

## 1813.

The Russian catastrophe not only prevented Napoleon from reinforcing his armies in Spain, but obliged him to recall Soult, with 20,000 men; 70,000 remained, besides those under Suchet in the eastern provinces, and were then placed under command of General Reille, having headquarters at Valladolid. The army of the centre, under Drouet, was distributed round Madrid, while that of the south had its headquarters at Toledo. Nominally, these forces were under King Joseph, but practically handled by Marshal Jourdain. Clausel and Foy commanded separate divisions in Arragon and Biscay. The Spanish Government nominated the Marquis of Wellington their Commander-in-Chief. But his reliable forces only consisted of about 36,000 British and Portuguese infantry, with 6000 cavalry.

Early in April the 43rd received a draft from England of 1 captain, 6 subalterns, 6 sergeants, and 180 rank and file. On the day of their arrival the Light Division, commanded by Major-General Alten, formed in line and passed in review before Lord Wellington. The 43rd mustered 10 captains, 29 subalterns, and 80 men per company.

Active operations commenced in the middle of May, and in less than five weeks the main army of the French, under Joseph Buonaparte, was driven from Portugal to the Pyrenees. On the 26th of May the division halted in a wood below Salamanca. Next day the 43rd went into the town, and although the French had only left the previous night, the inhabitants appeared quite tranquil, with their shops open and trade stirring. Te Deum was performed in the cathedral, before Lord Wellington and the principal civil and military authorities; the former appearing in a grey frock coat, white tie, old sword, and cocked hat, while Castaños and another Spanish general by his side were *en grande tenue*.

On the 1st of June the Light Division passed the Douro, and encamped by Toro. The whole army moved forward from Braganza in three columns, and on the 12th the Light Division arrived at Hormillas. The day after, a loud explosion was heard, which proved to be the blowing up of the works of the castle of Burgos by the enemy before retreating. On the 15th the Division reached the valley of the Ebro, where, encountering a party of sturdy swarthy peasant women laden with supplies of fresh Asturias butter, the 43rd—not having tasted that luxury for upwards of two years—purchased largely, calculating on thus securing a rare evening banquet. As ill-luck would have it, they reckoned without their host, for the commissariat again proved deficient, and neither bread nor biscuit was attainable.

During the Peninsular War the peasantry living on the line of march were put to desperate straits to preserve their poultry. The moment a detachment marched into a village, fowls, ducks, geese, and turkeys were demanded. At length the owners of brood-hens and patriarchal ganders used, as soon as the drum was heard, to lock them up in chests and presses where darkness ensured silence, and in reply to inquiries protested that their last visitors had eaten up the whole. For a time this device succeeded; but one day a shrewd old campaigner carried a live duck he had contrived to borrow into a farm-house where it had been solemnly declared not a feathered denizen remained. He then pinched the creature until loud repetitions of “quack! quack!” were extorted, and directly a simultaneous reply resounded from all the boxes and cupboards in the room, to the utter despair of the Spanish farmer. In a twinkling the test became general.

On the 18th the Light Division suddenly came upon two brigades of Maucane's division, inflicting upon ~~him~~ a

severe loss. The 43rd managed to secure the baggage and stores belonging to the French medical department.

The Division arrived at Subijana de Morillas, and on the 20th the allies halted between the Bayas and the Zadorra, that the columns might close up before the premeditated attack on Vittoria. Lord Wellington examined the ground, but high ridges of hills intercepted the view of the city and of the enemy's position.

#### BATTLE OF VITTORIA.

On the 21st of July the Light Division moved forward. Before dawn a heavy shower of rain fell, but with daylight the clouds dispersed, and the sun rose in splendour. On ascending a rising ground the whole French army became visible, drawn up in two lines. The river Zadorra was in front, and it was necessary to carry several bridges before action in the centre could be commenced.

At half-past eleven o'clock, Wellington led the way by a hollow road, followed by the Light Division, whom he placed unobserved amongst some trees exactly opposite to the enemy's centre, and within two hundred yards of the village of Villolas, proposed to be carried at the point of the bayonet. A Spanish peasant now reported that the enemy had left one of the bridges unprotected, and offered to conduct the Division. The right brigade, preceded by the 1st Rifles, instantly moved for the bridge indicated, which was passed at a run, and a steep road ascended, where a heavy column of French was descried on the principal hill commanding a bird's-eye view of the brigade. Luckily, however, the formation of the ground presented a sort of natural *tête-de-pont*, behind which the regiments formed.

Two round shots came amongst them, the second of which severed the head from the body of their guide; but so well concealed were the soldiers that the enemy

ceased firing. The situation of the 43rd and the 1st Brigade was most extraordinary; at the elbow of the French position, isolated from the rest of the army, within a hundred yards of the enemy's advance, and absolutely occupying part of their position on the left of the river. No attempt was made by the French to dislodge them. El Rey Joseph, surrounded by at least 5000 men, was within a few hundred paces. Sir James Kempt, alarmed at the critical position of the brigade, sent for the 15th Hussars, who galloped forward singly up the steep, and dismounted in rear of the centre. The French dragoons then advanced within fifty yards to examine the strength of our force, but a few shots from the Rifles sent them to the right about.

This state of affairs lasted for half-an-hour, when the centre of the enemy drew off towards Vittoria, and the 3rd Division debouched rapidly from the rocks about Mendoza.

As General Graham reached the neighbourhood of Reille's position, the French flanks being threatened, they retired. So soon as the 3rd Division had closed up, Picton placed them, supported by the 4th, exactly opposite to the French centre. The 7th Division crossed above Tres Puentes, supported by the 2nd brigade of the Light Division, and forced the heights of Margarita.

The enemy having taken up a second position, upon Gomecha, the battle recommenced by a discharge on the 3rd Division as they deployed into line. The 43rd closed up in support, when they carried the village of Ariyez, the enemy's artillery being at that time within 200 yards of the 43rd, ploughing up the ground in their rear.

The first round shot was a spent one, which hit the ground near the centre of the regiment, bounded over the men's heads, striking the Colonel on the arm, but doing no mischief beyond that of a momentary blow.



Soon after, a shell burst, about six yards from the centre, but the men lay down and no harm accrued. The next round shot struck the 17th Portuguese, in close column, not a yard from the spot which the 43rd colours had just left, and only ten or twelve off them, killing a sergeant and taking a leg from each of the ensigns.

By six o'clock the centre of the British army had gained five miles from their starting point, vigorously driving the enemy, and by half-past the advance reached within one mile of Vittoria. There the French made a third stand, and showed such an imposing front that the left centre of the Allies remained at bay. Night approaching, Lord Wellington determined to win the battle before dark, and ordered the 4th Division on the right of the Light forward. With a rush they broke a dense French corps, who quickly retired in one confused mass.

The scene then presenting itself has been graphically described; the valley crowded with red bodies of infantry and smoking artillery, while the cavalry eagerly looked for an opening to gallop into the town. The enemy withdrew the right of their army behind the left as the only chance of retiring in anything like a compact body, sacrificing all their cannon, with the exception of two pieces taken in the subsequent pursuit. The road to Pampeluna was crowded by carriages freighted with terrified women and children, waggons laden with specie, wounded soldiers, and ammunition, and interspersed by droves of oxen, sheep, pigs, and mules. One figure was ludicrously conspicuous; the diminutive French paymaster-general, attired in most fantastic garb and powdered wig, offered gold doubloons to our dragoons as they passed, beseeching their protection. King Joseph left his carriage and baggage in the streets. The wife of the French general Gazan was taken a short distance from the town.

Various excesses were committed, but the greater part of the booty was appropriated by the camp followers. The 1st Brigade of the Light Division, in which was the 43rd, marched steadily through the strange and stirring scene, and not a man attempted to quit the ranks. They bivouacked a league beyond Vittoria; and laying aside their arms and packs, the weary and half-famished soldiers immediately set to work to capture the sheep and goats running wildly about, and to secure sacks of corn and flour lying by the road side.

Night ended the battle of Vittoria. The British loss was returned at 3308; Spanish and Portuguese, at 1602; the French at upwards of 6000; 143 brass cannon were left on the field. All who read the details and look on a plan of this battle will see that it was one of continuous movement; much ground being passed over on both sides between sunrise and sunset. At Salamanca the French sustained a great overthrow, and abandoned the field in haste and confusion:—at Vittoria—they were utterly routed and scattered like a flock of sheep.

The casualties in the 43rd were comparatively trifling: 1 bugler, and 2 rank and file, killed; Brevet-Major Duffy, Lieutenant Houlton, and 20 rank and file, wounded.

On the 20th the Light Division pursued the French towards Pampeluna, and as they went along, some officers of the 43rd observed a gun with eight horses and mules lying in a ditch. With exertion and difficulty it was rescued, and—as is usual—the animals sold by auction for the benefit of the Division. The only remaining gun carried off by the enemy from Vittoria was captured on this same day by Lieutenant Fitzmaurice and three men of the rifle corps. Villalba was reached on the 25th, when the baggage came up. All were in high spirits anticipating an early entry into the renowned city of Saragossa, when the line of march was unexpectedly

changed, and the Division passing Pampeluna advanced towards Vera by a narrow road blocked up by large stones detached from overhanging cliffs, running along the right bank of the Bidassoa. Suddenly they were hailed by some Spaniards posted as sentinels, while a vidette of the enemy's chasseurs à cheval appeared on the brink of the crags.

Part of the division had been already sent to keep a look-out up the road leading to the heights of Echalar; before the mouth of the defile was reached a murmur from the head of the column proclaimed the enemy at hand, and rattle of musketry resounded. Lieutenant Baillie of the 43rd, who had been amusing himself with a volume of Gil Blas, could hardly tuck it into his breast pocket before a ball buried itself in the middle of the book, and knocked him off his horse. The bullet was afterwards shown as a curiosity, from the fact that the silk braiding of the pelisse was indented in the leaden surface; a fragment had been carried into the compressed leaves and remained tightly twisted round the ball. The 43rd attacked the enemy stationed behind orchards and stone walls, and driving them out, then supported the Rifles in their advance upon the heights of Santa Barbara, which they compelled the French to abandon; and the front being now cleared, the Division halted within half a mile of Vera. In this affair, which occurred on the 15th of July, the 43rd had 12 rank and file wounded.

The right of the enemy immediately opposed to the Light Division rested on a rock nearly perpendicular at an elbow of the Bidassoa overlooking the market-square of Vera. Their centre crowned the heights on each side of the Puerta de Vera; their left extending to the base of La Rhune. Our troops then re-entered the mouth of the pass. The 1st Brigade ascended the heights of Santa Barbara; the 2nd occupied a rising ground to protect

the entrance of the defile leading to San Estevan, and pickets were pushed close up to Vera. The whole allied army took up the lofty chain of the Pyrenees, to cover Pampeluna and St. Sebastian. The position extended for thirty-eight miles as the crow flies, but nearer sixty for troops to traverse.

Napoleon was at Dresden, after his victories at Lutzen and Bautzen, when, on the 4th of June, tidings reached him that Wellington had crossed the Ebro. He immediately ordered Soult to the south to endeavour to retrieve matters. On the 13th of July the Marshal arrived at St. Jean Pied de Port, having collected nearly 40,000 men, issued a stirring proclamation, and prepared for a grand offensive movement. Three divisions more, amounting to 20,000 under Count d'Erlon, were destined to force the passes of Maya. His double object was to raise the blockade of Pampeluna and relieve St. Sebastian. On the 25th Sir Thomas Graham's attempt to storm that fortress failed, and on the same day Soult commenced his series of operations against Byng's brigade and Cole's division, amongst the rocks of Altobiscar. Lord Wellington turned the siege of St. Sebastian into a blockade, and put his whole force in motion to resist the machinations of the French.

The Light Division remained in front of Vera, until the morning of the 27th of July, when finding that the 7th Division had quitted the heights of Echalar, by which their right flank was exposed, the 1st Brigade descended quietly from Santa Barbara, and all concentrated behind the defile on the road to Lazaca. They crossed the Bidassoa and encamped on the mountain of Santa Cruz, from whence they still had a view of the French bivouac. On the following day the battle before Pampeluna was fought, thirty miles to the rear of the Light Division; but, from its entangled situation amongst the mountains, the result was unknown until three days after.

The Light Division having completely lost trace of the army, continued, during the 28th, in position at Santa Cruz; but at sunset, not without misgivings, began to descend a rugged pass, in hopes of cutting in upon the high road between Pampeluna and Tolosa. To increase their perplexities, night set in so dark that the men could no longer see each other as they floundered and stumbled over the jagged rocks and brushwood. Daybreak re-revealed the greater part of the 1st Brigade scattered over the steep. They then grouped together, taking the only discernible path, and luckily soon fell in with a mounted officer sent to direct them towards Leyza, where the rest of the Division were already in bivouac.

The French, who had suffered terribly in what are called the Battles of the Pyrenees, continued to retreat by the roads of Roncesvalles, Maya, and Donna Maria, followed by five victorious divisions of the British. On the evening of the 31st, although obliquely to the rear of the pursuers, orders were given to overtake the enemy, and to attack wherever practicable. Accordingly, the Light Division got under arms in the middle of the night, and began to move.

Towards mid-day on the 1st of August, having already marched twenty-four miles, the regiments descended into a deep valley, and drew up in column to reconnoitre the right flank of the French, still hovering in the neighbourhood of Estevan. After halting one hour, the movement was continued, and for three more the Division continued to clamber up rugged acclivities, by still more rugged paths. By four o'clock, P.M., a flying dust was observed, glistening with the bright vivid flashes of small arms, on the right of the Bidassoa, and in the valley of Lerins. A cry instantly resounded, "The enemy!" By seven o'clock the Division having marched nearly forty miles in nineteen hours, it was absolutely necessary to halt the 2nd

Brigade near Aranza as a rallying point. The gallant 1st Brigade still held on, and reached the summit of a lofty precipice overlooking the enemy, within a stone's throw of the river which separated them. The French were wedged in on the other side by a narrow road with inaccessible rocks. They no sooner descried the brigade than a panic seemed to seize them, indescribable confusion prevailed, and they made a rush up the pass of Echalar, throwing down and trampling upon their own wounded and dying, while many of their cavalry, horses and riders, were precipitated into the river.

Some fired vertically at the British, while their wounded prayed for quarter, pointing to their dead and dying. Orders were given to support the Rifles while they repulsed the enemy, who had crossed over by the bridge of Yanzi in order to enable the tail of their columns to get off. The bridge being seized, the whole of the French baggage, with many prisoners, fell into the hands of the British columns following from San Estevan. Thus ended one of the most harassing marches ever performed.

Next morning the brigade filed across the bridge, and a small force was detached to guard the road towards Echalar, until the 2nd Brigade came up, when the Division again ascended the heights of Santa Barbara. As the pickets could not enter the valley until the right was cleared, and the enemy pushed from the mountain of Echalar, the 1st Rifles, supported by five companies of the 43rd clambered up. The soldiers, having been for two days without sustenance, were so weak they could scarcely stand. Fortunately an excellent commissary overtook the Division, and rations were served out, which the men devoured in the act of priming and loading for the attack.

Invisible firing commenced, all being enveloped in fog,

and as the combatants were literally contending in the clouds, it was impossible to ascertain which side was getting the best of it. As daylight waned all firing ceased, and the French Light Infantry were dislodged from the mountain.

#### SECOND ASSAULT AND STORMING OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

The first unsuccessful attempt to carry St. Sebastian cost the British 56 officers and 570 men, killed, wounded, or prisoners. Lord Wellington regarded the capture of the fortress as imperative; the French were equally determined to hold it. Another desperate struggle was therefore inevitable. The 5th Division, with some Portuguese brigades, resumed the close investment on the 31st of July. The long-previously demanded battering train only arrived from England on the 19th August; and so great was the supineness displayed by the home authorities, that when it was tardily received, all ammunition had been omitted. Breaches were made in the rampart on each side of the tower of Mésquitas, and in the curtain between the Tower of Los Hornos and the demi-bastion of St. Elmo, assault being fixed for noon on the 31st.

Fearing that the troops already engaged in the siege had become disheartened, Lord Wellington gave orders that the storming party should consist of 750 volunteers from the 1st and Light Divisions. In a highly complimentary letter to Baron Alten, commanding the Light Division, he begged "he would send 1 field officer, 2 captains, 4 subalterns, and 100 men to show the 5th Division how to mount a breach."

As soon as the communication was made known, whole companies volunteered, and consequently much difficulty was experienced in the selection. Of the 43rd, Major William Napier, Captain Brock, and Lieutenants Cooke and O'Connell were most earnest to be of the party, and



had actually been told off, when it was discovered that seniors refused to waive their right of precedence. Lieutenant O'Connel was therefore the only officer from the regiment permitted to respond to the call. Hopkins, Murchison, James Considine, H. Baillie, and Cooke were present as spectators. Major Napier, having been expressly accepted to lead the Light Division stormers, proceeded to the market-place of Lesaca, where they were to parade, in order to assume command. Upon arriving, he was informed that Lieutenant-Colonel Hunt of the 52nd was to lead, and that his services would be dispensed with. He remonstrated with the General on the injustice, but without avail. He then appealed to Colonel Hunt to forego his claim. Hunt replied that, having gained his rank and been on several previous storming parties, he had no intention of offering himself for this, and did not know that Napier had volunteered; but being informed that another field officer was the man selected, whom he believed incompetent to do the Division credit, he then came forward; but consented to waive his claim if Napier could procure permission to that effect from Lord Wellington, who, however, met the application by a flat refusal, saying that he disapproved of volunteering, although necessary at times, as in that way he lost his best officers. Napier then determined to take a musket and march with the men who had come forward at his call; but some inkling of his design having reached General Alten, he desired him forthwith to return to his regiment.

The men of the 5th Division, naturally indignant at the stigma supposed to be attached to them, became so enraged that they declared they would bayonet the soldiers of the detachment, if they got into the town first. Major-General Leith, commanding the 5th Division, fearful of such collision, and participating in the feeling thus generated, would not permit the volunteers to lead the

assault, but disposed them along the trenches of the horn-work. At 11 o'clock A.M. on the 31st, the storming party, led by Lieutenant Macguire of the 4th Regiment, filed out of the trenches, and shortly after, a mine exploded, destroying many of the enemy and not a few of the men at the head of the column. Here Lieutenant O'Connel, 43rd, was killed by a grape-shot in his thigh, speedily followed by a musket-ball in his abdomen. He had been one of the storming party at Ciudad Rodrigo, and at Badajoz, where he was badly wounded—a ball passing in at the top of his shoulder and coming out at the elbow joint. He was a great favourite, and a very gallant officer. Upon his death being reported to Lord Wellington, he ordered his commission to be sold for the benefit of his mother, a widow of slender means. Sergeants Kilpatrick and Thomas Blood of the regiment, were wounded—one being shot through the nose, the other losing his right hand.

The batteries on the besiegers' side were ordered to fire over the heads of the British, and at the end of half-an-hour the defence was evidently weakened. Fresh troops then filed out of the trenches, and the volunteers from the Light Division advanced together with the 2nd Brigade of the 5th Division. After some desperate fighting, the volunteers effected a lodgment, when an accidental explosion took place, annihilating many of the besieged. Major Snodgrass of the Portuguese service, under a tremendous fire of grape and canister, led his men through water breast high to assault the lesser breach, and effected a successful entrance simultaneously with that of the more powerful force at the greater breach. The British by degrees forced their way over the ramparts, and by 3 o'clock the town was theirs. A portion of the garrison managed to retire up to the Castle, where they held out until the 8th of September. Next day they marched

out with the honours of war, leaving 500 wounded in the hospital. Thus, after sixty-three days of open trenches, the siege terminated.

Of the detachment of the 43rd present, consisting of 33, only 5 escaped unhurt. Lieutenant O'Connell and 5 rank and file were killed; 2 sergeants and 20 rank and file wounded.

About this time, the honourable distinction of "colour-sergeant" was introduced into the British army, by orders from the Commander-in-Chief. The following ten sergeants of the 43rd, who had particularly distinguished themselves, were selected as nominees by Major Napier, then in command:--

William Fitzpatrick, volunteered at the storming of St. Sebastian; lost an arm.

Richard Griffiths, volunteered at the storming of St. Sebastian.

Aaron Loveman, stormer at Badajoz.

Moses Loveman, stormer at Badajoz.

Samuel Rand, stormer at Badajoz; afterwards Quarter-Master of the regiment and Knight of Windsor.

Morgan Jones, distinguished at Badajoz.

Ewan Cameron, received a commission in 1815.

Thomas Blood, stormer at St. Sebastian, wounded severely. Received a commission in the 6th Regiment, 10th of November, 1813; his Lieutenantancy on the 8th of September, 1814.

Samuel Armitage, stormer at St. Sebastian.

William Pardoe, stormer at St. Sebastian.

On the 31st August, the same day that the assault of St. Sebastian took place, Soult, with the right wing of his army, crossed the Bidassoa opposite St. Marcial, while another division forded the river two hundred yards below Vera, and immediately moved on to attack the heights occupied by part of the 7th Division. They frequently, without success, endeavoured to climb the eminence; so perpendicular was the ascent, that the Spaniards alone by their fire managed, in Lord Wellington's presence, to drive the enemy back.

Ensign Folliott, who had only arrived with a detachment of the 43rd from England a few days before, was suddenly surprised in a wood, on his way to join, and mortally wounded in the stomach. He expressed perfect resignation to his early fate, touchingly saying his only ambition was to have seen the regiment. Mortification supervened, and in a few hours the poor boy passed peaceably away, his comrades laying him beneath the wide-spreading boughs of an adjacent oak. Four of his men were also killed; but the rest, under Sergeant Loughlin, succeeded in joining.

During September the enemy worked hard in felling and sawing timber to form abbatis, and in the construction of intrenchments. The 43rd remained at Santa Barbara. An attack was arranged for October 7th, and the plan of operations communicated to all officers commanding companies. The redoubts were to be carried by repeated assaults of the 43rd and 52nd, while the 95th and Caçadores were to act as tirailleurs.

#### THE PASSAGE OF THE BIDASSOA.

The extreme left of the army was personally directed by Lord Wellington. At daybreak the 5th Division crossed near the mouth of the Bidassoa, and the 1st Division commenced the attack. Lord Aylmer's brigade, and a corps of Spaniards, covered by some pieces of cannon stationed on the heights of St. Marcial, also forded the stream at various places. A sharp contest then took place, particularly against the 5th Division, while ascending the steep and difficult slopes. The enemy, attacked simultaneously at different points, was finally beaten off. The 4th Division, in reserve behind Vera, deployed on the heights of Santa Barbara to support the Light.

The enemy, who had batteries and trenches in every place likely to be serviceable, occupied these with eight

battalions, two of them Light Infantry. The morning was heavy, but it cleared off, and was a fine day

The pickets of the Light Division, in front of Vera, began the attack of a detached ridge called the "Boar's Back," from its hogged up, protruding outline. Before they could debouch through the town of Vera, for the assault of the main position, covered by forts and abbatiss, it was necessary to carry this jagged summit. The 43rd began to skirmish up one end, while the 3rd Rifles followed suit at the other, and being defended by only a small body of French troops, was speedily won. The 2nd Brigade, under Sir J. Colborne, then attacked, but unsuccessfully, as the enemy held a fort with great resolution, and not only beat them back, but in turn sallied from their works, and drove many of the assailants, principally Portuguese, over the precipices. At this critical moment the 52nd advanced in column, impetuously pushed back the French, driving them into the fort on one side and out at the other.

The 2nd Brigade then advanced, but the ground was so difficult that they were kept at bay for a considerable time. Meanwhile, the 1st Brigade pushed through Vera to support the skirmishers, who moved parallel with the 2nd Brigade,—the enemy pelting them with bullets from a small fort. So soon as a sufficient number of men could be got together, that post was carried, and between 300 and 400 men surrendered. After three hours' more hard toil, and clambering from rock to rock, there remained but 200 yards to the summit of the Puerta de Vera, when the skirmishers, grouped together in a compact body, forced the pass at the point of the bayonet. The French ran in all directions; and so elated were the victors, that about 300 of the 43rd descended the mountain with loud hurrahs, and chased the enemy for a league and a half into France. The 1st Brigade then took

possession of boarded and well-roofed huts, constructed by the French as their winter quarters.

The 43rd lost in this attack on "The Heights of Vera:" 1. bugler, 6 rank and file, killed; 20 rank and file wounded. During the night fatigue-parties arrived from Santa Barbara with the knapsacks. The men of the Light Division had invariably fought with their packs on except when storming breaches or escalading forts, and this was the only occasion on which the rule had been departed from.

The following letter of Lieutenant Hennell of the regiment gives some interesting details relative to the "Passage of the Bidassoa," as it is called:—

"13th Oct., 1813.

"I shall now give you some particulars of the taking of the position. On the evening of the 6th I returned from Passages, where I had been on detachment, when orders were issued to take the position in front on the following morning. The principal force of the enemy was on the main road at top of the hill, and on a higher hill to the right. They had made trenches and batteries in every possible place. I learn by prisoners they had six regiments, two of them light, with two battalions each; in all eight battalions, and between four and five thousand strong. Had they fought as French troops *have* fought, and as they *ought* to have fought, we should have lost a great number, if not repulsed. The morning was very heavy, but it cleared up. Nothing could have been finer than our movements. The Division moved down into the valley close to Vera at daylight, and stayed there near two hours. The enemy, seeing every man of us move, sent out their light troops to fill the trenches and forts, and a small body attempted to defend the first hill with their skirmishers in front. A company of the 95th opened the business. About twenty men, with twenty supporting, marched coolly up the hill, when the French, who delight in a long shot, began directly our men showed their heads. However, the 95th moved regularly up the hill to within thirty yards of the top without firing, and then by way of breathing gave a volley, loaded, and advanced to the top, the support just behind them. The French did not attempt to defend it, but moved to their left, not without music, and in quick time.

"I firmly believe there are no better troops in the world than the 95th; they take things so coolly and deliberately, and seem to know their business so well. You have no idea with what glee we saw them, and how readily we fell in to advance as soon as our pickets had cleared the first hill, which they did soon; though it is said by many officers that there scarcely ever was a stronger position attacked. So well were the arrangements made, that our regiment was under cover almost all up the position. The 95th, with one company of ours, were thrown out to skirmish, and the pickets flanked all their trenches, and made them run in all directions; so that we marched nearly straight up this hill, one and a half mile from Vera, to the pass over it, in little more than an hour. The other brigade had not the advantage of ravines, and had to charge several redoubts and forts, which they did most gallantly, and this accounts for their loss being greater than ours. It was very interesting to examine all the works, &c., which we had been looking at through glasses for months. The Spaniards on our right behaved admirably. The hill they had to attack is at least twice as high as most here, and on the top of it a perpendicular rock, with the ruins of a chapel; it is the highest of any here, not excepting the Crown Mountain. They lost many men under it, and did not take it for two days. On the 7th Division moving round it, the French evacuated it in the night, leaving us in possession of all the Pyrenees. We can now go on any hill we please, and not only 'proudly survey them,' but send our btmen with covering party for corn. There has been a heavy firing from two o'clock till nearly this time (eleven o'clock). I hear they have attacked the Spaniards in the valley to our right. The 1st and 5th Divisions, and Lord Aylmer's Brigade are in the valley below us. The French are hard at work making their extended position as strong as they can. A general attack is expected. How far we shall go is uncertain. It will be a glorious battle. What a pity it is we have no John Bulls to see it from these mountains: you may see everything that takes place to Bayonne. St. Jean de Luz is a beautiful town, about a league from the bottom of the mountain, with a river running through it, and a small harbour. When at Passages I went to see the ruins of St. Sebastian. It was one of the most beautiful places in Spain; all the houses were large, built of freestone, with iron balconies; part of the walls are left with the balconies hanging down. Passages is very like Portsmouth—the harbour full of transports.



"Oct. 17th.

"The firing I mentioned was caused by the French taking back a hill with a fort on it. Two hours before daylight they took two companies of Spaniards prisoners. It was in France; as Lord Wellington did not send any English troops, I suppose he did not care for it.

"The following questions and answers have passed between the Governor of Pampeluna and Don Carlos:—"

"Q. Will you allow us to march out with baggage into France?"

"A. No.

"Q. If you do not, the inhabitants will starve.

"A. If I find any one inhabitant dies from want of food while a French soldier has a ration, I will hang the Governor.

"Q. We will surrender if you do not send us to England, but have a Spanish guard.

"A. If you want a Spanish guard over you, you have it, and cannot be in a better place."

"So that it is likely to surrender soon; and I hear the Portuguese are gone round to Roncesvalles, as the attack is to be made on their left. I have just come off picket on the mountain, and it has been the worst I have had. The Spanish troops have a longing desire to advance into France; it will require all Lord Wellington's management to prevent their murdering the inhabitants, plundering I am sure he cannot. I was on picket the day after the action. A young French soldier was mortally wounded in the side in running down the hill, and, although he was dying, they stripped him entirely naked, and left him on the long grass wet with the evening dew. Our picket found him, and told me when I arrived he was just dead. The Spaniards abuse the French prisoners, and the French theirs; declaring that, were it not for the red-coats, they would have thrashed them in millions. The French officers bear amputation much better than the English. One of our soldiers showed a French prisoner a French major wounded, 'Ah! and the devil go with him,' said the Frenchman, 'for he wanted us to charge you, but we knew better.' Some French prisoners in the rear were rejoicing in losing a leg or arm, saying they should now go home and have no more soldiering. The weather is now always either raining or blowing, excessively hard. I bought a little pony from one of Longas' sweet youths the other day for thirteen dollars."

"During the combat of the 7th, the right wing of the army guarded the mountains from Echalar to Ronces-

valles, while the left, after the action, held the ridge from the Rock of La Rhune to the Bay of Biscay. The 1st Brigade of the Light Division encamped in a forest at the base of the great Rhune, and the 2nd took post at the Puerta de Ibañeta. The weather was cold and dismal, rain poured in torrents; wicker-work tents to protect the quadrupeds were constructed, and the month wore tediously away.

On the 9th of November the Light Division received orders to move and take up ground during the night preparatory to a general attack of the enemy's position in France; and before morning the 43rd got under arms and marched silently by the north-east side of La Grande Rhune, through a narrow path, to within a few hundred yards of the French outposts. For six months they had been labouring at stone forts on the summit of La Petite la Rhune, which were now to be stormed; "but strong and valiant in arms must the soldiers have been who stood in that hour before the veterans of the 43rd." These are the words of Napier, who commanded the regiment on that day, when the rising of the sun above the horizon was to be the signal for commencing the

#### BATTLE OF THE NIVELLE.

No newer or better account of this action can be given than that contained in a letter written by Lieutenant Maclean of the 43rd—now Military Knight of Windsor:—

"Dec 12th, 1813.

"On the night of the 9th we received orders to hold ourselves ready to march at an early hour the following morning, to assault the position of the enemy on La Petite la Rhune. Breakfast was ordered at 2 A.M., which we managed to eat most heartily; and having some remarkably thick American biscuits, Madden observed that their thickness would turn a bullet aside, at the same time putting one into the breast of his jacket. Never was prediction more completely verified, for early in the day the biscuit was

shattered to pieces, turning the direction of the bullet from as gallant and true a heart as ever beat under a British uniform. Another bullet passed through Madden's left arm immediately afterwards.

"The regiment having moved off about 3 o'clock, ascended the side of the mountain, halting within a short distance of La Petite la Rhune, and close to our left we saw and passed the Rifles, lying down in close column, covered by their white blankets, in the faint light resembling a flock of sheep much more than grim warriors prepared for the strife. The most perfect silence had been enjoined, and the 43rd were directed to lie down in close column to await the signal of attack—the firing of a third gun from the right.

"We heard the French drums beating to arms, and even could distinguish voices, although not in sight of them; for being on the slope of a hill, we had no idea we were so near or about to attack. Sir James Kempt, who commanded the 1st Brigade of the Light Division, ordered that two companies of the regiment should lead in skirmishing order, followed by a support of four in line under Lieut.-Colonel Napier, and a reserve of three companies under Lieut.-Colonel Duffy. Major Brock's and Captain Murchison's companies were to lead the advance in extended order.

"The sunrise in those regions is most sudden, for darkness is dispelled by a burst of glowing light as the sun clears the head of a high mountain, and startles the beholder with its glorious brightness. Such was its appearance as it glanced on the recumbent troops, and sparkled from their bayonets along the arms piled by companies that eventful morning. The next moment the sound of a gun followed by others was heard, and every ear was on the alert to count each shot. The men were on their feet in an instant, and the words 'Stand to your arms' being given, each soldier seized his Brown Bess. The Rifles folded their blankets, and moved off to their left. General Kempt mounted his horse, and said, 'Now, 43rd, let me see what you will do this morning;' and pointing to an intrenchment on a rising ground in front to the left of the regiment lined with French infantry, gave the order to advance and carry it; and then await the arrival of the support before an attempt was to be made on the stone redoubts on the ridge of rocks on the top of La Petite la Rhune.

"The companies then extending, and bringing their right

shoulders forward, were at once in fire, and after descending a short distance and crossing a piece of marshy ground, made a rush for the breastwork, which was quickly evacuated by the enemy; but not before they had by their sharp practice dropped a few of their assailants, who had scarcely returned their fire, so intent were they on rushing at the intrenchment. On clearing the breastwork, we brought our left shoulders forward to face redoubt No. 1, and as we were directed to wait for the four companies, we took such shelter as some scattered rocks afforded at about fifty or sixty yards from the first redoubt. The enemy made our quarters pretty hot, as they when firing were well covered, which our men perceiving were endeavouring to check by aiming at their heads when opportunities offered; but, to avoid exposing themselves, they preferred firing at the support and reserve, although not so close, for thus they had a far better chance of killing and not being hit by our men, and consequently could fire coolly. The redoubts were built of rough stones, but had no cannon.

“ Captain Murchison and myself got alongside of a flat piece of rock within about forty yards of the redoubt, and as they could see part of us, they made the rock smoke with their shots. Captain Murchison raised his head to look over, and instantly his face assumed a livid appearance as if choking. I inquired what was the matter, when he with difficulty said, ‘he was struck in the neck and must see a doctor!’ but in the meantime, should the support arrive, he desired me to take on the company. Shortly after the surgeon examined him, and found that the bullet had got entangled in his neckcloth and had run round his neck. A sergeant pointed out better cover about twenty-five yards nearer the redoubt, to which we both went; and I borrowed his fusée and fired several shots at the heads of the French, the sergeant loading for me. While so employed, Colonel Napier and the support came sweeping up behind us, on which I gave the order to advance, and we all dashed forward with a cheer. Napier, boiling with courage, and being withal very active, attempted to scale the walls without observing the bayonet points over his head; and, being rather short-sighted, would certainly have been very roughly handled had not James Considine and myself laid hold of the skirts of his jacket and pulled him back, for which we received anything but thanks. We of course apologised to Colonel Napier for the liberty we had taken, for he was very wrath at the time. We then pointed out an easier ascent for him, and assisted each other over the wall. To show the danger he was in at the

moment, I was even under the necessity of striking a bayonet up with my sword, though they were giving way, as a hint that we were coming over in spite of them. The hint was taken, and a free passage left.

"On getting inside I saw a French officer kneeling with his arm raised begging for quarter, and his head and face covered with blood. I told one of the men to take care of him, and proceeded through the gate at the rear, following the retiring enemy towards the second redoubt on the ridge of rocks, similarly constructed to the one we had just taken. I then met Cooke and Considine, and we consulted what was best to be done, as we had not a sufficient number of men with us to assault the second redoubt, most of them having joined the regiment below the rocks. We were then about 100 yards from it, and exposed to its fire. I proposed to Considine to follow a path leading along the face of the ridge of rock, which I expected would lead to the redoubt, and if I found it practicable would not return. I had judged correctly as to the direction of the path, for it led direct on the redoubt in question; but although the enemy must have seen me distinctly they did not fire in my direction: I suppose from seeing me alone, and being occupied by the others who were gathering for a rush. I quickly discovered they were about to quit the redoubt by the gate behind, for some were taking that direction, and before I could get close up they were off.

"On reaching the top of the ridge again, I found that I was on the flank of a long trench, filled with a regiment of French infantry, but high above it. The intrenchment was cut across a nearly level green, approaching which I perceived a portion of the 43rd advancing in column under General Kempt, and the French having fired a volley, I observed he had been wounded, and his A.D.C., Captain Gore (now Honourable General Sir Charles Gore), K.C.B., binding a handkerchief quickly round his arm.

"The order to charge was then given, a British cheer followed,—a line of levelled steel showed what the enemy might expect. I saw them waver, then spring out of the intrenchment and retire down the hill at a rapid pace.

"This had no sooner taken place than I observed on the other side, and also below me, a French officer waving his sword and encouraging his men to advance and retake the redoubt, but he could not induce them to follow. One of the 43rd skirmishers rushed at him with his bayonet at the charge, and in spite of his attempts to defend himself with his sword ran him through, and

then returned to the level ground behind the trench the regiment had carried in such gallant style.

"Gore then rode up to me with orders from the General to stop the pursuit on which the men were eagerly bent; and it was with considerable difficulty that their ardour was checked and the men halted, for they were rushing after the enemy like greyhounds, so excited were they.

"The French, finding that they were no longer pressed, retired more tranquilly but still in confusion, our men firing on them as they descended the hill to some huts forming an old bivouac. I observed an officer on the way separate himself from the mob of fugitives, which removed him from our line of fire, and walk quietly along: on which a short stout soldier asked my permission to follow and take him prisoner. I consented, provided no one accompanied him; and although his musket had been discharged he would not wait to reload, but ran forward. He had not gone above 300 or 400 yards, when he overtook the officer and called on him to surrender. The Frenchman presented a pistol on turning round, which the 43rd man observing, and being then very near, poised his musket over his head, and pitched it with such precision that the bayonet penetrated his thigh and brought him to the ground, where he lay at the mercy of his adversary, who merely took possession of the pistol, and, what he considered of greater value, a flask of brandy. On rejoining his company, after offering it to me, he gratified his heated comrades with a sip as far as the supply would go. Both these French officers, who fell under our bayonets, were removed to Vera, and I was told were doing well.

"I now learned that Considine had his thigh broken by a bullet, and that Murchison, shortly after the doctor had examined him, was struck by another musket ball, which carried him off in twenty-four hours.

"After about a quarter of an hour's halt the Division moved on, the Rifles and 52nd leading: and some of the former were sent down the hill to drive the French from the bivouac to which they had retired. This was quickly done, but the French being reinforced again advanced; the drummers beating the *pas de charge* to retake the huts. The Rifles, however, were too wily, for, perceiving that the wind blew in the enemy's faces, they fired the huts, which with the straw therein blazed and smoked to such a degree that the French were obliged to relinquish their intention.

"The sight at this moment was truly grand: we looked from our vantage ground over an extent of about twenty miles occupied by



two gallant armies, of which the Light Division composed the centre of the British. To the right the pass of Mayar and St. Jean de Pied de Port, to the left St. Jean de Luz, and from each extremity could be distinctly traced, by the flashes of fire and rising smoke, the advance of our troops and the gradual retreat of the French, offering an obstinate resistance at every favourable spot. But the British were not to be denied, and went in to win; and in short carried everything before them, notwithstanding the gallant resistance they met with.

"While looking around, William Freer came up and inquired anxiously for his brother Edward. Seeing that something was amiss, he turned round, saying, 'I see how it is,' and started off to the rear, where his worst fears were too soon confirmed: his brother having been shot through the head. Both brothers were fine courageous fellows, much liked in the regiment; each had been wounded, the elder had lost an arm at Badajoz. The younger frequently told me had a presentiment he would be killed in the attack of La Petite la Rhune. He happened also to be in the last company that went into action that day, when his presentiment was fulfilled, to the great sorrow of all his brother officers and the entire regiment.

"The Division then crossing a narrow valley ascended the nearest hill, driving in the French skirmishers, and at the top came upon a fine star-fort of earth, surrounded by a deep ditch containing about 700 men; and although the 52nd attacked it with their accustomed determination, they were repulsed with loss. The Commandant was then called upon to surrender, which he at first refused to do; but seeing that he could not defend the work for any length of time, he agreed: provided he was not to be marched to the rear by Spanish or Portuguese troops. This being accepted, the redoubt was given up and the French disarmed.

"This may be said to have ended the day's fighting."

On the signal being given for the advance, an incident of a very unusual character had occurred. The men were in the act of standing to their arms and "falling in," when the sergeant-major Russell placed himself in front of the leading company, drew his sword with a theatrical flourish, and facing about, violently threw his scabbard away, exclaiming with much gesticulation: "Soldiers! we have not had an opportunity of distinguish-



ing ourselves since the siege of Badajoz. I must remind you in the words of the immortal Nelson, 'England expects that every man this day will do his duty,'—then follow me to victory!" All this was *muchio bellicio por nada*, and at the moment only excited a laugh of derision, but was not without inspiring effect.

When reforming on the Plâteau, after the rocks of La Rhune had been carried, to the astonishment of the regiment they saw one of their privates, who in the confusion had got below the rocks on the right, endeavouring to lead on a Spanish regiment. This attempt he made several times before he discovered his own regiment.

Lord Wellington had directed the right attack against the French left, but by some oversight in his first despatch did but scant justice to the Light Division. On the 13th of November he, however, wrote from St. Pé:—"I have also to draw your Lordship's attention to the Light Division's conduct in the manner it deserves; these troops, under Major-General Charles Baron Alten, distinguished themselves in this, as they have on every occasion when they have been engaged. Major-General Kempt was wounded at the head of his brigade in the beginning of the day, in the attack on the enemy's works at La Petite Rhune."

In this action the 43rd lost 2 captains, 2 lieutenants, 2 sergeants, and 7 rank and file, killed; 4 lieutenants, 1 ensign, 8 sergeants, and 50 rank and file, wounded; Captain Thomas Capel and Lieut. Edward Freer were killed on the spot; Captain Robert Murchison and Lieutenant Angrove died of their wounds; Lieutenant James Considine had his thigh broken; Lieutenants Wyndham Madden (severely), William Freer, Hennel, and Ensign Rowley Hill, wounded. Major Napier received a clasp and the brevet of Lieutenant-colonel for his distinguished conduct.

On the following day the Light Division edged off to the right and crossed the Nivelle by the picturesque little bridge of Harastaqui. The whole army moved forward in three columns, and the right took post on the left bank of the Nive at Cambo. The extreme left of the British crossed the Nivelle, advanced to Bidart, and headquarters were established at St. Jean de Luz. Bayonne was strongly fortified. The enemy occupied farm-houses and villas around, and a morass, only passable at two points, covered an intrenched camp within cannon-shot.

The advanced posts of the 1st Brigade of the Light Division were placed in the churchyard of Arcangues, in the Château, and in a cottage close to a lake. The 2nd Brigade prolonged this line towards a deep valley which separated them from the 5th Division holding the plateau on the high road to Bayonne.

Since the passage of the Nivelle the weather had set in exceedingly disagreeable and wet. The regiment, after being much exposed in bivouac, was cantoned in the detached miserable cottages constituting the poor straggling hamlet of Arbonne. Matters went on quietly, and all field operations, with the exception of working parties intrenching the position of Arcangues, were apparently suspended.

Early on the morning, however, of the 29th of November, Kempt's Brigade was assembled in the vicinity of the Château d'Arcangues for the purpose, as they were informed, of making some change in the pickets along the line in their immediate front and in advance of the village of Bassussary; the outlying pickets consequently pushed forward,—the French sentries retiring, firing off their pieces and giving the alarm. Through some unfortunate misapprehension on the part of the officer in command of the advance, the whole body extended as

skirmishers, acting almost independently of each other, regardless of what was occurring on their flanks and of the numbers opposed to them.

The French, seeing that our men persevered in boldly advancing, strongly reinforced their pickets, and were enabled to hold their ground. A fierce and violent hand-to-hand combat then ensued; the whole of Clausel's Division getting under arms, expecting a general action.

Cooke, of the 43rd, in his memoirs gives a graphic account of this "skirmish with a vengeance," and a letter written on the spot by Lieutenant Hennel, likewise of the regiment, is as follows :—

"Arcangues, Nov. 25th, 1813.

"The day after sending off my last, the left wing of our regiment was for picket, one and a half mile in advance. Two companies and a half halted at a large handsome house, and the other two and a half moved on a mile further to relieve the pickets in front. Since the 18th we have had very fine weather. Our sentries and those of the French were sufficiently near to converse. The country here is very hilly. I had the 'Times' with me and was reading it. I thought our opponents might like to see both sides of the question, so held up the paper walking down towards the ditch that divided us. The vidette immediately walked his horse down and met me; I asked him how he did. He said, 'Very well.' I gave him the paper and came away, wishing him 'good morning.' The picket got round him (the paper was the 8th Nov., General Stewart's despatch) and sent it to their officers. In half an hour an officer and six hussars came to relieve. The officer got off his horse and came down towards us. I immediately met him at the ditch, and he came over it without hesitation. We were very polite to each other: he came with me up my hill, and asked me if I spoke French; I told him 'no,' but that I would send an officer who could. Hobkirk came with two other officers, and on two more coming with blue great-coats, he asked if they were Portuguese. He stopped talking with us three-quarters of an hour, saying it was a pity we were fighting, as they esteemed us much as soldiers. I then walked back with him to the ditch and we shook hands. He was the chief of a squadron of 10th Hussars, dressed very handsomely, and seemed a shrewd man. Hobkirk and Baillie relieved us next day, and we went back to the

château. The owner is a very handsome man, about twenty-five years old; his friends live in Bayonne. He talked to us without any reserve, and is very intelligent. He says the inhabitants are much less annoyed with our army than they were with the French; he confirms all that is said about spies watching political conversations, and also as to persons from the highest respectability down to the shoeblack, being employed as acquaintances, servants, &c., &c. Yesterday Soult allowed the inhabitants to return from Bayonne to St. Jean de Luz. Monsieur d'Arcangues told us that the people at Bayonne quite recognise the falsity of Buonaparte's accounts of the battles in Spain; as for instance, 'the road to Bayonne was crowded with English prisoners,' when not one was to be seen; but, he added, they believe what he tells them of the north, and though the people of the north know what he says of them is false, yet they believe what he says of the south.

"Next morning at daylight, instead of relieving us, the brigade came to drive the French back; of course the pickets led the way. We marched under cover to our range of hills in advance. Captain Hobkirk and Lieutenant Baillie, with their company and ours (Captain Simpson's), formed in the village opposite the French pickets; and when the firing commenced on our left, Captain Hobkirk's company got through the hedge, extended in skirmishing order, and moved on. I was immediately desired with a section (fourteen men) to move on his right, with orders to drive the enemy off the two first hills, and halt at a house pointed out.

"The whole country here is crowded with small woods, hedges, ditches, and houses. As we came upon the first hill, the French were running in a crowd upon the second. I opened a fire upon them as they passed. We ran down the hollow, and then moved up and displaced them there. I then had as fine a fire upon them as possible. We were upon a hill and in a ditch up to our shoulders, and they were crowding into a narrow pass to get into a wood close by a house, strongly intrenched behind which they had 9000 troops. I had this fire upon the men at the gateway about three-quarters of an hour, at 300 yards' distance. I then moved on, and found Hobkirk's and Champ's companies formed with General Kempt. I believe we had now accomplished all we wanted. General Kempt ordered us to move forward. I, being nearest to a gap, moved first; he called me back, and said, 'Now, mind, you are not to go beyond the wood.' We were now about 400 yards from their trenches: the first 100 yards was a close, the next a thick wood, the two next closes with a slight hedge between

them, and with scarce any bank or ditch. Just as I came to the edge of the wood, Lieutenant Baillie following at the head of Captain Hobkirk's company, said, 'Here is cavalry! form up!' I turned round, and saw them and infantry, both much stronger than we were, entering the wood on the other side. We gave them such a fire as quickly sent them off, and then moved to the front of the wood, each man to his tree, and kept up a fire upon their trenches. They did not forget to return it, but it did little mischief as we were well covered by the trees; the boughs dropped fast around us, and the leaves were knocked up by our side.

"After being here half an hour, the advance was sounded (I afterwards found by mistake): Hobkirk and Baillie moved out of the wood at the head of their men, and I at the head of mine, under a tremendous fire to the slight hedge, not more than 90 or 100 yards from their trenches, in which were at least 2000 men on the three sides. As Baillie came up, he with three others was knocked over. Baillie was struck in the forehead, and instantly died. I was at the hedge first of my men, and instantly laid down flat; every man got as good a place as he could. The hedge and ditch scarcely afforded any cover. I ordered them to cease firing, as for every shot we gave they sent five or six in return, all striking within a foot or two of him that fired. At this time our other four companies kept up a fire upon them, and I thought they were going to storm the trenches.

"I lay here full an hour, having many wounded around me, when seeing no reserve coming up and our fire slackening much (five of us were lying together, and at one moment three of us were struck—one had the bottom of his chin knocked off within a few inches of my face, another was hit in the body, and the third in the arm), determined me to shift my quarters. I desired all around me to crawl on their bodies (if we had crawled on our hands and knees we should all have been knocked over) to our right into the hollow under cover. I collected about twenty men as I went along. As we began crawling, a man was killed just by me. When we had got thirty or forty yards we were under cover, and I stayed there about twenty minutes, setting a man to watch if they came out of the trenches, pointing out the road to retire by. The retreat sounded; they immediately rushed out, and I made the best of my way with my men over a little hill, under a tremendous fire, to some houses in rear where I found two companies. After leaving eighteen men under Lieutenant Steel, we retired to the rest of the regiment; as we left we learnt that Hob-

kirk, with twelve or fourteen men, were made prisoners. Lieutenant Steel was to retire to the position we wanted, and then halt. He had a shot in his leg, but it is not a bad wound. Thus ended, at two o'clock P.M., a skirmish which, but for the mistake, would only have cost us ten men wounded; as it is, we have 1 captain missing, 1 lieutenant killed, 1 wounded, 2 sergeants, 76 men killed, wounded, and missing. Thus I have passed the hottest fire I ever saw, Badajoz not excepted. I was in twenty times more danger than in either the battles of Salamanca or Vittoria, and I have not received the slightest injury; a loud call for gratitude—it shall not be unattended to. If I live to return, I shall have many remarks of a serious nature to make, that would be improper to place here. Baillie was a fine young man, had just come from England with Hobkirk, bringing a most superb kit. Hobkirk spends near 1000*l.* a year on dress. A flag of truce was sent to ask permission for his private servant and baggage to go to him, which was granted; and I hear Lord Wellington has sent the names of four French captains for them to choose one in exchange, so he will very likely return. Lord Wellington knows him personally. Major Napier called the officers together yesterday, delicately to point out to them the necessity of judgment and caution in the field; he said it was not necessary at this time of day for the officers of the 43rd to show themselves men of courage. By a deserter we learn the French have 9000 men on this side the Nive, and 1000 at Bayonne, and that they lost 100 men on the 23rd. We are intrenching the position we now have—Arcangues. We took a great deal of ground on our left by pushing them as we did. There is no reason why we should not advance. I find if I had remained with Hobkirk I should certainly have been taken prisoner, as full 200 men rushed out of the trenches and leaped over the hedge upon him."

It may not be uninteresting to mention that the Marquis d'Arcangues alluded to is still alive, and a remarkably fine specimen of the old French *haute noblesse*. During a recent excursion in La Basque, the writer of these records was hospitably welcomed at the ancient château, where M. d'Arcangues passes the autumn of his days, patriarchally surrounded by numerous children and grandchildren. His memory of the events of 1813—which rendered his estate historic ground—is acutely retentive. He related several anecdotes; among them, how one poor fellow of



the 43rd, on being carried into the château seriously wounded, desired the surgeon to hand him the bullet just extracted, which he then placed under his pillow, saying it "should yet wing a Frenchman." The Marquis d'Arcangues remarked that he was well acquainted with various officers of the regiment, whom he characterised as a very gentlemanlike set, adding that he met Hobkirk at dinner at Soult's, the very evening of his capture, who from the richness of his dress was at first mistaken for a field-marshal.

Lord Wellington then determined to separate his army into two corps, to force the passage of the Nive. The Light Division remained on the left bank. Soult's position round Bayonne was far more compact and concentrated than that of the British. On the 9th of December the army was put in motion. The 2nd Division forded the river near Cambo; the Light Division advanced against the French in front of Bassussary and drove in some of their pickets; while the left, under Sir John Hope (who had succeeded Sir Thomas Graham), made way nearly up to the intrenched camp in front of Bayonne. Desultory skirmishing took place.

At daybreak on the 10th an advance of the enemy was observed within a hundred yards of the 43rd picket commanded by Lieutenant Cooke. About nine o'clock, a sentinel stationed on the highest ground informed him that he had seen a mountain gun brought on a mule's back and placed behind a bush. In a few moments, Soult with about forty staff-officers came within point-blank range to reconnoitre. During this short interval, Cooke, climbing up a tree, descried a column of the enemy lying down and in readiness to pounce upon his party.

Leaving the next senior officer in charge, he immediately galloped off to acquaint the General, who desired him to despatch a mounted officer to Baron Alten, to delay firing



until the latest possible moment, and at the same time sent part of another company to Cooke's support.

Soon after some French soldiers, headed by an officer—who feigning indifference made a bow to the party and carelessly looked about him—issued from behind the hedges and moved round within a hundred yards, while to the left a body of their cavalry appeared. Returning the civility of not being fired upon, the Chasseurs called to the men of the 43rd picket to retire. The French skirmishers then advanced, talking to each other, good naturedly allowing our sentinels to retreat without a shot. They expected by their superiority of numbers to win the post by a *coup de main*, and so to surprise more effectually the whole line. But when they were within twenty yards of the abbatis, Cooke called out, "Now fire away!" The first discharge did great execution; and thus commenced the

#### BATTLE OF THE NIVE.

The enemy debouched from behind the thickets in crowds, and the flanks of the 43rd picket were turned, right and left; the French Voltigeurs shouting, "En avant, en avant, Français! Vive l'Empereur!" In the mean time the whole of the pickets of the 43rd ceased firing and retired leisurely, taking their station with the rest of the regiment, and formed in the churchyard of Aincagues, while the remainder of the brigade lined the breastwork of the château. One company of the 43rd having held its ground too long in front of Bassussary was surrounded. Duncan Cameron in command asked the soldiers if they would charge to the rear; upon this they rushed into the village with such prolonged huzzas, their sudden apparition so surprising a French brigadier that he halted his column; when they sprang across the single street and escaped.

The 2nd Brigade of the Light Division, previously in echelon to the left of the 1st and obliquely to the rear, now became sharply engaged. The plateau of Arcangues and Bussassary being gained by the enemy, became the pivot of Soult's operations, enabling his right wing to tackle the 5th Division on the high road to St. Jean-de-Luz. The attack opposite to the 43rd ceased, with the exception of the playing of artillery, which continued on the churchyard. This went on for some time, but the 43rd from the churchyard kept up so sharp and incessant a fire that the French gunners were at last glad to cease molesting them.

The enemy, collecting in force on the neighbouring heights, then seemed to meditate a closer attack. Two companies lined the interior of the church, round which ran wooden galleries; the walls were cannon proof, and water was carried into the building and a strong traverse erected across the door; so that if *par hasard* the enemy should gain possession, the fire from the galleries would drive them out. The rest of the battalion was stationed in reserve behind the stone wall encircling the churchyard, with fixed bayonets ready to charge. The enemy's advance was within two hundred yards, covered by cannon on the brow of the hill; the 43rd had two mountain guns, three-pounders, placed to the left of the church. The other intrenchments consisted of a few lightly turned shovels of earth, which the French Voltigeurs might have easily hopped over; and flank defences were wholly omitted.

On the 11th of December, it was conjectured the Duke of Dalmatia would break our centre by advancing against the church and château. Accordingly Sir John Hope detached the right of his force nearer to the left of the Light Division; but the enemy again attacked and obliged him to resume his original ground, when many

brave men fell on both sides. Though the French advance was close to the 43rd, there was no firing, and the interregnum was used to strengthen the position. At this juncture, two battalions of German troops, men of Nassau and Frankfort, left the French lines and came over to the Allies.

On the 12th, firing continued through the greater part of the day. In the evening, on calling the roll of the regiment, a dozen men were reported missing, whereupon Colonel Napier despatched an officer with a sergeant and patrol in quest. The men were found in a small house filled with apples, on most amicable terms with about as many French soldiers—oddly enough belonging to the Imperial 43rd. The same object, that of securing the tempting fruit, had impelled both parties to the spot, and all had gone on the apple raid unarmed. The French, on observing that the English bore “43” on their breastplates, examined them attentively, cordially shook hands, and expressed much pleasure in the accidental rencontre, asking many questions as to rations and allowances; and assured them if they would accompany them to a post a little way off they would give them some first-rate brandy. Upon the appearance of the officer, the Frenchmen, believing themselves prisoners, brought forth the whole of their spoil as a peace offering; but he merely pointed to the door, whence they effected their escape, while the English truants with crammed havresacks were escorted back to their quarters.

On the 13th Soult attacked Hill's corps at St. Pierre. It was a noble battle, nobly won by the British General. Both sides fought as if determined that the struggle should wind up, in brilliant style, the three days' combat of the Nive. The enemy, driven back at all points, never again resumed the offensive, nor was the British army further disturbed by petty affairs.

In the afternoon, Lord Wellington passing by the 43rd in conversation with Sir James Kempt was heard to say, "I have often seen the French well licked, but I never knew them get such a hell of a licking as Hill has given them to-day."

In the late various affairs the 43rd had 1 rank and file killed; 13 rank and file, wounded; 1 sergeant, 1 bugler, and 19 rank and file, missing. Lieut.-Colonel W. Napier was wounded, first by a musket-ball in the right hip, and again by the explosion of a shell which drove his telescope against his face. He received a clasp for having commanded the regiment. The year closed without further incidents, and national Christmas festivities were celebrated in due form.

#### 1814.

Early in February the Light Division passed the Nive and occupied Bastide, but the 43rd were ordered to return to Ustaritz to bring on their new clothing which had reached that place from England.

Reaching Sauveterre they found the bridge had been blown up, and it was therefore necessary to ford the river upwards of a hundred yards in breadth. Although hardly three feet deep, so rapid was the current, and so stony the bottom, that it was deemed advisable for the strongest men to throw off their knapsacks, join hands, and form a close chain with their faces to the stream, in order to pick up any who might turn giddy or lose foothold. At night they bivouacked in a wood within three miles of Orthes, where they learnt that the battle of Orthes had been fought. Early on the 29th, the regiment got under arms, hoping to give the 2nd Division "the go by;" but the movement having been anticipated, strict orders were issued that they should follow in rear.

When within four miles of the river Adour, Wellington

rode up, and said, "Forty-Third, what are you doing here?" Napier replied that the officer commanding the column would not let them pass. In ten minutes the whole of the troops in their front were halted, the Regiment marched forward, and soon after formed column in the Grande Place of the town of St. Sever. From thence they were sent with Ross's brigade of Horse-artillery to Mont de Marsan to take possession of the stores in that town. When the bridge was reached, Picton declined halting the 5rd Division, and it was not until he received the most peremptory orders to do so that he consented. Soult having left Bordeaux to its fate, retired up the Adour to confront Hill's corps which had branched off to the right, and was moving in the direction of Aire to threaten the French Marshal's communication with Toulouse.

Instead of being received with hostility or sullenness at Mont de Marsan, the inhabitants flocked out to welcome the British troops. The new clothing was carried by the soldiers on the tops of their knapsacks, while nearly all their trowsers in wear were made from blankets. The French expressed much astonishment at seeing the troops of the richest nation in the world so thread-bare and poorly clad. The band struck up, and the women exclaimed, "Ma foi! Les Anglais ont de la musique! Et voilà de beaux jeunes gens aussi!"

The 43rd then took possession of the village of Brinquet, and social hospitalities were exchanged until the 19th, when the Division encamped on a ridge of hills east of Vic Bigorre: there they witnessed the attack on the town by the 3rd Division.

On the 20th, while 200 French cavalry blocked up the main road, a portion of the British army made a demonstration of crossing the Adour opposite the town of Tarbes. The 43rd formed column on the left, with a

troop of the 10th Hussars below, facing the French detachment. Two of the enemy's videttes walked their horses to within a hundred yards of the 10th, and sarcastically challenged them to charge. The officers of the 43rd whispered them to avoid rashness and keep perfectly quiet until a company could creep along under a hedge to take the chasseurs in flank; when the main body instantly unmasked two pieces of cannon at half range, and began playing away. The 6th Division then attacked in reverse, obliging them to retire on Tarbes. Next morning, the enemy being in full retreat towards Toulouse, the Light Division cut in upon the high road of St. Gaudens, and eventually crossed the Garonne by a pontoon bridge, near Fenouillet, while the army marched in parallel columns on Toulouse. When within two miles, the enemy were seen in dense black columns filing out of the town, and forming in order of battle on the terre de Cabade, crowned with redoubts. Soult had arrived on the 24th of March, and his position was exceedingly strong.

#### BATTLE OF TOULOUSE.

Lord Wellington remained on the left bank of the Garonne. On the A.M. of April the 10th, the enemy were to be forced near a large building in front of the *tête-de-pont* of Craniague by the 3rd Division. The 2nd Brigade of the Light Division branched off to the right to make a sham attack opposite the *tête-de-pont* of Les Minimes, and to keep up a link with the 3rd Division, while the 1st Brigade edged off to the left to support the Spaniards, then moving in echelon on that flank. While crossing a small rivulet, two of the enemy's guns opened from the detached eminence of La Borde de la Pugade. So soon as the Spaniards had crossed the stream and ditch they advanced rapidly, driving the French from

their advanced posts, behind which they formed in column.

At 11 o'clock the Spaniards moved forward to attack the heights of Pugade, but suffered a terrible defeat; the French came round the left flank of the fugitive Spaniards, until stopped by the fire of a brigade of guns and an attack on their own left by the Rifles supported by the 43rd. The enemy, finding they had totally defeated the Spaniards, immediately moved a body of troops and cavalry to the right, to make head against the 4th and 6th Divisions; but after the repulse of the Spaniards the battle almost ceased on that side. About this time, an officer of the 43rd—Lieutenant Havelock,—extra aide-de-camp to Baron Alten, was seen riding at the base of the enemy's position, turning and twisting his horse at full speed, inducing a group of brother officers to imagine he was wounded and no longer able to manage the animal. Suddenly he fell, as it were, from the saddle to the ground, and the horse made a dead stop. Believing him killed, great was their surprise when he remounted, cantering towards them with a hare which he had ridden down.

By the middle of the day, the 6th Division gained the French position and took a redoubt. The 4th Division made an oblique march to the left to turn the enemy's right flank, which manœuvre greatly contributed to the victory. The French made a desperate attempt to retake the great redoubt in the centre, but without effect. Owing to this failure, they quietly evacuated those on their left, and the whole army retired to the faubourg of St. Etienne. Soult held the town on the following day, hemmed in on almost every side, but there was no firing, and during the night of the 11th retreated towards Carcassonne. Lord Wellington entered in triumph on the 12th.

On the 12th, a detachment from the 2nd Battalion



joined, consisting of 2 captains, 4 lieutenants, 3 ensigns, 3 sergeants, and 198 rank and file; only two days too late to share in the last laurels gathered in the six years' conflict.

For several days Soult declined negotiating with Lord Wellington, and the Division was for the last time put in motion, marching some leagues on the road to Ville Franche. Hardly had they taken up their ground, before General Count Albufera de Gazan, deputed by the Dukes of Dalmatia and Albuera to treat with Lord Wellington, alighted, and preliminaries for permanent peace were entered upon.

In consequence, the Division retraced their steps to Montech, where for six subsequent weeks the 43rd remained, passing the time most agreeably; the enjoyment of the hospitalities and gaieties lavishly offered by the leading residents doubtless greatly enhanced by long previous abstinence. On the regiment quitting Montech, great demonstrations of regret were made by the citizens, who in crowds accompanied them to the banks of the Garonne. The officers dismounted, walked behind the regiment escorted by the ladies of Languedoc, exchanging many tokens of mutual interest. The soldiers, too, had enrolled themselves in the good graces of the grisettes, and one, as her admirer entered the boat, flung herself into the river, but was fortunately rescued from a watery grave and eventually united to the sergeant for love of whom she had so nearly perished.

The whole British army then marched for Bordeaux, the Portuguese Caçadores detaching in order to regain their own country. They took leave of the Light Division with unfeigned sorrow, whom they would willingly have followed to any quarter of the globe. Having for several years fought side by side, they had themselves attained the same conspicuous state of discipline and efficiency.

“The training enforced by Moore was contrived to produce a perfect soldier. He did not merely teach striplings to move a hundred thousand men on paper, but put them in the ranks and made them practise the duties of privates. They thus acquired an inward, and not a mere outward knowledge of the functions they were to superintend.

“He also devised such improvements in drill, discipline and dress, arms, formations and movements, as would have placed him for military reforms beside the Athenian Iphicrates, if he had not had the greater glory of dying like the Spartan Brasidas.

“The material chosen by Moore to fashion after his own plan were the three infantry regiments—the 43rd, 52nd, and Rifles; and Sir William Napier records with pride that ‘they sent forth a larger number of distinguished officers than any three regiments in the world. The men vied with their leaders in attaining excellence. They constituted Wellington’s celebrated Light Division, and even before they had seen a battle were, according to Major Hopkins, looked up to as the veterans of the army by troops who had already been in fight.’

“‘The greatest secret of war is discipline,’ wrote the historian, and it was to discipline that the Light Division owed its supremacy; they were never negligent, never dismayed. Once, on their way to the lines of Torres Vedras, they started up from their sleep in the night, without an enemy being near or an alarm being given, and dispersed in every direction. A voice called out that the pursuing cavalry was amongst them, and immediately the whole of the scattered soldiers ran together to repel the attack.

“They are stated to have been no less orderly on the breach than in the line, and though they were always at the outposts, in the most hazardous situations, the only

baggage they lost throughout the Peninsular campaign was on the retreat from Salamanca, when some horsemen got up to their rear in a wood and captured two mules.

“Six years of warfare could not detect a flaw in their system, nor were they ever matched in courage or skill. Those three regiments were avowedly the best that England ever had under arms. This is no idle boast. War was better known, the art more advanced under Napoleon than in any age of the world before, and the French veterans—those victors of a thousand battles—never could stand an instant before my gallant men.”

Hardly had the Division sighted Bordeaux, and drawn up in an adjacent wood, before they were desired, with barely time to shake the dust from off their accoutrements, to form along the road, in order to be reviewed by their Chief—now created DUKE of Wellington. At the conclusion they moved on to Blanchefort Camp, and thence to Pouillac, where the final separation of comrades in arms, so long and gloriously associated, took place.

Brightly danced the sun's reflected rays on the glittering waters of the Garonne, as the greater part of the 43rd were rowed aboard the 'Queen Charlotte,' flag-ship of Lord Keith, Admiral of the Channel Fleet, for conveyance to Old England. The remainder embarked in the 'Dublin.' After nine days, the 'Queen Charlotte' dropped her anchor in Plymouth Sound. The battalion disembarked on the 23rd and 25th of July, and the officers gave a dinner at the 'Fountain' to the Admiral and his subordinates, in return for the kindness and courtesy shown them whilst at sea. Before the close of the month the 2nd Battalion arrived from Hythe Barracks, when an interchange took place.

After three months' rest and quiet at home, the 1st

Battalion, mustering 1050 bayonets, commanded by Colonel Patrickson, was ordered to form a brigade with the 7th Fusiliers, already on board ship, and take passage for the same destination—the New World. On the 10th of October, the regiment was placed in three transports, and, after remaining weather-bound for a fortnight, got under weigh. In six weeks Martinique and Dominica were sighted; Fort George was passed; and in twelve days the transports, convoyed by the ‘Vengeur,’ 74, made the delta of the Mississippi, thence steered for Lac Borgne, and on New Year’s Day found themselves in the midst of a British fleet, the greater part of the ships from the ‘Chesapeake’ having arrived, with the troops which had captured Washington.

In the last great campaign of the American War there was no lack of courage, though an incredible amount of blundering. Not satisfied with ruining the trade of all towns on the Mississippi by blockading that river, it had been determined to attack New Orleans. The British commander finding that the intended *coup* was anticipated by the Americans, struck upon the bold idea of entering Lac Borgne in the season of short days and long nights, baffling winds, intense cold, and, withal, in a very difficult navigation—a daring enterprise, skilfully carried out. Before daylight on the 13th of December, the men-of-war’s boats in three divisions had entered Lac Borgne; by the 21st, the land forces, commanded by Major-General Sir John Kean, were concentrated on Isle aux Poix; and on the 22nd, Captain Travers’ company of the Rifles in advance, seeing a fire on the right-hand of the creek, landed and captured an American look-out picket without a shot being fired on either side. Early next day, 1600 British troops were landed within seven miles of New Orleans, and marching through a plantation the same company of Rifles quietly captured a major and twenty

American militiamen; but the officer contrived to escape, and spread the news of the British descent.

All difficulties had thus disappeared. A flat open plain with a cypress wood was on the right, the Mississippi on the left, with the city of New Orleans stretched in front. Up to this epoch General Jackson was virtually surprised; the troops however halted at the exact moment when they should have advanced, and no notice was taken of two American vessels of war anchored in the river. A staff officer—the present General Sir De Lacy Evans, K.C.B.—recommended that time should be taken by the forelock, but his seniors decided otherwise. Jackson thus gained breathing time, and, knowing that New Orleans was no place for defence, “Old Hickory” determined to show his generalship. The troops already landed were the 4th and 85th, five companies of the 95th Rifles, two light field-pieces, and a few sappers. Instead of being employed in throwing up some kind of cover, these soldiers were lounging about while the boats returned to fetch the remainder.

Fires blazed in the bivouac, arms were piled, and each soldier looked after his individual necessities. At eight o'clock the anchor of one of the sloops of fourteen guns—which had been observed up the river—was let go. The fires enabled the Americans to point their guns with precision, and then round and grape shot at once played amongst the astonished troops, knocking over the arms and boiling mess-kettles, and scattering logs of blazing wood far and near, maiming and killing many. Captain Hallen's company of the Rifles began a battle single-handed, against part of the 7th and 44th American regiments and a strong body of irregulars, led by Jackson himself; but they could not beat Hallen and his eighty men, wholly unsupported. There was severe hand-to-hand fighting, and prisoners were taken and retaken on

both sides. The Americans failed in the great point of forcing the main road. Finally they gave way on all sides, after a contest of three hours, principally sustained by the Rifles and the 85th—in all about 1000 strong. Some companies of the 93rd Highlanders and 21st Fusiliers came up towards the close, and proved a most seasonable reinforcement.

Instead of following up his victory, the British General let slip his opportunity, although all his force was now landed.

Jackson continued to fire into the bivouac of the British, while he prolonged a broad ditch by a cut to the Mississippi, about one hundred yards behind his Crescent battery on the high road, in hopes of saving New Orleans for a day. Behind this, he constructed with the utmost despatch a Barricade of near three-quarters of a mile in length—extending from the river to a wood, said to be impassable, on his left—composed of barrels and sugar-casks placed here and there along the edge of a ditch ten feet wide by three deep, the interstices filled with mud and all kinds of rubbish. Two heavy pieces of cannon were mounted on the original Crescent battery. From hour to hour, the Americans, unmolested, strengthened the barricade with bales of cotton and everything that came to hand.

On Christmas-day, Major-General Sir Edward Pakenham and Major-General Gibbs arrived. Pakenham at once declared that troops were never before in such a predicament, and although auguring badly as to the result, resolved to persevere in the attack. He made no instantaneous advance, but remodelled the small British force into two brigades; the dragoons, having no horses, were employed about the hospitals and other head-quarter purposes.

On the 27th, Jackson's schooner was blown up by red-

hot shot from a battery hastily erected. On the following day a reconnaissance was made, by which we lost fifty men and made no way. The other American ship of fourteen guns was warped up the river nearer to the town. A battery was erected 700 yards from General Jackson's Crescent battery, and on the 1st of January, 1815, a second attempt was made on the American works with no better success. Such was the aspect of affairs fifteen days after the first landing of the British troops.

1815.

On the 5th of January the 7th and 43rd landed, both corps in splendid order, mustering upwards of 1700 bayonets. A grand attack being determined on, as a preliminary, at eleven o'clock P.M. on the 7th, 200 of the 43rd, with a proportionate number of officers, were ordered to the front to mend and guard a battery on the right of the enemy's lines, and endeavour to render it tenable before daylight. Water unluckily sprang up at the depth of a foot, obliging them to pare the surface for a great extent around; but they worked unflaggingly through the greater part of the night, when some cannon were dragged up and placed in the battery.

Two companies of the 7th and 93rd with one of the 43rd, a compact little column of 240, were to assault the Crescent battery, which now mounted twenty pieces. The working party of the 43rd had only just quitted the battery at which they had been toiling, when a rocket—the signal for attack—went whizzing aloft, falling into the Mississippi. For a minute or two all was silence; then a tremendous discharge from the British artillery opened upon the left of the American lines before they could even see upon what their fire was to be directed, and before the attacking column of the British was properly formed.



Light breaking disclosed the 7th and 43rd in echelon ; the 85th had been detached across the river ; the Fusiliers were within 300 yards of the enemy's lines. So great was the echo from all sides that each report seemed answered an hundred-fold. The assault had commenced, and the 200 men of the 43rd ran the gauntlet from the left to the centre, under a cross-fire, in hopes of taking part. But the attack had already failed, and companies were broken, driven back, and dispersed. Lieutenant Duncan Campbell of the 43rd was observed running about in circles, and at length fell on his face. When picked up, he was found to be blind from the effects of a grape-shot that had torn open his forehead. As he was borne insensible to the rear, with a convulsive grasp he clutched the hilt of his sword, the blade having been broken off by the shot, and then expired.

Three generals, 7 colonels, 75 officers, and 1781 soldiers had fallen in a few minutes. Pakenham was killed, Gibbs mortally wounded, his brigade dispersed, and Keane disabled. The command devolved upon Major-General Lambert. With the exception of the 200 of the 43rd in the centre, hardly a man was found all the way to the bank of the river, where Colonel Thornton had crossed. Lieutenant Rowley Hill of the 43rd remarked, "Look at the 7th and 43rd, like two seventy-fours becalmed. Why were they not led on?" Many old soldiers asked the same question, but in vain.

In conjunction with two companies of the 7th and 93rd, one of the 43rd, soon after the British artillery opened, had rushed forward under a murderous fire of cannon, rifles, and small arms, and although the Crescent battery was defended bravely, forced their way into it. But their ranks were nearly annihilated, as 8 officers and 180 men were killed or wounded. The remaining handful clung tenaciously to the battery ; four pieces of cannon were

taken, and the soldiers ensconced themselves in the exterior ditch, in hopes of succour. It was only when the grand attack failed that they retired, which was effected by some raising their caps on the points of their bayonets, and making a start inducing the enemy to fire a volley. Before the smoke cleared away, these men, at full speed, were almost beyond musket range. Only three officers of the whole detachment escaped unwounded. Lieutenant Steele of the 43rd alone got off scot free.

This company of the 43rd was commanded by Captain Robert Simpson. The subalterns were Lieutenants Duncan Campbell, Meyrick, and Alexander Steele—all volunteers. The loss amounted to 2 lieutenants, 1 sergeant, 1 bugler, and 11 rank and file, killed; 1 lieutenant, 2 sergeants, and 19 rank and file, wounded; 1 captain, 2 buglers, and 15 rank and file, missing and prisoners. The officers killed were Lieutenants Duncan Campbell and Meyrick; Captain Robert Simpson severely wounded and taken prisoner, and Lieutenant Darcy lost both legs by a round shot which entered his tent two days after. Captain Wilkinson—formerly of 43rd,—Acting Brigade-Major, had his horse shot under him, but observing that the Americans slackened fire, he rushed forward on foot: a ball pierced his body, and he fell into the shallow ditch. While gasping for breath, he said to the only officer who accompanied him, “Now, why do not the troops come on? the day is our own!” But it was too late, and the moment of probable victory eluded our grasp. The 7th and seven companies of the 43rd were still formed at within six hundred yards of the enemy’s lines, full of enthusiasm, and waiting impatiently for an order to force the passage; but there they were kept, idle spectators of the defeat, after having been brought so many thousand miles to join in the combat and anticipated triumph. While the reserve were still anxiously looking

for the result of Thornton's attack on the other side of the river, a volley was heard, then a few hasty discharges of artillery, and finally a round of lusty British cheers. The 85th had taken all the American works, batteries, sixteen pieces of cannon, and a stand of colours. On that side victory was complete: they were opposite to New Orleans, and enfiladed the enemy's lines.

Wonderful to relate, in this state of affairs, instead of renewing the main attack, a flag of truce was sent to General Jackson, asking leave to bury the dead—a request eagerly acceded to, on condition that no more troops should be sent across the river during the time so occupied. For the rest of that disastrous day, the reserve maintained their position. Two hours after dark they retired, on hearing that Colonel Thornton's party had been withdrawn from the opposite side of the river. Such was the sequel of a most inexplicable series of military tactics, and the failure was doubly galling when it became known that peace had actually been signed at Ghent, between England and America, a fortnight before this encounter; but in those days there was no submarine electric telegraph to flash intelligence with the rapidity of lightning from hemisphere to hemisphere.

On the 18th of January the British forces were entirely withdrawn from before New Orleans, and returned to the ships. In a few days they steered for Mobile Bay, and early in February landed on Dauphin Island, where they went under canvas, and on the 8th of April the 43rd with the 7th Fusiliers sailed for England. Off the Land's End a vessel hove to and distributed newspapers wherein long columns recounted Napoleon's invasion of France from Elba, with four small vessels, 800 infantry and 100 Polish dragoons, in an attempt to recover the Imperial diadem, at the very moment when the European plenipotentiaries were in solemn deliberation at Vienna.

On the 1st of June the 'Bucephalus' frigate, with part of the 43rd, let go her anchor at Spithead, and the transports, with the remainder of the corps, turned up a few days later, when all proceeded to comfortable quarters in Dover and Deal. A strong draft from the 2nd battalion, consisting of 1 captain, 3 lieutenants, 5 ensigns, 15 sergeants, and 190 rank and file, here awaited them.

On the 16th the regiment, mustering 1100 bayonets, was put aboard small craft for the purpose of joining the Allied army in the Netherlands. Landing at Ostend, they reached Ghent on the 19th, when their mortification may be better imagined than portrayed on finding that the great and decisive battle of WATERLOO, memorable for ever in all archives, military, political, or historical, had taken place, and the last act played out of the long, adventurous and stirring drama comprising the public life of one of the greatest yet direst of autocrats.

Joining the army near St. Denis, they were on July 4th placed in the 5th Division, under command of Major-General Sir James Kempt, and marched to Paris, where they encamped on the heights of Belville. On the 6th Louis XVIII. made his public entry into the French capital. On the 7th the 43rd moved to the banks of the Seine near Clichy, remaining until the 30th of October. They then went into cantonments at Melun and the adjacent villages. On the 30th of November a General Order fixed and formed into divisions and brigades that portion of the British forces intended to form the Army of Occupation in France.

The 43rd was placed in brigade with the 7th and 23rd Fusiliers, being one of the three comprising the 1st Division commanded by Lieut.-General Sir Lowry Cole, G.C.B. At Christmas they marched from Melun to Paris.

and occupied the caserne in the Place Verte, doing duty at the barriers.

#### 1816.

In January they marched for the north of France, followed by the 7th and 23rd. Early in February they reached Bapaume, the head-quarters of the battalion. Many fine soldiers, whose limited period of service had expired, left for England, and in October 100 undersized and worn men were also discharged and sent home.

#### 1817.

On the 3rd of April, in consequence of the reduction of the 2nd Battalion, a detachment of 1 captain, 6 subalterns, 6 sergeants, 8 buglers, and 154 rank and file, joined the first. On the 12th the regiment moved from Bapaume to Valenciennes, thence to Cambray, and encamped on the glacis. On the 11th of October they broke up from Cambray; returning to Valenciennes.

#### 1818.

Leaving Valenciennes in August, the 43rd returned to Cambray, and in September removed to Douchy. On the 23rd of October the whole of the British, Hanoverian, Saxon, and Danish contingents, under the command of the Duke of Wellington, were reviewed by the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia, and went through a variety of manœuvres. It was a grand military display. The troops of each nation in different columns, having a supposed enemy in front, moved between Cambray and Valenciennes, threw their pontoons over the river, and crossed under a heavy cannonade, a large force of artillery and cavalry in the field, several good charges being made by the latter. Upon arriving at the open ground overlooking Valenciennes, the troops passed the allied sovereigns in review order, and the next morning they were

all in motion for their different countries—some Cossacks having even to return to the walls of China. There was a grand ball given by the Duke of Wellington at the theatre at Valenciennes to the sovereigns in the evening.

On the 26th the British contingent of the Army of Occupation broke up and commenced its homeward route. The 43rd, still in brigade with the 7th and 23rd, arrived at Calais on the 31st, embarked for Dover, landed and marched to Canterbury.

#### 1819.

During the following month, while there, the strength of the regiment was reduced to the peace establishment,

	F O	Cpts.	Subs.	Staff.	Sergts.	Bugles.	R. & F.
From	4	10	30	6	55	22	810
To	4	10	20	5	35	22	650

Soon after this reduction, the regiment embarked for Ireland, and remained in barracks in Belfast until July, 1820.

In this year Lieut.-Colonel Napier left the regiment. On his leaving, all the officers who had served under him, even those who had quitted the service, or gone on half-pay, or into other regiments, subscribed to present him with a rich sword, bearing on its blade the following inscription :—

“Presented by LIEUT.-COLONEL PATRICKSON, C.B., and the Officers of the 43rd Light Infantry, to

LIEUT.-COLONEL WILLIAM F. P. NAPIER, C.B.,

as a testimony of their sincere regard for him, and their high admiration of the gallantry and conduct he ever displayed during his exemplary career in the 43rd Regiment.”

#### 1820.

In October of this year the 43rd removed to Dublin.

#### 1821.

On the 7th of March a communication from the Horse Guards was received, bearing date the 2nd, stating that

“His Majesty had been pleased to approve of the regiment being permitted to bear on its colours and appointments, in addition to any other badges or devices, which may have heretofore been granted to it, the words—

Vimiero,	Salamanca,
Busaco,	Vittoria,
Fuentes d'Onoro,	Nivelle,
Ciudad Rodrigo,	Nive,
Badajoz,	Toulouse,

in commemoration of the distinguished services of the regiment at the Battle of Vimiero, 21st of August, 1808; at the action of Busaco, 27th of September, 1810; at Fuentes d'Onoro, 5th May, 1811; at Ciudad Rodrigo, 19th of January, 1812; at the siege of Badajoz, 6th of April, 1812; at the Battle of Salamanca, 22nd of July, 1812; at Vittoria, 21st of June, 1813; at Nivelle, 10th of November, 1813; at the passage of the Nive, on the 9th, 10th, and 11th of December, 1813; and in the attack of the posts covering Toulouse, on the 10th of April, 1814.” A communication was also received, dated the Horse Guards, 22nd of March, 1821, stating “that His Majesty had been pleased to approve of the regiment being permitted to bear on its colours and appointments, in addition to any other badge or devices which may have heretofore been granted to the regiment, the word

CORUNNA,

in commemoration of the distinguished services of the 2nd Battalion, in the action fought near that town on the 16th of January, 1809.”

In August, on occasion of His Majesty King George IV. visiting Ireland, the 43rd, in conjunction with others forming the garrison of Dublin, was passed in review; the full colonel, Lord Howden, G.C.B., in command. In the same month, an order was received for the further



reduction of the army, and the regimental establishment was lowered

	F. O.	Cpts.	Subs.	Staff.	Sergts.	Corps.	Buglers.	R. & F.
From	4	10	20	5	35	30	22	620
To	4	8	16	5	30	24	12	552

#### 1822.

In December the regiment marched to Naas.

#### 1823.

In February, 1823, to Limerick; in June to Galway; and in July to Fermoy, previous to embarkation for Gibraltar, when Major William Haverfield succeeded to the command, by purchase, vice Colonel Patrickson who retired. The 43rd reached Gibraltar on the 9th of October, and were inspected by the Governor, the Earl of Chatham.

#### 1824.

Remained at Gibraltar. Here, for several months, General Don Miguel Alava was the honoured guest of the regiment. One of the finest specimens of the old Castilian nobles, his rare qualities both of head and heart rendered him beloved by all. Nephew of the Spanish Admiral Gravina, he was taken prisoner on board his ship and severely wounded at the Battle of Trafalgar. In 1810 he had been appointed Spanish Commissioner to the Duke of Wellington's head-quarters, which office he most efficiently filled until the close of the war, and had formed very intimate acquaintance with the officers of the 43rd. When the French invaded Spain in 1823, Alava, who had joined the Constitutional party, retired with their Government to Cadiz, carrying with them the King—Ferdinand. On the French storming the Rocadero they were obliged to submit, and deliver up Ferdinand. Alava was selected to hand over the King to the French outposts, and feeling that his life was no longer safe he

got on board a vessel direct for Gibraltar. So soon as his arrival in the bay was reported the officers of the 43rd begged him to take up his quarters in their barracks—a proposal which, with warm expressions of pleasure, he accepted. Other regiments on “the Rock” were solicitous to show him similar attentions, but he used invariably to reply, “I like to live with my own family here—my old friends the 43rd.”

Afterwards, during Lord Melbourne’s administration, Don Alava filled the diplomatic post of Ambassador at St. James’s.

1825.

Early in the year, General Foissac le Tour, the general commanding the French army in Spain, came to Gibraltar. Colonel Haverfield being absent on leave, Major Booth offered to show him the regiment. He replied he should be delighted, and came on the ground in full dress, a large crimson saddle-cloth embroidered in golden fleurs de lys, and attended by his aide-de-camp, nearly as richly caparisoned. On the conclusion of the field-day, General Foissac said, “Major Booth, you have well commanded your well-instructed regiment. This day has disabused me of an error of twenty years. I always thought the French infantry the quickest to move in Europe, but they are nothing to you, you move like cavalry!”

Singularly enough the French General thus unwittingly parodied the old Shorncliffe *refrain*—

“No cavalry in England can form a line so quick,  
As the 43rd Light Infantry can—at the double-quick!”

A feat of surprising agility was at this time performed by Lieutenant Daniel Freer of the 43rd. Returning from a shooting-excursion with some brother officers, he was laughingly challenged, as they neared the saluting battery of twenty-one mounted guns on iron carriages, to jump one. To the astonishment of the spectators, he instantly

jumped over the whole twenty-one, one by one, and turning back repeated the exploit without flagging.

A General Order was issued, directing that four companies of each regiment abroad—East Indies excepted—should be stationed at home, and also that the strength of such regiments should be augmented from eight to ten companies: the corps abroad to have six service-companies consisting each of 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 4 sergeants, 4 corporals, 10 buglers, and 82 privates. The four reserve companies at home to have each 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 ensign, 3 sergeants, 3 corporals, 1 bugler, and 52 privates. A selection of officers and non-commissioned officers made for the purpose of joining the recruiting stations in England, arrived at Plymouth in July, where "THE DEPÔT" had arrived from the Isle of Wight; and in August the reserve companies consisted of 4 captains, 3 lieutenants, 2 ensigns, 1 assistant-surgeon, 14 sergeants, 4 buglers, and 84 rank and file. In October, the Depôt marched to Colchester, leaving a detachment of 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant, and 44 privates, for embarkation to join the service companies.

#### 1826.

In January the establishment of the reserve companies was completed, and they marched for Plymouth, where they remained until October, 1830.

#### 1827.

Owing to the disturbed state of Portugal, and the hostile attitude of Spain, a British force of about 5000 men was despatched to the Peninsula, under command of Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton, G.C.B. The service companies of the 43rd, being ordered to form part of that contingent, embarked from Gibraltar on board the 'Melville,' 74, for the Tagus.

On the 5th February they entered barracks at Lisbon, in brigade with the 23rd Fusiliers. Thence they marched by Coimbra to Leiria, remaining until the 19th, when they removed to Thomar, and on the 26th July made for Lumiar, which was reached on August 6th, after a fearfully harassing time, the heat being excessive, and many men expired from sunstroke. On the 11th the regiment marched to Belem for embarkation on their return to Gibraltar. This Portuguese episode furnished a strange contrast to the stirring incidents which had marked the footsteps of the 43rd over much of the same ground in 1810 and 1811.

A French paper related, as an incident of this *quasi* campaign, afterwards translated into the 'United Service Journal' of June, 1827, as follows:—

*"Military Punishment.*—A new kind of punishment has been inflicted in Lisbon upon an English soldier. Wishing to have his fill of port wine, and his finances being rather in a low state, he sold a pair of breeches to obtain the means of satisfying his thirst. This fact having been reported to his superiors, the soldier was compelled to stand sentinel two hours at the door of the barracks, in full uniform, but *sans culottes*."

#### 1828.

The 43rd, having returned to "the Rock," remained in barracks until the 17th September, when they were placed under canvas on the neutral ground, a mortal epidemic having broken out in garrison. The loss sustained amounted to 2 sergeants, 1 bugler, and 86 rank and file, including many of the finest and most athletic soldiers in the corps.

#### 1829.

On the 10th January the regiment returned to their barracks, the scourge having been arrested.

## 1830.

On the 29th of June, 1830, by the death of Lieut.-Colonel William Haverfield, Major Henry Booth succeeded to the command of the regiment. By an order of the 2nd of August, the *Gorget*, as well as the "*black cockade*" of England, heretofore worn by every rank, was abolished, and a paltry gold crown substituted for the latter.

Disturbances of a serious nature having broken out in the manufacturing districts at home, orders were given to stop the Admiral's flag-ship, the 'Windsor Castle,' on her course from Malta to England, and the whole of the 43rd, with little or no preparation—men, women, children, and baggage—were hustled on board, quitting Gibraltar the same night, the 17th of December.

Soon after getting under weigh, the weather became thick, and as the 'Windsor Castle' got abreast of Tarifa, all hands were surprised by a discharge from the batteries on the Mole. One round shot flew over the poop, another struck the ship just under the quarter-galley. Guns were ordered to be run out to return the salute, but the current carried the vessel past the Mole before they could be brought to bear. It afterwards appeared it was customary to fire at all ships approaching the land after dark, and the 'Windsor Castle' having drifted within the proscribed limit, Jack Spaniard boldly let fly into her. Notwithstanding the overcrowd on board, the greatest possible good humour and *bon-homme* existed during the whole passage between the brave tars and their red-coated visitors.

## 1831.

The regiment disembarked at Portsmouth on the 2nd of January, marching on the 5th to Winchester Barracks, where, by express command, it was detained until the Duke of Wellington came down from London, accompanied by Lord Fitzroy Somerset, to inspect his old tried

and favourite corps. Towards the end of the month they received a route for Manchester, and arrived there on the 14th of February. The reserve companies joined from Bolton. The whole strength thus consisted of 3 field-officers, 10 captains, 10 lieutenants, 10 ensigns, 6 staff, 42 sergeants, 36 corporals, 14 buglers, and 653 privates. The head-quarters, with six companies, were then, in aid of the civil power, detached to Wigan, and from thence to Haydock Lodge; while four companies, under Major Furlong, marched to Newcastle-under-Lyne, in consequence of insurrectionary ebullitions in the Potteries. Major George Johnson retired, and was succeeded by Captain Edward Walpole Keppel. Major Johnson had, throughout the Peninsular War and in the attack on New Orleans, served with the 43rd. He was slightly wounded at Badajoz.

#### 1832.

In January the regiment moved to Dublin, and the Insurrection Act at that time being in force in Ireland, the captains were placed in the commission of the peace.

#### 1833-34.

On the 8th of April the 43rd broke up from Dublin; the head-quarters proceeded to Castle Comer, the out-stations being Carlow, Castle Durrow, Maidenhead, Ballyragget, and Johnstown. At the end of May head-quarters removed to Kilkenny, with detachments throughout the country. In August the whole regiment moved to Cork, where they remained, under command of Major-General Sir T. Arbutnot, until the 4th of June, 1835, the period of departure for New Brunswick, North America.

#### 1835-36.

The service companies having been selected, the under-mentioned officers embarked in the 'Prince Regent'

transport, and proceeded up the St. John river to Fredericton, the capital and seat of government of the province :—

Lieut.-Colonel Henry Booth, *in command*.—  
 Captains Charles R. Wright.  
 „ Samuel Tryon.  
 „ Hon. A. A. Spencer.  
 Lieutenants J. Thomas.  
 „ J. Meade.  
 „ Jones.  
 „ Hon. C. R. West.  
 Ensign Hoste.  
 Surgeon Miller.  
 Adjutant Priestly.  
 Quarter-Master S. Rand.

The left wing sailed for St. John. The officers comprised :—

Major E. W. Koppel.  
 Captains W. Frazer.  
 „ W. Egerton.  
 „ W. Bell.  
 Lieutenants F. Sanders.  
 „ J. A. Pearson.  
 „ Levinge.  
 „ W. D. Oxendon.  
 „ Lord William Hill.  
 Ensigns J. C. Coote.  
 „ A. L. Cole.  
 „ H. Skipwith.  
 „ W. H. Herries.

Previous to anchoring, a steamer came alongside off Partridge Island, and carried away Lieutenant Pearson and twenty-five men to East Port, on the frontier of the State of Maine. The dépôt companies left at Cork were under the command of Major Furlong.

#### 1837.

On the occasion of Sir Archibald Campbell's resignation of the government of New Brunswick—the conqueror of