

informed the regency, that to give up the shells of certain public buildings for hospitals, was all that would be done under the convention. Wherefore, as neither troops nor horses could march through Spain, and the supply of those already with the army became nearly impossible, the regency detained the reinforcements. Wellington reproached the Spanish government for this foul conduct; yet observed with great force to the Portuguese regency, that the treaty by which a certain number of soldiers were to be constantly in the field, was made with England, not with Spain; and that the former had paid the subsidy and provided ships for the transport of the troops. His remonstrances, Beresford's orders, and Mr. Stuart's exertions, backed by the menaces of Lord Castlereagh, were alike powerless; the regency embarked only three thousand men out of nine thousand, and those not until the month of March, when the war was on the point of terminating.

Thus, instead of thirty thousand Portuguese, Wellington had less than twenty thousand; and yet Mr. Stuart affirmed, that by doing away with the militia, and introducing the Prussian system of granting furloughs, one hundred thousand troops of the line might have been furnished and supported by Portugal, without pressing more severely on the finances of the country than the system which supplied these twenty thousand. The regency were, however, more than usually importunate to have the subsidy paid in specie, in which case their army would have disappeared altogether, and Mr. Stuart firmly opposed their importunity. It was indeed peculiarly ill-timed when their troops were withheld, and Wellington, having to pay ready money for his supplies in France, wanted all the specie that could be procured for the military chest. Such was the Portuguese ingratitude, and if the war had not terminated immediately afterwards, the alliance could not have continued. The British army, deserted by Portugal, and treated hostilely, as we shall find, by Spain, must then have abandoned the Peninsula.

Spain.—The malice evinced towards the English general by the Spanish government—the libels upon him and his army—the vicious system of supplying the Spanish troops, and their evil propensities, exacerbated by neglect and suffering—the intrigues of politicians inimical to the British alliance—the insolence and duplicity of the minister of war—the growing enmity between Spain and Portugal—the virulence of all parties, and the absolute hostility of the local authorities against the British officers and soldiers, who were treated rather as invaders than friends, drove Wellington in the latter end of November to extremity. He thought the general disposition of the people still favorable to the alliance, and with the aid of the serviles, hoped to put down the

liberals; but an open rupture with the government he judged inevitable; and if the liberal influence should prove most powerful with the people, he could not effect a retreat into Portugal. Wherefore, he recommended the British ministers to take measures with a view to a war against Spain! And this when, victorious in every battle, he seemed to have placed the cause he supported beyond the power of fortune! Who, when Napoleon was defeated at Leipsic, when all Europe and part of Asia were pouring their armed hordes into the northern and eastern parts of France, when Soult was unable to defend the western frontier—who then could have supposed that Wellington, the long-enduring general, whose profound calculations and untiring vigor had brought the war in the Peninsula to its apparently prosperous state, who could have supposed that he, the victorious commander, would thus describe his own situation to his government?

“Matters are becoming so bad between us and the Spaniards that I think it necessary to draw your attention seriously to the subject. You will have seen the libels about San Sebastian, which I know were written and published by an officer of the war department, and I believe under the direction of the minister at war Don Juan O'Donoju. Advantage has been taken of the impression made by these libels to circulate others in which the old stories are repeated about the outrages committed by Sir John Moore's army in Galicia; and endeavors are made to irritate the public mind about our still keeping garrisons in Cadiz and Carthagea, and particularly in Ceuta. They exaggerate the conduct of our traders in South America, and every little concern of a master of a ship, who behaves ill in a Spanish port, is represented as an attack upon the sovereignty of the Spanish nation. I believe these libels all proceed from the same source, the government and their immediate servants and officers; and although I have no reason to believe that they have as yet made any impression on the nation at large, they certainly have upon the officers of the government, and even upon the principal officers of the army. These persons must see that if the libels are not written or encouraged by the government, they are at least not discouraged; they know that we are odious to the government, and they treat us accordingly. The Spanish troops plunder everything they approach, neither their own nor our magazines are sacred. Until recently, there was some semblance of inquiry and of a desire to punish offenders, lately these acts of disorder have been left entirely unnoticed; unless when I have interfered with my authority as commander-in-chief of the Spanish army. The civil magistrates in the country have not only refused us assistance, but have particularly ordered the inhabitants not to

give it for payment; and when robberies have been discovered and the property proved to belong to the commissariat, the law has been violated and possession withheld. This was the case lately at Tolosa.

“Then, what is more extraordinary and more difficult to understand, is a transaction which occurred lately at Fuenterrabia. It was settled that the British and Portuguese hospitals should go to that town. There is a building there which has been a Spanish hospital; the Spanish authority, who gave it over, wanted to carry it off, in order to burn as fire-wood, the beds, that our soldiers might not have the use of them; and these are people to whom we have given medicines, instruments and other aids, who, when wounded and sick, we have taken into our hospitals, and to whom we have rendered every service in our power after having recovered their country from the enemy! These are not the people of Spain, but the officers of government, who would not dare to conduct themselves in this manner, if they did not know that their conduct was agreeable to their employers. If this spirit is not checked, if we do not show that we are sensible of the injury done to our character, and of the injustice and unfriendly nature of such proceedings, we must expect that the people at large will soon behave towards us in the same manner, and we shall have no friend, or none who will dare to avow himself as such in Spain. Consider what will be the consequence of this state of affairs, if any reverse should happen, or if an aggravation of the insults and injuries, or any other cause, should cause the English army to be withdrawn. I think I should experience great difficulty, the Spanish people being hostile, in retiring through Spain into Portugal from the peculiar nature of our equipments; and I think I might be able to embark the army at Passages, in spite of all the French and Spanish armies united. But I should be much more certain of getting clear off as we ought if we had possession of San Sebastian; and this view of the subject is the motive for the advice I am about to give you, as the remedy for the evils with which I have made you acquainted.

“First, then, I recommend to you to alter the nature of your political relations with Spain, and to have nothing there but a *chargé d'affaires*. Secondly, to complain seriously of the conduct of the government and their servants, to remind them that Cadiz, Carthage, and I believe, Ceuta, were garrisoned by British troops at their earnest request, and that the troops were not sent to the two former till the government agreed to certain conditions. If we had not garrisoned the last, it would, before now, have fallen into the hands of the Moors. Thirdly, to demand, as security for

the safety of the king's troops against the criminal disposition of the government and of those in authority under them, that a British garrison should be admitted into San Sebastian, giving notice that, unless this demand was complied with, the troops should be withdrawn. Fourthly, to withdraw the troops if this demand be not complied with, be the consequences what they may, and to be prepared accordingly. You may rely upon this, that if you take a firm, decided line, and show your determination to go through with it, you will have the Spanish nation with you, and will bring the government to their senses; and you will put an end at once to all the petty cabals and counter-action existing at the present moment, and you will not be under the necessity of bringing matters to extremities; if you take any other than a decided line, and one which, in its consequences, will involve them in ruin, you may depend upon it, you will gain nothing, and will only make matters worse. I recommend these measures whatever may be the decision respecting my command of the army. They are probably the more necessary if I should keep my command. The truth is that a crisis is approaching in our connexion with Spain, and if you do not bring the government and nation to their senses before they go too far, you will inevitably lose all the advantages which you might expect from services rendered to them."

Thus Wellington, at the end of the war, described the Spaniards precisely as Sir John Moore described them at the beginning. But the seat of government was now transferred to Madrid, and the new Cortes, as already noticed, decided, against the wishes of the Regency, that the English general should keep the command of the Spanish armies. The liberals, indeed, sought to establish a system of control over the Cortes, by means of the populace of Madrid, as they had done at Cadiz; and they were so active and created so much alarm by their apparent success, that the serviles, backed by the Americans, were ready to make Carlotta sole regent, as the only resource for stemming the progress of democracy. However, when they had proved their strength upon the question of Wellington's command, they deferred the princess's affair and resolved to oppose their adversaries more vigorously in the assembly; being encouraged by a tumult which happened at Madrid, where the populace, instigated by their agents, or disliking the new constitution, for the measures of the democratic party were generally considered evil in the great towns, rose, and forced the authorities to imprison a number of obnoxious persons. The new Cortes then arrived, the serviles got the upper hand, and, having resolved to change the Regency, took as their ground of attack its conduct towards the English general. Pursuing this scheme of opposition

with ardor, they caused the minister of war to be dismissed, and were ready to attack the Regency itself, expecting full success; when, to their amazement and extreme anger, Wellington, far from desiring to have his personal enemies thus thrust out of power, expressed his earnest desire to keep them in their stations!

To men devoid of patriotism or principle, whose only rule of action was the momentary impulse of passion, such a proceeding was incomprehensible; yet it was a wise and well-considered political change on his part, showing that private feelings were never the guides of his conduct in public matters; and that he ever seemed to bear in mind the maxim which Sophocles has put into the mouth of Ajax: "*carrying himself towards his friends as if they might one day become enemies, and treating his foes as men who might become friends.*" The new spirit had given him no hopes of any alteration of the system, nor was he less convinced that sooner or later he must come to extremities with the Spaniards; but he was averse to any appearance of disunion becoming public when he was invading France, lest it should check his projects of raising an anti-Napoleon party in that country. He therefore advised the British government to keep his hostile propositions in abeyance, leaving it to him and to his brother to put them in execution or not, as events might dictate. Meanwhile, he sent orders to evacuate Cadiz and Carthagena, and opposed the projected change in the Spanish government. He said, that as "the minister of war was dismissed, the most obnoxious opponent of military arrangement was gone; that the mob of Madrid, worked upon by the same press, in the hands of the same people who had made the mob of Cadiz so ungovernable, would become as bad as these last; and though the mercantile interest would not have so much power in the capital, they would not want partisans when desirous of carrying a question by violence. The grandees were too poor to retain their former natural influence, and the constitution gave them no political power. The only chance which the serviles had, was to conduct themselves with prudence, and when in the right, with a firm contempt for the efforts of the press and the mob; but this was what no person in Spain ever did, and the smaller party being wiser, bolder, and more active, would soon govern the Cortes at Madrid as they did at Cadiz."

No permanent change for the better could be expected, and meanwhile the actual government, alarmed by the tumults in the capital, by the strength of the serviles in the Cortes, by the rebukes and remonstrances of the English general and ministers, and by the evident danger of an open rupture, displayed, according to Wellington, the utmost prudence and fairness on a most im-

portant event which occurred at this time. That is to say, their own views and interests coinciding with those of the English commander and government, there was a momentary agreement, and this opening for conciliation was preferred to the more dangerous mode before recommended. This event was the secret arrival of the Duke of San Carlos at Madrid in December. He brought with him a treaty of peace, proposed by Napoleon, and accepted by Ferdinand, called the treaty of Valençay. It acknowledged Ferdinand as king, and the integrity of the Spanish empire was recognized; he was, in return, to make the English evacuate Spain, and the French were to abandon the country at the same time. The contracting powers were to maintain their respective maritime rights as they had been stipulated by the treaty of Utrecht, and observed until 1792. The sales of national domains by Joseph were to be confirmed; all Spaniards attached to the French were to be reinstated in their dignities and property, and those who chose to quit Spain were to have ten years to dispose of their possessions. Prisoners, including those delivered by Spain to the English, were to be sent home on both sides. The king was to pay annually thirty millions of reals to his father Charles IV., two millions to his widow, and a treaty of commerce was to be arranged.

Ferdinand, here, acted with that cunning which marked his infamous career through life. He gave San Carlos secret instructions to tell the serviles, if he found them all-powerful in the Cortes, to ratify this treaty with a secret resolution to break it when time served; but if the jacobins were strongest, he was merely to ask them to ratify it, Ferdinand, in that case, reserving to himself the task of violating it on his own authority. These secret instructions were made known to the English ministers and general; but they, putting no trust in such a negotiator, and thinking his intention was rather to deceive the allies than Napoleon, thwarted him as much as they could, and in this they were joined by the Portuguese government.* The British statesmen were naturally little pleased with the prospect of being forced to abandon Spain under a treaty which would give Napoleon great influence in after times, and at the present enable him to concentrate all the old troops on his eastern frontier; nor was the jacobinical Spanish government content to have a master. Wherefore, all parties being agreed, the Regency kept the matter secret, and dismissed San Carlos the 8th of January, with a copy of the decree passed by the Cortes; which rendered null and void all acts of Ferdinand while a prisoner, and forbade negotiation for peace while a French army remained in the Peninsula. And that the king might fully understand them, they

* Mr. Stuart's Correspondence, MSS.

told him "*the monster despotism had been driven from the throne of Spain.*" Meanwhile, Joseph Palafox, a prisoner since the siege of Zaragoza, was first sent to Valençay, and then, closely following San Carlos, arrived at Madrid four days after the latter's departure. His negotiations were equally fruitless, and in the secret sittings of the Cortes, measures were discussed for watching the king's movements, and forcing him to swear to the constitution and to the Cortes before he passed the frontier.

Wellington was alarmed at the treaty of Valençay. He had, he said, long suspected Napoleon would adopt such an expedient, and if he had shown less pride and more common sense, it would have succeeded. This sarcasm was perhaps well applied to the measure, as it appeared at the time; but the emperor's real proceedings he was unacquainted with, and this splenetic ebullition only indicated his own vexation at approaching mischief. He acknowledged that the project was not unlikely even then to succeed, because the misery of Spain was so great, and so clearly to be traced to the views of the government and of the new constitution, that many persons must have been desirous to put an end to the general suffering, under the sanction of this treaty. "If Napoleon," he said, "had withdrawn the garrisons from Catalonia and Valencia, and sent Ferdinand, who must be *as useless a person in France as he would probably be in Spain*, at once to the frontier, or into the Peninsula, peace would have been made, or the war at least rendered so difficult as to be almost impracticable, and without hope of great success." Now, this was precisely what Napoleon had designed, and it seems nearly certain that he contemplated the treaty of Valençay as early as the battle of Vittoria, if not before.

His scheme demanded secrecy, that it might be too sudden for the English influence. He had therefore designed that Ferdinand should enter Spain early in November, when it would have been most injurious to the English interest, because then the disputes in Cortes between the serviles and jacobins were most rancorous, and the hostility of the regencies in Portugal and Spain towards the English undisguised. Suchet had then also proved his superiority to the allies in Catalonia, and Soult's gigantic lines being unessayed, seemed impregnable. But in Napoleon's council were persons seeking only to betray him; and it was the great misfortune of his life to have been driven by circumstances to suffer such men as Talleyrand and Fouché, whose innate treachery has become proverbial, to meddle in his affairs, or even to approach his court. Mischief of this kind, however, necessarily awaits men who, like Napoleon and Oliver Cromwell, have the courage to attempt, after great convulsions and civil war, the rebuilding of the social edifice

without spilling blood. Either to create universal abhorrence by their cruelty, or to employ the basest of men, the Talleyrands, Fouchés, and Monks of revolutions, is their inevitable fate; and never can they escape the opposition, more dangerous still, of honest and resolute men, who, unable to comprehend the necessity of the times, see nothing but tyranny in the vigor which prevents anarchy.

This treaty of Valençay was too important a measure to escape the traitors around Napoleon, and when their opposition in council and secret insinuations proved unavailing to dissuade him from it, they divulged the secret to the partisans of the Bourbons. Taking advantage of the troubled state of public affairs, they contrived that Ferdinand's emissaries should precede him to Madrid, and delayed his own departure until March, when the struggle was at an end. Nevertheless, the chances of success, even with this imperfect execution, were so many and so alarming, that Wellington's sudden change from fierce enmity to a warm support of the Regency, when he found it resolute and frank in its rejection of the treaty, although it created so much surprise and anger at the moment, cannot be judged otherwise than as the wise, prudent proceeding of a consummate statesman. Nor did he fail to point out to his own government the more distant as well as the immediate danger to England and Spain, involved in this singularly complicated and important affair.

As affecting the war and English alliance with Spain, the evil was obvious, but the articles providing for Ferdinand's parents, and for the Spaniards who had joined the French, involved great interests. It was essential, Wellington observed, that the Spanish government should explicitly declare its intentions. Negotiations for a general peace were said to be commenced; of that, he knew nothing, but he supposed, such being the case, that a basis would be embodied in a preliminary treaty, which all the belligerents would ratify, each power then to arrange its own peculiar treaty with France, under protection of the general confederation. Napoleon would necessarily put forward his treaty with Ferdinand. It could be got rid of by the statement that the latter was a prisoner when negotiating; but new articles would then have to be framed, and therefore the Spanish government should be called upon previously to declare what their intentions were as to the two articles in the treaty of Valençay. His objections to them were that the allowance of Charles IV. was beyond the financial means of Spain, and were it not so, Napoleon should not be allowed to stipulate for any provision for him. Neither should he be suffered to embody or establish a permanent French party in Spain, under

protection of a treaty, an article of which provided for the restoration of the Spaniards who had taken part with the French. It would give him the right, which he would not fail to exercise, of interfering in their favor in every question of property or other interest, and the Spanish government would be involved in perpetual disputes with France. It was probable the allied sovereigns would be desirous of getting rid of this question, and would think it desirable that Spain should pardon her rebellious subjects. For this reason, he had before advised the Spanish government to publish a general amnesty, with the view of removing the difficulty when a general peace should come to be negotiated, and this difficulty and danger be enhanced, if not before provided for, by the desire which each of the allied powers would feel when negotiating on their separate grounds to save their finances by disbanding their armies.

This recommendation of an amnesty, made ten days before the battle of Vittoria, illustrates Wellington's sagacity, his long and provident reach of mind, his discriminating and magnanimous mode of viewing the errors and weaknesses of human nature. Let it be remembered that in the full tide of success, after having passed the Douro, when Joseph, surprised and bewildered, was flying before him, that he who has been called the iron duke, in the midst of his bivouac fires, found time to consider and had sufficient humanity and grandeur of mind thus to address the Spanish government on the subject.

"A large number of Spaniards who have taken the side of the French are now with the enemy's army, many of these are highly meritorious and have rendered most essential service to the cause even during the period in which they have been in the service of the enemy. It is also a known fact that fear, the misery and distress which they suffered during the contest, and despair of the result, were the motives which induced many of these unfortunate persons to take the part which they have taken; and I would suggest for consideration whether it is expedient to involve the country in all the consequences of a rigid adherence to the existing law in order to punish such persons. I am the last man who will be found to diminish the merit of those Spaniards who have adhered to the cause of the country during the severe trial which I hope has passed; particularly of those, who, having remained amongst the enemy without entering their service have served their country at the risk of their lives. But at the same time that I can appreciate the merits of these individuals and of the nation at large I can forgive the weakness of those who have been induced by terror, by distress, or by despair, to pursue a different line of conduct.

“ I entreat the government to advert to the circumstances of the commencement and of the different stages of this eventful contest; and to the numerous occasions in which all men must have imagined that it was impossible for the powers of the Peninsula, although aided by Great Britain, to withstand the colossal power by which they were assailed and nearly overcome. Let them reflect upon the weakness of the country at the commencement of the contest, upon the numerous and almost invariable disasters of the armies, and upon the ruin and disorganization that followed, and let them decide whether those who were witnesses of these events are guilty because they could not foresee what has since occurred. The majority are certainly not guilty in any other manner, and many, now deemed guilty in the eye of the law as having served the pretended king, have by that very act acquired the means of serving and have rendered important services to their country.

“ It is my opinion that the policy of Spain should lead the government and the Cortes to grant a general amnesty with certain exceptions. This subject deserves consideration in the two views of failing or succeeding in freeing the country from its oppressors. If the effort fail the enemy will by an amnesty be deprived of the principal means now in his hands of oppressing the country in which his armies will be stationed; he will see clearly that he can place no reliance on any partisans in Spain, and he will not have even a pretence for supposing that the country is divided in opinion. If the effort succeed the object of the government should be to pacify the country and to heal the divisions which the contest has unavoidably occasioned. It is impossible to accomplish this object while there exists a great body of the Spanish nation, some possessing the largest property in the country and others endowed with considerable talents, who are proscribed for their conduct during the contest, conduct which has been caused by the misfortunes to which I have above adverted. These persons their friends and relations will, if persecuted, naturally endeavor to perpetuate the divisions in the country in the hope at some time to take advantage of them; and adverting to their number and to that power which they must derive from their property and connexions, it must be feared that they will be too successful.

“ But there are other important views of this question. First, should the effort to free the country from its oppressors succeed, at some time or other approaches to peace must be made between the two nations, and the amnesty to the persons above described will remove the greatest difficulty in the way of such arrangement. Secondly, should even Spain be at peace with France and

the proscription against these persons be continued, they will remain in France a perpetual instrument in the hands of that restless power to disturb the internal tranquillity of Spain; and in case of a renewal of the war, which will be their wish and object, they will be the most mischievous and most inveterate enemies of their country; of that country which with mistaken severity aggravates her misfortunes by casting off from her thousands of her useful subjects. On every ground then it is desirable that the measure should be adopted and the present moment should be seized for adopting it."

Then pointing out with great accuracy and justice those who should be exempted from an amnesty, he thus terminated this record of his own true greatness and of the littleness of the people to whom it was fruitlessly addressed.

"In bringing this subject under the consideration of the government, I am perhaps intruding my opinion on a subject in which as a stranger I have no concern; but having had an advantage enjoyed by few of being acquainted with the concerns of the country since the commencement of the contest, and having been sensible both in the last and present campaign of the disadvantages suffered by Spain from the want of a measure of this description, I have thought it proper as a well-wisher to the cause to bring it under the consideration of the government, assuring them at the same time that I have never had the slightest communication on the subject with the government of my country, nor do I believe that they have ever turned their attention to it. What I have above stated are my own opinions to which I may attribute more weight than they merit, but they are founded upon a sincere devotion to the interests of the country."

Such was the general political state of the Peninsula as bearing upon the military operations at the close of the year 1813, and the state of England and France shall be shown in the next chapters. But however hateful and injurious to England the conduct of the Peninsular government appears, and however just and well-founded were the greatest part of Wellington's complaints, it is not to be assumed that the Spanish government and Cortes were totally without excuse for their hostility or ingratitude. It was not solely upon military grounds that they were obnoxious to the English general. He united heartily with the English government in hatred of democratic institutions as opposed to aristocratic domination. Spain with the former seemed scarcely worth saving from France, and in a letter written about that period to H. O'Donnel, who it would appear proposed some immediate stroke of violence against the regency, he openly avowed that he was inimical

to the constitution, because it admitted a free press and refused to property any political influence beyond what naturally belonged to it. That is, it refused to heap undue honors, privileges and power upon those who already possessed all the luxury and happiness which riches can bestow,—it refused to admit the principle that those who have much should have more—that the indolence, corruption and insolence naturally attendant upon wealth should be supported and increased by irresponsible power;—that those who labored and produced all things should enjoy nothing—that the rich should be tyrants, the poor slaves. But these essential principles of aristocratic government have never yet been, and never will be quietly received and submitted to by any thinking people—where they prevail there is no real freedom. Property inevitably confers power on its possessors, and far from adding to that natural power by political privileges it should be the object of all men who love liberty to balance it by raising the poorer classes to political importance: the influence and insolence of riches ought to be tamed and subdued instead of being inflated and excited by political institutions. This was the guiding principle of the most celebrated Greek legislators; the opposite principle produced domestic dissensions with the Romans and was the ruin of Carthage. It was the cause also of the French revolution. But after many years of darkness, the light of reason is now breaking forth again, and that ancient principle of justice which places the right of man in himself above the right of property is beginning to be understood. A clear perception of it has produced the American republic. France and Spain have admitted it and England ripens for its adoption. Yet pure and bright and beautiful and healthful as the light of freedom is in itself, it fell at this time in Spain on such foul and stagnant pools, such horrid repulsive objects, that millions turned at first from its radiance with disgust and wished for darkness again.

CHAPTER V.

Political state of Napoleon—Guileful policy of the allied sovereigns—M. de St. Aignan—General reflections—Unsettled policy of the English ministers—they neglect Lord Wellington—He remonstrates and exposes the denuded state of his army.

NAPOLEON'S energy was evinced in a marvellous manner by the rapidity with which he returned to Germany at the head of an enormous army, before his enemies had time even to understand the extent of his misfortunes in the Russian campaign. The

victories of Lutzen and Bautzen then seemed to reinstate him as the arbiter of Europe; but those battles were fought with the heads of columns, the rear of which were still filing out of France, and with young troops. Wherefore, when he had given himself a fixed and menacing position in Germany, he more readily listened to the fraudulent negotiations of his trembling opponents, partly in hope of fair dealing, partly to organize and discipline his soldiers, confident in his own unmatched skill in directing them, if war was finally to decide his fate. He counted also upon the family tie between him and Austria; he saw, indeed, that with her, hope to regain former possessions was uppermost, and he was prepared to concede them; yet he seems to have been quite unsuspecting of the long course of Austrian treachery. He knew not, that while negotiating with France an offensive and defensive treaty in 1812, the Austrian cabinet was secretly aiding the plan of a vast insurrection extending from the Tyrol to Calabria and the Illyrian provinces. The management of this scheme was entrusted by the English cabinet in concert with that of Austria to General Nugent and Mr. King at Vienna, while their agents went from thence to Italy and the Illyrian coast. Many Austrian officers were employed, and Italians of great families entered into commercial houses to enable them with more facility to carry on this plan.* Moreover, Austria, while actually signing the treaty with Napoleon, was with unceasing importunity urging Prussia to join the Russians in opposition to him; the feeble operations of Prince Swartzenberg, the manner in which he uncovered the emperor's right flank, and permitted Tchitchagoff to move to the Beresina in the Russian campaign, were but continuations of this deceitful policy. And it was afterwards openly advanced as a merit by the Austrian cabinet, that her offer of mediation after the battle of Bautzen was made solely with the view of gaining time to organize the army which was to join the Russians and Prussians: finally, the armistice itself was violated, hostilities being commenced before its termination, to enable the Russian troops safely to join the Austrians in Bohemia.

Nevertheless, Napoleon's genius triumphed at Dresden over the unskilful operations of the allies directed by Swartzenberg, whose incapacity as a commander was made manifest in this campaign. Nor would the after misfortunes of Vandamme and Macdonald, or the defeat of Oudinot and Ney, have prevented final success, but for the continuation of a treachery which seemed at the time to be considered a virtue by sovereigns who were unceasingly accusing their more noble adversary of the very baseness they were practising so unblushingly. He had conceived a project so vast, so

* Appendix 23, Vol. IV.

original, so hardy, so far above the imaginations of his cotemporary generals, that even Wellington's sagacity failed to pierce it, and he censured Napoleon's long stay on the Elbe as an obstinacy unwarranted by the rules of art. Yet he urged as a reason for not invading France, the emperor's tenacity in holding Dresden; thus showing how widely the moral influence of that position was felt. Napoleon had more profoundly judged his own situation. The large forces he left at Dresden, at Torgau, and Wittenberg, blamed by shallow military critics, were essential parts of his gigantic plan. He quitted Dresden, apparently in retreat, to deceive his enemies; but with the intention of marching down the Elbe, recrossing that river, and throwing his opponents into a false position. Then he would have seized Berlin, and re-opening his communications with his garrisons both on the Elbe and the Oder, have operated between those rivers; and with an army much augmented in power, because he would have recovered many thousand old soldiers cooped up in the garrisons—an army more compact and firmly established also; because he would have been in direct communication with the Danes and with Davoust's force at Hamburg, and both his flanks would have been secured by his chains of fortresses on the two rivers. Already had Blucher and the Swedes felt his first stroke; the next would have taught the allies that the lion was still abroad in his strength, if at the very moment of execution, his marshals had not opposed his views, and the Bavarians, on whom he depended to check the Austrians in the valley of the Danube, had not made common cause with their opponents and marched together towards the Rhine. The battle of Leipsic followed, the well-known treason of the Saxon troops led to the victory gained there by the allies, and Napoleon, now the prey of misfortune, reached France with only one-third of his army; having on the way, however, trampled in the dust the Bavarian Wrede, who attempted to stop his passage at Hannau.

Meanwhile, the allied sovereigns, by giving hopes to their subjects that constitutional liberty would reward their prodigious exertions against France, hopes which with the most detestable baseness they had previously resolved to defraud, assembled greater forces than they were able to wield, and prepared to pass the Rhine. Yet distrusting their immense superiority of numbers, they still pursued their faithless system. When Napoleon marched to Leipsic, he sent orders to St. Cyr to abandon Dresden, and unite with the garrisons on the lower Elbe; the messengers were intercepted, and St. Cyr, too little enterprising to execute such a plan of his own accord, surrendered on condition of being allowed to regain France.

The capitulation was broken, and general and soldiers remained prisoners.

After the Leipsic battle, Napoleon's adherents fell away by nations. Murat, the husband of his sister, joined Austria, and thus forced Prince Eugene to abandon his position on the Adige. A successful insurrection in favor of the Prince of Orange broke out in Holland. The neutrality of Switzerland was then violated, and more than half a million of armed men were poured across the frontiers of France in all the violence of brute force; for their military combinations were contemptible, and their course marked by murder and devastation. But previous to this, they gave one more notable example of their faithless cunning.

St. Aignan, the French resident minister at Gotha, had been taken at Leipsic, and treated at first as a prisoner of war; he remonstrated, and being known to entertain a desire for peace, was judged a good tool with which to practise deception. Napoleon had offered on the field of Leipsic to negotiate, no notice was taken of it at the time, but now the Austrian Metternich and the Russian Nesselrode had an interview with St. Aignan at Frankfort, and assured him the Prussian minister agreed in all things with them. They had previously arranged that Lord Aberdeen should come in during the conference as if by accident; and, though nothing was put down in writing, St. Aignan was suffered to make minutes of their proposals in reply to the emperor's offer to negotiate. These were generally, that the alliance of the sovereigns was indissoluble—that they would have only a general peace—that France was to be confined to her natural limits, the Alps, the Rhine and the Pyrenees*—that the independence of Germany was a thing not to be disputed—that the Spanish Peninsula should be free, and the Bourbon dynasty be restored—that Austria must have a frontier in Italy, the line of which could be afterwards discussed, but Italy itself was to be independent of any preponderating power—that Holland was to be independent, and her frontier to be matter for after discussion—that England was ready to make great sacrifices for peace upon these bases, and would acknowledge that freedom of commerce and of navigation which France had a right to pretend to—and when St. Aignan observed that Napoleon believed England was resolved to restrict France to the possession of thirty sail of the line, Lord Aberdeen replied that it was not true.

This conference had place at the Emperor of Austria's headquarters, on the 10th of November, and Lord Aberdeen enclosed the account of it in a despatch dated at Smalcalde the 16th of November. He had objected verbally to the passage relating to the

* Secret Diplomatic Correspondence, MSS.

maritime question with England, nevertheless, he permitted it to remain in St. Aignan's minute. It was decided also that the military operations should go on, notwithstanding the negotiation, and, in truth, the allies had not the slightest design to make peace. They thought Napoleon would refuse the basis proposed, which would give them an opportunity to denounce him as opposed to all reasonable modes of putting an end to the war, and thus work upon the French people. This was proved by what followed. For when, contrary to their expectations, it was signified, on the 16th of November, that he accepted the propositions, observing that the independence of all nations, at sea as well as by land, had been always his object, Metternich, in reply, on the 25th of November, pretended to consider this answer as avoiding the acceptance of the basis. Napoleon, however, put that obstacle aside on the 2d of December, by accepting explicitly the basis generally and summarily, such as it had been presented to him, adding that France would make great sacrifices, content if, by like sacrifices on the part of England, that general peace, which was the declared object of the allies, could be obtained. Metternich thus driven from his subterfuge, required Napoleon to send a like declaration to each of the allies separately, when negotiations might, he said, commence.

Meanwhile, Lord Aberdeen, who had permitted St. Aignan to retain the article relating to maritime rights in his minutes of conference, presented to Metternich, on the 27th of November, a note declaring that England would not admit the turn given by France to her share of the negotiation; that she was ready to yield all the rights of commerce and navigation which France had a right to pretend to, but the question would turn upon what that right was. England would never permit her navigation laws to be discussed at a congress, it was a matter essentially foreign to the object of such an assembly, and England would never depart from the great principle thereby announced as to her maritime rights. Metternich approved of these views, saying they were his own and those of his court, thus proving that the negotiation had been a deceit from the beginning. This fact was, however, placed beyond doubt by Lord Castlereagh's simultaneous proceedings in London.

In a note, dated 30th November, that minister told Lord Aberdeen, England admitted as a basis the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees as the frontier of France, subject to such modifications as might be necessary to give a secure frontier to Holland, and to Switzerland also, although the latter had not been mentioned in the proposals given by St. Aignan. He applauded the resolution to pursue military operations, notwithstanding the negotiations, and he approved of demanding nothing but what they were resolved to

have. Nevertheless, he said that any sacrifice to be made by England was only to secure the independence of Holland and Switzerland, and the former having already declared for the house of Nassau, was now out of the pale of discussion. Finally, he recommended that any unnecessary delay or equivocation on the part of the enemy should be considered as tantamount to a rejection of the basis, and that the allies *should then put forward the offer of peace, to show that it was not they, but France that opposed an honorable termination of the war.* Having thus thrown fresh obstacles in the way of that peace the allies pretended to have so much at heart, he, on the 21st December, sent notes to the different ambassadors of the allied powers then in London, demanding explicit answers about the intentions of their courts as to England's maritime code. To this, they all responded that their cabinets would not suffer any question relative to that code to be entertained at a congress in which England was represented, and this, on the express ground that it would mar the great object of peace.

Lord Castlereagh, provided with these documents, declared that France should be informed of their resolutions before negotiations commenced. But twenty days before this, Napoleon having decreed a fresh levy of three hundred thousand conscripts, the allies had published a manifesto treating this measure, so essentially a defensive one, since they would not suspend their military operations, as a fresh provocation on his part; because the motives assigned for the conscription contained a just and powerful description of their past deceits and violence, with a view to rouse the national spirit of France. Thus, having first by a pretended desire for peace and a pretended willingness on the part of England to consent to an arrangement about her maritime code, inveigled the French emperor into negotiations, thereby ascertaining that the maritime question was uppermost in his mind, and the only obstacle to peace, they declared that vital question should not even be discussed. And when, by this subtlety, peace was rendered impossible, they proclaimed that Napoleon alone resisted the desire of the world for tranquillity. Yet, at that moment Austria was secretly endeavoring to obtain England's consent to her seizing upon Alsace, a project only stopped by Wellington, who forcibly pointed out the danger of rousing France to a general insurrection by such a proceeding.

The contrast between these wiles to gain a momentary advantage, and the manly vigorous policy of Lord Wellington must make honest men of all nations blush for the cunning which diplomatists call policy. On one side, the arts of guileful negotiation, masked with fair protestations, but accompanied by a savage and revolting

system of warfare; on the other, a broad open hostility, declared on manly and just grounds, followed up with a strict regard to humanity and good faith, nothing put forward with an equivocal meaning, and the actions true to the word. On the eastern frontier, the Cossack let loose to ravage with all the barbarity of Asiatic warfare; on the western frontier, the Spaniards turned back into their own country for daring to pass the bounds of discipline prescribed by the wise and generous policy of their commander. Terror and desolation, and the insurrection of a people rendered frantic by the cruelty of the invaders, marked the progress of the ferocious multitudes who crossed the Rhine. Order and tranquillity, profound even on the very edge of the battle-field, attended the march of the civilized army which passed the Bidassoa. And what were the military actions? Napoleon, rising even above himself, hurtled against the armed myriads opposed to him with such a terrible energy, that though ten times his number, they were rolled back on every side in confusion and dismay. Wellington advanced without a check, victorious in every battle, although one half of the veterans opposed to him would have decided the campaign on the eastern frontier. Nor can this be gainsaid, since Napoleon's career in this campaign was only stayed by the defection of his brother-in-law Murat, and by the sickening treachery of two marshals to whom he had been prodigal of benefits. It is undeniable that Wellington with sixty thousand Anglo-Portuguese effected in the south more than half a million of the allies could effect on the opposite side of France; and yet Soult's army, on the 10th of November, was stronger than that with which Napoleon fought the battle of Brienne.

That great man was never deceived by the simulated negotiation of the allied powers. He joined issue with them to satisfy the French people that he was not averse to peace, but his instructions to Caulaincourt the 4th of January prove at once his sagacity and firmness. "I think," he said, "that the allies' good faith and the wish of England to make peace are doubtful; for my part I desire peace, but it must be solid and honorable. I have accepted the basis proposed at Frankfort, yet it is more than probable the allies have other notions. These propositions are but a mask, the negotiations are placed under the influence of the military operations, and it is easy to foresee what the consequences of such a system must be: it is necessary therefore to listen to and observe everything. It is not certain even that you will be admitted to the headquarters of the allies; the Russians and the English watch to prevent any opening for explanation and reconciliation with the Emperor of Austria. You must therefore endeavor to ascertain the real views

of the allies; and let me know day by day what you learn that I may frame instructions for which at present I have no sure grounds."

The internal state of France was more disquieting to his mind than foreign negotiations or the number of invaders. The republicans were averse to him as the restorer of monarchy; yet they should have felt that the sovereign whose ruin was so eagerly sought by the legitimate kings and nobles of Europe could not be really opposed to liberty. The advocates of legitimacy shrunk from him as an usurper; and all those tired of war, and they were a majority of the nation, judging from the stupendous power of his genius that he had only to will peace to attain it with security, blamed his tardiness in negotiation. An unexpected opposition to his wishes was also displayed in the legislative body, and the partisans of the Bourbons were endeavoring to form a great conspiracy in favor of that family. There were many traitors likewise to him and to their country, men devoid of principle, patriotism or honor, who with instinctive hatred of a failing cause plotted to thwart his projects for the defence of the nation,—in fine, the men of action and the men of theories were alike combined for mischief. Nor is this outbreak of passion to be wondered at, when it is considered how recently Napoleon had stopped the anarchy of revolution and rebuilt the social and political structure in France. But of all who by their untimely opposition to the emperor hurt their country, the most pernicious were those silly politicians, whom he so felicitously described as "*discussing abstract systems of government when the battering-ram was at the gates.*"

Such however has been in all ages the conduct of excited and disturbed nations, and it seems to be inherent in human nature; because a saving policy can only be understood and worked to good by master-spirits, and they are few and far between, their time on earth short, their task immense. They have not time to teach, they must command, although they know that pride and ignorance and even honesty will carp at the despotism which brings general safety. It was this vain short-sighted impatience that drove Hannibal into exile, caused the assassination of Cæsar, strewed thorns beneath the gigantic footsteps of Cromwell. It raged fiercely in Spain against Wellington, in France against Napoleon, and always with the most grievous injury to the several nations. Time only hallows human institutions. Under that guarantee men will yield implicit obedience and respect to the wildest caprices of the most stupid tyrant that ever disgraced a throne; and wanting it they will cavil at and reject the wisest measures of the most sublime genius. The painful notion is thus excited,

that if governments have just the degree of stability and tranquillity which they deserve, the people of all nations, much as they may be oppressed, enjoy upon an average of years precisely the degree of liberty they are fitted for. National discontents mark, according to their bitterness and constancy, not so much the oppression of the rulers as the real progress of the ruled in civilization and its attendant political knowledge. When from peculiar circumstances those discontents explode in violent revolutions, shattering the fabric of society and giving free vent and activity to all the passions and follies of mankind, fortunate is the nation which possesses a Napoleon or an Oliver Cromwell "*to step into their state of dominion with spirit to control and capacity to subdue the factions of the hour and reconstruct the frame of reasonable government.*"

Great as those two wonderful men were in the field of battle, they were infinitely greater when they placed themselves in the seat of power, ruling with the might and despotism of genius essential to the completion of their holy work. Washington cannot be justly deemed comparable to either of those men; his situation was of infinitely less difficulty; and there is no reason to believe his capacity would have been equal to the emergencies of a more formidable crisis than he had to deal with. Washington could not have made himself master, had it been necessary and he so inclined, for he was neither the foremost general nor the foremost statesman of his nation. His forbearance was a matter of necessity, and his love of liberty did not prevent him from bequeathing his black slaves to his widow.

Such was Napoleon's situation: and as he read the signs of the times truly he knew that in his military skill and the rage of the peasants at the ravages of the enemy he must find the means to extricate himself from his difficulties, or rather to extricate his country—for self had no place in his policy save as his personal glory was identified with France and her prosperity. Never before did the world see a man soaring so high so devoid of all selfish ambition. Let those who, honestly seeking truth, doubt this, study Napoleon carefully; let them read the record of his second abdication published by his brother Lucien, that stern republican who refused kingdoms as the price of his principles, and they will doubt no longer. It is not however with these matters that this history has to deal, but with the emperor's measures affecting his lieutenants on the Spanish frontier of France. There disaffection to his government was extensive from local causes. The conscription was peculiarly hateful to the wild mountaineers, who like most borderers cherish very independent notions; the

war with England had ruined the foreign commerce of the great towns, and the advantage of increased traffic by land on the east was less directly felt in the south—there also the recollection of the Vendean struggle still lingered and the partisans of the Bourbons had many connexions. But the chief danger arose from the politic conduct of Wellington, which, offering no cause of anger and much of private advantage to the people, gave no hope of insurrection from sufferings.

While France was in this state England presented a scene of universal exultation. Tory politics were triumphant, opposition in parliament was nearly crushed by events, the press was subdued by persecution or in the pay of the ministers, and the latter with undisguised joy hailed the coming moment when aristocratic tyranny was to be firmly established in England. The most enormous subsidies and military supplies were poured into the continent, and an act was passed to enable three-fourths of the militia to serve abroad. They were not however very forward to volunteer, and a new army, which ought to have reinforced Wellington, was sent under the command of Graham to support the insurrection of Holland. It was there only engaged in trifling or unsuccessful operations in no manner affecting the great objects of the war, and meanwhile the importance of Wellington's army and views was overlooked or misunderstood. The ministers still pressed his removing to another quarter of Europe, and at the same time, instigated by the ambassadors of the allied sovereigns, were continually urging him to push his operations with more vigor in France! as if he was the man who had done least!

His letters were therefore filled with strong well-founded complaints that his army was neglected. He had, with a political view and to meet the wishes of the allied sovereigns backed by the importunities of his own government, placed himself in a confined and difficult district of France, where his operations were cramped by rivers and fortresses, and by a strong army occupying strong positions on his front and flanks. Unable to act at all in wet weather, he was dependent upon the ocean for supplies and reinforcements, and upon the Spanish authorities for hospitals, dépôts and communications. Numbers were requisite to balance the advantages the enemy had in the conformation of the country and in the fortresses; money also was wanted for supplies; which he could not carry with him and must pay for exactly to avoid insurrection and ruin to the political object in view. He had undertaken the invasion of France at the express desire of the government, yet the latter were alike ignorant of its importance and of the means to accomplish it; at one moment urging progress beyond reason,

at another ready to change lightly what they had proposed ignorantly; they could not comprehend the nature of the great tide of events on which they floated rather than sailed. Wellington was forced day by day to teach them the value of their own schemes, and the true bearing of the political and military affairs they pretended to direct!

“Assure,” he wrote on the 21st of December to Lord Bathurst, in reply to one of their ill-founded remonstrances, “assure the Russian ambassador there is nothing I can do to forward the general interest that I will not do. What do they require? I am already further advanced on the French territory than any of the allied powers; and better prepared to take advantage of any opportunities which might offer as a consequence of my own situation or of their proceedings.”—“In military operations, there are some things which cannot be done, and one is to move troops in this country during or immediately after a violent fall of rain. To attempt it will be to lose more men than can be replaced, a guilty waste of life.

“The proper scene of action for the army was undoubtedly a question for the government to decide; but with thirty thousand men in the Peninsula, he had, for five years, held two hundred thousand of Napoleon's best soldiers in check, since it was ridiculous to suppose that the Spaniards and Portuguese could have resisted for a moment, if the British troops had been withdrawn. The French armies actually employed against him could not be less than one hundred thousand men, more if he included garrisons, and the French newspapers spoke of orders to form a fresh reserve of one hundred thousand at Bordeaux. Was there any man weak enough to suppose one-third of the number first mentioned would be employed against the Spaniards and Portuguese if the British were withdrawn? They would, if it were an object with Buonaparte to conquer the Peninsula, and he would, in that case, succeed; but he was more likely to give peace to the Peninsula, and turn against the allied sovereigns his two hundred thousand men, of which one hundred thousand were such troops as their armies had not yet dealt with. The war every day offered a crisis, the result of which might affect the world for ages, and to change the scene of operations for the British army would render it incapable of fighting for four months, even if the scene were Holland; and it would even then be a deteriorated machine.

“The ministers might reasonably ask how, by remaining where he was, he could induce Napoleon to make peace. The answer was ready. He held a commanding situation on the most vulnerable frontier of France, probably the only vulnerable one; and

if he could put twenty thousand Spaniards in activity, and he could do it if he had money and was properly supported by the fleet, Bayonne, the only fortress on the frontier, if it could be called a fortress, would fall to him in a short time. If he could put forty thousand Spaniards in motion, his posts would soon be on the Garonne; and did any man believe that Napoleon would not feel an army in such a position, more than he would feel thirty or forty thousand British troops laying siege to one of his fortresses in Holland? The resources in men and money, of which the emperor would be thus deprived, and the loss of reputation, would do ten times more to procure peace than ten armies on the side of Flanders. But if he was right in believing a strong Bourbon party existed in France and preponderated in the south, what mischief would not an advance to the Garonne do Napoleon! What sacrifices would he not make to get rid of the danger!

“It was for the government, not for him, to dispose of the nation's resources, he had no right to give an opinion upon the subject; but military operations in Holland and in the Peninsula could not be maintained at the same time with British troops, one or other must be given up; the British military establishment was not equal to maintain two armies in the field. He had begun the recent campaign with seventy thousand Anglo-Portuguese, and if the men got from the English militia and the Portuguese recruits which he expected had been added to his force, even though the Germans were removed from his army, according to the ministers' plan, he might have taken the field early in 1814 with eighty thousand men. That was now impossible. The formation of a Hanoverian army was the most reasonable plan of acting on the continent, but the withdrawal of the Germans would reduce his force to fifty thousand men, unless he received real and efficient assistance to bring up the Portuguese recruits. This would increase his numbers to fifty-five or even sixty thousand, if his own wounded recovered well and he had no more battles, but he would even then be twenty thousand less than he had calculated upon, and it was certain that if the government extended their operations to other countries, new means must be put in activity, or the war must be stunted on the old stage. He did not desire to complain, but every branch in the service of the Peninsula was already stunted, especially in what concerned the navy and the supplies which came directly from England!”

While thus combating the false views of the English cabinet as to the general state of affairs, he had also to struggle with its negligence and even opposition to his measures in details. The clothing of the Spanish troops, and the great-coats of the British soldiers for 1813 were not ready in January, 1814, because the in

ferior departments could not comprehend that new scenes of exertion required new means ; and the soldiers had to brave the winter half naked, first on the snowy mountains, then in the more chilling damps of the low country about Bayonne. The clothing of the British soldiers for 1814 should have arrived in the end of 1813, when the army lying inactive near the coast, by reason of the bad weather, could have received and fitted it without difficulty. It did not arrive until the troops were in progress towards the interior of France ; and then, no means of transport existing, many of the best regiments were compelled to return to the coast to receive it, and the army, as will be seen, had to fight a great battle without them.

Wellington had, on entering France, issued a proclamation promising protection to persons and property ; this was construed by the French to cover their vessels in the Nivelle, when the battle of that name gave the allies St. Jean de Luz. Sacrificing personal profit to the good of the service, he admitted this claim as tending to render the people amicable ; but it clashed with the prize-money pretensions of Lord Keith, who commanded the fleet of which Collier's squadron formed a detached portion ; and though the serious evils springing from default of naval assistance had been treated as of slight importance, a trifling personal gain for the navy excited a marvellous activity and vigorous interference on the part of the government. Upon these subjects, and others of a like vexatious nature affecting his operations, he repeatedly and forcibly declared his discontent during the months of December, January and February.

“As to the naval affairs,” he said, “the reports of the number of ships on the stations, striking off those coming out and going home, would show whether he had just ground of complaint ; and, whatever their numbers, there remained the right of complaint, because they did not perform the service required. The French had recommenced their coast navigation from Bordeaux to Bayonne, and if the blockade of Santona had been maintained, the place would have been forced to surrender at an early period. The proclamation of protection which he had issued, and the licenses which he had granted to French vessels, every act of that description, and two-thirds of the acts which he performed every day could not, he knew, be considered of any avail as affecting the king's government, unless approved of and confirmed by the prince regent ; and he knew that no power short of the regent's could save the property of French subjects on the seas from the British navy. For that reason, he had requested the sanction of the government to the sea passports which he had granted. His proclamation of protection had been construed, whether rightfully or wrongfully, to protect the

French ships in the rivers; his personal interest, greater than others, would lead him to deny this, but he sacrificed his profit to the general good.

“Were Lord Keith and Sir George Collier, because the latter happened to have a brig or two cruising off the coast, to claim as prizes all the vessels lying in every river which the army might pass in its operations? and this to the detriment of the cause which required the strictest respect for private property. For the last five years, he had been acting in the confidence that his conduct would be approved of and supported, and he concluded it would be so still; but he was placed in a novel situation, and asked for legal advice to determine whether Lord Keith and the channel fleet were to be considered as engaged in a conjoint expedition with the army under his command against the subjects of France, neither having any specific instructions from government, and the fleet having nothing to do with the operations by land. He only required that fleet to give him a free communication with the coast of Spain, and prevent the enemy's sea communication between the Garonne and the Adour, and this last was a part of its duty before the army arrived. Was his proclamation of protection to hold good as regarded the ships in the rivers? He desired to have it sanctioned by the prince regent, or that he might be permitted to issue another declaring that it was of no value.”

This remonstrance caused Lord Keith to relinquish his claims, and Admiral Penrose was sent to command upon the station instead of Collier. The immediate intercourse with the navy was thus ameliorated by the superior power of this officer, who was remarkable for his suavity; yet the licenses given to the French vessels were strongly condemned by the government, and rendered null; for we find Wellington again complaining that “he had granted them only in hopes of drawing money and supplies from France, and of interesting the French mercantile men to aid the army; but he feared the government were not aware of, and did not feel the difficulties in which he was placed at all times for want of money, and judged his measures without adverting to the necessity which occasioned them; hence their frequent disapprobation of what he did.”

Strange all this may sound to those who seeing the great duke in the fullness of his glory have been accustomed to regard him as the star of England's greatness; but those who at that period frequented the society of ministers know well that he was then looked upon by those self-sufficient men as a person whose views were wild and visionary, requiring the corroboration of older and wiser heads before they could be assented to. Yea! even at the

eleventh hour was the giant Wellington thus measured by the political dwarfs.

He gained something by making San Jean de Luz a free port for all nations not at war with France, but his financial situation was nearly intolerable; and at the moment of greatest pressure, Colonel Bunbury, under secretary of state, was sent out to urge amongst other matters the difficulty of providing specie, and the expense of conveying forage for his cavalry from England and Ireland. One hundred thousand pounds a month was to be the maximum of specie supplied, when he was so overwhelmed with debt he could scarcely quit his house for the multitude of creditors besieging his door. In reply he thus described his position.

“Some of his muleteers were twenty-six months in arrears, and recently, instigated by British merchants,* they had become so clamorous that rather than lose their services he had given them bills on the Treasury for a part of their claims; though he knew they would sell these bills at a discount to the *sharks*, who had urged them to be thus so importunate, and who were waiting at the ports to take advantage of the public distresses: this very dangerous measure he desired not to repeat. It might be true, that the supply of one hundred thousand pounds a month had been even exceeded for some time past, but it was incontestable that the English army and all its departments, and the Spanish and Portuguese armies were at the moment paralyzed for want of money. The arrears of pay to the soldiers was entering the seventh month, the debt was immense, and the king's engagements with the Spanish and Portuguese governments were not fulfilled. Indebted in every part of Spain he was becoming so in France; the price of all commodities increasing in proportion to the delay of payment, to the difficulty of getting food at all, and to the want of credit into which all the departments of the army had fallen. Of two hundred thousand dollars given to Beresford for the pay of his troops on account of the Portuguese subsidy he had been forced to take back fifty thousand to keep the Spaniards together, and was even then forced to withhold ten thousand to prevent the British cavalry from perishing. Money to pay the Spaniards had sailed from Cadiz, but the vessel conveying it, another containing the soldiers' great-coats, were by the Admiralty arrangements obliged to go first to Coruña, and neither had arrived there in January although the money had been ready in October. But the ship of war designed to carry it did not arrive at Cadiz until the end of December. Sixteen thousand Spanish troops were thus

* Wellington's Despatches.

rendered useless because without pay they could not be trusted in France."

"The commissary-in-chief in England had been regularly informed of the state of the supplies of the military chest and of the wants and prospects of the army, but those wants were not attended to. The monthly hundred thousand pounds spoken of as the maximum, even if it had been given regularly, would not cover the ordinary expenses of the troops; and there were besides the subsidies other outlays requiring ready money, such as meat for the soldiers, hospital expenses, commissariat laborers, and a variety of minor engagements. The Portuguese government had been reduced to a monthly sum of two hundred thousand dollars out of a subsidy of two millions sterling. The Spanish government got what they could out of a subsidy of one million. And when money was obtained for the government in the markets of Lisbon and Cadiz, it came not in due time, because such were the Admiralty arrangements, there were no ships to convey the treasure to the north coast of Spain. The whole sum which had passed through the military chest during the past year was scarcely more than two millions four hundred thousand pounds, out of which part of the subsidies had been paid. This was quite inadequate; the government had desired him to push his operations to the Garonne during the winter; he was prepared to do so in every point excepting money, and he knew the greatest advantages would accrue from such a movement, but he could not stir. His posts were already so distant from the coast that his means of transport were daily destroyed by the journeys, he had not a shilling to pay for anything in the country and his credit was gone. He had been obliged privately to borrow the expense of a single courier sent to General Clinton. It was not his duty to suggest the fitting measures for relief, but it was obvious that an immediate and large supply from England was necessary, and that ships should be provided to convey that which was obtained at Lisbon and Cadiz to the army."

Such was the denuded state of the victorious Wellington at a time when millions, and the worth of more millions were being poured by the English ministers into the continent; when every petty German sovereign, partisan, or robber who raised a band or a cry against Napoleon, was supplied to satiety. And all this time there was not in England one public salary reduced, one contract checked, one abuse corrected, one public servant rebuked for negligence; not a writer dared to expose the mischief lest he should be crushed by persecution; no minister ceased to claim and to receive the boasting congratulations of the tories; no whig had sense to discover or spirit to denounce the iniquitous system—the

voice of reprehension was never heard from that selfish faction unless it were in sneering contempt of the general whose mighty genius sustained England under this load of folly.

Nor were these difficulties all that he had to contend with. While the Portuguese regency withheld his reinforcements the Duke of York insisted upon withdrawing his provisional battalions, which, being all composed of old soldiers the remains of regiments reduced by the casualties of war, were of more value in a winter campaign than three times their numbers of new men. For the services of the English militia regiments he had no desire; they possessed, he said, all the worst faults of the regulars and some peculiar to themselves besides; what he desired was that eight or ten thousand men should be drafted from them to fill up his ranks; he could then without much injury let his foreign battalions be taken away to re-form a Hanoverian army on the continent. And this plan he was inclined to, because the Germans, brave and strong soldiers, were yet addicted to desertion and in that particular set a bad example to the British: this suggestion was however disregarded, and other reinforcements were promised to him.

But the most serious of all the secondary vexations sprung from the conduct of the Spanish authorities. His hospitals and dépôts were for the most part in the Spanish territories, principally at Santander. To avoid inconvenience to the inhabitants he had wooden houses brought from England in which to shelter his sick and wounded men; and he paid extravagantly and regularly for every aid demanded from the natives. Nevertheless after much underhand and irritating conduct, the municipality, resolute to drive the hospitals from their town, suddenly, and under the false pretext that there was a contagious fever, placed all the British hospitals with their officers and attendants under quarantine. This was in the middle of January. Thirty thousand men had been wounded since June in the service of Spain, and the return was to make those wounded men close prisoners and drive their general to the necessity of fixing his hospitals in England! Vessels coming from Santander were thus rendered objects of dread, and the municipalities of the other ports, really fearing or pretending to fear the contagion, would not suffer them to enter their waters. And such a height did this cowardice and villany attain, that the political chief of Guipuscoa, shut without notice all the ports of that province against vessels coming from Santander; and the alcalde of Fuenterrabia endeavored to prevent a Portuguese military officer from assisting an English vessel, which was about to be and was afterwards actually cast away, because she came from Santander.

But from the danger of navigating the Bay of Biscay in winter,

and the badness of the ports near the positions of the army, all the stores and provisions coming by sea went in the first instance to Santander, the only good port, there to wait till favorable opportunities occurred for reaching the more eastern harbors. All the provision magazines of the Spanish army were there, and this blow cut all off; the army was reduced to the smaller magazines at Passages, which could only last for a few days, and when that supply was expended, Wellington would have no resource but to withdraw across the Pyrenees! "*Here,*" he exclaimed, "*here are the consequences of the system by which these provinces are governed! Duties of the highest description, military operations, political interests, and the salvation of the state, are made to depend upon the caprices of a few ignorant individuals, who have adopted a measure unnecessary and harsh, without adverting to its objects or consequences, and merely with a view to their personal interests and convenience.*"

They carried it into execution also with the utmost hardness, caprice and injustice, regardless of the loss of ships and lives which must follow; and finally desired him to relinquish the harbor and town of Santander altogether as a dépôt! However, his vigorous remonstrances stopped this nefarious proceeding in time to avert the danger which it menaced. Be it remembered now, that these dangers and difficulties, and vexations, although related in succession, happened, not one after another, but altogether; that it was when crossing the Bidassoa, breaking through the mountain fortifications of Soult, passing the Nive, fighting the battles in front of Bayonne, and when still greater and more intricate combinations were to be arranged, that all these vials of folly and enmity were poured upon his head. Who, then, shall refuse to admire the undaunted firmness, the unwearied temper and vigilance, the piercing judgment with which he steered his gallant vessel with a flowing sail unhurt through this howling storm of passion, this tumultuous sea of folly.

CHAPTER VI.

Continuation of the war in the eastern provinces—Suchet's erroneous statements—Sir William Clinton repairs Tarragona—Advances to Villa Franca—Suchet endeavors to surprise him—Fails—The French cavalry cut off an English detachment at Ordal—The Duke of San Carlos passes through the French posts—Copons favorable to his mission—Clinton and Manso endeavor to cut off the French troops at Molino del Rey—They fail through the misconduct of Copons—Napoleon recalls a great body of Suchet's troops—Whereupon, he reinforces the garrison of Barcelona, and retires to Gerona—Van Halen—He endeavors to beguile the governor of Tortosa—Fails—Succeeds at Lerida, Mequinenza, and Monzon—Sketch of the siege of Monzon—It is defended by the Italian soldier St. Jaques for one hundred and forty days—Clinton and Copons invest Barcelona—The beguiled garrisons of Lerida, Mequinenza, and Monzon arrive at Martorel—Are surrounded, and surrender on terms—Capitulation violated by Copons—King Ferdinand returns to Spain—His character—Clinton breaks up his army—His conduct eulogized—Lamentable sally from Barcelona—The French garrisons beyond the Ebro return to France, and Habert evacuates Barcelona—Fate of the Prince of Conti and the Duchess of Bourbon—Siege of Santona.

CONTINUATION OF THE WAR IN THE EASTERN PARTS OF SPAIN.

WHEN General Clinton succeeded Lord William Bentinck, his whole force, composed of the Anglo-Sicilians, Whittingham's and Sarsfield's Spaniards, and two battalions of Roche's division, did not furnish quite nineteen thousand men under arms.* Copons, blockading Mequinenza, Lerida and Monzon, and having garrisons in Cardona and the Seu d'Urgel, the only places in his possession, could not bring more than nine thousand men into the field. Elio had nominally twenty-five thousand, but this included Sarsfield's and Roche's troops, the greater part of which were with Clinton. It included, likewise, the bands of Villa Campa, Duran and the Empecinado, scattered in Castile, Aragon and Valencia, and acting according to the caprices of their chiefs. His force, daily diminishing also from the extreme unhealthiness of the country about Tortosa, was scarcely sufficient to maintain the blockades of the French fortresses beyond the Ebro.

Copons' army having no base but the mountains about Vich and Monserrat, having no magazines or dépôts, or place of arms, having very little artillery and scarcely any cavalry, lived as it could from day to day; in like manner lived Sarsfield's and Whittingham's troops, and Clinton's army was chiefly fed on salt provisions from the ships; the two former having no means of transport were unable

* Appendix 28, Vol. IV.

to make even one day's march with ease, they were continually upon the point of starvation, and could never be reckoned as a movable force. Nor indeed could the Anglo-Sicilians, owing to their scanty means of transport, make above two or three marches from the sea; and they were at this time more than usually hampered, being without pay, and shut out from their principal dépôts at Gibraltar and Malta: by plague at the first, yellow fever at the second. The courage and discipline of the British and Germans set aside, it would be difficult to find armies less efficient for an offensive campaign than those of the allies in Catalonia. Clinton's command over the Spaniards was restricted to Whittingham's and Sarsfield's troops, and though he strove to conciliate Copons, that general's indolence and incapacity impeded or baffled all useful measures.

This analysis shows that Elio being entirely engaged in Valencia, and Sarsfield and Whittingham unprovided with the means of movement, the army of Copons and the Anglo-Sicilians, together furnishing, when the posts and escorts and the laborers employed on the fortifications of Tarragona were deducted, not more than eighteen thousand men, were the only troops to oppose Suchet, who, without drawing a man from his garrisons, could attack them with thirty thousand. Copons and Clinton had also different bases and lines of retreat; the first depended upon the mountains and the interior for security and subsistence, the second on Tarragona and the fleet. The only mode of combining on a single line was to make Valencia a common base, and throwing bridges over the Ebro, construct works to defend them. This was recommended by Wellington to Lord William and to Clinton; but the former had several times lost his bridges, partly from the rapidity of the stream, partly from the activity of the garrison of Tortosa; and for Clinton the difficulty was enhanced by distance; because Tarragona, where all his materials were deposited, was sixty miles from Amposta, and all his artificers were required to restore the defences of the former place. The blockade of Tortosa was therefore always liable to be raised, and the troops employed there exposed to a sudden and fatal attack, since Suchet, sure to separate the Anglo-Sicilians from Copons when he advanced, could penetrate between them; and while the former rallied at Tarragona, and the latter at Igualada, his march would be direct upon Tortosa. He could thus either carry off his strong garrison, or passing the Ebro by the bridge of the fortress, move without let or hindrance upon Peniscola, Saguntum, and Valencia, drive Elio back to Alicante, collect his garrisons, and return too powerful to be meddled with.

This state of affairs led Wellington to recommend that the