

forces under Sir John Cradock. They were subsequently incorporated in a company of the 1st battalion of detachments formed with many others left sick and wounded after the battle of Vimiero.

The battalion was shipped for England on board the 'Resolution' and 'Elizabeth,' and after a tempestuous passage, landed at Plymouth, where the inhabitants loaded the men, women, and children, with kindness, gratuitously supplying clothes and other comforts. On the 23rd of March they entered Colchester Barracks, where the first battalion was already stationed, and in the happiness of reunion quickly forgot all the trials and hardships of the late campaign.

Recruiting went on briskly, many militiamen and volunteers joined, and before the second battalion had been located one week in Colchester Barracks it was augmented by upwards of 500.

EXPEDITION TO WALCHEREN.

On the 18th of June the vast armament, under Admiral Sir Richard Strachan, composed of 35 ships of the line, 2 of 50 guns, 3 of 44, 197 sloops, bombs, and other armed small craft, intended for a descent on Holland, assembled in the Downs. The land forces, under General the Earl of Chatham, including officers, numbered 39,219. All were in a high state of spirits and discipline. On June 20th, the second battalion of the 43rd, with other corps, left Colchester and moved to Shorncliffe Barracks, where, until the 17th of July, they remained brigaded with the second battalion of the 52nd and 95th, under command of Major-General the Hon. W. Stewart. On that day they marched through Dover to Deal, where they found innumerable boats ready to convey the soldiers, streaming into the town by every available road, to their ships, from whose mastheads floated—

“ The flag that 's braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze.”

In incredibly quick time the men were pulled off by the blue-jackets in the presence of countless fair daughters of Albion, gathered from afar to watch their departure.

The strength of the battalion on embarkation amounted to thirty-five sergeants, twenty-two buglers, and 605 rank and file. They were placed on board the ‘York,’ seventy-four, and on the 31st July were in East Kapelle roads off Walcheren. Little opposition was offered, and the troops were immediately employed in the reduction of Flushing. The object of the expedition was to destroy or capture the enemy’s ships afloat, on the Scheldt, as well as those building at Antwerp and Flushing; to destroy the arsenals and dockyards; to reduce the Island of Walcheren, and render, if possible, the river no longer navigable for ships of war. Should this programme prove impracticable, the commanders were to return to England, leaving a force sufficient to maintain the future possession and protection of Walcheren.

On the arrival of the battalion at East Kapelle roads, a heavy fire was observed from the mortar and gunboats directed on the town of Terverre. Part of the fleet had already entered the Veergat, and landed a large force, together with 300 sailors. The army advanced and occupied the place, taking some field-pieces, and driving the enemy into Flushing. Hope’s division took possession of Fort Balzon. The French fleet retired behind a chain drawn across the Scheldt, near Fort Lillo. On the 5th of August, Zandolist, opposite Fort Bathz, was attacked with twenty-eight gunboats, but were driven off by the batteries. The weather had become so boisterous that the sea blockade of Flushing could not be accomplished until the 7th. The enemy threw a thousand men across the Scheldt, to reinforce the town, and made a sortie

from Flushing on the right of our line, but was repulsed.

Meanwhile the 43rd had been placed in small craft in the Sloe Passage between Walcheren and South Beveland. The light brigade was composed of the second battalions of the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Rifle corps. On the 13th the batteries below Flushing were completed, and some frigates and bombs having taken their station, a fire was opened from upwards of fifty pieces of heavy ordnance, and kept up during the night, vigorously returned by the enemy. In the morning seven line-of-battle ships, anchored in the Deserlo Passage, got under weigh and ranged along the sea front, led by Sir R. Strachan, plying a furious cannonade until the town presented one vast conflagration. Firing from the ramparts having nearly ceased, General Monnet was summoned to surrender. An evasive answer was returned. Hostilities were recommenced and continued until the following day, when the enemy craved a suspension of arms, and the governor and entire garrison became prisoners of war, while all the valuable stores fell into our hands. The loss of British killed, wounded, and missing during the siege amounted to about 720, including officers.

Offensive operations were at an end. The troops found themselves in the midst of abundance. Pay was issued with punctuality, and recreations of all kinds were indulged in. The British army was suddenly roused from this state of peaceful enjoyment by the approach of a foe more terrible than that of French myrmidons. A pestilential fever broke out, from which men staggered, fell, and dropping, almost instantaneously expired. With such fearful rapidity did this scourge prey upon its victims that in fourteen days 12,086 soldiers were struck down, and so virulent were the seeds of the disorder that even convalescents rarely in any case ever wholly recovered their

former vigour of constitution. This destroying angel was long remembered with awe-struck terror by the name of "Walcheren" fever.

On the 10th of August, headquarters, with the right wing of the 43rd, marched for South Graven Polder, where they were cantoned until the 15th; the other wing, under Major Elers, remaining at Turgoes. Headquarters and right wing moved on the 16th to the parish of De Groa, and were cantoned in the neighbouring farmhouses until the 30th, when, just as they had sat down to dinner, a sudden order desired them to move to the coast. The meal was instantly abandoned, everything packed up, and the beach gained in two hours, where embarkation began without delay. Next morning, 200 of the sick, officers and soldiers, were removed on board small craft for England. The headquarters of the battalion were removed from the 'Ganges' to His Majesty's ship 'Salsette,' but by this time every man was ill, and many had died. At Harwich there disembarked 32 sergeants, 35 corporals, 21 buglers, 566 privates, nearly all prostrated by the fever. As they crawled on shore, an honest countryman, pointing, observed to his companion, "I say, Bill, there goes the King's hard bargains." 1 sergeant and 7 privates were left at Walcheren.

The battalion marched to Colchester. Those at all able to move were sent to Sudbury for change of air, which in some cases proved highly beneficial; but from first to last their loss was 126 men by the epidemic. The final evacuation of Walcheren took place towards the end of December.

This expedition can only be regarded as a disgraceful record of the incompetency of the ministry then in power. To their errors in judgment, combined with the jealousies and recriminations existing between the naval and military commanders, may be ascribed the loss of 7000 brave

British soldiers by fever and ague, ingloriously sacrificed in an unhealthy climate, while their services would have been invaluable in Spain. The miserable event gave rise to a caustic epigram :—

“ Lord Chatham, with sword *undrawn*,
Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strachan ;
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham.”

After Walcheren, the second battalion of the 43rd remained in England to recruit for the first in the Peninsula.

Napoleon, on quitting Spain at the close of 1808, left the task of complete subjugation to his delegated marshals. This will prove that so arrogantly secure did he make of Soult's immediate progress in Portugal that he fixed the 5th of February for the arrival of his troops at Oporto, and the 16th instant for his own triumphant entry into Lisbon. This army consisted of 23,000 men, of which 4000 were cavalry, with 56 pieces of cannon.

Early in spring the British Ministry, convinced that the Spanish and Portuguese cause was not hopeless, despatched General Beresford with twelve or fourteen officers to re-organize and form the army of the latter nation. The English troops left in the Peninsula on the withdrawal from Corunna consisted of a brigade under Brigadier-General Cameron, the 14th Dragoons, with the sick, convalescents, and stragglers of Sir John Moore's army; the whole amounting to some 7000 men, under command of Sir John Cradock at Lisbon. From this body was formed the first and second battalions of detachments. The first of these had, besides the 43rd company, one from the 29th, another from the 52nd, and a third from the 95th, commanded by Colonel Way of the 29th. The 43rd were in charge of Lieutenant George Brown,

with whom was Lieutenant Brockman. Reinforcements reached the Tagus in March and April, increasing the army to 13,000 men. This enabled Sir J. Cradock to take up a position out of Lisbon, and to cover the great roads leading upon that city. Government determined to intrust the defence of Portugal to the general who had so successfully distinguished himself in the year previous. Sir J. Cradock was therefore superseded and appointed Governor of Gibraltar.

On the 16th of April Sir Arthur Wellesley sailed from Portsmouth in the 'Surveillant,' Captain Sir G. Collier, nor did he again touch English soil until 1814 as F.M. Duke of Wellington, at the very moment that the Prince Regent was exhibiting the arsenal, dock-yard and fleet to the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia. Sir Arthur reached Lisbon on the 22nd of April. His reception was an ovation. The city was illuminated, the people hailed him as their former deliverer, and testified intense gratification and delight. On the 25th he was introduced to the regency in the palace of the Inquisition, when the rank of Marshal-General of Portugal was conferred, and he joined the army at Coimbra on the 2nd of May. Each town through which he passed was brilliantly illuminated in his honour, while ladies emulated each other in bestowing "wreathed smiles" and offering magnificent bouquets.

Sir Arthur determined to advance with his main body on the enemy's front. A division under Marshal Beresford was directed on Viseu and across the Douro to co-operate with Silveira. The British troops were in excellent order, and the Portuguese regiments, although less soldier-like in *ensemble* than their allies, came out better than was expected. Great credit was due to Marshal Beresford, for upon being appointed Generalissimo of this army, he first clothed them in English fashion, doubled

their pay, dismissed the service two of their general officers as ignorant and incompetent, and instituted such regulations and drills, that what was like a country rabble became metamorphosed into a respectable body of regular troops.

It was intended to surprise the French under General Franceschi, on the 10th; but the neighing of horses and stupidity of the guides caused a failure.* On the following day the enemy was observed on the skirts of a wood. Sharp skirmishing ensued. The four battalions of the German Legion marched diagonally to turn the left, which appeared the weak point—meanwhile—the French managed to push a column of infantry down the road, through the village of Grijon, which being reported to Sir Arthur, he replied, “If they come any further, order the battalions of detachments to charge them with the bayonet.” This alternative was unnecessary, as finding our whole force in their front, they retired.

On the 12th a hair-dresser, escaped from Oporto in the night, brought intelligence that the French had destroyed the bridge of boats over the Douro, and had secured all those on the other side. Sir Arthur ordered Colonel Waters to proceed directly to the river and procure boats, *coûte qui coûte*. Passing up the left bank he at length, two miles above the city, descried a small old boat embedded in the mud. Others were seen on the opposite side, and some peasants consenting to accompany the Colonel and ferry back four boats, the troops were conveyed over. Soult discredited the possibility until uncontestedly proved by our firing. The enemy then issued from the town, in great numbers bringing guns to bear, but being tamely served, did little mischief. Suddenly they began to retreat. On their deserting the quays, the Portuguese jumped into the boats amidst vociferous cheering. General Charles Stewart pursued.

At the passage of the Douro the British loss did not exceed 120 men, while the French, besides 500 killed and wounded, left in our hands many prisoners, many sick in hospital, and various pieces of cannon. The 43rd company had about 10 killed and wounded. Sir A. Wellesley in his despatch wrote:—"I cannot say too much in favour of the officers and men. They have marched in four days over eighty miles of most difficult country, have gained many important positions, and have engaged and defeated three different bodies of the enemy's troops. I have also to request your Lordship's attention to the conduct of the flank companies of the 29th, 43rd, and 52nd Regiments under Major Way of the 29th."

On the 29th of May the first battalion of the 43rd, complete in officers and numbering 1072 bayonets, marched from Colchester to Harwich, under command of Lieut.-Colonel Gifford. In conjunction with the first battalion 52nd and first battalion 95th Rifles, they embarked for Portugal. These two regiments had each upwards of 1000 effectives, and with the 43rd were as fine and efficient a body of men as ever took the field. The Tagus was made on the 28th of June. On the 2nd of July the rifle corps and right wing of the 43rd proceeded up the river and the left followed. All went well until within a league of Villada, when some of the boats got aground, and the men were disembarked and took the road, reaching Villada on the evening of the 5th. After leaving Abrantes they crossed to the left of the river; but finding only bad roads, a barren country, and little or no food, they recrossed. At Villa Velha the country improved. At Castel Branco they rested for two days, understanding that Sir Arthur was not so much in want of them. From thence a short cut was made to Zebreira, on the frontier of Spain, where they heard of Sir Arthur having reached Orobispo, in the neighbourhood of Talavera,

at that time occupied by a part of the French army under Victor. Either this piece of intelligence, or a direct order from Wellesley, induced Craufurd to push forward by forced marches to Coria by way of Zarza Maior. At Coria it was absolutely necessary to give the division a day's rest, after which they proceeded pell mell night and day, allowing but a few hours in the meridian heat for cooking, and arrived about three miles in front of Talavera at nine o'clock on the morning of the 29th, just one day after the battle. Of this celebrated march Napier wrote:—"That day General Robert Craufurd reached the English camp with the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Regiments, and immediately took charge of the outposts. These troops, after a march of twenty miles, were in bivouac near Malpartida de Placenzia when the alarm caused by the Spanish fugitives spread to that part. Craufurd, fearing that the army was pressed, allowed the men to rest for a few hours, and then withdrawing about fifty of the weakest from the ranks, commenced his march with the resolution not to halt until he reached the field of battle. As the brigade advanced crowds of the runaways were met with, and although not all Spaniards, all propagating the vilest falsehoods—"The army was defeated;" "Sir Arthur Wellesley was killed;" "The French were only a few miles distant;" nay, some blinded by their fears, affected to point out the enemy's advanced posts on the nearest hills. Indignant at this shameful scene, the troops hastened rather than slackened the impetuosity of their pace, and leaving only seventeen stragglers behind, in twenty-six hours crossed the field of battle in a close and compact body; having in that time passed over sixty-two English miles in the hottest season of the year, each man carrying from fifty to sixty pounds' weight upon his shoulders. Had the historian Gibbon known of such a march, he would

have spared his sneer about the 'delicacy of modern soldiers.' "

Discussion having arisen as to the correct data furnish by the foregoing extract, a leaf out of Lieutenant Pollock's—43rd Regiment—pocket diary may be likewise quoted :—

"Left Coria on the 24th (July, 1809) for Galesta; on the 25th to Malpartida, a distance of four leagues, under soaking rain. Next A.M., 26th, about three leagues, crossed the river Pietar, and after marching two leagues found we had taken the wrong road; obliged therefore to cross the country about two leagues, where we halted, having marched upwards of seven leagues; next morning marched for Naval Moral, four leagues. Next A.M., 28th, the brigade marched at 1 o'clock with the intention of only going four leagues, but before we had got so far we met the Spaniards running away in all directions, with baggage, &c., and who reported an engagement; proceeded therefore about six leagues to Oropesa, where we filed off to a wood and stopped until 4 o'clock, when we again continued the march at a very quick pace until 11 o'clock. The brigade then lay down with their arms in their hands, and after remaining in that situation for three hours again marched and reached the ground where the action had been fought the day previous—a harrowing march of *sixty-six miles in thirty hours.*"

Great was the disappointment and disgust in the brigade at finding they were but a few hours too late to take part in the battle, but as in close column they passed over the field, they were cheered by the whole army, and their arrival at this particular moment was hailed as an auspicious omen. Although as a regiment the 43rd were not present at Talavera, their company of detachments, under Lieutenants Brown and Brockman, formed on a hill to the extreme left of the position, greatly distin-

guished itself by repulsing at the point of the bayonet a formidable attack. This company, consisting of 4 sergeants and 100 rank and file, lost 10 privates; Lieutenant Brown was wounded, and Captain Gardiner of the regiment, brigade-major to General Stewart, killed.

The Spaniards behaved infamously, refusing the slightest assistance in burying the dead, and although sufficient corn to support the army for a month was secreted in Talavera, declined to produce it. This conduct sowed the first seeds of contempt and dislike, never after wholly eradicated, in the hearts of the British towards their allies. Provisions were scant, water stagnant, and the enemy concentrating in the vicinity. The French had continued a rear-guard on the Alberche until they retired through Santa Olalla. An anecdote was related highly creditable to King Joseph. In the house where he had lodged, a caricature was discovered of 'El Reye Pepé,' which created great indignation in those around his person. On his departure next morning, H.M. tendered his host a snuff-box, remarking that he would do well to be more careful of the contents than of the caricature. On being opened it was found to contain the King's miniature.

At this time the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Rifles, were ordered to "compose a Light Brigade under command of Brigadier-General Robert Craufurd."

The Duke of Dalmatia, at the head of an imposing force, had entered Placenzia. The fate of the Peninsula seemed now suspended on a thread, and the peril of the British army extreme, owing to their great numerical inferiority. In this alarming attitude of affairs, the General abated not one whit of his usual calmness and fortitude. He occupied himself in visiting the hospitals, procuring all attainable comforts for the wounded and dying, while he neglected no possible precautions against surprise.

On the 3rd of August the 43rd, with the light brigade left Talavera for Oropesa, crossing the Tagus at Arzobispo, and reaching Almaraz on the 8th. During the march, grievous privations from want of food and water were undergone; even a breakfast of acorns was deemed a luxurious repast. Within a few days, Major Proctor and Captain M'Lachlan of the 43rd succumbed from fever contracted on the march. The latter had distinguished himself at Vimiero. Major M'Leod now commanded the regiment, Colonel Gifford being on the staff.

Meanwhile, Sir Arthur had taken up a position on the other side of the Tagus, by the bridge of Arzobispo, thus baffling the combinations of the enemy. Craufurd's brigade, with six pieces of artillery, was directed to gain the bridge of Almaraz, lest the enemy discovering the ford below, should cross and seize the Puerta de Mirabete. This movement was effected, but the Spanish infantry under Albuquerque permitted Mortier to take advantage of their supineness, and the French cavalry, secretly assembled, with General Coulaincourt's brigade, suddenly entered the stream. The Spaniards running to arms, opened upon the leading squadrons; but Mortier, with a powerful concentric fire of artillery, overwhelmed them.

Sir Arthur and his army gained Deleytoza, and depositing the wounded in a large convent, proceeded westward. On the 11th of August headquarters were at Truxillo. Craufurd's light brigade was relieved at Almaraz by the Spaniards, and took the road of Cáceres to Valencia de Alcantara. The pass of Mirabete disclosed how much they had suffered. With difficulty and many halts they were only able to reach Campo Mayor on September the 11th, where the pestilent fever of the Guadiana committed distressing ravages. Four sergeants and 106 rank and file of the 43rd perished from the epidemic. Dysentery

also raged, and in a short space of time that scourge cost the British army 5000 men. Here the men of the regiment hitherto attached to the first battalion of detachments joined.

On the 3rd of September, Wellesley left Truxillo, gradually drawing towards the frontiers; passing through Medellin and Merida to Badajoz, where he established himself. The enemy had not followed the defeated Spaniards; but fearful of leaving the north of Spain without troops, and feeling secure of the capital, the three corps set out on their return towards Salamanca, and thus ended the campaign of 1809.

The actions of July had taught the enemy that their arms were no longer infallible; their repulse awakened some degree of energy in the Spaniards, while Europe began to recognise the possibility of beating the French. To this and the succeeding campaigns may be ascribed the resuscitation of the *morale* in European armies which the unbounded conquests and ambition of Napoleon had almost totally annihilated. In December Craufurd's brigade marched from Campo Mayor to Coimbra and Celorico.

At Coimbra the nuns invited the officers of the 43rd to a breakfast, at which they waited themselves. Placed inside a double grating, they turned round a table plentifully supplied with a great variety of chocolate, coffee, cakes, and other delicacies.

1810.

On the 3rd of January the 43rd arrived at Pinhel, close to the River Coa, where they were cantoned.

Sir Arthur Wellesley—now Lord Wellington—was regarded as the only general capable of directing the defence of Portugal, our ancient ally, and at the same time inspiring entire confidence both at home and

abroad. Calculating that rations for a larger force might not be procurable, he demanded but 30,000 troops to prosecute the war. Success, he urged, could only be arrived at by combined earnestness and devotedness in purpose and action on the part of the natives. It was necessary to secure two points; first, to concert measures by which sufficiency of subsistence should be attainable for the British and Portuguese armies; secondly, to devise plans by which the enemy should be deprived of supplies. The inhabitants were ordered to destroy their mills, break down the bridges, remove the boats, abandon their dwellings, and carry off their property wherever the invader might approach; while the entire population, converted for the nonce into soldiers, should close on the rear and flanks and cut off all exterior resources. Stern as the mandate might appear, the exigencies of war rendered it essential for the preservation of the kingdom, and it was unhesitatingly obeyed.

Lord Wellington, in pursuance of his comprehensive plans, sought a position covering Lisbon, where the allied forces should neither be turned by the flanks, forced in front by numbers, nor reduced by famine. The mountains abutting upon Lisbon furnished the key to the arch of defence. Lord Wellington determined to convert these mountains into a gigantic and impregnable citadel. Hence the far-famed lines of TORRES VEDRAS.

Intrenchments, redoubts, and glacis, covered more than five hundred square miles of mountainous country, between the Tagus and the Atlantic. The defensive force may be computed at 80,000, of which the British contributed 30,000. The frontier to be protected from Braganza to Astramonte was 400 miles. Every probable or possible movement of the enemy was weighed

by the acute and fertile brain of the English general, actively alive to the multiplied counter-combinations to be anticipated. In case of disaster a line of inner intrenchments was prepared to secure embarkation, and 24,000 tons of shipping were retained in the river to receive, if necessary, the British troops.

On the 6th of January the 43rd crossed the Coa, and were cantoned in villages. Every morning, one hour before dawn, they were under arms, and so remained until daylight.

On the 22nd of February, in a General Order issued by Lord Wellington at Viseu, the following notice appeared:—"The 1st and 2nd battalions of the Portuguese Chasseurs are attached to the brigade of Brigadier-General Craufurd, which is to be called The Light Division."

In March the whole brigade, except the 52nd, who remained with Craufurd at Pinhel, pushed its advance towards the Agueda, as a corps of observation on Masena, about to besiege Ciudad Rodrigo. The rifle corps occupied the post of honour in rear of the pass of St. Felices, in order to watch a French column, occupying the towns of St. Felices, Villa Nueva, &c.; and the 43rd in their cantonments extended from the right of the Rifles as far as Ciudad Rodrigo. The German Hussars, a very fine body of men acknowledged by all to be the only troops fit for the work, formed a chain along the banks of the Agueda for a distance of twenty-five miles.

Craufurd's division reached 4000 effectives, with six guns. While the hussars watched the distant bridges, the troops could always concentrate under Almeida, and on the side of Barba de Puerco the ravine was so deep that a few companies of the 95th were considered competent to oppose any number. Seven minutes sufficed at midnight for the division to get under arms and half

an hour by day or night to assemble at the alarm posts, with the baggage loaded and stationed at a convenient distance in the rear. The troops evinced a celerity, promptness, and intelligence, never surpassed under any circumstances. At midnight on the 19th of March the Rifles stationed at Barba de Puerco had an affair with a very superior party of the enemy, who attempted a surprise, but, headed by the gallant Beckwith, they beat them off, and pushed the French column over the edge of a precipice.

On the 21st of April, seven companies of the 43rd were at Villa de Cierbo with the headquarters of the brigade, and three at Castellegos de Duas Casas. On the 27th the battalion marched to Almeida, headquarters moving to Gallegos, where the division was joined by Captain Ross' troop of horse artillery, two squadrons of the 1st German Hussars, and the 2nd Portuguese Caçadores. Ciudad Rodrigo was now being invested by the French, and on June the 11th the trenches were opened. The light division remained at Gallegos, observing the progress of the siege, and being stationed on a hill which overlooked the town, had a fine view of the operations.

At this juncture the French were most annoying, invariably watching the hours of cooking and meals, advancing at the very moment when all was prepared, obliging our men to empty their kettles and rush rapidly to arms, when they would immediately retire. Early in July the enemy appeared in great force. Ciudad Rodrigo capitulated on the 10th. On the 24th occurred the

COMBAT OF THE COA.

General Craufurd received positive instructions not to risk an action beyond the Coa. Carried away by his daring and ambitious spirit, he braved the whole French

army, and brought on an ill-considered conflict which, although the result was glorious to the troops engaged, might have seriously compromised the deep-laid schemes of the Commander-in-Chief. Napier in his History gives a most graphic account of that bitter fight, where he himself was shot through the left thigh towards the close of the action, and his company lost one ensign killed and thirty-five men killed and wounded.

Lord Wellington wrote of this action near Almeida that it was one of the most brilliant of the exploits of the Light Division during the war: "I am informed, that throughout this trying day the commanding officers of the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th, Lieut.-Colonels Beckwith, Barclay, and Hull, and all the officers and soldiers of those excellent regiments, distinguished themselves."

To these public accounts we add a private letter from Lieutenant (afterwards Lieut.-Colonel) Henry Booth of the 43rd, to his brother in England:—

"Camp at Celorico, July 30th, 1810.

"We are both (alluding to his brother Charles, in the 52nd) as well as possible, quite clear out of all the scrapes, thank God! But to the point. Our gallant, I wish I could say *wise*, General Crauford, after having been driven from his position near Gallegos about three leagues in front of Almeida, posted his division a little to the right of that fortress, amongst rocks, walls, and vineyards, on the slope of the hill which descends to the river Coa—a worse position, every one allows, could not have been chosen. However, after a dreadful stormy night, with incessant rain, thunder, and lightning until day-break, our men and officers thoroughly drenched—I may say half-drowned—and fire-locks nearly unserviceable, we waited patiently the attack of the French on the morning of the 24th. Our pickets were soon driven in, and the French fired on our line with musketry, shot, and shells; we returned the fire, and were ordered to retire *in line—very wisely and properly ordered!* But unfortunately, from the vast quantity of high walls, six feet high generally, the number of rocks, vineyards, and broken ground which continued down to the water's edge, our *line* was very soon broken, past all chance of being formed again, till we had crossed

the bridge. In this manner the whole division retired down this tremendous hill. This was fine fun for the French skirmishers, who were following us closely from rock to rock, pelting us pretty handsomely down to the river! However, in all this confusion, our fellows behaved nobly, and retired fighting inch by inch, which in the end proved our misfortune; for had we made the best of our way over the bridge, and occupied the hills on the other side as soon as possible, we should have suffered less, and precisely the same position would have been gained. But why did our General wait for the attack in so infamous a position? It was impossible for us to keep our ground, nor was it intended that we should. We remained, as it were to be fired upon, without the means of defending ourselves till we could cross the bridge. Would it not have answered the purpose if General Craufurd had at first occupied the hills on the other side of the bridge, advancing his pickets some distance in front, which could have retired on the approach of the French, covered by the fire of our line on the hills, and then defend the bridge, as we might have done against a much superior force? Every one asks the same question. The General is universally blamed, and Lord Wellington is said to have expressed to him his disapprobation. In proof he has given Sir Brent Spencer the command of the Light Division, which has caused no little satisfaction amongst us. To continue my tedious, and I am afraid, confused account, we defended the bridge against three attempts of the French to force it, in all of which they failed, suffering heavy loss. At last the firing mutually ceased, on account of the torrents of rain that fell, after five hours' hard peppering at each other. Towards night we retired, and have been gradually falling back on this place. The main body of the army is still more in rear, and we have only a few cavalry in our front. We *must* retire when the French advance. Where the army will halt and fight, of course we are ignorant. It depends entirely on the force they bring against us. We have had a good share of fag, and shall be glad to have a reprieve. Things are now, I assure you, coming to a crisis. All depends on the force of the French. It is the general opinion that the enemy will bring on such numbers as to leave little doubt of the issue of a battle. Happen what may, we have lads who will do their duty. The people of England, I dare say, are looking to us. Well they may. Now, my dear Tom, with much sorrow, I lay before you a long list of killed and wounded of the 43rd. Killed—Colonel Hull, who had joined us to take command the preceding day; Captain

Ewen Cameron; and Lieutenant Mason, a fine young lad of seventeen. Wounded—Captains Lloyd, J. W. Hall, W. Napier, Shaw, Deshon, the four first severely; Lieutenant McDiarmid, Harvest, Johnston, Stevenson, Frederick, Hopkins. Poor Frederick, a fine young boy, has since lost his leg; it was amputated yesterday. Hopkins commanded the company I am attached to, and was wounded in the first fire. The command afterwards fell to me. I was not so unfortunate; I came clear off. Sergeants, drummers, and privates killed, wounded, and missing, 130.

The 95th has suffered almost as severely as ourselves in officers and men. The loss of the 52nd, I am happy to say, is comparatively trifling. Two officers wounded, and a few men killed. They were not so much exposed as ours and the 95th. We regret the loss of Colonel Hull; in short, of all who fell. Major McLeod, who has succeeded Colonel Hull in the command, distinguished himself. Is not this a pretty loss for one regiment, owing entirely to the blunders of ———? I hope we shall be better managed for the future. We only wish for a fair chance; there is then no fear of our lads gaining distinction. Is it not a pity such fine fellows should always be obliged to fight *retiring*? Yet this must be the game now for a while. The French force in our front, in the neighbourhood of Almeida and Rodrigo, is stated to be about 80,000. It is said they are also advancing in other directions. This is a camp letter; pray excuse faults."

On the 4th of August, orders were issued that the Light Division should be divided into two brigades—the 43rd, 3rd Caçadores, and four companies of the 95th, in the first; the 52nd, 1st Caçadores, and four companies of the 95th, in the second. On August 27th, Almeida suddenly surrendered, and the brigade retired to Martagao. ..

BATTLE OF BUSACO.

In the beginning of September, the Light Division slowly retrograded towards Busaco, waiting the enemy's approach, Lord Wellington having there resolved to offer them battle. On the 26th they advanced by Martagao, and ~~back~~ back skirmishing with the French. During the night the 43rd and 52nd, forming the left brigade of the

division, were drawn up in line on a small plateau just behind a steep portion of the mountain range. The position was in front exceedingly strong, and the direct approach almost inaccessible. Notwithstanding, before daybreak on the 27th, the enemy's columns appeared in the woods below, and rapidly advanced. Loison's division, headed by Simon's brigade, led the attack. They soon drove in the English skirmishers, and scrambling up the rocks-crowned our position. The artillery were obliged to fall back from their guns, and the summit was for a few moments actually in the possession of the French, when Craufurd, who, hidden by the crest of the hill, had keenly and anxiously watched their proceedings, waving his hat, gave the signal for the 43rd and 52nd to charge. With a cheer, they dashed at the enemy, overthrew their columns, strewing the hill with their dead and wounded, and secured many prisoners.

The enemy's attack on the 3rd division at first was more successful (Regnier's corps was employed there, Ney's against the Light Division). In this attack some of the Portuguese were overthrown, and the right of the division turned, and the French were in possession for a short time, when the 45th and 88th Regiments charged, and Colonel Cameron at the same time attacking with the 9th Regiment drove the enemy from their position, which finished the battle of Busaco. Lord Wellington, in his despatch after the action, said:—"On the left, the enemy attacked with three divisions of infantry of the sixth corps, that part of the Sierra occupied by our Light Division, commanded by Brigadier-General Craufurd, and by the brigade commanded by Brigadier-General Pack. One division of infantry only made any progress to the top of the hill, and they were immediately charged with the bayonet by Brigadier-General Craufurd, with the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Regiments, and the 3rd Portuguese

Caçadores, and driven down with immense loss. In this attack, Brigadier-General Craufurd, Lieut.-Colonels Beckwith of the 95th, and Barclay of the 52nd, and the commanding officers of the regiments engaged, distinguished themselves. The loss sustained by the enemy in his attacks of the 27th has been enormous."

The casualties in the 43rd were slight:—1 captain, 1 sergeant, and 7 rank and file wounded. The officer was Captain Lord Fitzroy Somerset, on the staff of Lord Wellington.

The following letter addressed by Lieutenant Charles Booth, bearing on the action, is replete with interest:—

"Camp near Aruda, about fifteen miles from Lisbon, 9th Nov., 1810

"Never did a military man commit so great a blunder as Massena in attacking the position of Busaco. Without any previous reconnoissance of our force or the nature of our position, he attacked what was far from being its weakest points with a force unequal to make the slightest impression. We lost certainly some brave fellows, but, compared to their loss (especially in killed), ours was a mere trifle. In the part of the line occupied by the Light Division and about 200 yards immediately to its front two columns of the enemy—supposed about 5000 each—were met by the two left-hand companies of the 43rd, and the right two of the 52nd. The front of their columns alone—chiefly composed of officers—stood the charge; the rest took to their heels, throwing away their arms, pouches, &c. Our men did not stand to take prisoners; what were taken were those left in our rear in the hurry of pressing forward in the charge. The flanks of the 43rd and 52nd in their charge met only the enemy's skirmishers who had by superior numbers driven in the 95th Rifles but a few seconds before the charge of the division. These poor fellows were all glad enough to give themselves up as prisoners, our men not being allowed to fire a shot at them. The advanced part of the charging line—the four companies first mentioned—after throwing themselves into the midst of the enemy's retreating columns, killing, wounding, and in short felling to the ground lots of them, were with great difficulty halted, and then commenced from the flanks of the whole division the most destructive flanking fire that I believe was ever witnessed. Not a tenth part of their

whole force would have escaped had not the four companies, by precipitating themselves too far in front of the general line, exposed themselves to the fire of their comrades, and thus prevented more than 300 firelocks on each flank of the division from being brought into action. The flanks, and in fact every other part of the division (except the four centre companies), had to pass over in the charge some very steep rugged ground, where, not meeting with anything but the enemy's skirmishers, they pushed on head-over-heels, until the descent became almost perpendicular. At this time they were halted, and had a fine view of what was going on in the centre.

"I was in the left wing of the battalion, and am sure, though we were not five minutes in the charge down the hill, it cost us more than half an hour to get up into our first position again. I have often had described to me what is called a '*hot business*,' and where confusion 'tis said 'reigns triumphant on all sides.' If this be true, then I have only to say that I have never been in a general action, or what is termed '*hot business*.' It must indeed be a terrible sight if it exceeds what we experienced at Busaco, where, to all those who had their eyes open and not poking their way with a bayonet, everything appeared to be carried on with the greatest possible regularity, considering the ground we had to act upon. Orders, to be sure, could only be communicated by sound of bugle, or by the stentorian voice of a company officer. Great was the screech set on foot by our fellows during the charge. Poor Barclay was shot twice in front of the four companies, at a very few paces from the enemy; he was cheering the men at the time.

"You will see by the '*Gazette*' that the 52nd took General Simon, two or three field officers, and some of inferior rank. Some one has had the audacity, rascality, I should say, to contradict this in the newspapers; if this gentleman is wise, he will not give the slightest hint of his name to any of the Light Division. It was said, too, that he was actually engaged with the division on that day. General Simon was both wounded and taken by the same person—a private soldier of the 52nd. He had been much in advance and on the right of their column in coming up the hill, and at the time he was wounded was reconnoitring in their line of skirmishers. Harry I reckon as having narrowly escaped on several occasions during the retreat. At Busaco he was in Captain Lloyd's—the left-hand company of the 43rd—in one of those who met the head of the French column in the charge.

His captain, who was close to him at the time they reached the enemy's columns, was on the point of being bayoneted, but knocked down the fellow attempting it. Harry must have had a shave or two, as he could not prevent himself from being in the very thick of them, but he speaks only of the actions of others. At the Coa, near Almeida, his was one of the companies that covered the retreat of the division across the bridge; and had it not been for the gallant manner in which this detachment—principally 43rd—behaved, most of the division would certainly have been taken prisoners, or forced into the river, where they must inevitably have perished. Lieutenant Hopkins, in command of this company, had been wounded in the early part of the day, whilst in conversation with Harry respecting their unfavourable position. Harry, of course, took command of the company for the *rest of the day*, which was by far the most trying part of it, having been amongst the last of the few who escaped over the bridge after the retreat of the principal body of the covering party. Had any person of interest been inclined to have taken proper notice of his conduct, and that of a few others on that day, and represented it *properly* to Lord Wellington, a company would have been the least he could have rewarded them with.

“The day of the retreat to our present position, Harry's (Captain Lloyd's) company was on the rear-guard on the most stormy disagreeable day I ever witnessed. The enemy had come upon us rather unexpectedly whilst snug at our dinners at Alenquer. Considerable confusion ensued on our leaving the town, for the enemy's riflemen were actually entering it before the 43rd had assembled. Harry was in rear of all with a section of the company, and obliged to blaze away in all directions in order to keep them in check, so great was their impudence and spirits at seeing us retreat in so confused a manner. The town withal contained excellent plunder, and, what they most wanted, shelter for the day.”

On the 1st of October a rapid file over the bridge at Coimbra was made. The enemy pressed on so fast that many dragoons were sabred in fording the river. Sir J. Fergusson wrote :—

“It was a distressing sight to see the inhabitants of that large town obliged to abandon their houses and property, and fly for their lives; many of the better class, accustomed to every luxury,

obliged to travel on foot night and day, suffering every description of misery, until they arrived at Lisbon: many died from want and fatigue. The miseries of war never struck us so forcibly; we felt for the poor creatures, but it was not in our power to relieve them. We were hard pressed by the crowd, and with difficulty made our way through them to Condeixa, and escaped.

"The Light Division occupied a position in rear of Condeixa during the night, and the cavalry pickets to the front were employed in destroying our extensive magazines there—cavalry equipments, hospital supplies, tea, brandy, shirts, shoes, trowsers, and tobacco—and after a most disagreeable service, without rest, had to resume their march at daybreak. The division continued to fall back by Pombal, Buenavista, Batalha, Rio Mayor, Alcantara, and Sobral, to Alemquer. At this last place we were nearly surprised, through neglect in not posting pickets as they ought. The men were accoutred, ready to move in a moment, and no bad consequences occurred, with the exception of some officers losing their baggage, and several their dinners, which were left cooking at the fires for the French to regale themselves with.

"By a flank movement during the night, Aruda, below our station in the lines and the picket post of the division, was entered. This was the first knowledge we had of the famous lines of Torres Vedras. The pretty little town of Aruda was beautifully situated, and a favourite retreat of the rich merchants of Lisbon—their quintas being splendidly furnished, and made as luxurious as possible. It was altogether a little paradise; but how soon was the scene changed! It was plundered, burnt, and utterly destroyed; all the valuable furniture of the houses thrown into the picket fires, to the disgrace of our army; for unfortunately we did not permit the enemy to get possession of it, even for a moment to have shared the stigma."

From the 10th of October to the 15th of November the British army remained in the lines, when the enemy, finding them impregnable, retired to Santarem. Lord Wellington then deemed it expedient to remain on the defensive, and even to strengthen the lines. The Light Division, supported by a brigade of cavalry, occupied Valle and the heights overlooking the marsh and swamp below the French position. The bridge on the intervening causeway was mined; a sugar-loaf shaped hill, looking

straight down the approach, was crowded with embrasures for artillery, and laced in front with a zigzag covered way. Lord Wellington fixed his headquarters at Cartaxo, to watch the further operations of the French, and in such close proximity the armies remained during the winter. Flags of truce were interchanged, and mutual civilities tendered.

1811.

The French Marshal, having with consummate skill and secrecy arranged all for a retreat, which could no longer be delayed, on the night of the 5th of March, withdrew his divisions from Santarem. His army had suffered much from very short supplies, owing to a protracted demonstration in front of the British lines. At that time he was unaware of the advance of Soult, who had defeated the Spanish forces south of the Tagus. He partially succeeded in deceiving Lord Wellington with respect to the line of his retreat, by indicating a disposition to occupy Thomar, while he continued his march by the river Mondego to Pombal. Lieuts. Pollock and Taggart of the 43rd, with their companies, being on outlying picket, observed a change in the enemy's position, and that the fires looked low. Lieutenant Pollock desired one of his sergeants to come forward and aid him in investigation. Cautiously crossing the causeway and abattis which divided the camps, they were soon within a few yards of what appeared to be a sentry carelessly leaning against the wall. From his rigidity of attitude, they concluded he was asleep, and rushing forward to seize him, found the apparition but "a man of straw," dressed in up an old French uniform, and armed with a stick representing a firelock! The figure had been placed against the causeway before Massena decamped.

The Light Division was immediately ordered in pursuit. A slight skirmish took place at Pombal on the 11th.

COMBAT OF REDINHA.

In front of Redinha was an open plain, surrounded with wood; the enemy occupied the village at the extreme end, with a river in front and a timbered country in rear. By daybreak of the 12th of March both armies were in movement. The Light Division—then under Sir David Erskine (in Craufurd's absence)—was ordered to attack a wooded slope on Ney's right, while a like movement was made by the 3rd Division on the left. These exposed Ney's position entirely, but he held his ground until the heads of our columns shewed themselves at different openings from the wood, debouching into the plain. Upon a signal given, they rapidly deployed into line and advanced in beautiful order, supported by strong columns in reserve, with large masses of cavalry ready for a charge, — but Ney, under cover of the smoke from a volley of artillery, disappeared; firing the village, where some of his wounded perished, and retired by Condeixa.

The British had 12 officers and 200 men killed and wounded. Ney lost as many, but he might have been totally destroyed. Napier says, "Lord Wellington paid him too much respect."

The French were strongly posted. The Light Division planted pickets close to the enemy, but at night the French divisions stole out, and passing the British posts, made for Miranda de Corvo: owing to the darkness of the hour, they managed to execute this movement unchallenged.

The enemy intended retreating on Coimbra, but finding that town occupied by Trant and the Portuguese, suddenly took the mountain by the Puerta da Murcella, where the Light Division had a hard day's work to dislodge them. Commencing at daybreak, they skirmished across those mountains until 3 P.M.; the country was most difficult; but the men of the Light Division were excellent

light troops, and experienced little loss. It was the sharpest day's lesson in skirmishing they had had during the war.

COMBAT OF CAZAL NOVO.

So dense was the fog on the A.M. of the 14th, that the 52nd, unconsciously passing the enemy's outposts, had nearly captured Ney himself. The regiment was completely buried in mist; and as the vapour slowly rose, the 52nd was observed in the midst of the enemy's army, "appearing like a red pimple on the face of the country, black with the French masses"! At this juncture Lord Wellington came up and pushed the Light Division forward to sustain the 52nd, led by Captain William Napier, with six companies of the 43rd. The fight was vigorously carried on amidst numerous stone enclosures.

The right of the enemy was partially turned; but the main position could not be shaken until our left attack, under Picton and Cole, had developed itself. Ney then retired from ridge to ridge, and for a long time without confusion and little loss. Towards noon, however, the British guns and skirmishers got within range of his masses, and the retreat was concluded in confusion.

The loss on this occasion in the Light Division was 11 officers and 150 men, killed and wounded. Captain W. Napier of the 43rd was shot in the spine, and fired upon when down. He miraculously escaped death by dragging himself on his hands towards a heap of stones. He was in consequence gazetted to a brevet-majority.

In relating the occurrences of the 14th, Lord Wellington wrote—

"In the operations of this day, the 43rd, 52nd, 95th Regiments, and 3rd Caçadores, under the command of Colonels Drummond and Beckwith and Major Patrickson, Lieut.-Colonel Ross, and Majors Gilmour and Stuart, particularly distinguished themselves."

The Allies did not reach Ceira till late on the following day, when just as the men had lighted fires and were ready for the night bivouac, Wellington, taking a rapid glance at the position, determined to attack the French, who were encamped near the village of Foz d'Arronce.

AFFAIR OF FOZ D'ARRONCE.

Lord Wellington directed the Light Division to hold the right wing in play while the horse artillery sharply and suddenly opened on the left. The first charge had so paralysing an effect on Ney's left wing, that it dispersed and fled in immediate confusion towards the river, and many were drowned or crushed to death upon the bridge.

Darkness caused the French to fire on one another in mistake for the foe. Their expulsion was so sudden and unexpected, that they were obliged to leave their kettles boiling over their fires, to abandon their entire stock of provisions, among which was a supply of excellent biscuit,—a great prize to our men, who, having outstepped their commissariat, had received no bread for four days.

The 43rd remained in the village during the night. The enemy retreated on Celorico, closely followed by the British army, of which the Light Division formed the advance, and almost daily skirmishes occurred.

The British loss at Foz d'Arronce was four officers and 60 men killed and wounded. That of the French 500, of which one half were drowned. An eagle was afterwards found in the bed of the river. Lord Wellington, in a General Order, dated Lusao, the 17th of March, 1811, returned thanks to the generals, staff, officers, and troops, for their excellent conduct in the operations of the last ten days against the enemy.

He further requested the commanding officers of the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Regiments, to name a sergeant of each for promotion to an ensigncy, in testimony of his

particular approbation of these three regiments. Sergeant-Major J. Kent of the 43rd was selected from that corps and promoted into the 60th. The regiment, since quitting the lines, lost 1 Captain, 1 Ensign, and 40 rank and file, killed, wounded, and missing. Captain Napier and Ensign Carroll were the officers wounded.

The French continued to retreat, occasionally taking up a strong position, to be invariably abandoned on approach of the English. On the 28th of March they had collected in such force on the Guarda, that Lord Wellington thought proper to concentrate his army in the neighbourhood of Celorico, for the purpose of an attack. The necessary arrangements were hardly concluded before the enemy disappeared without firing a shot, retiring to Sabugal on the Coa.

Meanwhile the blockade of Cadiz was prosecuted by the French, the battle of Barrossa had been fought, and Badajoz treacherously given up by Isma.

BATTLE OF SABUGAL.

This action was not prearranged by Lord Wellington, but brought on by accidental circumstances.

Sir James Fergusson (then Captain in the 43rd) thus wrote :—

“On the 3rd of April we had an affair with Regnier’s corps at Sabugal on the Coa, in which our regiment, the 43rd, displayed great gallantry and discipline.

“The morning was foggy, with rain; the advanced cavalry and Light Division were under Sir William Erskine, and owing to want of correct orders, the columns of attack were not properly directed. The cavalry and Elder’s Portuguese corps were separated from us. The companies of the 95th Rifles attached to our Brigade crossed the ford and were soon in action with the enemy’s pickets. The 43rd took the same direction and crossed the ford about half a league to the right of Sabugal, and as soon as each company gained the opposite bank of the river it moved rapidly forward in support of the riflemen, each company getting into line

as it arrived. We had been scarcely formed when the riflemen were driven in and passed silently through our line; immediately two strong columns of the enemy approached. We were aware (by the peculiar noise of musketry when near) that they could not be far off. The 43rd Regiment stood alone to defend the ground; our 2nd Brigade not having yet passed the river, the whole of Regnier's corps being in our immediate front, but the fog prevented our relative situations from being seen. Immediately, with a British cheer, we charged, routed the columns and threw them back in confusion on the main body. Having gained the low ground in our charge, we discovered the enemy's main body strongly posted above, and cautiously retiring to our original ground, had scarcely gained it when three fresh columns of greater strength again advanced against us. The fog at this time in a degree clearing away, we discovered a wall in our front lined by a battalion of the enemy, with a howitzer in rear which had been dealing destruction in our ranks. We remained firm and steady under a heavy fire of grape and musketry until the enemy's columns neared us, when we again charged, routed, and drove them from the wall, taking the howitzer. Our soldiers were so much excited and advanced with such rapidity that our front was rather scattered; their cavalry took advantage, and imperceptibly gaining our flank, charged along our front. The greater part of the battalion took shelter behind the small wall and formed up, others behind some trees that afforded a certain protection, and we drove them from the field, preserving the howitzer from being retaken.

"About this time the 2nd Brigade arrived; the 2nd battalion of the 52nd formed on our right and the remainder a second line, when we again charged and drove the enemy before us.

"Another division of the army showed themselves on the left, and the enemy retired in columns. Colonel Sidney Beckwith commanded our Brigade, and showed during the action great coolness and firmness.

Colonel Patrickson commanded the 43rd in this gallant and distinguished action, as brilliant as any during the war."

Napier, in his '*Peninsular History*,' relates the distinguished conduct of Lieutenant Hopkins of the 43rd, now Major Sir J. P. Hopkins, K.H., who on his own sole responsibility, and with much presence of mind, took possession of an eminence, repulsing various attacks of the

enemy, and greatly conduced to the success of the day. A descriptive letter, written by himself, may be introduced :—

“Early on the morning of the 3rd of April, during heavy rains, the 43rd Regiment was formed in column of companies at their alarm post, close to the miserable Portuguese village in which they had passed the night. They were kept a considerable time under arms, awaiting orders for crossing the river Coa. At last an officer of the Staff rode up, and in a hasty, petulant manner asked Colonel Beckwith, who commanded the Brigade, why he had not marched to the ford. The Colonel replied that he had not received any instructions from the General, Sir William Erskine, for that movement. On this, however, the Colonel marched us rapidly towards the ford. We advanced right in front; four companies of the 95th led. We all crossed the Coa, which from incessant rains had become so swollen as to render the passage difficult and dangerous. The bank on the further side of the river was steep in ascent, covered with thick underwood. We soon gained its summit, halting in front of the brow of the hill to avoid the torrents of rain, fast pouring down, with the wind at our backs. The officers sat themselves, with their backs against a low stone wall. The enemy in position at Sabugal discovered us, and fired several shot. Colonel Beckwith laughingly said, ‘Gentlemen, you have an extraordinary taste, to prefer shot to rain.’ He ordered the 95th to advance to the town, which was some distance to our left front. They advanced in skirmishing order, under a sharp fire from the enemy, many of the shot reaching us. The atmosphere was greatly darkened by the bad weather.

“The firing on the Rifles became incessant, but they gained their ground up to the French position. Colonel Beckwith sent the 43rd forward in support of the Rifles; they descended towards the river, into a sort of plain, interspersed with trees and underwood. As we approached, the heavy fire of the French marked their line of battle, and the riflemen retired upon us in good order. Colonel Beckwith having gone some distance towards the left, in order to reconnoitre the position of the enemy, Colonel Patrickson was left in the entire command, and close upon the enemy. He gave orders for an instant advance and charge against the line in our front, which was on an eminence. At this moment a slight clearance from the rain enabled me, who was in command of the company on the extreme right of our line, to perceive that at some distance, towards our right rear, a strong detachment of the French from Rovena were directing their march to the ford. I

saw all the danger of our being so turned, and immediately requested Captain Duffy, commanding the next company, to allow me to take mine to oppose the attempt of the enemy, who were gaining fast upon our rear. He replied that he could not take upon himself such a responsibility as allowing the separation of my company from the regiment. I said no time should be lost, and that I would take the responsibility at such a moment on myself; and instantly I marched off the company, by bringing up their left shoulders, advancing rapidly to the right towards an eminence at some distance, on which I placed the company in position, fronting the enemy, who were marching round the right flank. I was now quite separated from the Regiment, which was fiercely engaged with the French. I had above 100 men in the company, as several of Duffy's men had followed. The two subalterns with the company were William Freer and Henry Oglander, both most excellent officers.

"The body of French, who were marching towards the Coa, halted on seeing us, and despatched a body of infantry against us. I reserved my fire until they neared the summit of the hill, when I opened upon them, causing them to retire in some disorder to the plain. They again formed, and advanced as before, but were checked, retreating to a greater distance. At this time Colonel Beckwith rode up; I reported all that had occurred, and that the French had brought up two guns in rear. I requested his instructions. He spoke most handsomely to me, approving and thanking me for what I had done, and said that he should give me no orders, but leave me to act entirely on my own judgment, in which he had perfect confidence; that he would not forget me, and that he would bring me to the notice of Lord Wellington. On his leaving, Sir John Elly, who commanded the cavalry came up, when I begged that some dragoons might reinforce me. He made no reply, but rode off, shaking his head as if unable to comply. During this time the enemy were forming in greater strength, they advanced with the drummer beating the *pas de charge*; the officer in command, some paces to the front, leading his people to the hill. William Freer asked permission to go forward and personally engage him; this I of course refused, as his presence with the company was more important.

"The French bravely stood our fire, and their two guns were brought to bear upon us. I ordered a charge, which was done with great spirit, driving the enemy to some distance. Whilst these attacks were made, the Regiment was constantly engaged at

Sabugal. The firing was severe and continuous, never receding nor slackening, thus affording me the utmost confidence; for had not the French left been so severely attacked, they would have been able to detach a body against my rear or on my left flank, which would have compelled me to retreat upon the troops now advancing to our support.

"It was at this time the captured howitzer was left under command of the fire of the 43rd and Rifles, as every attempt of the French to carry it off was ineffectual, causing severe loss both in cavalry and infantry.

"The enemy were still at some distance, and appeared to be reinforced, and intending another attack; and I perceived the 2nd Battalion of the 52nd advancing rapidly. I went to the commanding officer, pointing out the enemy near, and we agreed it would be best for him to form his regiment on the right of my company, and make an immediate advance upon the French, which we did. As we advanced they retired, forming themselves into the line perpendicular to our left, and in continuation of their line to Sabugal, where their chief body was posted. I therefore brought up my right shoulders to front them, extending all my men as skirmishers; the 52nd doing the same to my right, we all commenced 'skirmishing amid the trees in unabated rain.

"The French showed fight, in their new line, mingling several dragoons with their skirmishers; their sudden debouch from behind the trees at first shook ours and severely wounded several. One man, close to me, was cut in the face, but he would not leave the field. A Manksman, of the name of Cassan, was taking his aim at a dragoon riding towards him, when another horseman appearing suddenly on his right, he turned his firelock and shot him dead, the other dragoon instantly galloping away. Colonel Mellish, of the Staff, rode along the line; he was to be seen in every post of danger, loudly and gallantly cheering the men. Colonel Beckwith, also with the blood streaming down his face, encouraged the men to stand fast against the enemy. Our whole line preserved their ground for some time, until a few of the horsemen getting amongst the skirmishers on the right, a sudden cry, 'The cavalry! the cavalry is in the midst of us!' caused the 52nd to retreat in confusion.

"I was with the skirmishers on the left, and did not retire my men, seeing that the horsemen who had got into the line were so few. Some men of the 52nd remained on the left with my com-

pany. It was fortunate that we remained skirmishing, as it prevented one of the colours of the 52nd falling into the hands of the French, owing to the firmness of the men. The officer bearing the colour came up to thank me, at the same time highly praising the gallantry of my men.

"The enemy, perceiving strong reinforcements marching up, commenced a hurried retreat. Seeing that the 52nd were now in line, with an opening between the wings, we forming in the centre, I directed William Freer to wheel the company into sections, as I intended to rejoin the Regiment. He was struck down by a shot in his face, but persevered in marching.

"The French, though fast retreating, were not pursued by the divisions of the army which had joined us; instead of which, the staff officers employed their time in complimenting the regiment for their conduct in the combat, and the pursuit was given up.

"I marched to my regiment along the line leading straight to Sabugal, on which we had last engaged, and came upon the howitzer, at the point where it had been posted by the enemy and where it had been compelled to remain.

"The Combat of Sabugal never having been faithfully rendered, justice has therefore been long withheld from the troops, who so greatly distinguished themselves in that action. Every writer on the subject, with the exception of Sir William Napier, only notices the affair of that day as but little more than a sharp and successful skirmish. Napier's account, however, is too diffuse, and rather inexact in some parts. Brialmont, the Belgian writer of the 'Life of the Duke of Wellington,' in his statement of Sabugal, is evidently led astray by the partial reports of the French generals. As he remarks,—'The French passed the Coa and established themselves at Sabugal. It was here that on the 3rd April Wellington fought the action, of which he says, with some touch of exaggeration, "This was one of the most glorious British troops were ever engaged in." We only know that if glorious to one party it was equally glorious to the other, for Regnier's troops showed themselves by no means inferior to those of the enemy.'

"Regnier, commanding in a chosen position at Sabugal, did not display high generalship, for, having at that point a force of 12,000 infantry, supported by cavalry and artillery, he failed in defeating the attack of 1200 British infantry, who nobly proved themselves the decided superiors of the French.

"Napier was mistaken in ascribing to General Beckwith the

merit of the attack, as Beckwith was then away on the left, which was threatened by a strong force of the enemy. The charge was entirely ordered by Colonel Patrickson of the 43rd. I was close to him when he gave the order, and also when he led the men to the charge, and it was during that advance that I found it requisite to move my company to the right, on the appearance of the French troops threatening that flank.

"It was well known that the Duke of Wellington was the most truthful of men, totally incapable of exaggeration; and it has ever been admitted that he never bestowed praise but where justly due. His report of Sabugal, therefore, that 'this was one of the most glorious actions that British troops were ever engaged in,' ought to be cherished and registered in history, as a lasting tribute to the honour of the British soldier."

Sir W. Napier, in a letter to Colonel Gurwood, wrote :—

"Sir Sidney Beckwith often spoke to me about Hopkins, describing him as one of the finest soldiers he ever beheld; and that so far as a man commanding one company could decide a battle, Hopkins decided the battle of Sabugal; not once, but many times he said this to me."

The loss of the Allies in this fierce conflict amounted to nearly 200 killed and wounded. That of the enemy was enormous. The 43rd had 1 lieutenant, 2 sergeants, 11 rank and file, killed;—2 captains, 2 lieutenants, 1 ensign, and 40 rank and file, wounded. The officers were Lieutenant McDiarmid, killed; Captains Dalzell and O'Flaherty; Lieutenants T. Rylance and Creighton (who died subsequently), and Ensign Carrol, wounded.

Lord Wellington's despatch contained the following paragraphs :—

"Colonel Beckwith's brigade of the Light Division was the first that crossed the Coa, with two squadrons of cavalry upon their right. Four companies of the 95th and three of Colonel Elder's Caçadores drove in the enemy's pickets, and were supported by the 43rd Regiment.

"They were, however, again attacked by a fresh column with cavalry, and retired again to their post, where they were joined by

the other brigade of the Light Division, consisting of the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 52nd and 1st Caçadores.

"These troops repulsed the enemy, and Colonel Beckwith's brigade and the 1st battalion of the 52nd again advanced upon them. They were attacked again by a fresh column supported by cavalry, which charged the right, and they took post in an enclosure upon the top of the height, from whence they could protect the howitzer which the 43rd had taken, and they drove back the enemy.

"I consider the action that was fought by the Light Division, by Colonel Beckwith's brigade principally, with the whole of the second corps, to be *one of the most glorious that British troops were ever engaged in*. The 43rd Regiment, under Major Patrickson, particularly distinguished themselves."

Again Lord Wellington, writing to Captain Chapman of the Royal Engineers, on April the 8th, 1811, said :—

"We have given the French a handsome dressing, and I think they will not say again that we are not a manœuvring army. We may not manœuvre as beautifully as they do; but I do not desire better sport than to meet one of their columns *en masse*, with our lines. The poor 2nd corps received a terrible beating from the 43rd and 52nd, on the 3rd."

The French retired on Ciudad Rodrigo and Salamanca. The Light Division advanced towards Gallegos in pursuit, while the rest of the army remained in reserve, on the Coa. On the 5th Massena crossed the frontier of Portugal, exactly thirty days since the evacuation of Santarem. It must be conceded that the French General evinced great military ability in conducting his retreat.

Discussions have arisen as to the capture of the howitzer at Sabugal. Lord Wellington distinctly says in his despatches, that it was taken by the 43rd. Napier as distinctly claims it for the same regiment. He says, "A strong column of infantry, rushing up the hill, endeavoured to retake the howitzer, which was on the edge of the descent, and only fifty yards from the wall; but no

man could reach it and live, so deadly was the fire of the 43rd."

"Sabugal's Bridge and Coa's gory flood,
The hill beyond, where *one* * brave band withstood
A host, and seizing, heedless of its roar,
The hostile gun away in triumph bore."

Note in the Original.—'The 43rd Regiment.'

After many years, Colonel Gurwood attributed the exploit to the 52nd, and circulated a pamphlet in corroboration, which also impugned the credibility of Napier on other points. Every officer, however, of the 43rd present during the action, confirmed the original statement, and General Sir G. Brown, G.C.B.—at that time Captain of the 43rd—in a letter to Napier, dated, "Horse Guards, June 21st, 1845," wrote, "The howitzer was as safely deposited under the fire of the 43rd, when the 52nd, or a portion of it, came up, as if it had been drawn to the rear of the regiment. Neither was this point ever questioned at the time, or as far as I know, for five-and-twenty years afterwards. The 43rd never retired further than behind the stone wall to renew their formation, which had been somewhat broken in driving the enemy over the hill and taking the said gun on the crest of it."

In Captain Moorsom's 'Record of the 52nd,' published in 1860, he again claims the capture of the howitzer, alleging that though it first fell into the hands of the 43rd, it was retaken by the enemy, and eventually recaptured by a company of the 52nd, commanded by Lieutenant Love. General Sir J. Fergusson, late Colonel of the regiment, repudiated this tale, desired it might be erased from the regimental records, and accredited where due—to the 43rd—their gallant and united brothers-in-arms.

Massena's sudden retreat from Sabugal, left Almeida to its fate, and it was immediately invested by the British.

On the 2nd of May, the French threw a large convey into Ciudad Rodrigo. The Light Division fell back from Gallegós, towards the plains of Fuentes d'Onoro, and next day filed through the village, and took post on the high ground behind Almeida, the left of our army resting near Fort Conception, while our right was at Fuentes, with the river Dòs Casas in front.

FUENTES D'ONORO.

On the 3rd of May the enemy attacked with great vigour, and drove our troops from the village of Fuentes, but it was soon regained by a determined charge, and our antagonists forced across the river. In these struggles both sides suffered severely; our troops continued to occupy the village during the night, and next day, upon Massena assuming command, some changes of position took place, and he made preparations for a grand attack.

On the 5th he was observed moving troops towards their left, and in consequence the Light Division, with the cavalry, were sent to support our right, where the French had already made some cavalry charges. The regiments of the Light Division were then thrown into squares. Norman Ramsay's troop of horse artillery was for a moment cut off, but reformed in a most dashing manner, and driving through the French, regained our lines in full view of the 43rd's square. Our right being out-flanked in consequence of the position being too extended, the Light Division retired in squares under a heavy cannonade, every moment threatened by cavalry; but quickly concentrating in a closer and more compact body, the enemy abandoned their plan of forcing the right. Hard fighting took place in the village of Fuentes; the lower part being taken and retaken several times, and finally our troops retained the upper part.

In the evening the 1st brigade of the Light Division

occupied the village. Being well accustomed to outpost duty, they quietly occupied all the advanced posts, directing the men not to fire excepting under great emergency, and by this well-timed precaution quiet was soon established. They exchanged the dead and wounded strewn around, and strongly intrenched themselves. On the 10th of May the enemy retired across the Aguada, relinquishing farther idea of a second invasion of Portugal, and at midnight Regnier blew up the works of Almeida. In a compact column he managed to pass the English pickets and lines, and carried off his entire garrison, with the exception of three hundred of his men, who were taken prisoners. This brilliant exploit reflected little credit on the blockading force. Lord Wellington issued severe orders in consequence.

In the action of Fuentes d'Onoro the British had 1500 killed and wounded, and 300 taken prisoners. The loss of the French was more than double.

The French withdrew to Salamanca. The Light Division formed part of the force left with Sir Brent Spencer, while Lord Wellington, with two divisions, moved south to the relief of Beresford, and for the purpose of attacking Badajoz. It had been invested on the 5th May, and on the 12th the siege was raised. On the 16th the battle of Albuera was fought and won by British valour; the Fusileers covered themselves with glory.

The Light Division again occupied its old station, taking possession of Gallegos, Alameda, and Espeja, where they continued until the 6th of June. On that day Marshal Marmont (who had succeeded Massena in command of the French army), having introduced a convoy into Ciudad Rodrigo, moved out and directed his march upon Gallegos and Espeja, when the division retreated across the plain upon Alfayates, and General Spencer withdrew behind the Coa. Finding the French moving

by the pass Barros, his route was directed by Sorto, Penamacour, across the pontoon-bridge at Villa Velha, arriving at Arrónches on the 22nd, and took up ground at Monte Reguengo, on the Ceira, ready to move into position, if necessary, behind Campo Mayor.

While stationed at Campo Mayor, the 43rd received a splendid draft from the 2nd battalion, consisting of 1 major, 3 captains, 12 subalterns, 12 sergeants, and 345 rank and file.

Lieutenant Cooke, of the regiment, now Lieutenant-Colonel Sir J. H. Cooke, Lieutenant of Her Majesty's Yeoman of the Guard, who accompanied this draft, gives the following animated account of his first impression of the far-famed Light Division.—“On the 20th of July we descended into the valley, and at the edge of a wood awaited the coming of the division, from an advanced camp on their way to Castello de Vida. Every eye was on the stretch, and in the distance we descried a cloud of dust rolling towards us, the bright sparkling rays of the sunbeams playing on the soldiers' breast-plates, when suddenly the leading regiment of the Light Division burst forth; their bronzed countenances and light knapsacks, and their order of march, all united to inspire a conviction that their early discipline had not only been maintained amidst privations, battles, and camps, but had become matured by experience. They had traversed mountains and forded rivers; the grim and icy hand of death had grasped many in the unhealthy marshes of the Alentejo, and with sure effect had scattered balls amidst their ranks without distinction: yet the remainder of these veterans were still bent onwards, to gather fresh laurels in the rugged and uncertain paths of fortune. Seven battalions of light infantry and riflemen defiled before us with their threadbare jackets, their brawny necks loosened from their stocks, their wide and patched trousers of various colours,

and brown-barrelled arms slung over their shoulders, or carelessly held in their hands, whilst a joyous buzz ran through the cross-belted ranks, as their soldier-like faces glanced towards us, to greet many of their old comrades, now about to join in their arduous toils after a long separation. A cloud of dust alone marked their further progress as they receded from our view. Following in succession, we brought up the rear. At the expiration of an hour's march, we entered a wood, formed column, called the roll, and the whole division was then dismissed. The assembled multitude of voices, the tearing and cutting down of branches of trees, crackling of fires, rattling of canteens, shooting of bullocks through the head, and the hurrying of parties of soldiers for rum and biscuit for rations, the neighing of horses, braying asses and rampant mules, all resounded throughout the forest, giving new life and many echoes to its most intricate recesses. Groups of officers stood in circles; every countenance seemed decked in smiles, and a hearty welcome greeted us from all hands.

“Under the wide-spreading branches of a venerable cork-tree, decorated with pack-saddles, accoutrements, and other military trappings, dinner was served up and laid out on a pair of hampers, which served us instead of a table. Beef, biscuit, tea, rum, and wine, composed our fare; it being a usual custom to join breakfast and dinner, so as to make one meal serve for the twenty-four hours, the troops merely halting to cook and refresh themselves during the heat of the day. A more happy meal, I can safely say, I never partook of; and with infinite satisfaction did I regard the purple jackets and battered epaulettes of my companions. Our small keg of wine being emptied, the word passed to pack up and accoutre; and, in an incredible short space of time, the column reformed.

"The 'assembly' sounded—the signal for march,—threes, from the right of companies, the bands struck up, and at the end of two hours' march, and towards night-fall, we entered another wood. The same ceremony gone through as already described, the blankets were spread out, the earth our bed, knapsacks our pillows, and the overhanging trees our canopy; the busy hum of life no longer vibrated through the bivouac, and thousands of soldiers slumbered and reposed their weary limbs, lying scattered through the forest or around the embers of expiring fires. My companions insisted on stretching themselves on each side of me, protesting that they ought to do this, as a protection against cold, for the first two or three nights, since a very heavy dew fell, so as almost to wet us through the blankets, notwithstanding the great heat of the weather by day."

Towards the end of July, Marmont retraced his steps to Salamanca, and the Light Division theirs to the banks of the Aguada, where they arrived on the 9th of August.

On the 29th, Major Hungerford Elers, of the 43rd, died at Celorico, of a fever brought on by unremitting exertions in his professional duties. The following memorandum was inserted in the orderly-book:—"Sept. 5th 1811. The Commanding Officer is much concerned to communicate to the regiment, that he has received accounts of the death of Major Elers, at Celorico, on the 29th ult. The mournful fate of an officer who had so long served in the regiment, who was so sincere a friend to the honour and interest of the corps, must be lamented by officers and soldiers. As a mark of respect for the memory of one so justly esteemed, it is requested that such officers as have it in their power will put on mourning, to be worn for three days."

All had remained tranquil until the 23rd September, when the French advanced with a strong convoy for the

relief of Ciudad Rodrigo, and the division retired to Castel Branco. Two affairs with the enemy took place; one at El Boden, the other at Aldea de Ponte.

When Marmont had accomplished his object of succouring Ciudad Rodrigo, he returned to Salamanca, and the Light Division once more to their old cantonments, where they remained until the end of the year.

1812.

STORMING OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

The campaign of 1812 commenced early. On the 8th of January the Light Division assembled from its cantonments, and invested Ciudad Rodrigo. During the night, six companies of volunteers including Captains Ferguson's and Duffy's of the 43rd—carried by escalade, in a most masterly style, the outwork of St. Franceseo. The 43rd lost one sergeant, and a few privates were wounded. With the exception of one man, the entire garrison was captured, and the first parallel, under heavy fire, commenced against the town. The duties of the trenches were taken by the Light 1st, 3rd, and 4th Divisions, relieving each other every twenty-four hours; the Light returning to their quarters—a distance of four leagues. The weather was severe, with sharp frosts, and the Aguada had to be forded going and returning.

On the 19th, two breaches having been pronounced practicable, the place was carried. The Light Division, ordered to assault out of its turn, was formed behind the Convent of St. Franceseo at about 8 P.M. The storming party consisted of 100 volunteers from each British regiment. The 43rd was led by Captain James Fergusson, with Lieutenants Bramwell, Steel, and O'Connell; the 52nd contingent by Captain James; that of the 95th Rifles by Captain Mitchell, and the forlorn hope, by Lieutenant Gurwood; all under Major Napier of the

52nd, who directed that when the breach was carried, the 43rd party should clear the ramparts to the right, and the 52nd to the left, towards the great breach.

The forlorn hope led, and the storming party followed immediately. They hurried rapidly on, hearing the fire from the 3rd Division—ordered simultaneously to attack the great breach—and passing over the glacis, descended into the ditch near the ravelin, under a heavy fire. The forlorn hope were placing ladders against the face of the work, when Lieutenant Elliott of the Royal Engineers exclaimed, “You are wrong! this is the way to the breach in the *fausse braie*.” The breach in the body of the place was then reached and carried in a moment. A gun was stretched across the entrance, near which some of the enemy were bayoneted.

Israel Wild, a private of the 43rd, was the first to mount the breach in the *fausse braie*, but no man could claim being the first to enter the great breach in the body of the place, as it was a neck-and-neck rush of from thirty to forty. The forlorn hope having gone too far to the left, were not actually the first, though amongst those to claim the honour,—Lieutenant Steel of the 43rd and Lieutenant Gurwood inclusive.

Before carrying the little breach the 43rd party cleared the rampart to the right, driving the enemy from their different traverses, until reaching the great breach. At this time the great breach had not been carried, and was obstinately defended by the enemy. Houses bearing upon it had been loopholed, and the descent into the town from the top of the rampart was considerable. The moment the storming party of the Light Division arrived at the spot, they made a determined attack upon the hostile defences, taking them in flank. At the same time the 3rd Division storming party entered the breach, and Ciudad Rodrigo was won.

The French had 300 killed, and 1500 made prisoners. The English lost 90 officers, and 1200 soldiers; of these, 650 men and 60 officers were slain or hurt, at the breaches. The casualties in the 43rd were:—1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant, and 13 rank and file, killed; 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 2 sergeants, and 35 rank and file, wounded. The officer killed was Lieutenant Bramwell of the storming party, who died of his wounds; those wounded were Captain Ferguson and Lieutenant Patten-son. Generals Craufurd and Mackinnon were killed; the former, shot through his lungs, survived until the 24th. Above 150 pieces of artillery were taken, including Marmont's battering train.

After the assault, the regiment returned to its cantonments for some six weeks.

SIEGE AND STORMING OF BADAJOZ.

After the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, Lord Wellington moved south, to attempt the capture of Badajoz, a strong fortress on the left bank of the Guadiana, with a garrison of 5000 men, commanded by General Philippon, a first-rate engineer, and reputed in all respects a man of great ability. On the 16th of March the place was invested, trenches were opened, and the first parallel completed. As the 43rd fell in before daylight on the 18th, to relieve the 88th, who had first broken ground, one of the Connaught Rangers exclaimed with an oath, "Och! boys, Soudradrodrago was but a *flay-bite* to this." The stupendous nature of the undertaking was already recognized by the soldiers.

On the 19th the garrison made a sally, when a hot fight ensued. The enemy was beaten back in confusion, losing above 300 men. On the 25th, Fort Picurina, an important outwork, was carried by assault. On the 6th of April two breaches were reported practicable, and on

that night the great conflict took place. Desperate it was expected to be, and most desperate it proved.

The day had been fine; all the soldiers, in high spirits, were cleaning themselves and accoutrements as if for a review. At half-past 8 P.M., the ranks were formed, and the roll called in an undertone.

Before the 43rd joined the division, Colonel McLeod long and earnestly addressed his men, expressing entire confidence in the result of the attack, and concluded by impressing that he trusted to the honour of all listening, to preserve discipline, and to refrain from any species of cruelty on the defenceless inhabitants.

As at Ciudad Rodrigo, the 43rd, 52nd, and 95th Regiments furnished each one hundred volunteers, with officers. The 43rd party was again commanded by Captain Fergusson, notwithstanding his having at the time two unhealed wounds; with him were Lieutenants Duncan Campbell and Alexander Steel, while Lieutenant Harvest was to lead the forlorn hope. In the most profound silence the division drew up behind a large quarry, about three hundred yards from the breaches made in the bastions of La Trinidad and Santa Maria. A small stream separated the Light from the 4th Division. A voice was suddenly heard giving orders about the ladders in that direction, so loud that it might have reached the ramparts. Everyone was indignant, and McLeod sent to say that he would report the circumstance to the Commander-in-Chief. Luckily, nothing beyond croaking of frogs responded to the ill-timed voice. At 10 o'clock, a carcass was thrown from the town, which illuminated the ground for many hundred yards. Two or three fire-balls followed.

Soon after, a suppressed whispering announced that the forlorn hope was stealing forward, heading the

storming parties, and in two moments more the division followed. One single French musket-shot resounded from the breaches. All with great regularity gained ground leisurely but silently; the 43rd, 52nd, and a part of the Rifle corps gradually closed to columns of quarter distance. The ladders were placed on the edge of the ditch, and they were descending in wrapt stillness, when suddenly an explosion took place at the foot of the trenches, and a burst of light disclosed the exact position. The ramparts were crowded with troops, who, well prepared, let loose every possible implement of destruction, while all beneath seemed convulsed. A succession of explosions, with unceasing roar of musketry, soon levelled the party, very few escaping. Captain Feigusson, amongst the foremost, was wounded in the head.

But three ladders were placed down the counterscarp for the Light Division to gain the ditch, and were exactly opposite the centre breach. With amazing resolution, the whole division rushed to the assault. The soldiers swung themselves down, cheering lustily. At the bottom of the ladders, Lieutenant Pollock, 43rd, who was in command of Lord Fitzroy Somerset's company, with Cooke, Considine, and Madden, met Captain Duffy of the regiment, who exclaimed, "Pollock! they," meaning the storming party and the forlorn hope, "are all wrong; they have gone to the 4th Division breach," pointing at the same time to the small one. Thus undesignedly this company were the first up to the sword-blades. To get into Badajoz by that breach was impossible. The men repeatedly tried and failed; the French soldiers stationed behind the bristling *chevaux-de-frise*, deliberately killing every one who approached. Cannon shot alone could have levelled or destroyed them. The left breach,

at the Santa Maria bastion, was not attempted until near twelve o'clock, when Lieutenant Shaw, of the 43rd, with great difficulty collected about seventy men of different regiments, and made an effort to gain the top. The whole party was prostrated by two rounds of grape and musketry, "and the intrepid Shaw stood alone."

Meantime the 3rd Division carried the castle by escalade, and the 5th, under Walker, entered the town by the San Vincente Bastion, and thus Badajoz was won. At midnight the 4th and Light Divisions retired, but many soldiers remained in the ditch, unable to ascend the ladders owing to the heaps of dead and wounded. The troops, excited beyond control by the desperate service in which they had been engaged, sacked the place, plundered the houses, ripped up furniture in search of treasure, and appropriated all they could find.

Generals Picton, Colville, Kempt, Harvey, Bowes, Walker, Champlémond (Portuguese), and almost every officer commanding a regiment, besides more than 300 other officers, and nearly 5000 gallant veterans, fell in the breaches and round the walls. The 43rd had to mourn the loss of their chief, the gallant M'Leod, who was killed while trying to force the left corner of the large breach. He received his mortal wound within three yards of the enemy. The three British regiments of the Light Division, as brave and well disciplined soldiers as ever stood under arms, suffered dreadfully in the assault, nearly half their number perishing. The loss of the 43rd, as shown by Lord Wellington's despatch, exceeded that of any other regiment employed in the operations. They lost 20 officers and 335 sergeants and privates, killed and wounded: killed, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 3 lieutenants, 4 sergeants, and 74 rank and file; wounded,

1 major, 3 captains, 12 lieutenants, 1 ensign, 18 sergeants,
1 bugler, and 238 rank and file.

Officers Killed.

Lieut.-Colonel Charles McLeod.

Lieutenant Horatio Harvest, forlorn hope.

„ Charles Taggart.

„ E. L. Hodgson, died of wound, 8th April.

Wounded.

Major John Wells, severely.

Captain James Fergusson, ditto.

„ George Johnston, slightly.

„ L. Strode, ditto.

Lieutenant S. Pollock, severely.

„ G. Rideout, ditto.

„ Thos. Capel, ditto.

„ W. Freer, right arm amputated.

„ H. Oglander, left arm ditto.

„ Wyndham Madden, severely.

„ Edw. Freer.

„ Jas. Considine.

„ A. M. Baillie.

„ John O'Connell.

„ John Cooke.

Ensign Wilkinson.

Lieut.-Colonel Charles M'Leod of the 43rd had early given proofs of ardent military attachment. His services commenced under his father's friend, Lord Cornwallis; upon whose death in India he was the bearer of despatches to England announcing that event. He was next employed at Copenhagen, and subsequently in the Peninsula; and succeeded to the command of the regiment at the affair on the Coa, when Hull was killed. His character and services are best epitomised in the words of the illustrious commander who, with the glory of his own deeds, has transmitted to posterity the name of M'Leod. The following is an extract from Lord Wellington's despatch, announcing the fall of Badajoz:—

"In Lieut.-Colonel M'Leod, of the 43rd Regiment, who was killed in the breach, His Majesty has sustained the loss of an officer who was an ornament to his profession, and was capable of rendering the most important services to his country."

M'Leod, who had only attained his twenty-seventh year, was buried amid springing corn, on the slope of a hill opposite to the regimental camp. Six sorrowing hearts, the only officers of the 43rd able to stand, laid him in his grave. His brother officers, desirous of recording their affection and respect, erected a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey, on which is engraved the above extract.

The day following the fall of Badajoz, as Lieutenant Pollock lay suffering in his tent, a private of his company brought him an offering of three fine fowls, remarking that they would make good broth. This man had been rather a disorderly character, and Pollock had on many occasions administered punishments. He was therefore surprised by the act, and said, "Howard, you are the last man in the company from whom I should expect such attention." "Sir," replied Howard, "I have gratitude. You might have had me flogged twenty times; but, Sir, you always punished me yourself, and I have gratitude."

This anecdote proves the fallacy erroneously held by many, that the British soldier is a mere machine, devoid of susceptibility and generosity of feeling towards his officers. Let officers but treat their men as brethren, with compatible kindness and consideration, and no attachment will be closer knit or more enduring. Such was the system inculcated in the 43rd.

The British camp at Badajoz broke up on the 11th, leaving a corps to repair the defences, under General Graham, afterwards Lord Lynedoch.

Soon after Brevet-Major William Napier joined and

assumed the command. Major Hearne succeeded to the lieut.-colonelcy of the lamented M'Leod, and Napier became regimental major.

While the British army was engaged before Badajoz, Marshal Marmont entered Portugal, having masked Ciudad Rodrigo, and threatened an assault on Almeida. On the 12th of June the British army, in concentrated force, crossed the river Aguada, the Light Division leading the centre column, and after a long march took up a position in front of Salamanca—the French, under Marmont, being about two miles distant. On the 16th July the Light Division, by a night march, moved to Castrijon. The French retired from Salamanca, leaving 800 men to garrison the three forts, when the 6th Division took possession of the town, and St. Vincente being in flames, the enemy permitted our troops to ascend the breaches without opposition.

On the 18th of July, Marmont, with his whole force, appeared before Castrijon, making a very determined attempt to cut off the Light and 4th Divisions. So resolutely did he press forward that frequently during the day the advanced columns were marching abreast of each other within musket range, yet so steadily was the retreat conducted, that little loss resulted.

On the 19th Lord Wellington rode up to Lieutenant Wilkinson of the 43rd, on picket, and asked, "What are the enemy doing?" Wilkinson replied, "The French are in motion." The Commander-in-Chief said, "Yes,—to the right, now," and ordered the 1st Brigade of the Light Division to make a corresponding movement.

On the 21st both armies crossed to the left bank of the Tormes. This movement was made after dark, under an appalling storm of thunder and lightning, of which the flashes were so vivid as to daze and blind the men for minutes together. The British again took up the position

of St. Cristoval, when the Light Division formed the extreme left, as a check upon the attitude assumed by the right Division of the French army.

On the afternoon of the 22nd Marmont made a sudden movement to the left, and attempted to cut in on the British communications with Portugal. Wellington instantly seized the opportunity, and gave the signal for a general attack.

BATTLE OF SALAMANCA.

This was the first general action in the Peninsular War where Lord Wellington attacked. The battle began on the right, where the 3rd Division, under Major-General Pakenham, carried everything before them. The 4th and 5th Divisions assailed the French centre, while Pack's brigade of Portuguese, more to the left, followed the example, but was repulsed. By 6 o'clock the battle was at its height. The Prince of Orange, A.D.C., then rode up, and ordered the Light Division to move on the left attack, in open columns, which they did, and then closed to quarter distance. The shades of evening were beginning to fall when the enemy made their last effort, amid flashes of cannon and small arms. Lord Wellington was within fifty yards of the front when the advance commenced firing. As he passed the 43rd, he called out, "Come, fix your bayonets, my brave fellows," which they instantly obeyed, and were upon the point of charging, when the enemy, having fired a volley or two, which passed mostly over their heads, disappeared.

"In the battle of Salamanca the 43rd led the heavy column employed to drive back Foy's Division and seize the ford of Huerta, and on that occasion the Regiment made a very extraordinary advance in line for a distance of three miles under a cannonade, which, though not heavy was constant, with as clear and firm a line as at a review. What renders the march more remarkable is

that it was made after dark; the Regiment kept its line simply by the touch to the centre; and the late General Shaw Kennedy, who commanded the left centre company on that occasion, declared that the line was so well kept as to have been able at any moment to fire a volley and charge with the bayonet. Major Napier rode during the whole time in front of the left centre company, and from time to time joked with Captain Shaw on the safety of the humble pedestrian compared with the lot of a mounted officer, as the round shot all flew over the heads of the men on foot."

The advance and bearing of the regiment on this occasion so delighted Lord Wellington, that the following morning, during breakfast, it was the theme of his repeated encomium and admiration.

As night advanced firing ceased, and the French made no further resistance. Marmont being severely wounded, Clausel assumed command and conducted the retreat.

This battle served to show the decline of the French power and prestige in Europe, and placed for the first time our army in a position free to pursue the enemy at pleasure. It was fought on a Sunday, and lasted six hours. The inhabitants of Salamanca crowded the churches, offering up prayers and thanksgivings for the success of the British arms.

The Light Division continued its movement, and bivouacked at midnight round a village. The loss of the French exceeded 12,000. The allies had 694 killed, and 4270 wounded; of which numbers, 2714 were British, 1552 Portuguese, and the large balance of four Spaniards. The proportion of officers was very great. The 43rd had 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants, and 13 rank and file, wounded. The officers were Captain William Haverfield and Lieutenant George Rideout.

As morning dawned the Light Division advanced,

formed *en masse*, while the heavy German dragoons made a brilliant charge, breaking the enemy's rear-guard, posted on the heights of La Serna, and took several hundred prisoners before they had time to complete their squares. Clausel then carried his army off, marching fifty miles in thirty-six hours. On the 28th the Light Division bivouacked round Olmedo, where Lord Wellington gave a ball. a general invitation to all officers being issued.

The enemy continued his flight over the Douro. While the impedimenta of the 43rd was crossing, an officer's batman of the regiment with a pony, got out of his depth, and both were quickly carried down the stream. The soldier disdained, even at the risk of life, to quit his charge, and held on until a rope was thrown to him, by aid of which he conveyed the little animal and his master's portmanteau safe on shore. On the 30th Lord Wellington entered Valladolid, Clausel clearing out rapidly on his approach, and in his hurry leaving behind seventeen pieces of artillery, considerable stores, with 800 sick and wounded. The heads of our columns were now directed towards Madrid, but want of necessary supplies retarded operations, and only by dint of stringent exertion were partial provisions provided.

King Joseph, who, hoping to support Marmont, had advanced, now rapidly fell back, literally flitting through his capital. On the 9th of August Wellington's headquarters were at St. Ildefonso, and on the two following days his victorious troops, defiling by the passes of Guadarama and Naval Serrada, crossed the mountains and gained the plain in which Madrid is situated. The Light Division bivouacked in the park of the Escorial, from whence the 43rd, commanded by Major Napier, marched into the city. On the 12th Lord Wellington entered Madrid at the head of his army, and was received

with intense and natural excitement. He proceeded at once to reconnoitre the defences of the Retiro, where Joseph had left a garrison. On the following evening the outer fortification of a triple line of defence was forced and next morning the French commandant surrendered; his garrison, amounting to 2000 men, being taken prisoners of war. An arsenal containing 20,000 stand of arms, 180 pieces of artillery, military stores of every description, and two eagles, rewarded the victors.

The troops were quartered in various convents and monasteries, while the officers luxuriated in splendid palaces and villas; rather a contrast to their previous sixty nights' quarters, where the heavens had been their only canopy, muddy fields and wet blankets their only couch, and covering. One of the young subs. of the 43rd found himself told off to a bed of down hung with white satin curtains and long gold-bullion fringes, the whole surrounded by a gilt helmet and waving plumes of ostrich feather.

As the Madrilenos began to reflect on the possible restoration of French rule, their goodwill cooled, and their *vivas* grew fainter when called upon to furnish supplies. Supplies of all kinds in Madrid were at that time exorbitantly dear,—an hypothesis not easily explained, seeing that the inhabitants lived almost entirely on fruit and vegetables, regarding Gaspachio — *soupe maigre* — composed of water, garlic, and onions, as a sumptuous repast.

* On the 22nd a detachment from the 2nd Battalion joined. Its strength on landing at Lisbon was—4 captains, 7 lieutenants, 5 ensigns, and 200 rank and file; but, whether owing to the intense heat or the injudicious marching in the sun, only 3 captains, 2 lieutenants, 1 ensign, 2 sergeants, and 18 rank and file reached Madrid. Many perished from fever and ague, and 1 captain, 5 lieutenants, 4 ensigns, 2 sergeants, and 182

rank and file, were left sick at various hospital stations between Lisbon and Madrid. Lieutenant Fidlör expired at Madrid from the effects of the march. War carries many destroying adjuncts in its train beyond the deadly casualties of the field.

An empty money chest, difficulty in procuring sustenance, combined with a menacing concentration of French troops, determined Lord Wellington on the capture of Burgos as a *point d'appui*. Accordingly he sent forward three divisions, with some Portuguese and cavalry, following in person on September 1. The attack failed, and Soult now approaching in force from the south led to a retreat towards the frontiers of Portugal.

Hill, in command of the division at Madrid, left the capital, retiring slowly towards Salamanca, in order to keep communication open with the main body. On the 8th of November a junction was effected at Alba de Tormes, and by the 12th the whole British army, with a considerable number of Spanish troops, was assembled at Salamanca.

Soult had arrived and taken supreme command on precisely the same position occupied by Marmont on the 22nd of July. Lord Wellington wished and waited for a great battle there; but the French Marshal hesitated. Corunna had taught him of what stuff an English army was composed, when they turned and stood at bay on ground of their own selection. On the 14th Nov. all left Salamanca and moved towards Alba de Tormes, the enemy having crossed two leagues above that town. Under a fire of cannon, Wellington made a reconnoissance, and found them strongly posted on the left of the Tormes, at Mozarbes. The English advance fell back, the baggage animals were ordered to the rear, and all moved towards the forest in dense columns by echelon of divisions. The Light Division acted as rear-guard.

COMBAT OF THE HUEBRA.

Next A.M., as the men were roasting acorns to satisfy the cravings of hunger, after passing a wretched night of unmitigated rain under the trees, an officer suddenly espied French heavy cavalry stealing through the wood, who would have taken him prisoner, but for the speed of his English horse. Passing at full gallop, he exclaimed, "The enemy's cavalry! fall in!" Instantly the division seized their arms, debouched, and formed in contiguous columns, horse artillery filling up the intervals. In the afternoon, a report spread that the baggage had been captured, and Lieut.-General Sir Edward Paget, second in command, taken. This last rumour proved correct, and happened on the road the division was compelled to traverse. Lord Wellington now joined, and rode on the left flank of the column. The enemy's infantry, mixed with cavalry, began to come up in force. Wellington made a sweep round the column to look for the best fighting ground, and when the division emerged from the forest they were saluted on the left by a number of the enemy's guns posted on a high hill just above San Muñoz.

They at once broke into double time across the plain, and made for the ford of the river Huebra. The 7th division was already formed in close column on the opposite side, suffering terribly from the effect of round shot. Two squadrons of heavy dragoons protected the brigade of the Light Division. All plunged into the water under sharp artillery practice, scrambled up the steep bank on the other side, causing momentary confusion. Lord Wellington rode up in front of No. 1 company of the 43rd, and regarding them placidly, simply said, "The enemy must not cross here." At that moment a round shot carried off one of the legs of Lieutenant George Rideout of the regiment, and knocked a German hussar from his horse.

Lieutenant Rideout died from the effect of the shock.



LIGHT DIVISION THEATRE.

G A L L E G O S.

On Saturday Evening, the 6th. of March, 1813.

WILL BE PERFORMED.

F O R T U N E ' S F R O L I C.

M E N.

++++

Robin Roughthead,	Lt. Hannel, 43d. Regt.
Snack,	Lt. Pattenson, 43d. Regt.
Mr. Frank,	Lt. Pemberton, 95th. Regt.
Rattle,	Lt. Havelock, 43d. Regt.
Clown,	Lt. Hopewood, 95th. Regt.
Servant,	Lt. Hamilton, 95th. Regt.

W O M E N.

+++++

Miss Nancy,	Lt. Lord C. Spencer, 95th. Regt.
Dolly,	Lt. Hble. C. Gore, 43d. Regt.
Margery,	Lt. Grubbe, 43d. Regt.
Villagers, &c.	

TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED THE FARCE OF

R A I S I N G T H E W I N D.

M E N.

• +++++

Plainway,	Lt. Pattenson, 43d. Regt.
Fainwou'd,	Lt. Hopewood, 95th. Regt.
Diddler,	Capt. Cator, Royal Artillery.
Sam,	Lt. Hannel, 43d. Regt.
Richard,	Lt. Considine, 43d. Regt.
Waiter,	Lt. Hamilton, 95th. Regt.

W O M E N.

+++++

Peggy,	Lt. Ed. Freer, 43d. Regt.
Miss Durable,	Capt. Hobkirk, 43d. Regt.

N O A D M I T T A N C E B E H I N D T H E S C E N E S.

V I V A T W E L L I N G T O N.

[PRINTED AT FRENEDA.]

At the battle of Salamanca he had been struck by a ball, and also slightly wounded at Badajoz. He was much liked and esteemed in the regiment, and was afterwards buried by the side of General Craufurd at Ciudad Rodrigo. Three companies of the 43rd, which had been left in the wood, crossed the Huebra at full speed pursued by the enemy, with the round shot of both armies flying over their heads; but they at last withdrew, and the division bivouacked for the night, entering on Ciudad Rodrigo the following day, and thus ended what is termed the retreat of Burgos.

The loss of the 43rd at the passage of the Huebra consisted of Lieutenant Rideout and Baillie, wounded; 1 sergeant killed, and 1 sergeant and 10 rank and file wounded; 3 sergeants and 22 rank and file were missing, of whom some were taken, and others died of wounds, fatigue, or privation.

Many men of the regiment, who had been with Sir John Moore, declared that the retreat from Salamanca, though shorter, was quite as severe as that to Corunna. There they were amply provisioned; here neither bread nor biscuit was forthcoming, owing to the culpable neglect of the commissariat. In consequence, the commissary-general of the Light Division was dismissed, and the underlings tried by court-martial.

The British army then went into winter cantonments. The Light Division remained near Rodrigo; the headquarters of the 1st Brigade, to which the 43rd was attached, being at Gallegos. Lord Wellington established his headquarters at Frenada, within the frontiers of Portugal. During the winter both men and officers, among their relaxations, amused themselves by getting up private theatricals. The 43rd came out particularly strong, evincing unrivalled talent in the histrionic art. The appended play-bill is a fac-simile of one of their programmes:—

It must be owned that considerable dissatisfaction reigned in England that greater results had not been achieved by the eventful campaign of 1812. Dazzled by its opening brilliancy, the nation anticipated an uninterrupted series of decisive victories. Ballasteros, the Spanish General, whose disobedient and wrong-headed conduct rendered the retreat from the capital imperative, and whose pride and jealousy went far to imperil the whole of the British army, had the hardihood to reflect upon the Commander-in-Chief for relinquishing Madrid, and failing to capture Burgos. The Government Opposition papers caught up the protest, and inserted many trenchant and strong animadversions. Lord Wellington's own brief and ready words offer the most terse and truthful commentary on his adopted policy. "I am much afraid," he wrote, "from what I see in the newspapers, that the public will be much disappointed at the result of the campaign, notwithstanding that it is, in fact, the most successful in all its circumstances, and has produced, for the common cause more important results than any in which the British army has been engaged for the last century. We have taken Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, and Salamanca, and the Retiro has surrendered. In the mean time the Allies have taken Astorga, Consuegra, and Guadalaxara, besides other places. In the ten months elapsed since January, this army has sent to England little short of 20,000 prisoners, and they have taken and destroyed, or retained for their own use, the enemy's arsenals in Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, Valladolid, Madrid, Astorga, Seville, and the lines before Cadiz, &c. Upon the whole we have taken or destroyed, or we now possess, little short of 3000 pieces of cannon. The siege of Cadiz has been raised, and all the country south of the Tagus has been cleared of the enemy."