batteries being finished and armed were going to open, when a privateer captured a despatch from the Governor, who complained in it that the English wished to take the command of the place, and declared his resolution rather to surrender than suffer them to do so. On this hint Suchet opened negotiations, which terminated in the capitulation of the fortress, the troops being allowed to go where they pleased. The French found sixty guns mounted, and the easy reduction of such a strong place, which secured their line of communication, produced a general disposition in the Valencians to submit to fortune. Such is Suchet's account of this affair, but the color which he thought it necessary to give to a transaction, full of shame and dishonor to Navarro, can only be considered as part of the price paid for Peniscola. The true causes of its fall were treachery and cowardice. The garrison were from the first desponding and divided in opinion, and the British naval officers did but stimulate the troops and general to do their duty to their country.

After this capture, six thousand Poles quitted Suchet, for Napoleon required all the troops of that nation for his Russian expedition. These veterans marched by Jaca, taking with them the prisoners of Blake's army; at the same time Reille's two French divisions were ordered to form a separate corps of observation on the lower Ebro, and Palombini's Italian division was sent towards Soria and Calatayud to oppose Montijo, Villa Campa, and Bassecour, who were still in joint operation on that side. But Reille soon marched towards Aragon, and Severoli's division took his place on the lower Ebro; for the partidas of Duran, Empecinado, and those numerous bands from the Asturias and La Montaña composing the seventh army, harassed Navarre and Aragon, and were too powerful for Caffarelli. Mina's also re-entered Aragon in January, surprised Huesca, and being attacked during his retreat at Lumbiar repulsed the enemy and carried off his prisoners.

Suchet's field force in Valencia was thus reduced by twenty thousand men; he had only fifteen thousand left, and consequently could not push the invasion on the side of Murcia. The approaching departure of Napoleon from Paris also altered the situation of the French armies in the Peninsula. The King was again appointed the Emperor's lieutenant, and he extended the right wing of Suchet's army to Cuença, and concentrated the army of the centre at Madrid; thus Valencia was made, as it were, a mere head of cantonments, in front of which fresh Spanish armies soon as-

sembled, and Alicant then became an object of interest to the English government. Suchet, who had neglected the wound he received at the battle of Saguntum, now fell into a dangerous disorder, and that fierce flame of war which seemed destined to lick up all the remains of the Spanish power, was suddenly extinguished.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1. The events which led to the capitulation of Valencia, were but a continuation of those faults which had before ruined the Spanish cause in every part of the Peninsula, namely, the neglect of all the good military usages, and the mania for fighting great battles with bad troops.

2. Blake needed not to have fought a serious action during any part of the campaign. He might have succored Saguntum without a dangerous battle, and might have retreated in safety behind the Guadalaviar; he might have defended that river without risking his whole army, and then have retreated behind the Xucar. He should never have shut up his army in Valencia, but having done so, he should never have capitulated. Eighteen thousand men, well conducted, could always have broken through the thin circle of investment drawn by Suchet, especially as the Spaniards had the power of operating on both banks of the river. But the campaign was one huge error throughout, and was pithily summed up in one sentence by the Duke of Wellington. Being accused by the Regency at Cadiz of having caused the catastrophe, by permitting the army of the north and that of Portugal to send reinforcements to Suchet, he replied thus: "The misfortunes of Valencia are to be attributed to Blake's ignorance of his profession, and to Mahy's cowardice and treachery."

## CHAPTER IV.

Operations in Andalusia and Estremadura—Description of Soult's position—Events in Estremadura—Ballesteros arrives at Algeiras—Advances to Alcada de Gazules—Is driven back—Soult designs to besiege Tarifa—Concludes a convention with the Emperor of Morocco—It is frustrated by England—Ballesteros cooped up under the guns of Gibraltar by Sémélé and Godinot—Colonel Skerrett sails for Tarifa—The French march against Tarifa—Are stopped in the Pass of La Peña by the fire of the British ships—They retire from San Roque—General Godinot shoots himself—General Hill surprises General Girard at Aroyo Molino, and returns to the Alentejo—French reinforced in Estremadura—Their movements checked by insubordination amongst the troops—Hill again advances—Endeavors to surprise the French at Merida—Fine conduct of Captain Neveux—Hill marches to Almendralejos to fight Drouet—The latter retires—Phillipon sends a party from Badajos to forage the banks of the Guadiana—Colonel Abererombie defeats a squadron of cavalry at Fuente del Maestro—Hill returns to the Alentejo.

## OPERATIONS IN ANDALUSIA AND ESTREMADURA.

THE affairs of these provinces were so intimately connected, that they cannot be treated separately; wherefore, taking Soult's position at Seville as the centre of a vast system, I will show how, from thence, he dealt his powerful blows around, and struggled, even as a consuming fire, which none could smother though many tried.

Seville, the base of his movements, and the storehouse of his army, was fortified with temporary citadels, which, the people being generally submissive, were tenable against desultory attacks. From this point he maintained his lines of communication, with the army of Portugal, through Estremadura, and with Madrid, through La Mancha; and from this point he sustained the most diversified operations on all parts of a circle which embraced the Condado de Niebla, Granada, Cordoba, and Estremadura.

The Niebla, which furnished large supplies, was the most vulnerable point, because from thence the allies might intercept the navigation of the river Guadalquivir, and so raise the blockade of Cadiz; and the frontier of Portugal would cover the assembling of the troops until the moment of attack. Moreover, expeditions from Cadiz to the mouth of the Guadiana were, as we have seen, frequent. Nevertheless, when Blake and Ballesteros had been driven from Ayamonte, in July and August, the French were masters of the Condado with the exception of the castle of Paymago, wherefore Soult, dreading the autumnal pestilence, did not keep more than twelve hundred men on that side.

The blockade of the Isla was always maintained by Victor, whose position formed an irregular crescent, extending from San Lucar

de Barameda on the right to Conil on the left, and running through Xeres, Arcos, Medina, Sidonia, and Chiclana. But that Marshal while thus posted was in a manner blockaded himself. In the Isla, including the Anglo-Portuguese division, there were never less than sixteen thousand troops, who, having the command of the sea, could at any moment land on the flanks of the French. The *partidas*, although neither numerous nor powerful, often impeded the intercourse with Seville; the *Serranos* of the Ronda and the regular forces at Algezirás, issuing, as it were, from the fortress of Gibraltar, cut the communication with Granada; and as Tarifa was still held by the allies, for General Campbell would never relinquish that important point, the fresh supplies of cattle, drawn from the great plain called the *Campaña de Tarifa*, was straitened. Meanwhile the expeditions to Estremadura and Murcia, the battles of Barosa and Albuera, and the rout of Baza, had employed all the disposable part of the army of the south; hence Victor's corps, scarcely strong enough to preserve its own fortified position, could make no progress in the attack of the Isla. This weakness of the French army being well known in Cadiz, the safety of that city was no longer doubtful; a part of the British garrison therefore joined Lord Wellington's army, and Blake, as we have seen, carried his Albuera soldiers to Valencia.

In Granada, the fourth corps, which after the departure of Sebastiani was commanded by General Laval, had two distinct tasks to fulfil: the one to defend the eastern frontier from the Murcian army, the other to maintain the coast line, beyond the *Alpuxaras*, against the efforts of the *partidas* of those mountains, against the *Serranos* of the Ronda, and against the expeditionary armies from Cadiz and from Algezirás. However, the defeat at Baza, and the calling off of Mahi, Freire, and Montijo to aid the Valencian operations, secured the Granadian frontier; and Martin Carrera, who was left there with a small force, having pushed his partisan excursions rashly, was killed in a skirmish at Lorca about the period when Valencia surrendered.

Cordoba was generally occupied by a division of five or six thousand men, who were ready to operate on the side of Estremadura, or on that of Murcia, and meanwhile chased the *partidas*, who were more numerous there than in other parts, and were also connected with those of La Mancha.

Estremadura was the most difficult field of operation. There Badajos, an advanced point, was to be supplied and defended from the most formidable army in the Peninsula; there the communications with Madrid and with the army of Portugal were to be maintained by the way of Truxillo; and there the fifth French



corps, commanded by Drouet, had to collect its subsistence from a ravaged country; to preserve its communications over the Sierra Morena with Seville; to protect the march of monthly convoys to Badajos; to observe the corps of General Hill, and to oppose the enterprises of Morillo's Spanish army, which was becoming numerous and bold.

Neither the Spanish nor British divisions could prevent Drouet from sending convoys to Badajos, because of the want of bridges on the Guadiana, below the fortress, but Morillo incommoded his foraging parties; for being posted at Valencia de Alcantara, and having his retreat upon Portugal always secure, he vexed the country about Caceres, and even pushed his incursions to Truxillo. The French General, therefore, kept a strong detachment beyond the Guadiana, but this exposed his troops to Hill's enterprises; and that bold and vigilant commander having ten thousand excellent troops, and being well instructed by Wellington, was a very dangerous neighbor.

Marmont's position in the valley of the Tagus, and the construction of the forts and bridge at Almaraz, which enabled him to keep a division at Truxillo, and connected him with the army of the south, tended indeed to hold Hill in check, and strengthened the French position in Estremadura; nevertheless, Drouet generally remained near Zafra with his main body, because from thence he could more easily make his retreat good to the Morena, or advance to Merida and Badajos as occasion required.

Such was the state of military affairs on the different parts of the circle round Seville, at the period when Suchet invaded Valencia and Wellington blockaded Ciudad Rodrigo; and to support his extensive operations, the Duke of Dalmatia, if his share of the reinforcements which entered Spain in July and August had joined him, would have had about a hundred thousand troops, of which ninety thousand men and fourteen thousand horses were French. But the reinforcements were detained in the different governments, and the actual number of French present with the eagles was not more than sixty-seven thousand.\*

The first corps contained twenty thousand; the fourth and fifth about eleven thousand each; the garrison of Badajos was five thousand; twenty thousand formed a disposable reserve, and the rest of the force consisted of "*Escopeteros*" and civic guards, who were chiefly employed in the garrisons and police. Upon pressing occasions Soult could therefore take the field at any point, with twenty-four or twenty-five thousand men, and in Estremadura, on very pressing occasions, with even a greater number of excellent troops well and powerfully organized. The manner in which this

\* Appendix 13, § 3.

great army was paralyzed in the latter part of 1811, shall now be shown.

In October, Drouet was in the Morena, and Girard at Merida, watching Morillo, who was in Caceres, when Soult, who had just returned to Seville after his Murcian expedition, sent three thousand men to Fregenal, seemingly to menace the Alemtejo. General Hill therefore recalled his brigades from the right bank of the Tagus, and concentrated his whole corps behind the Campo Maior on the 9th.

The 11th, Girard and Drouet advanced, the Spanish cavalry retired from Caceres, the French drove Morillo to *Caza de Cantellaña*, and everything indicated a serious attack; but at this moment Soult's attention was attracted by the appearance of Ballesteros in the Ronda, and he recalled the force from Fregenal. Drouet, who had reached Merida, then retired to Zafra, leaving Girard with a division and some cavalry near Caceres.

Ballesteros had disembarked at Algezirias on the 11th of September, and immediately marched with his own and Beguine's troops, in all four thousand men, to Ximena, raising fresh levies and collecting the Serranos of the Ronda as he advanced. On the 18th, he had endeavored to succor the castle of *Alcala de Gazules*, where Beguines had a garrison, but a French detachment from Chiclana had already reduced that post, and after some skirmishing both sides fell back, the one to Chiclana, the other to Ximena.

At this time six thousand French were collected at Ubrique, intending to occupy the sea-coast, from Algezirias to Conil, in furtherance of a great project which Soult was then meditating, and by which he hoped to effect, not only the entire subjection of Andalusia, but the destruction of the British power in the Peninsula. But this design, which shall hereafter be explained more fully, required several preliminary operations, amongst the most important of which was the capture of Tarifa, for that place, situated in the narrowest part of the straits, furnished either a protection, or a dangerous point of offence, to the Mediterranean trade, following the relations of its possessor with England. It affected, as we have seen, the supplies of the French before the *Isla*; it was from its nearness, and from the run of the current, the most convenient and customary point for trading with Morocco; it menaced the security of Ceuta, and it possessed, from ancient recollections, a species of feudal superiority over the smaller towns and ports along the coast, which would have given the French, if they had taken it, a moral influence of some consequence.

Soult had in August despatched a confidential officer from Conil to the African coast to negotiate with the Barbaric Emperor, and

the latter had agreed to a convention, by which he engaged to exclude British agents from his court, and to permit vessels of all nations to use the Moorish flag to cover their cargoes while carrying to the French those supplies hitherto sent to the allies, provided Soult would occupy Tarifa as a *dépôt*. This important convention was on the point of being ratified, when the opportune arrival of some unusually magnificent presents from England, turned the scale against the French. Their agent was then dismissed, the English supplies were increased, and Mr. Stuart entered into a treaty for the purchase of horses to remount the allied cavalry.

Although foiled in this attempt, Soult, calculating on the capricious nature of barbarians, resolved to fulfil his part by the capture of Tarifa; hence it was, that when Ballesteros appeared at Ximena, he arrested the movement of Drouet against the Alemtejo, and sent troops from Seville by Ubrique against the Spanish General, whose position, besides being extremely inconvenient to the first and fourth corps, was likely to affect the taking of Tarifa. Ballesteros, if reinforced, might also have become very dangerous to the blockade of Cadiz, by intercepting the supplies from the Campiña de Tarifa, and still more by menacing Victor's communications with Seville, along the Guadalquivir. A demonstration by the allies in the Isla de Leon arrested the march of these French troops for a moment, but on the 14th, eight thousand men under Generals Godinot and Sémélé advanced upon St. Roque and Algeiras. The inhabitants of those places immediately fled to the green island, and Ballesteros took refuge under Gibraltar, where his flanks were covered by the gun-boats of the place. The garrison was too weak to assist him with men, and thus *cooped up*, he lived upon the resources of the place, while efforts were therefore made to draw off the French by harassing their flanks. The naval means were not sufficient to remove his whole army to another quarter, but seven hundred were transported to Manilba, where the Serranos and some *partidas* had assembled on the left of the French, and at the same time twelve hundred British troops with four guns under Colonel Skerrett, and two thousand Spaniards, under Copons, sailed from Cadiz to Tarifa, to act upon the French right.

Copons was driven back by a gale of wind, but Skerrett arrived the 17th. The next day, Godinot sent a detachment against him, but the sea-road by which it marched was so swept with the guns of the Tuscan frigate, aided by the boats of the *Statély*, that the French after losing some men returned. Then Godinot and Sémélé being in dispute, and without provisions, retreated; they were

followed by Ballesteros' cavalry as far as Ximena, where the two generals separated in great anger, and Godinot having reached Seville shot himself. This failure in the south unsettled Soult's plans, and was followed by a heavier disaster in Estremadura.

#### SURPRISE OF AROYO MOLINO.

When Drouet had retired to Zafra, Hill received orders from Wellington to drive Girard away from Caceres, that Morillo might forage that country. For this purpose he assembled his corps at Albuquerque on the 23d, and Morillo brought the fifth Spanish army to Aliseda on the Salor. Girard was then at Caceres with an advanced guard at Aroyo de Puerco, but on the 24th, Hill occupied Aliseda and Casa de Cantillana, and the Spanish cavalry drove the French from Aroyo de Puerco. The 26th, at daybreak, Hill entered Malpartida de Caceres, and his cavalry pushed back that of the enemy. Girard then abandoned Caceres, but the weather was wet and stormy, and Hill, having no certain knowledge of the enemy's movements, halted for the night at Malpartidas.

On the morning of the 27th, the Spaniards entered Caceres; the enemy was tracked to Torre Mocha on the road to Merida; and the British General, hoping to intercept their line of march, pursued by a cross road, through Aldea de Cano and Casa de Don Antonio. During this movement intelligence was received that the French General had halted at Aroyo Molino, leaving a rear-guard at Albala, on the main road to Caceres, which proved that he was ignorant of the new direction taken by the allies, and only looked to a pursuit from Caceres. Hill immediately seized the advantage, and by a forced march reached Alcuesca in the night, being then within a league of Aroyo de Molinos.

This village was situated in a plain, and behind it a sierra or ridge of rocks rose in the form of a crescent, about two miles wide on the chord. One road led directly from Alcuesca upon Aroyo, another entered it from the left, and three led from it to the right. The most distant of the last was the Truxillo road, which rounded the extremity of the sierra; the nearest was the Merida road, and between them was that of Medellin.

During the night, though the weather was dreadful, no fires were permitted in the allied camp; and at two o'clock in the morning of the 28th, the troops moved to a low ridge, half a mile from Aroyo, under cover of which they formed three bodies, the infantry on the wings and the cavalry in the centre. The left column then marched straight upon the village, the right marched towards the extreme point of the sierra, where the road to Truxillo