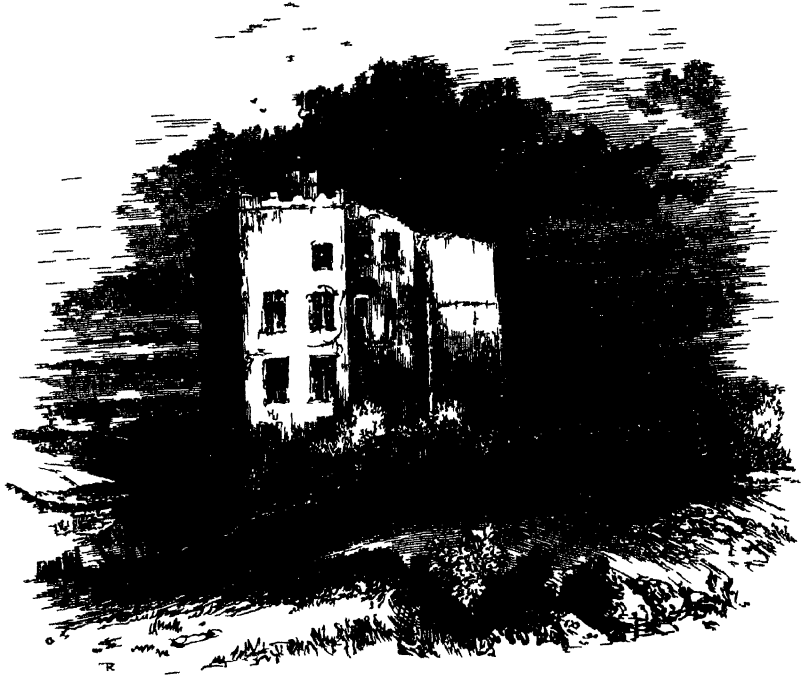

DENGAN CASTLE

THE

MILITARY LIFE

ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
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THE

MILITARY LIFE

ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

PART I.—INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

1769—1802.

Birth and early life.—Holland.—India.—Lord Mornington's government.—War with Tippoo.—Seringapatam.—Command in Mysore—War with Doondiah Waugh.—Expedition to Egypt.—Return to Seringapatam.

In a wild but picturesque part of the county of Meath stands Dengan Castle, the seat of the Wesleys or Wellesleys, in whose direct line the old place remained until the year 1728, when it passed to a cousin of the last possessor, and carried with it the name of Wellesley to the family of the Colleys. The Richard Colley who thus assumed the name of Wellesley was raised to the peerage as Baron Mornington by George II.; and the additional titles of Viscount Wellesley and Earl of Mornington were afterwards granted to his son, the father of the victor of Waterloo In 1759, Lord Mornington married the eldest daughter of Viscount Dungannon, and died in 1784, leaving a numerous family, an embarrassed estate, and an admirable widow, to whose carefulness and unremitting attention her children were mainly indebted for their success during their early struggles.

Arthur, the fourth son of this family, was born in 1769, at the old castle, and early sent to Eton, where his brother, the future Marquis of Wellesley, had already obtained celebrity. After a short stay at Eton, young Arthur was moved to France, and placed at the celebrated military school at Angers, to study the elements of his future profession under the able instruction of the famous Pignerol. In his sixteenth year the young student received his commission as ensign, and by the name of Arthur Wesley made his first appearance on our army list. In the December of the same year he was raised to a lieutenancy, and in June 1791 to the rank of captain in the 18th regiment of Light Dragoons.

Captain Wellesley, as his name was now written, was, at this time, in Parliament. As soon as he became of age, the interest of his brother, Lord Mornington, effected his return for the borough of Trim, and he sat as its representative in the Irish Parliament for a short time. Ruddy-faced and juvenile in his appearance, he is described as popular among his comrades, but unpolished, abrupt, and unsuccessful in his attempts in speaking in his place in the Irish House of Commons. The interest and money of his brother were applied to Arthur's progress in the army; and in 1793 he obtained his majority, and within a few months the lieutenant-colonelcy of the 33rd regiment.

In command of his new regiment, Colonel Wellesley was sent, in the spring of 1794, to form part of the expedition under Lord Moira, destined for the siege of Ostend. In June, Colonel Wellesley with his regiment joined Lord Moira's army; but in less than a month the progress of the French, under Pichegru, and the position of the Duke of York's army, rendered it advisable to draw off the forces from before Ostend, and endeavour to effect a junction with the allied army on the Scheldt. The junction was effected; but the assistance proved ineffective, and retreat at last became absolutely necessary. During that disastrous retreat, Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley obtained his first command of a brigade, to which the defence of the rear was entrusted; and already evidenced in his subordinate command sufficient zeal, activity, and intelligence, to warrant many able officers in predicting his future emi-

nence. With the opening of the spring of 1795, and the consequent breaking up of the ice, the ill-fated expedition re-embarked at Bremen, and returned ingloriously to our shores.

Colonel Wellesley's regiment was not long inactive; in the autumn it was ordered to join the fleet under Admiral Christian, the destination of which was the West Indies. In October the fleet sailed; but the winds proved adverse, and the weather too tempestuous to admit of a successful prosecution of the voyage, and eventually the fleet returned to the channel, the expedition was given up, and Colonel Wellesley's regiment consigned to quarters at Poole until the spring of the following year. In the spring of 1796 the 33rd were again embarked, and their destination was now the East Indies. Detained by severe illness, Colonel Wellesley was unable to accompany his regiment, but after a short delay, took a passage by a quick ship, joined his men at the Cape, and landed with them at Calcutta in February 1797.

India was at this time enjoying a short respite from the miseries of war; but a general feeling prevailed that, beneath the calm, a deep and deadly hatred lay concealed, ready to break out on the first opportunity. Concession had characterized the policy of the then Governor-General, Sir John Shore, until at last Sultan Tippoo had been emboldened to attack our settlements, and brought upon himself the siege of his capital and the defeat of his armies. To these successes peace had succeeded, but everything tended to excite the suspicions of the British that the interval was being used for renewed preparations, and that the momentary absence of the British army would induce Tippoo once more to pour his thousands over the plains of the Carnatic. These local reasons, and the knowledge that by the treaty of Campo Formio, Napoleon was now free to turn his attention to the East, led Sir John Shore to countermand an expedition already on its voyage against the Spanish settlement of Manilla, and of which Colonel Wellesley's regiment formed a part.

The return of the expedition would seem to have baffled the schemes of Tippoo; for a time they were delayed, and this wonderous man, the sworn enemy of the Christian, the

chosen servant of Mahomet, as he believed himself to be, the elected leader of a holy war against the heretics, the duly enrolled Citizen Tippoo of the jacobin club, continued his plots with the Mahrattas, the French in the Isle of France, and Zeman Shah in Candahar, and burned for the day when, with his holy turban on his brow, the turban that had been dipped in the sacred well of Zeman, he should unfurl the sacred banner and root out the Nazarenes from the soil of India.

It was at this juncture that Lord Mornington, Colonel Wellesley's elder brother, who had long occupied an active place in the Board of Control over India affairs, came out to Calcutta as the successor of Sir John Shore. On his arrival at Calcutta in 1798, Lord Mornington found our allies, the Nizam of the Deccan and the chief of the Mahrattas, weakening their forces by mutual disputes, and far from unwilling to aid Tippoo in his holy war. Immediate action was much required, but the crippled state of the Indian finances, and the unprepared state of the army, especially the native troops, for any continued exertion, compelled Lord Mornington to devote his earliest attention to the state of the finances The effect of Lord Mornington's government on the state of India was most rapid, and he was soon in a position to interfere with effect in the affairs of our allies. His first interference was with the Nizam. In the service of this prince were two subsidiary corps, the one British, as well in men as officers, the other composed of native troops, officered by Frenchmen, and called the French Brigade. The refusal of the government to allow the British Brigade to be employed in the private warfare of the Nizam had ended in the dismissal of that corps, and the augmentation of the French corps to numbers hazardous at once to the prince and the government of India. Lord Mornington endeavoured to prove to the Nizam the nature of his position,—in the end he succeeded; the French corps were ordered to be disbanded, that of the British to be trebled. Indeed it was time to act, for the French corps were on the eve of raising the French standard at Hyderabad, deposing the Nizam, and joining the army of Tippoo, when they were disarmed by the united forces of the Nizam and the British brigade.

Tippoo next demanded attention. Conciliation was at first attempted; but hardly had the disputed territory been ceded to him in the hopes of peace, when a proclamation of the French Governor of the Mauritius, revealed more clearly the union between the French and the Sultan, and the certainty of war so soon as the promised aid should arrive from France. To anticipate, to strike the blow before the powers were united, was evidently our only hope, and Lord Mornington immediately prepared to carry war into the country of Mysore, and by cutting off Tippoo from his coast territory in Malabar, effectually prevent his communicating by sea with his French allies.

Before the end of the year 1798, two armies were moving against the Mysore territory, the one from Bombay ascended by the Poodecherum Ghaut, the other from Madras marched towards Vellore. To this latter army the regiment of Colonel Wellesley was attached, and on him had devolved the chief command, until the junction of the commander-in-chief. Of the condition of Colonel Wellesley's division, General Hains spoke in the highest terms, when he joined them in the February of 1799: "they did honour," he said, "to themselves and their colonel, whilst the masterly and judicious arrangements as to supplies, which opened an abundant free market, and inspired confidence into dealers of every description, were no less creditable to Colonel Wellesley than advantageous to the public service." On the junction of the Nizam's contingent, the 33rd was attached to that force, and at the request of the Nizam's son, the command of that division entrusted to the colonel of that regiment

The combined army moved towards the capital of Mysore, little molested in the march, until on the 27th of March they encountered the Sultan's troops drawn up in battle array on the heights beyond the little town of Malavelly. The troops were soon formed for action, General Harris leading the right, Colonel Wellesley the left, and General Floyd, keeping the centre with his cavalry. Ordered to wait for the advance of the right and centre before commencing the attack, Colonel Wellesley perceived considerable confusion in his front, and marked the time for his attack; the officer who had brought General

Harris's orders agreed with the Colonel, and hastened back to report the circumstances to the commander-in-chief, assuring Colonel Wellesley that if he did not return in ten minutes his advice was approved. On this Colonel Wellesley acted, and led his division into action before the right and centre were ready to move. Noting the gap thus made between the centre and left, the Mysore infantry made a rapid charge on the left division, whilst their horse bore down on the combined right; reserving their fire until the enemy were within pistol shot, Colonel Wellesley's division poured in a destructive fire, and followed it up with a rapid charge of the bayonet. In a few moments the Mysore troops were driven back, and General Floyd's dragoons completed the confusion; whilst the right was equally successful in defeating the Mysore Cavalry. The battle was over:—above 2,000 of Tippoo's troops had fallen, whilst the victors had lost but three hundred.

From Malaveily to Seringapatam the advance of the British was uninterrupted; and on the 5th of April, by a judicious march over the Cauvery at a neglected ford, the entire force was congregated on the southern side of the great fortress, where Tippoo had made no new preparations for defence, believing that to the northern side the second attack, like the first, would be confined. Within a short time the Bombay army joined, and 35,000 troops in excellent condition and amply supplied with material were encamped before the capital of Mysore.

No sooner were the trenches commenced, than the working parties were annoyed by a heavy fire, chiefly of rockets from an advanced post on a rocky eminence near the walls. A night attack was determined on, and Colonel Wellesley led his own regiment and the 2nd Bengal Native Infantry to the attack. A small village in the front of the aqueduct was carried, but, on moving forwards, so severe was the fire that the troops recoiled and returned to the camp After relating his defeat to General Harris, Colonel Wellesley, conscious that he had performed his duty, retired to his tent and fell fast asleep, a coolness remembered in after days. On the morrow the attack was ordered to be resumed, and the command already offered to General Baird. A second thought prompted General Harris to

give Colonel Wellesley another chance, and General Baird cordially acquiesced and resigned his command to Wellesley. With the Scotch Brigade and two regiments of sepoys the attack was renewed, the wall-course carried with ease, and the village at the same time cleared of the enemy, and every impediment removed from the further progress of the trenches. In the gallant assault that so soon followed, by which the reign and life of Tippoo were closed on the ramparts of his capital, Colonel Wellesley held no active part; and whilst General Baird was leading his men to the attack, Colonel Wellesley remained in command of the reserve in the advance trenches to support the assaulting troops if necessary,

On the 3rd of May Seringapatam fell, and on the following morning the command of the capital was given to Colonel Wellesley. The city teemed with military licence, but the excesses yielded rapidly to the stern and indefatigable exertions of the new commandant. Four of the plunderers were immediately executed, and guards placed by Colonel Wellesley himself at the doors of the chief inhabitants. The effect was immediate, confidence was inspired, and the terrified inhabitants returned from the fields and jungles, and provisions and merchandize rapidly reappeared in the bazaars and streets of Seringapatam. At the head of the garrison, now permanently established, Colonel Wellesley was placed, and as governor of the capital a place was assigned him on the commission to which the division and settlement of the conquered territories, and the removal of Tippoo's descendants, and the re-establishment of the old family were committed.

It was no mere honorary office which Colonel Wellesley thus obtained on the commission. "The details of this painful, but indispensable measure," wrote Lord Mornington,* "cannot be entrusted to any person more likely to combine every office of humanity with prudential precautions required by the occasion, than Colonel Wellesley; and I therefore commit to his discretion, activity, and humanity, the whole arrangement, subject always to such suggestions as may be offered by the other members of

* Lord Mornington's Instructions.

the commission." The delicate and onerous duties were performed in a manner to justify his brother's recommendation, and to obtain the gratitude of the objects of his labours. When the conquered lands had been divided, the district command of the portion which fell to our share was entrusted to Colonel Wellesley.

In the spring of the year 1800 the command of a projected expedition against Batavia was offered to Colonel Wellesley. The contingent advantages of such an expedition were not likely to be despised, and the Colonel referred the offer to his immediate superior, the Governor of Madras, expressing his willingness to assume the command, if Lord Clive could dispense with his services. Rising troubles in the Mysore compelled Lord Clive to request Colonel Wellesley to remain in his command; and consequently, on the 31st of May, the Governor of Mysore declined the proffered command, and assured the Governor of Madras "that he could not think of relinquishing the command with which he had entrusted him, for any object of advantage or credit to be gained in another place." *

Among the prisoners released by the British from the dungeons of Tippoo, was Doondiah Waugh, a marauding chief, the discovery of whose intrigues had induced Tippoo to consign him to prison. No sooner did this chief regain his liberty, than he gathered together the remnants of Tippoo's forces, and commenced a desultory warfare against his liberators. Light detachments of our army moved against the freebooter, and after many a severe conflict he was driven into the neutral Mahratta territory; and by the autumn of 1799 our new provinces were freed from his ravages. But with the new year, Doondiah reappeared with renewed force, and boldly entered the territories of our ally the Peishwa, in sufficient force to call for the presence of the Governor of Mysore himself To refuse the command against Batavia and to march at once against Doondiah was to Colonel Wellesley the work of but a few days. Ceaselessly and by long marches he pushed on with a body of light infantry and four regiments of cavalry, and by the middle of July two of the freebooters'

* Colonel Wellesley to Lord Clive, 31st May, 1800.

forts had fallen, and the strong division of his army driven with heavy loss across the Malpoorba by Colonel Stevenson.

The advance of the British was greatly impeded by the neglect of the native commissariat authorities; and as early as the 30th of June Colonel Wellesley complained bitterly of his inability to move across the Werdar for want of grain. "His troops in high health, order, and spirits, but everything marred by the unfortunate defect of arrangements before his arrival"* In despite of delays, the British force crossed the Malpoorba early in September, and pressed Doondiah with their whole force. To prevent the chief from escaping into his rear and endangering his communications, Colonel Wellesley divided his forces into three divisions, pressing with one to the southward, whilst Colonel Stevenson moved to the north, and the Mahratta horse maintained the requisite communication between them. On the 9th Doondiah was within nine miles of Colonel Wellesley's division, utterly unaware of the neighbourhood of the British troops. On the following evening Colonel Wellesley moved forward, and met Doondiah's army at a place called Conahgull. "He was on his march, and to the westward, apparently with the design of passing between the Mahratta and Mogul cavalry, and Colonel Wellesley's detachment. He had only a large body of cavalry, about 5000, which were immediately attacked by the two regiments of British dragoons, and two of native cavalry. The enemy was strongly posted, with his rear and left flank covered by the village and rock of Conahgull, and stood for some time with apparent firmness; but such was the rapidity and determination of the charge made by those four regiments, formed in one line, in order at all to equalize in length that of the enemy, that the whole gave way, and were pursued for many miles."† The loss was severe, and the defeat and dispersion of the enemy complete. But above all, the death of the freebooter himself completed the rout, and put an end to the warfare, and permitted the return of Colonel Wellesley to his command in Mysore.

* Colonel Wellesley to Lieutenant-Colonel Close, 30th June, 1800.
† Colonel Wellesley to the Adjutant-General, 10th Sept., 1800.

Before the end of 1800 Colonel Wellesley was recalled from Mysore and appointed to the command of a large force, which the Governor-General had collected at Trincomalee, in order to operate in Egypt or menace the French settlement of the Mauritius. For more than a month Colonel Wellesley awaited the arrival of the admiral whose fleet was to accompany the expedition, and then on his own responsibility took as much of his army as he had shipping for to Bombay. Delay at Ceylon had materially decreased the stores, which could not be replaced there; it was too late to attempt the expedition to the Mauritius; ample stores could be obtained at Bombay, and that port was a far more convenient starting place for the expedition to the Red Sea, which Colonel Wellesley now learnt, by an overland dispatch from England, to be the main object of the armament. When off Cape Comorin the Governor-General's despatches announced the appointment of General Baird to the expedition, and the recal of Colonel Wellesley. Proceeding with his fleet Colonel Wellesley reached Bombay, and though openly expressing the serious injury thus done to him, and boldly defending his own acts to his brother, he volunteered to accept a subordinate command in Egypt, or on his own responsibility to commence the expedition, prepared to resign the command to General Baird so soon as he should arrive from Ceylon.*

But his generous intention was defeated by a severe attack of fever on the night of the 25th of March, which lasted until April, and then left him so weak that his doctors recommended a colder climate, and eventually a course of nitrous baths, to which the malady yielded. By this time the expedition to the Red Sea had sailed, and Colonel Wellesley solicited and obtained his old command at Mysore, whither he returned before the summer of 1801. Until the opening of the year 1803 India was at peace. But the Governor of Mysore was not idle; accurately foreseeing the certainty of a war with the Mahrattas, he devoted his spare time to acquiring information concern-

* To the Governor of Ceylon, 18th Feb., 1801. To the Governor General, 23rd March, 1801. To the Hon. H. Wellesley, 25th March, 1801.

ing their country and their power, and in a long and laborious memorial sketched out in detail the operations which would be necessary in the event of a campaign in that country. "Not before long," says the memorandum, "we may expect a war with the Mahrattas; it is proper to consider the means of carrying it on. The experience which has been acquired in the late contest with Doondiah Waugh, of the seasons, the nature of the country, its roads, its produce, and its means of defence, will be of use in pointing them out. I shall detail my observations on each of these points, for the benefit of those in whose hands may be placed the conduct of the operations of the army, in case of such a war as I have supposed we may expect."*

* Memorandum upon Operations in Mahratta territory, 6th September. 1801

CHAPTER II

1803—1805.

Origin of the Mahratta War—Appointment of General Wellesley.—March from Hurryghur—Battle of Assaye—Consequent movements.—Battle of Argaum.—Peace with the Rajah of Berar and Scindiah.—Return to Seringapatam—Reception of General Wellesley—Return to England.

THE rapid increase of our Indian Empire by the conquest of Mysore, and the reduction of its Rajah and the Nizam to mere tributaries, as well as by the cession of the dominions of the Nawaub of Oude, obtained by negociations, and the rule of the Carnatic assumed by force, brought our power in contact with the Mahratta kingdoms of the Deccan. The Peishwa, who held his court at Poonah, was the nominal sovereign of this powerful confederacy, but really a puppet in the hands of his independent Princes, Scindiah, Holkar, and the Rajah of Berar. For the government of this unfortunate Prince, Scindiah and Holkar had consumed the entire year of 1802 in mutual conflict; and, in the end, the poor Peishwa gladly fled to the British territory, and solicited the aid of a subsidiary force to enable him to make head against his rebellious subjects. The crisis demanded immediate action, and the Govenor-General forthwith collected two armies, one under General Stewart at Hurryghur, in the Madras territory, and another under Lord Lake in Oude. To the command of the advanced portion of General Stewart's force, the Governor of Mysore, now raised to the rank of Major-General, was appointed; and with 10,000 infantry and 2,000 horse, General Wellesley broke up from Hurryghur on the 9th of March 1803, and crossed the Toombudra into the territories of the Peishwa.

Worn out by the marauding of the Mahratta troops, the people of the country hailed as their deliverer, the

general who forbad his troops to take one bit of grain without payment, and placed his own sentinels over the fields, in order to prevent the slightest attempts at plunder by his numerous army, or its still more numerous followers.* Aware of the effect of seizing the capital, Major-General Wellesley hastened onward with his cavalry; and before Scindiah could interpose for its defence, entered Poonah on the 19th of March, after a march of sixty miles in the last thirty-two hours. The effect of the capture of the capital was immediate, and when, without delay, the Peishwa returned to his palace, and the rest of the army removed from Hurryghur, the majority of the subordinate chiefs tendered their submission, and some even joined their contingents to the British forces. Such, however, was not the conduct of Scindiah or the Rajah of Berar, both chiefs assembled forces, and refused to withdraw to their own territories, protracting negociations in the hope of creating further divisions, and increasing the number of their own allies, and the efficiency of their own forces. By the beginning of August war was certain. "The British government," wrote General Wellesley to Scindiah, "did not threaten to commence hostilities against you—you threatened to commence hostilities against them and their allies; and when called upon to explain your intentions, you declared that it was doubtful whether there would be peace or war; and, in conformity with your threats and declared doubts, assembled a large army in a station contiguous to the Nizam frontier. On this ground I called upon you to withdraw your army to its usual stations, if your pacific declarations were sincere; but, instead of complying with this reasonable requisition, you have proposed that I should withdraw the troops which are intended to defend the territories of the allies against your designs; and that you and the Rajah of Berar should be allowed to remain with your troops assembled to take advantage of their absence. This proposition is unreasonable and inadmissible, and you must stand to the consequences of the measures which I find myself obliged to adopt to repel your aggressions. I offered you peace upon terms of equality, and honourable to all parties;

* General Orders, 10th February, 1803.

you have chosen war, and are responsible for all the consequences." *

In the month of August the war began, and both armies moved to action; before the autumn of the year, Lord Lake had effectually broken the northern powers, and the terrible battles of Delhi and Laswarree had proved the courage of the British troops. In the Deccan the war commenced in the first week in August; and on the 8th, General Wellesley's force was before the strong town and citadel of Ahmednugger. An immediate escalade was ordered, and the wall, which was lofty, but without ramparts was successfully surmounted by our troops. With no ground on which to take a firm stand, the British suffered severely from the fire from the towers with which the wall was defended; but, in the end, the enemy was silenced, and in despite of the arrival of additional troops, the town captured. On the morrow, the siege of the fort commenced, and before night, the garrison capitulated, and Ahmednugger with its 1400 defenders surrendered to our troops. † General Wellesley proposed to move forward immediately; but again the want of supplies occasioned delay, and led him to warn the Governor of Bombay that the service could not be carried on in that manner; and that the troops must have regular supplies of provisions at command, or misfortune and disgrace would be the result." ‡

After a short delay the army advanced, crossed the Godavery, and pushed forward into the enemies' country. It was now a contest of manœuvres and ravages, Scindiah endeavouring to get into the rear of his opponents, and with reckless barbarity laying desolate every spot of which he held momentary possession. In such a contest as this the British general was seriously inconvenienced by insufficient intelligence. "We cannot," he writes, "send out natives in the Company's service, who from long habit might be able to give an accurate account, because they being inhabitants of the Carnatic or Mysore, are as well known in this part of the country as if they were Europeans; and

* General Wellesley to Scindiah, 6th August, 1803.
† To the Governor-General, 10th August, 1803.
‡ To the Governor of Bombay, 13th August, 1803.

we cannot view their positions ourselves till we can bring up the main body of our armies, because the enemy are always surrounded by immense bodies of horse. The consequence is, that we are obliged to employ as Hircarrahs the natives, and trust to their reports."* The effect of this was, that, eventually, but a portion of the British force had to encounter the entire army of the enemy.

Two passes had to be guarded, the one to the eastward, the other to the westward; on the 21st of September, General Wellesley had an interview with Colonel Stevenson, who commanded an entirely independent force of about 8000 men, and it was agreed to separate, and make each his way through one of the two passes, and then unite on the 24th, and attack the enemy. General Wellesley moved to the west, Colonel Stevenson by the eastern pass Naulniah was the appointed place of meeting, and there General Wellesley arrived on the 23rd. Assured by his scouts that the enemy was within but six miles of him, and already rapidly moving off, he deemed it important to make an immediate attack. Sending intelligence to Colonel Stevenson, General Wellesley marched towards the enemy. Again he had been deceived, and when from a high ground he first saw the enemy, he found them still in full force, and drawn up in battle array behind the steep banks of the Kartna river. 30,000 good cavalry formed their right as far as Bokerdum, and 10,000 infantry, covered by nearly an hundred pieces of heavy cannon, composed their centre and right.

Against this formidable array, the British general could bring but 8000 troops, of which 1600 were cavalry, and about that number British, and seventeen pieces of cannon, many of which, from the loss of their draft cattle and gunners, could not be rendered available in the conflict. Still there was nothing left but fighting, so imminently dangerous would it have been to retreat to his camp in the face of such a body of cavalry, and there await the junction of Colonel Stevenson's division. With the utmost confidence in themselves and their chief, the British troops crossed the Kartna by a ford beyond the enemy's left, and gradually drew up in two lines of infantry

* Memorandum on Battle of Assaye, 24th September, 1803.

and one of cavalry on the narrow plain on which the bulk of the enemy lay, between that river and the watercourse of the Juah.

No sooner were the British troops perceived than the enemy changed their front, pushing their right to the Kartna, and their left to the village of Assaye, which was surrounded by cannon. A corresponding change was made by General Wellesley, who now sought to manœuvre by his right, well aware that Assaye must fall when the enemy's right and centre were defeated. He, therefore, ordered his right, by a circular march to keep out of shot from the batteries of Assaye, whilst he prepared to lead the

left and centre against the remainder of the enemies' position. By one of those unlucky accidents which frequently happen, the officer commanding the piquets which were on the right, led immediately up to the village of Assaye; the 74th regiment, which was on the right of the second line, and was ordered to support the piquets followed them. There was a large break in the line

between these corps and those on the left They were exposed to a most terrible cannonade from Assaye, and were charged by the cavalry of the enemy. Here was the greatest loss from this danger; the British cavalry came to their aid, and with one gallant charge rescued the broken infantry, and drove back the Mahratta horse in confusion. Timely and indispensable was this aid, but still highly detrimental to the ultimate success. The cavalry were thus brought into action at too early a period, drawn into the cannonade, confused and separated among the broken infantry, the unity of the body broken, and the opportunity lost of using it to pursue and break up the defeated enemy, and thus to make the victory more complete than it was.

Meanwhile the left advanced under General Wellesley in the face of a fire that, for a time, caused the regiments to hesitate. It was but for a moment, and then with the utmost steadiness the Europeans and sepoys rushed on the guns, and drove the enemy from their strong position at the point of the bayonet. Though broken, the Mahrattas were not defeated, but fell back on Assaye, and were not driven from that post until the victorious left came to the aid of our sadly diminished right. From that moment the victory was decisive, and the enemy retreated on all points, unmolested indeed from the inefficiency of our cavalry. Heavy, indeed, had been the British loss, a third of the troops had fallen; but far heavier that of the Mahrattas, who besides a fearful list of fallen, were despoiled of nearly all their artillery, ammunition, and baggage, and so disheartened as to fly to a great distance from the field in utter confusion, so soon as they heard of the approach of Colonel Stevenson's force. When they reached the neighbourhood of Burhampoor, little more than two hundred remained of the imposing force that fought at Assaye.*

During the month that succeeded the battle of Assaye General Wellesley had as much trouble from the officers of the Nizam, whose territories he was defending, as from the indefatigable enemy who were soon ready for further action. Incessant quarrels with the Nizam's officers, and

* To Lieutenant-Colonel Close, Assaye, 28th September, 1803.

threats to leave them and their country to its fate, unless properly assisted and supplied by them, and rapid and long marches consumed his entire time. "Since the battle of Assaye," he writes, "I have been like a man who fights with one hand and defends himself with the other. With Colonel Stevenson's corps I have acted offensively, with my own I have covered his operations, and defended the territories of the Nizam and the Peishwa. In doing this, I have made some terrible marches, but have been remarkably fortunate: first, in stopping the enemy when they intended to pass to the southward; and, afterwards, by a rapid march to the northward, in stopping Scindiah when he was moving to interrupt Colonel Stevenson's operations, in which he would otherwise have undoubtedly succeeded."*

The effect of those manœuvres was the rapid fall of many fortified places of importance and renewed attempts at peace on the part of Scindiah, and a gradual driving back of the confederates to the eastward and approach to the fortress of Gawilghur, for the defence of which the united armies of Scindiah and the Rajah prepared to do battle, though a suspension of arms, and preliminaries of treaty existed at the time between the British and the former chief

It was late in the day of the 29th of November that the divisions of General Wellesley and Colonel Stevenson united at the village of Patterly, about nineteen miles to the north of the Poorna river. From the tower of the village a confusion was seen on the opposite plain of Argaum, which soon disclosed itself to be the united forces drawn up in battle array, in front of the village from which the plain is named; rightly divining the object of the enemy to be, to show a bold front for the evening, and retreat during the night, the general ordered an immediate attack. Formed in one line, the British army moved in a direction nearly parallel to that of the enemy, with the European cavalry in advance, and that of Mysore and the Mogul defending the rear. The enemy's infantry and guns were on the left of their centre, with a body of cavalry on their

* To Major Shawe, Pahlood, 26th October, 1803.

extreme left. Scindiah's army, a mass of cavalry, formed the right of the line, with its light troops on its own extreme right. For above five miles the line extended, in its rear the village of Argaum, whilst the plain in its front was much cut up by water-courses.

Marching his own division of infantry to the village of Hersooly, but half a mile in the front of the enemy, General Wellesley prepared to form there the Anglo-Indian army. A sudden and violent cannonade broke some Sepoy regiments, and they sought shelter behind the houses of the village. Without a moment's delay, General Wellesley, reformed them behind the village, and led them round to the right, whilst the enemy continued to pour their fire to the left, where the British had first appeared. The army was soon formed in two lines, and moved to the attack with its artillery at intervals in the line. The conflict was short, for excepting a Parsee battalion that fought hand to hand with the soldiers of the 74th and 78th regiments, the enemy rapidly gave way, and left nearly forty pieces of cannon, and all their ammunition in the hands of the British.* With a loss that did not reach above 150 men, a great victory had been obtained, and the important fortress of the Rajah of Berar opened to the approaches of the Anglo-Indian forces. Hither the troops immediately marched, and in despite of its triple row of defences, this stronghold fell before the middle of December, and the Rajah of Berar hastened to conclude a treaty with his conqueror, and secure a portion of his vast possessions, by the surrender of several provinces, and by engaging to remove every French officer from his service. Scindiah, too, hastened to make his peace, and an equally advantageous treaty stripped him of much power and territory, and forced him to maintain a subsidiary British force, nominally as a defence against his old ally Holkar, but really as a check against his own designs. Thus, in less than twelve months the most powerful Mahratta confederacy had been utterly broken.

Beyond the dispersion of a numerous horde of Pindaree plunderers during the beginning of the year 1804, General Wellesley had no military employment in the field, and

* To the Governor-General, Camp at Patterly, 30th November 1803.

hastened to leave the Deccan, after in vain having attempted to impress on the Peishwa and his ministers the necessity of a new system of management, and more vigorous punishment of the robber hordes with which his territories were infested. Rewards and honours awaited General Wellesley's return. The inhabitants of Calcutta voted a sword of the value of a thousand pounds, fêtes, salutes, and addressess welcomed him at Bombay, and a golden vase, afterwards changed to a service of plate embossed with "Assaye," marked the feelings of the officers of his own division. The outbreak of Holkar for a time recalled General Wellesley to the Deccan, but the successes of the Commander-in-Chief against that chief, soon enabled him to resign his military and political powers, and return to his government of Seringapatam. Summoned for a time to aid in the military deliberations at Calcutta, and to receive the honor of a Companionship of the Bath bestowed on him by his sovereign, Sir Arthur Wellesley returned by the winter of 1804 to his old command. But all his thoughts were now given to his return to Europe to recruit his shaken health, and early in 1805 he resigned his post, and prepared to revisit England Addresses of every kind poured in, and his officers, his native subjects, and the civil servants of the government, alike agreed in testifying to his merits, and regretting his departure. In March he sailed for England, after receiving the thanks of the King and the Parliament for his services in the Deccan.

PART II.—THE PENINSULA.

CHAPTER I.

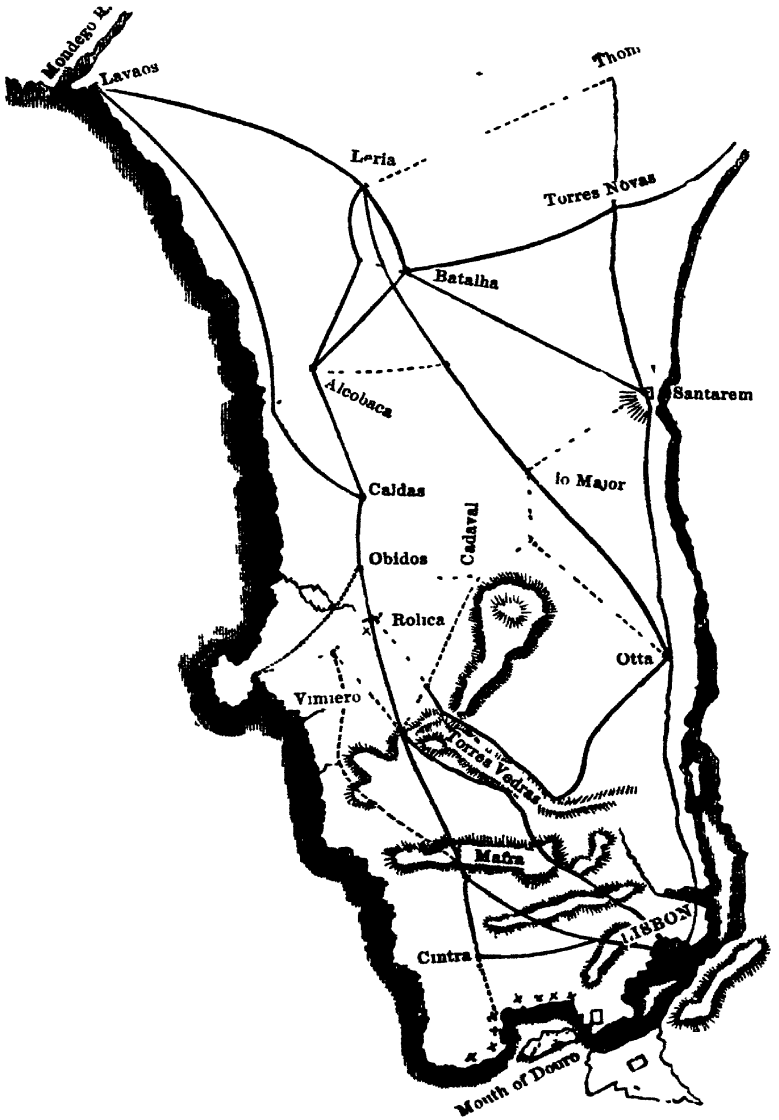
1805—1808.

ROLICA—VIMIERO.

Expedition to Copenhagen.—First expedition to Portugal.—State of that country.—Mondego Bay.—Combat of Rolica.—Battle of Vimiero.—Convention of Cintra.—Return to England.

IN the autumn of the year of Sir A. Wellesley's return to England, the English government sent an expedition to Hanover under the command of Lord Cathcart, and gave a subordinate command to the conqueror of the Deccan. The victory of Austerlitz defeated the object of the expedition, and it returned to England, and Sir Arthur was doomed to the minutiæ of military duties as commandant of a brigade of infantry located in Sussex. The death of Lord Cornwallis had now rendered the colonelcy in his old regiment vacant, and Sir Arthur succeeded to the command. During the year 1806, and the spring of 1807, Sir Arthur Wellesley's chief employment was in parliament, where he defended with striking effect the measures of his brother in India, and afterwards accepted the office of Chief Secretary of Ireland, under the viceroyship of the Duke of Richmond. During this interval, Sir Arthur married Miss Pakenham, the daughter of Lord Longford.

The danger anticipated by England from the probable union of the Danes with Buonaparte, determined the government on anticipating their movements, and sending a powerful fleet to threaten their capital, and either


Mondego R.
Lavaos
Leria
Thom
Torres Novas
Batalha
Alcobaca
Santarem
Caldas
Cadaval
Obidos
Rolica
Otta
Vimiero
Torres Vedras
Mafra
LISBON
Cintra
Mouth of Douro

force them into neutrality or seize their navy. In this expedition Sir Arthur Wellesley commanded the reserve, while to Lord Cathcart the command-in-chief was allotted. In the events which followed, the able manœuvres of the reserve so far tended to the eventual surrender of the Danes, that Parliament deemed their thanks due in an especial manner to the able general under whose command the success of his division had been achieved. The rapid success of the expedition soon released Sir Arthur Wellesley from his command, and permitted his return to his duties in Ireland and in Parliament until the spring of the year 1808, when he first embarked for the shores of Portugal.

The secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit between the Emperor of Russia and Napoleon, enabled the latter to complete the design he had long formed against the kingdom of Portugal. The injudicious conduct of Godoy, the Spanish minister, precipitated the event. On the eve of the victory of Jena, he had called upon the Spaniards to rise against their former allies, and stoutly resist the encroachments of the French. The victory of Jena enabled Napoleon to turn this proclamation to advantage, pretending to admit the excuses rendered by Godoy, he led the Spanish Government to sanction the passage of his troops across their territories, by the bribe of a share of Portugal, against which country the expedition was nominally destined. By the treaty of Fontainebleau the northern portion of Portugal was to be the prize of Spain, the central that of France, and the southern raised into a principality for the Spanish minister.

Immediately the French contingent crossed the Pyrenees and pushed across Spain. The orders were imperative to risk everything, and, if possible, to intercept the flight of the royal party from Lisbon, or the occupation of the capital by British troops. Regardless of roads or weather, and at the sacrifice of the lives and strength of his troops, Junot reached the vicinity of Lisbon with a small straggling column, without baggage or artillery, and reduced to swords and bayonets for weapons of offence. But the prowess of the nation had preceded the troops, and the skeletons entered Lisbon without resistance; and

from the walls of Belem Junot saw the English fleet conveying the royal family to their refuge in Brazil. The great prize had escaped, and the Regency left in power readily obeyed the orders of the French general, and enforced his commands in their own names.

It was November 1807 when Junot entered Lisbon with his haggard advanced guard. Before the close of the year he was in full possession of the country, and the division agreed upon at Fontainebleau seemed commenced; as already in the northern provinces, taxes were levied in the name of the King of Spain. On the 1st of February 1808, all was changed. The Milan decree of the previous December was promulgated; the house of Braganza had ceased to reign, the partition treaty was a dead letter, and the French power supreme over the entire kingdom of Portugal.

Remonstrance on the part of the Spaniards was useless; for already 60,000 French troops were in Spain, and all to the north of the Ebro in Napoleon's power. To force was added treachery, and thus possession acquired of some of the strongest fortresses of the country. The designs of the emperor were evident; but the moment for resistance had passed, and at the time when Murat entered Burgos as Lieutenant of the Emperor in the Peninsula, flight was deemed the only resource for the royal family. The mob of the capital prevented the execution of this design, and terrified the old King Charles VI into the abdication of his crown in favour of his son Ferdinand. But on the day that the new king entered Madrid, Murat's advanced guard entered also, and military possession was taken of the capital.

Treated with outward respect, but not recognised by Murat as king, Ferdinand was soon decoyed to a meeting with Napoleon at Bayonne, impressed with the idea that he should be enabled to retain his throne by abject submission to Napoleon. Thither, too, the old king and queen, the younger princes, and the infamous Godoy, were persuaded to repair, in despite of the resistance of the people of Madrid, who rose against the French, and were mercilessly massacred by the soldiers of Murat.

For some time the emperor had determined to place one of his brothers on the Spanish throne, and the obtaining an act of resignation from the old king was an easy matter. Ferdinand was less tractable, but threats were at last successful, and on the 2nd of May the crown was signed away to their friend the emperor, and the royal captives transferred to France, there to linger in confinement, whilst their subjects were fighting for their own and their prince's rights.

Before the pliant Joseph Bonaparte could arrive in his new kingdom, every spot where his brother's troops were not present was in arms against the new monarch. The best of the Spanish troops had been drawn from Spain to serve in the imperial armies, but the remnants still prepared to meet their opposers in the plains, whilst in the mountains every peasant seized his gun, and commenced partizan warfare on the invaders. Universal as these efforts were, they were much weakened by the want of a powerful central government to direct them. Every province had its provisional government or junta, and though that of

Seville assumed national power, and claimed to be a central governing junta, still the local governments would persist in making war for themselves, and in their own manner. Thus divided, the Spaniards every where fell victims to the combination and military skill of the French, and save behind the walls of some few towns, and in the mountainous districts, were unable to oppose the progress of their disciplined troops. Still the nation fought with desperation, and too often with cruelty; excesses of the most fearful kind characterized their earlier attempts. Gradually, but surely, the French troops spread over Spain, and formed the sieges of its strong places, until at length at Baylen, General Dupont suffered himself to be so hemmed in, as to be defeated, and his entire force made prisoners of war. The capitulation of Baylen relieved Saragossa from its imminent peril, compelled King Joseph to evacuate Madrid, and forced the French to retreat to the north bank of the Ebro.

Such was the state of affairs in the Peninsula, when the force assembled at Cork was ordered to the coast of Portugal. On the 12th of July the expedition sailed from Cork, and by the 3rd of the next month, the troops were landed in Mondego Bay, which place their general had selected for his debarkation, in preference to risking them in Spain, where national pride refused co-operation, or subjecting them to a certain loss in forcing a landing at the mouth of the Tagus. His position was far from encouraging, with an army of little more than 12,000 men, few of whom had seen service, a commissariat utterly inadequate, cavalry few and in bad condition, artillery ill-provided with horses, and allies without confidence in themselves or their friends, he had to oppose a united army of brave and disciplined men, full of the confidence inspired by victory, and implicitly relying on the able generals who had so often led them to victory.

Refusing the absurd advice of the Portugese general, to throw himself into the province of Beira, Sir Arthur Wellesley left the bulk of his allies at Leira, and with his own forces moved towards Lisbon by the coast road. He was already aware that the home government had

superseded him in his command, but as he wrote to Lord Castlereagh "whether he was to command the army or quit it, he still would do his best to ensure its success, and was far above hurrying operations, or commencing them one moment sooner than they ought to be commenced, in order to acquire the credit of success." He had already formed his opinion of the capabilities of the country and its people, and in the same letter in which he acknowledged his recal, had advised the construction of a Portuguese army of 30,000 troops, and a British one of 20,000, as a sure means of operating with success on the Spanish frontier, and rescuing Portugal for ever from the power of Napoleon.*

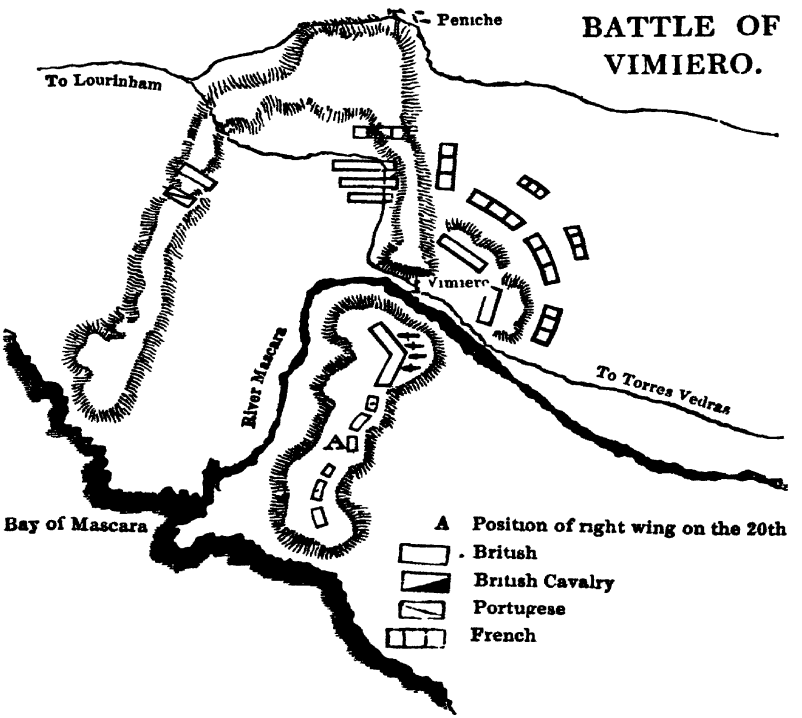
Two divisions of the French were retiring before the British, that of Laborde about 6000 strong, by the coast road, that of Loison, hardly so numerous, by the great Lisbon road. With the first of these corps, Sir Arthur Wellesley came up at Rolica on the 16th of August. Immediate action was important, for on the night of the 16th, a monk of Alcobaça came to the British camp and demanded an interview with the general. It was granted, and he revealed the intended departure of the French on the morrow, in order to form a junction with Loison, who was rapidly nearing their position Strong as was the French position, Sir A. Wellesley, confident in his troops, and rendered more so by his great superiority of numbers, commenced the attack on the morning of the 17th; without waiting for the result of his flank movements, he made a simultaneous attack on the heads of the several passes occupied by the French, and, in despite of a long and gallant resistance, the few regiments that bore the brunt of the battle, far inferior in numbers to their opponents, carried every point, and drove back the enemy with a heavy loss in men and artillery.

An immediate pursuit on the following morning would have ensured the destruction of the French army, but the news of the arrival of reinforcements, and the knowledge that the superiority of the French in cavalry would enable them to intercept their junction with his own force, compelled Sir Arthur Wellesley to manœuvre, to cover their

* To Lord Castlereagh, 1st August 1808.

disembarkation, and thus allowed Marshal Junot to concentrate at Torres Vedras, and with powerful forces to move to attack the British in their position of Vimiero. The new commander, Sir H. Burrard, was still in the offing, and forbad any forward move, so Sir Arthur had but to await his opponents' attack.

In the valley of the Maceira, about two miles from that river's mouth, lies the little village of Vimiero. Between



it and the sea-coast runs a range of heights reaching to the shore, and on the other side another range extends to the village of Perenza, and then turns back sharply, and almost in a parallel line to the coast. Between these

heights, the road from Torres Vedras to Lourinham runs through the village, in front of which a flat hill of no great size commands the approach. On this hill, two brigades of infantry and six guns were in position, in the village were the stores and ammunition, and on a small plain in its rear lay the cavalry and Portuguese, on the heights from Vimiero to the sea the bulk of the British were stationed, whilst a few piquets lined the edge of the left ridge.

Such was the British position when the break of day of the 21st showed the French in full march against the village and left ridge, where were only light piquets; immediately two brigades were moved across the valley, and formed on the left ridge at right angles to those on the hill in front of the village, whilst the rest of the right wing moved to the edge next the village, and the other division hastened to support the threatened points; on the centre and left the whole force of the battle broke. It was intended that the attacks should be simultaneous, but that on the left got entangled in a ravine, and Laborde alone engaged the centre, and was compelled to be supported by another division, whilst a third corps moved the extreme right, and endeavoured to aid Brennier in his attack on the left of the British; everywhere the attack failed. In the centre, the French were driven back with heavy loss; and on the left, where they expected no resistance, they were hurled back by the two brigades, and at the same time their rear threatened by the movement of the Portuguese, and another British brigade on the parallel ridge. Before noon the battle was over; with only a portion of his army, Sir A. Wellesley had driven back the entire French force, and effectually separated it into two divisions, which were now at the mercy of an army, a great portion of which had not yet fired a shot. At the moment when our left was pressing the French right into the hollows about the village of Perenza, and our right and centre closing in on their defeated divisions in the plain of the Maceira, the order came to stop. Sir Harry Burrard, who had been on the field for a considerable period, interfered for the first time; our victorious career was arrested, and Junot's shattered army allowed to retreat to Torres

Vedras. It was in vain that Sir A. Wellesley urged upon the new general, that the left had but to follow up their advantage, and the centre to move on the now open road to Torres Vedras, to ensure the advance of our forces on Lisbon before the retreating French could arrive there. To every argument he was deaf, "Well, then," said the victor of Vimiero, "we have nothing to do but go and shoot red-legged partridges." A general as prisoner, with several hundred of his men, fourteen pieces of cannon, and some two thousand killed and wounded, composed the losses of the French in their first general action with the great captain.

Sir H. Burrard's command was but short: on the morning after the battle, Sir Hugh Dalrymple landed in the bay of Maceira, and assumed the chief command. In forty-eight hours three commanders had exercised authority, and the last came recommended to put more than usual confidence in the skill and knowledge of the first. The new general indeed determined to advance, now that the opportunity was lost, and at the same time to concentrate all his troops at Vimiero, instead of acceding to Sir A. Wellesley's request to move those of Sir J. Moore on Santarem, and thus render the advance on Lisbon advantageous by preventing the rapid junction of the French corps from the north.

But all plans were rendered nugatory by the conduct of the French. A sudden alarm reported the enemy to be advancing in force, and soon a strong body of cavalry was seen approaching the outposts. A flag of truce showed the nature of the visit, and within a few minutes General Kellerman was in communication with the head commander at the quarters of Sir Arthur Wellesley. He came to propose a suspension of hostilities as introductory to a convention for the evacuation of Portugal by the French armies. To this armistice Sir Arthur gave his sanction; to the convention of Cintra, which sprang from it, he neither gave his sanction, nor did he interfere with its construction, beyond earnestly protesting against some of its terms, but with little success from the jealousy with which his advice was received by the Commander-in-Chief.

It is needless to particularize the terms of this convention, which provided for the evacuation of Portugal by the French army, allowing them not only their arms and baggage, but actually permitting them to serve again on their arrival in France, and guaranteed that they should be conveyed to their native country in our ships. Of the necessity of a convention for the evacuation of the country Sir Arthur Wellesley felt assured, so soon as he found that Sir J. Moore's troops were to move to Maceira bay, and such a delay caused as would enable the enemy to fortify their positions before Lisbon, and secure their retreat into Spain. But with the terms of that convention the conqueror of Vimiero did not agree. Frequently he warned his superior officer of their effects; and in one instance, that of the Russian fleet then lying in the Tagus, prevented that from being included in the convention. From that moment Sir Arthur Wellesley determined to return home. "I am afraid," he wrote, "that I am so much concerned with the credit of this army, that I cannot remain without falling with it, as it will fall. If I could be of any use to men who have served me so well, I would stay with them for ever; but as matters are situated, I am convinced that I can be of no use to them," * The general officers, indeed, appreciated his worth, and testified their feelings in a letter of thanks to their successful general; but every day made his situation more unbearable, and compelled him to feel that he had been too successful with the army to serve in it in a subordinate situation, with satisfaction to the person commanding, and of course not to himself" †

During the short period which elapsed between the conclusion of the convention, and the departure of Sir Arthur Wellesley from Portugal, one offer, which cannot but raise a smile, was pressed upon him by Lord Castlereagh, through his jealous commanding officer. It was to go into the Asturias, and consume his time and trouble in the work of some subaltern in the quarter-master general's department, by examining the country, and reporting upon its strength to Sir Hugh Dalrymple. Humi-

* To Captain Malcolm, Torres Vedras, 29th August, 1808.
† To Lord Castlereagh, Torres Vedras, 30th August, 1808.

liating as the task was, and little suited to his knowledge of drawing, or capabilities in designing, he would have deferred to Lord Castlereagh's wish, and formed his opinion and plan for the defence of the Asturias, could he but have felt assured that it would have been attended to. But feeling that it would be an idle waste of time, and an imposition on the government, to go thither with the pretence of giving them or their general an idea of the country, and equally vain and fruitless to form a plan for its defence, the execution of which must be left to another, he declined the mission, and again pressed for his recal.*

One more attempt was made to render the services o. Sir A. Wellesley useful to the Spanish cause. The necessity for some confidential agent in Spain, who could communicate the British plans to the Spanish authorities, and concert with them such measures as were necessary for carrying out the combined projects had long been felt, and some such position seems to have been now offered to Sir A. Wellesley. If it was intended that his powers and his means of exerting them should comprise all Spain, and all its various juntas, he felt that the unbounded confidence of his employers must be guaranteed. To be able to recommend any plan with authority to the Spaniards, the plans of his employers, their means for carrying them out, and to enable the Spaniards to execute the plans proposed to them, must be fully confided to such agent. Nor, indeed, was a less confidence required if the mission was confined to merely arranging with the Spanish generals and their military committee, a plan for the remainder of the campaign. The necessity of such confidence, and its absence in his case he freely declared to the commander-in-chief, and consequently the scheme fell to the ground.†

The discussions and quarrels incident on the operation of the convention and the embarkation of the French troops soon convinced Sir Arthur Wellesley that the command of the army must be changed, and that on no one better than Sir John Moore it could fall. As early as the 17th of September, he stated this to Sir John, and entreated him to be on better terms with the ministry,

* To Lord Castlereagh, Zambujal, 5th September, 1808.
† To Sir H. Dalrymple, Zambujal, 10th September, 1808.

in order that there might be no obstacle to his assumption of the command so soon as Sir Hugh Dalrymple and Sir H. Burrard were recalled to answer for themselves as to the convention of Cintra.

By the 6th of October General Wellesley was again in England, and addressing Lord Castlereagh an official account of his share in the late transactions, now subjected to a military inquiry. Before that commission, to which the convention was referred, Sir Arthur attended, and after a plain statement of facts, as readily admitted and defended his first advice on the convention, as he denied his concern with its actual terms and final form. In the end it was determined that the convention was advantageous to Portugal, as well as to the general service, and that no further military inquiry was needed. The court indeed was far from unanimous, some doubted the fitness of the convention, all agreed in commending the zeal and intentions of its framers, and the people coincided with the doubters.

In the popular feeling on the convention Sir A. Wellesley was not included; his previous conduct, from the landing at Mondego Bay to the victory of Vimiero, effectually secured his reputation, and when on the new year the Parliament assembled, both houses agreed in voting to him and his officers their thanks for his successful enterprise. To him every one looked as the only general who could restore the now languishing state of the Spanish war, and when the news of the successful inroad of the emperor, the consequent destruction of the Spanish armies, and the retreat of the British to Corunna, was known, the victor of Vimiero was unanimously regarded as the man to combat for the Peninsula.

CHAPTER II.

1808—1809.

OPORTO—TALAVERA.

Landing of the troops at Lisbon.—March on Oporto.—Retreat of Soult, —State of the army.—March into Spain.—Cuesta and his troops.—Battle of Talavera—Retreat towards the frontiers—Conduct of the Spaniards.—Murmurs and rewards

THE British successes in Portugal, and the threatened advance of their forces into Spain, convinced Napoleon that his personal presence was necessary to restore his position in that country. Assured of the friendliness of the Emperor of Russia, he hastened to join his army; and, early in November 1808, crossed the Pyrenees with little less than 200,000 men. Victory followed victory in rapid succession, Saragossa was once more besieged, and Madrid entered before the 1st of December. But the English forces were already in Spain, and concentrated at Salamanca, under the command of Sir John Moore. Relying on the co-operation of the Spanish armies, the English general now found himself in the midst of his enemies' country, without allies, with little money, and but small supplies. Desirous of striking one blow before commencing his indispensable retreat, Sir John Moore made a bold movement against Soult at Sahagun. But the emperor saw the manœuvre, and with his usual rapidity advanced with 50,000 men against the British general. Threatened by overwhelming forces, the English retreated; roads were bad, supplies were wanting, and the disorganization of the army was rapid. Again and again, however, did they turn and withstand their enemies with success, and then fall into disorder so soon as the contest was concluded. As far as Astorga Napoleon led the pursuit; there the news of Austria's warlike preparations arrested

his course, and he returned to Paris, leaving to Soult the task of driving the British to the sea. Gradually retreating to Corunna, the British troops there stood their ground, until the transports could arrive from Vigo. On the 16th of January, 1809, Soult appeared in force on the neighbouring heights, and with 20,000 men and a powerful artillery attacked the English troops, who mustered hardly 15,000, and had already embarked all their guns. All day the battle raged, and gradually but surely the French were driven back, and at the close of the contest the British lines were advanced on many points. But the victory had been won by the loss of their general, and the night of the battle witnessed the silent burial of the gallant Sir John Moore's corpse on the ramparts of Corunna. The departure of the emperor again roused the Spanish spirit; again armies sprang up on all sides, only to be defeated by their disciplined opponents. Many a city witnessed to the powers of Spanish endurance, and chief among them, Saragossa, for eight months defied the army of Lannes, and when at last taken, was a city of the dead, rather than of the living. Still the Spaniards continued the contest, and their junta, driven to Cadiz, renewed its petition for British aid.

Such was the state of affairs when, on the 22nd of April, Sir Arthur Wellesley landed at Lisbon, and immediately assumed the command of the British army. Known to the Portuguese only as a victorious general, the greatest enthusiasm welcomed his arrival, the Regency nominated him Marshal-General of their troops, and every one looked forward with confidence to immediate and effective operations. Determined on effective operations, two courses were open to the new commander, either to march against Soult at Oporto, or Victor in the neighbourhood of Badajos. The defeat of Victor promised to be most effectively detrimental to the French, and beneficial to the Spaniards; but it required the co-operation of the Spanish army, of whose ill disposition towards their allies Sir Arthur was well aware. Soult on the other hand held a rich province, whence the chief supply of cattle was derived for the army, and the second city of the kingdom, the regaining of which was uppermost in the feelings of the Portuguese

Dissensions, too, of a serious nature existed in his army, and already overtures had passed between the British generals and some of the malcontents. The secret society of the Philadelphians, whose object was the overthrow of Napoleon, were in great force in the army at Oporto; and a great proportion of Soult's officers, headed by his aid-de-camp D'Argenton, were prepared and solicitous that the movement of the allies should enable them to rise against their general. Sir Arthur Wellesley, willing indeed to take advantage of the state of feeling, was far too discreet to make his movements dependent on it; and well was it that he so acted, for when in a few days the conspiracy was discovered, D'Argenton saved his own life by revealing the knowledge he had obtained of the British forces in his interviews with their generals, and it was only by the discretion of Sir Arthur that that knowledge was rendered useless.

Determined to clear the north of Portugal of the French, Sir Arthur left an adequate force to watch Victor on the Alemtego frontier; and by the 2nd of May concentrated his forces at Coimbra, in numbers 25,000, of whom 9,000 were Portuguese, 3,000 Germans, and the rest British. The original intention was to send a strong detachment over the Douro on the French extreme left by Lamego, in order to form a junction with the Portuguese general Sylveira, at Amarante, and thus throw a mass of 30,000 men between Soult and Spain. The defeat of Sylveira rendered that scheme fruitless and therefore it was determined to make the chief attack by the coast road direct on the French right at Oporto, and confine the movement on the left to a smaller force, chiefly Portuguese, under General Beresford. Two slight engagements with the French detachments, and the delays necessary for the due arrival of Beresford on the upper Douro, prevented the concentration of the British forces in front of Oporto from being effected before the 12th of May.

With his means of obtaining information greatly crippled by the feelings of his officers, Soult lay on the sea side of Oporto, expecting the attack in that part, and believing that his retreat was as yet unmolested on the upper Douro. Behind the height of the Serra Convent the

British were clustered in force entirely concealed from their opponents, from whom that hill cut off the view of the river above the city. Almost opposite the height, a long and unfinished building, intended for a seminary, surrounded by a wall, that reached on both sides to the river, and with only one gate of egress on the Vallonga road, attracted the attention of Sir Arthur; and when he saw on that road baggage already moving, and other signs of retreat, and that the French guards were few and far between on that side, he selected this as his point of attack. Sending Murray with a detachment about three miles up the river to force a passage there, he turned his attention to the means of passing the broad and rapid Douro, in the face of 10,000 enemies, led by the first of warriors.

It was now ten o'clock, and the enemy lay quiet and unsuspecting; an officer reported that *one* boat was brought up to the point of passage. "Let the men cross," said the general; and on this an officer and 25 men of the Buffs entered the solitary boat, and in a quarter of an hour were within the walls of the seminary. All was still quiet, and a second boat passed without rousing the attention of the enemy. Soon after a third arrived, and then arose a tumultuous noise of drums and shouts from the city, and in haste and disorder the French troops poured out from the city, and surrounded the walls of the seminary. There was no longer any secresy; and the men hastened as best they could across the river, whilst the English guns from the hill of the Serra commanded the whole enclosure of the seminary, and swept the walls so as to confine the attack to the gate on the Vallonga road. Soon the townspeople brought numbers of boats, the forces increased in the seminary, other troops were crossing towards the centre of the city, and already Murray was seen descending the right bank from Avintas. The enemy were now hastening their retreat on the Vallonga road, pressed in the rear by Sherbrooke's division from the centre of the city, raked from the wall of the seminary by Hill's battalions, threatened by the rapidly approaching columns of Murray, and commanded by the artillery from the Serra. One bold charge of Murray would have all but annihilated the enemy, but that

attack was not made, and the French retreated to Vallonga, with the loss of but five hundred men and five pieces of artillery, beside the stores and guns, and wounded found in the hospitals of Oporto.

Thus, with a most trifling loss, the second city of the kingdom had been recovered, and the inhabitants freed, for ever, from the presence of most cruel and heartless enemies. With their injuries and sufferings fresh in their recollection, the inhabitants of Oporto would gladly have wreaked their vengeance on the wounded and prisoners of their discomfited opponents. But the English general determined to afford his foes the protection to which they were entitled by the laws of war, and in despite of much resistance, the people of the city soon discovered that he had both the will and the means of enforcing the commands he deemed it right to issue.

At Vallonga Soult rallied his army, and prepared to retreat by the road over the Tamiega at Amaranthe Hardly had he reached half the way, when he heard that Beresford's movement had effectually barred that route, and that Loison, on whom he trusted, had deserted the bridge, and retreated towards Braga. It was past midnight, the men were worn out with fatigue and the dreadful state of the weather, and were already calling out for capitulation, when Soult first heard of his loss. Without a moment's delay, he retraced his steps, and made for a mountain road on his right, that he was assured by a Spanish shepherd led to Guimaraens on the Braga road, over the heights of the Sierra Catalina. Destroying his guns and abandoning his treasure and baggage, he boldly braved the route, and made good his passage over the mountains. At Guimaraens he reunited all his various corps, including Loison's retreating detachment. Aware that the British were already in full march on Braga, and able to anticipate his arrival there, should he pursue the main road, the French Marshal again sacrificed artillery and baggage, and turning to his right passed over the heights of Carvalho d'Este, and took up his old position at Salamonde. But the British were close at hand, and retreat was necessary. Two routes lay before him, the one by Chaves, the other by Montalagre; both depending on bridges for

their being passable. News soon reached him that the road to Chaves was broken, the bridge destroyed, and that, unless immediately prevented, a similar fate would happen to the left route by Montalagre.

The bold daring of Major Dulong, to whom the task was committed, secured the bridge on the latter road, and the French army passed the Cavado in safety, just before their rear guard was driven from Salamonde, and crushed on the narrow bridge over which the army had defiled. From that moment the retreat closed; and on the 15th Soult crossed the Spanish frontier at Altaritz, without one of the fifty-eight pieces of artillery with which he had entered Portugal but seventy-six days before, and with his army weakened by above 6000 men, and utterly broken and dispirited with its losses and defeats. Fearful indeed had been the cruelties with which the retreat had been

attended. The French plundered without ceasing, and murdered every defenceless inhabitant that did not render assistance to his invaders and oppressors; the smoking ruins of villages, and the hanging bodies of peasants

marked the line of retreat, freely mingled with the mangled bodies of the French who had fallen under the retaliatory cruelties of the peasants.

At Montalagre all pursuit had ceased, and the Portuguese grumbled because an army that threw away everything that could strengthen it, impede its course, or enable it to act as a body, and abandoned all those who were entitled to its protection, could not be overtaken in a mountainous district by an army that had made no such sacrifices.* Ready enough to find fault with their allies, and to reap the advantages of British sacrifices, the Portuguese had but little inclination to part with any of the property saved to them by the British successes, in order to supply the deficiency in the expected supplies from England. The brief but severe campaign had deprived the troops of many necessaries, their pay was two months in arrear, and the military chest empty. The senate of Oporto were applied to by Sir Arthur, and they proffered, after some hesitation, a loan. The wine company, indebted to the British for the preservation of hundreds of thousands of pounds, were solicited for money, but so ungracious was their conduct, that it called forth a sharp rebuke from the general; and then, for fear that it should be believed that they had refused to aid the distresses of their preservers, the company also tendered a loan, and then talked of the rebuke, as if a forced contribution had been levied on them. It will hardly be believed that all this Portuguese gratitude was about ten thousand pounds And yet, when the question arose respecting such vessels as were captured in the waters of the Douro, from some of which prize money would have resulted to the army, had they been regarded as prizes to the British forces, Sir Arthur Wellesley contended that we were only acting as allies, that the harbour was Portuguese, and that everything there taken must be at the disposal of the Portuguese Government. It was a liberality little understood and less appreciated by those for whose benefit it was.

Within a few days of the return of the army to Oporto, it was known that Marshal Victor was on the move, and threatening Portugal from the Gallician frontier. The

* To Lord Castlereagh, Oporto, 24th May, 1809.

army was immediately ordered to the south, and passing by easy marches through Coimbra and Thomar, concentrated at Abrantes, by the first week in June. For nearly a month Sir Arthur Wellesley continued in his camp at Abrantes, utterly unable to take advantage of his late successes, from the miserable condition of his army. Long had he been of opinion that a British army, such as a British army then was, could bear neither success nor failure, and lamentable had been the proofs which he had received of the truth of his opinion. They were, indeed, little better than a rabble intent on plunder, and regardless of discipline, behaving as if in the country of an enemy and not of an ally, and plundering alike the little stores of the peasants and the supplies destined for their own corps. The peasants retaliated, and soon blood flowed on both sides. Such were troops whom Sir Arthur had undertaken "to tame." His discipline was severe, but effective; and at last, repeated callings of the roll, and a free use of the labours of the provost-marshal, the military executioner, restored discipline to the forces, and laid the ground-work of that army of which it was proudly said, "its general could have gone anywhere and done anything." *

At length the long expected arrears of pay arrived, and the time for a forward movement. With about 22,000 men the British commander moved on Alcantara and the Spanish frontier, with the intention of operating so as to cut off Victor from Madrid, whilst Cuesta, with the Estremaduran force, amused him in front by retiring to some strong position to the south of the Guadiana. But Cuesta, utterly unable to appreciate military movements, and bigoted to his own schemes, refused to retire as he was requested; and Sir Arthur, rather than lose the opportunity, was forced to accommodate his plans to the obstinacy of the Spaniard, and advance by Caslet blanco and Placentia to Oropeza, whilst Cuesta moved to the same place by Almarez and Arobispo. On the 20th of July the armies united, and raised the combined forces to 54,000 men and 76 guns. Again the obstinacy of Cuesta entailed trouble on the British general, and marred his best

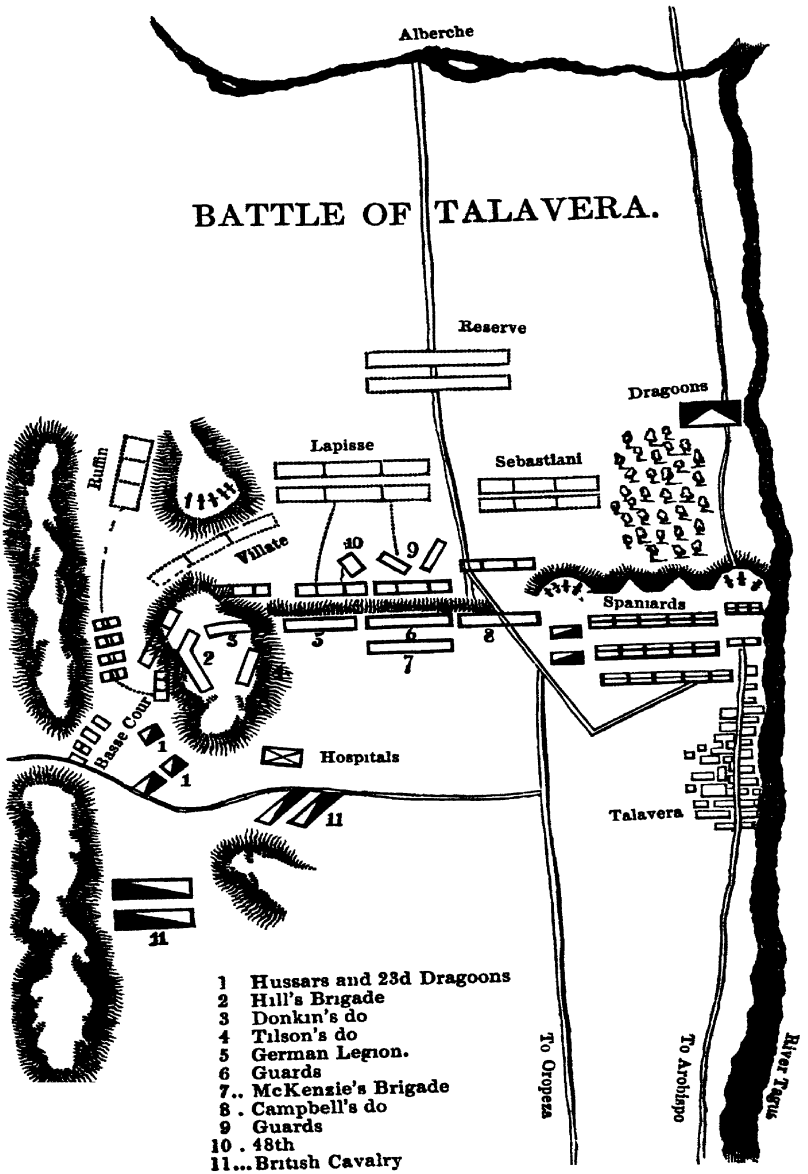
* To Right Hon. L. Villiers, 31st May, and 13th June, 1809. To Lord Castlereagh, ditto, and 17th June, 1809.

plans at a critical moment, when the French were everywhere falling back and concentrating in force on Talavera. Great and unbounded had been the promises of supplies and assistance lavished by the Spanish authorities in order to obtain the presence of British troops in their country; no sooner was the object gained than the meanness and falsehood of the nation was evident. Supplies were never forthcoming, and the Spaniards gloried in feasting whilst their allies were starving. Sir Arthur Wellesley determined to bring matters to a crisis; he refused to advance, and meditated a return to Portugal, unless the promised supplies were forthcoming. At length he declared that so soon as he had removed the enemy from the line of the Alberche he should consider his own engagements fulfilled, and retire forthwith to Portugal *

In furtherance of this determination, but a small British detachment accompanied the advance of the Spanish army, so soon as the Alberche was passed, when with ill-advised haste, Cuesta pressed on the rear of the retreating French, construing retreats into defeats, and dreaming of the occupation of Madrid instead of the defence of the Alberche. But the French now turned on their pursuers, and with an army raised to above 50,000 men, drove in the advanced guards of Cuesta, and eventually compelled him to follow the advice of Sir Arthur Wellesley, and withdraw his troops to the position of Talavera, than which few posts could be better suited for a defensive stand.

On the banks of the Tagus lies the village of Talavera, covered in front by olive groves, thickly planted and much intersected by ditches. In this position the great mass of the Spanish army was ranged, having in its front several heavy batteries commanding the road from the Alberche and the approaches to the town. Extending in a straight line from the town, the English position lay open as far as until its extreme left, where a formidable hill connected the centre with the left wing, which from this point fell back nearly at right angles to the rest of the army; between this eminence and another more distant range of heights, lay a small valley commanded by the guns on the hill, and also open

* Right Hon. J. Frere to Viscount Castlereagh, 24th July, 1809.


BATTLE OF TALAVERA.
Alberche
Reserve
Dragoons
Lapisse
Sebastiani
Ruffin
Villate
Spaniards
Basse Court
Hospitals
Talavera
To Oropesa
To Arobispo
River Tagus
1 Hussars and 23d Dragoons
2 Hill's Brigade
3 Donkin's do
4 Tilson's do
5 German Legion.
6 Guards
7.. McKenzie's Brigade
8 . Campbell's do
9 Guards
10 . 48th
11...British Cavalry

to the attacks of our cavalry that lay to the rear of the extreme left.

By three o'clock in the afternoon of the 27th, King Joseph and Marshal Victor were seen advancing in force across the Alberche, and so vigorous was their attack on the British outposts, that they fell back in confusion, and tempted the French generals to hazard a hasty attack on the British left and the Spanish troops in Talavera; the rapid flight of the Spanish troops encouraged the advance of the French; but when the British general moved up some of his veteran regiments, the attack was at once repelled, and after another ineffectual attempt to carry the English left, the French retired with the loss of seven hundred men, and the allied army resumed its position and awaited the opening of the next day.

In despite of their shameful conduct, Sir Arthur Wellesley still felt that he could trust the right of his position to his Spanish allies, covered as they were by two strong redoubts and the olive groves; to the left of the redoubt was Campbell's brigade, next to that the guards with Mackenzie's brigade in their rear, then the German legion, touching the hill with their extreme left; and on the hill, Donkin's and Hill's brigades forming the left wing of the army. This height was the key of the position, and to its capture the entire attention of the enemy was directed.

Supported by the great mass of their artillery, ranged on an opposing height, Ruffin's and Villatte's divisions moved rapidly against the British left. By eight o'clock on the 28th the battle was engaged, and under a fearful fire from both sides of the ravine, the troops encountered each other. For a time the advance of the French seemed resistless, and in despite of the artillery that swept the slope they rapidly neared the British line, and closed with Hill's division; for half an hour the struggle was hand to hand, and the contest appeared doubtful: but at length the English fire began to tell too fearfully to be resisted; gradually the French wavered, then came a rapid charge with the bayonet, and the enemy were pushed over the edge of the slope and driven headlong into the valley.

The extreme heat of the day suspended the contest for

a few hours. On both sides the lines were reformed, the artillery replenished, and the wounded conveyed to the rear. The British left was reinforced by some Spanish guns, and the placing of two brigades of cavalry in the entrance of the valley, whilst Bassecourt's Spanish division moved up from the right, and occupied the hills opposite to the extreme British left. For hours all was quiet, not a shot was fired, not even a drum heard, and the troops on both sides straggled down to the little brook that ran at the bottom of the ravine, and drank eagerly of its waters. On the top of the hard-contested hill, the British commander sat eagerly watching his opponents. The moment was becoming critical, the French were evidently massing their forces for a renewed attack on the British left, and at that moment an officer brought him word that Cuesta was betraying him. Calmly continuing his survey, Sir Arthur desired the officer to return to his brigade, and continued his watch until the rapid roll of the drum announced the onset, and the broad black columns of the enemy were seen moving into the ravine.

Along the entire British line, from its junction with the Spaniards to the entrance of the valley, 50,000 men, supported by batteries twice as heavy and numerous as those of the British, were in full advance, and rapidly ascending the slope on which the English brigades stood. It was now two o'clock, and along the entire position the battle was engaged; Ruffin's and Villatte's corps advanced into the valley and threatened the English left. A rapid charge of the German hussars, and the 23rd dragoons, effectually arrested the movement, and though eventually broken and severely tried when disordered by success, the cavalry broke through the enemy with marvellous celerity, and effectually paralyzed their intentions in that quarter.

Against the German legion and the guards, Lapisse's corps, covered by fifty pieces of heavy artillery, marched across the brook, and closed with the British line; one volley, followed by a bayonet charge decided the attack, and in great confusion hurled the French down the slope. After them the guards streamed across the rivulet, and even came up the opposite hill; straggling and disordered

by success, they came suddenly on the French reserves and batteries, whilst some cavalry threatened their flank; unable to form, and torn to pieces by the enemy's fire, the British guards fell into confusion, the German legion wavered, and the British centre was all but irretrievably broken, when Sir Arthur Wellesley moved forward the 48th from the rear against the right flank of the advancing French; opening their ranks as the guards streamed through them, the 48th closed with rapidity, and with one well directed volley arrested the march of the victorious French; rallying in a moment, the guards and Germans faced about, and the French advance was effectually arrested.

On the British right, Sebastiani's column had advanced with skill and vigour, but the British line, ranged three deep, never gave way, and as the long column advanced poured a ceaseless fire into its leading ranks; whilst on either side other regiments lapped its flanks in fire. Unable to deploy or to resist, the column broke, and Campbell's brigade, aided by two divisions of Spanish infantry, and one of cavalry, dashed after their opponents, completed the discomfiture of the disorganized mass, and returned with ten pieces of their cannon as trophies of their success.

The battle of Talavera was over: for two days nearly 50,000 French had endeavoured to wrest a strong position from the allies; and though with a justifiable and true estimate of their opponents, they had turned their entire forces against but 22,000 English soldiers, they everywhere failed, were everywhere driven back, and forced to retreat across the Alberche. Had the Spanish troops been capable of being relied on as a body, the advance of Cuesta's army would have turned the French, but Sir Arthur Wellesley knew his friends too well, he had already seen too many of their flights to trust them; and though he gladly accepted, and relied on the brave assistance of some of their brigades, wisely trusted to his own men alone, and contented himself with making an effective parade of his allies in a position where, even they, might maintain their ground.

Heavy indeed had been the English loss on this great day; above 6000 of our men had suffered; but the loss of their opponents was a far greater, and seventeen cannon,

and several hundred prisoners, remained as trophies of the hard earned victory. Flying with precipitancy to the rear, the Spanish fugitives spread far and wide the defeat and death of the British general. Sixty miles off lay Crawford with 3000 fresh troops No sooner did the lying intelligence reach him than his troops were in motion, and in twenty-six hours, laden each man with from fifty to sixty pounds weight, they reached the scene of their comrades' glory.

Cowards on the field of battle, the Spaniards showed themselves merciless to friend as well as foe in the hour of victory. Even to the wounded, who now crowded the streets of Talavera, they refused assistance and food, and plundered the dying and the dead who had so lately saved their lives, though they could not rescue their honour from disgrace. And whilst treating their allies in this manner, the Spanish junta and their general freely commented upon this "want of zeal," as they were pleased to call the British General's prudence, and boldly accused of treachery the army and the man that had saved them from destruction.

Great as had been the victory of Talavera, its benefits were no sooner won by the British, than they were lost by the conduct of the Spaniards. In vain had Sir Arthur Wellesley impressed upon Cuesta the necessity of guarding the pass of the Puerto de Banos, by which the allied line of communication with Lisbon could be reached. With the first show of force on the part of the French the Spaniards retreated from the pass, and by the beginning of August, Soult, with 30,000 men, threatened Placentia in the rear of the British army. Misled as to the numbers of Soult's army, Sir Arthur decided on dividing the allied force, and offering to Cuesta either to stay and hold Talavera against the victor now approaching, or move against Soult. Cuesta left the choice to the British general, and under the hope that with more certainty he could effect the repulsion of the French, and be aided in his manœuvre by the Portuguese army at Ciudad Rodrigo, Sir Arthur chose the latter, and on the 3rd of August started with 17,000 men toward Oropesa, leaving Cuesta to defend Talavera, and pledged to rescue the wounded in the event of defeat.

Hardly had the last of the British troops left Talavera, than it was known that Cuesta, afraid to fight without the English, had broken up from his position, and without a care for the wounded left above two thousand of them in the town of Talavera, and was hastening after his allies. At the same time the true amount of Soult's force became known, and thus pressed in the rear by Victor, and in front by Soult, the British general immediately took up a new line of operations. Crossing the Tagus by the bridge of Arobispo, he destroyed both that and the bridge of Almarez, defended the fords in the vicinity, and then united his forces in a strong position in the neighbourhood of Deleitosa on the south bank of the Tagus. Wearied and ill-fed as the troops were, the British rapidly executed their movement, and after a foolish parade of remaining on the other side of the Tagus to dare the enemy, the Spaniards followed their allies to the south bank.

But Victor had already crossed the Tagus at Talavera, and was moving in force down its southern bank. When he entered Talavera, he had found the streets strewed with the wounded, whom the inhabitants had refused to take into their houses, and the Spanish general had deserted without an effort in their favour. But they had fallen into the hands of a truly brave man, whose first care was for the wretched sufferers whom the British general had committed to his care, when deserted by their ally Victor knew how to treat the Spaniards, he asked no favours, but commanded them to receive the wounded into their houses in equal numbers of French and English, with orders to attend to the English first. He soon made them clear the streets of the putrefying dead, and then subjected the place to a three hours' plunder of the most systematic kind, thus bringing to light the heaps of stores, which, but a few days before, these base allies had refused and denied to their starving friends.

Compelled to leave the defence of the bridge of Arobispo to the Spaniards, Sir Arthur Wellesley had soon to consider how he could manage without its defence, as it was carried with ease by Soult, and thus above 60,000 enemies were able to act in unison against the reduced army of the allies, still suffering from want of provisions.

It was a critical moment, and had the command been in the power of Soult, another day like Talavera would have been fought on the heights of Deleitosa. But Jourdan was afraid, and without one bold act in unison the vast armies now concentrating on all sides against the British broke asunder, and the allies were left untouched in their new position. Had the real resources of the country been at their command, the allies might have resumed operations, and again threatened the Spanish capital. But the Spaniards would neither fight nor enable their allies to fight for them, "they were really children in the art of war, and did nothing as it ought to be done, with the exception of running away, and assembling again in a state of nature." * Supplies they would not find, and the more the English general asked the more they promised, and the more they promised, the less they did. At last matters came to a crisis between the armies, the worst feelings were created, and the juntas replied to the demands of the British commander by accusations of treachery. Convinced of his inability to trust to Spanish promises, and really afraid that his army would melt away without a struggle, Sir Arthur Wellesley determined on returning to the frontiers of Portugal. The threat brought more promises, but no more acts; and at last, on the 22nd of August, the British troops crossed the Guadiana, and took up their quarters in the vicinity of Badajos.

It was not among the Spaniards alone that the British commander was assailed with invective and his measures criticised. The English Opposition made the backwardness of the English general a fertile theme of declamation, and talked loudly and learnedly of the bravery, good faith, and skill of the Spaniards; looking to the method by which the French made war support itself, these orators compared their bold movements with the caution of the English, and called for active measures. They would have been the first to call in question the conduct of their own generals, had they, like Soult and his compeers, plundered everything they could find in the country, and forced from the inhabitants every hoard of victuals without payment, and

* The Duke's Dispatches.

under pain of death. Unable to comprehend the dependence of military measures on the commissariat, or to appreciate the British system of paying for everything, and therefore depending for everything on the honour and faith of their allies, and misled, and wilfully deceived by the sounding words and fine promises of the Spaniards, they looked for the immediate expulsion of the French through the passes of the Pyrenees without considering in what way the much to be desired end was to be obtained. But the government, and the majority of the country thought otherwise. The king rewarded the successful general with a peerage, and the representatives of the people added to those honours the grant of a pension in despite of the opponents of the measure. From this time our hero is Viscount Wellington, from this time there is no change of name, but only of titles.

CHAPTER III.

THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS.

1810—1811.

Retreat of Wellington, and advance of Massena.—Wellington's firmness. —Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida.—Battle of Busaco.—Retreat to the lines of Torres Vedras.—Massena retreats, his hopes —Battle of Fuentes d'Onore.—Fall of Almeida.—End of the Invasion of Portugal.

THE retreat of Wellington within the frontiers of Portugal subjected him to the severest charges from all sides, and his countrymen were among the loudest in their denunciations of his incapacity. Aware that he was "acting with a sword suspended over him, that was sure to fall the moment he suffered defeat," the British general would not be turned from his defensive system either by prayers or abuse. Confident in his own design, he left others to do what they liked, determined "not to give up the game as long as it could be played." * At the time when friends and foes alike expected the hasty embarkation of his army, he was preparing such a place of retreat as should not only repel attack, but bring destruction on the aggressor. His every attention was now paid to the reconstruction of his army, and rendering the country of Portugal and the people available for a defensive campaign. He compelled the Regency to call out all the armed population, and enforced, as far as he could, the desolation of the line of country through which his enemies were compelled by his manœuvres to march.

The cessation of the German war had left at the disposal of Napoleon vast bodies of veteran troops, which were now poured freely into the Peninsula, with the view of bearing

* Dispatches.

down on all points at once, and effectually conquering the country. Of these veterans nearly 70,000 were placed under the command of Massena, with orders to drive into the sea "those hateful leopards," as Napoleon called the lions of our national shield. Against this force Wellington could not calculate on collecting more than 32,000 men, of whom two-thirds might be British troops, the rest, divisions of the Portuguese army, now fully organised by Marshal Beresford. With these forces Wellington determined to fight his defensive campaign. "I conceive," he wrote, "that the honour and interests of the country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can; and I will neither endeavour to shift from my own shoulders on those of the ministers the responsibility of the failure, by calling for means which I know they cannot give, and which, perhaps, would not materially add to the facility of attaining our object; nor will I give to ministers, who are not strong, and who must feel the delicacy of their own situation, an excuse for withdrawing the army from a position, which, in my opinion, the honour and interest of the country require they should maintain as long as possible."

On the 1st of June Massena assumed the command of the French army, and forthwith invested the important fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo. Wellington was in the immediate vicinity, and on all sides he was called or taunted to risk a battle for the defence of the fortress. With Roman firmness the British general resisted the temptation, well aware of the danger of risking his mixed army in a battle on a plain with veterans so much more numerous, and of the inutility of gaining a battle over one army, when three times as many more troops were at hand to compensate for the loss. Thus, almost unmolested, the French pressed the siege with rapidity, and on the 10th of July the fortress capitulated within sight of their allies. From that day the proud Castilians maintained a sullen silence towards their allies: they forbore, indeed, to accuse them of cowardice or treachery, but henceforward held aloof from them, and refused in any way to aid them in their protracted warfare.

From Ciudad Rodrigo, Massena moved against Almeida, and Wellington again drew near to the French army, as if to succour the fortress. His great object was to delay the French until the commencement of the wet season, when their progress would entail superhuman difficulties on them. For ninety days the commander, Colonel Cox, expected to hold out; and as the French had wasted much time in plundering and devastating the villages and country, it was not until the middle of August that the trenches were opened against Almeida. But an unexpected misfortune precipitated the fall of the fortress, and for a time foiled the calculations of Wellington. Within ten days of the commencement of the siege, a bomb entered the great magazine, and with one blow the defences and houses of Almeida were all but laid flat. Further resistance was hopeless, and before the end of August the fortress fell; vast stores of rations were captured by the enemy, and their inroad into Portugal thus materially aided

The fall of Almeida was a grievous blow to the English commander, aiding the advance of the French, weakening the confidence of the Portuguese in the British general, and increasing for a time the power of the party in Lisbon, who were intriguing to ruin the cause by raising the Duke of Brunswick to the command of the allied army. Nothing however could shake the firmness of Wellington; and he boldly declared to the Regency, that, "though not insensible to the value of public opinion, he would not permit public clamour or praise to induce him to change in the smallest degree the system and plan of operations which he had adopted after mature consideration, and which daily experience shewed to be the only one likely to produce a good end."* The threat of an immediate embarkation, in the event of any overt act by the mob of Lisbon, brought the Portuguese to a portion of their senses, and left Wellington to carry out his plans without further molestation.

Concentrating the various divisions of his army, Wellington fell back by the valley of the Mondego, and took post on the ridge of the Sierra de Busaco, in order to cover Coimbra, and fight a battle there for its defence.

* To Don Miguel Forjar. Gouvea, 6th September, 1810.

In spite of his continued orders, the peasants would not destroy their cottages and houses, and thus it was necessary to make a stand in order to give time for the necessary devastation, before the French were tempted to advance, as also to raise the confidence of the nation, so much shaken by the fall of Rodrigo and Almeida. Led by renegades, the French forces pursued the worst roads, and were nearly two marches behind the allies, but by the 26th of September Massena lay with 72,000 men at the foot of the ridge of Busaco.

The position occupied by the allies was the northernmost portion of a formidable ridge of heights, running from the Mondego in a northward direction for eight miles, with the convent and garden of Busaco about two miles from its extremity. On this ridge the mass of the allied army was posted, whilst a brigade covered the right on the ridge of Murcella; Fane watched the enemy's cavalry on the Alva, and the allied horse formed in the plains in front of Millheada. In no wise dismayed at the strength of the position, Massena, underrating his opponents' strength, calculated on an easy victory, now rendered the more necessary as his communications with Spain were cut off by a gallant and successful march of Colonel Trant with some Portuguese battalions in his rear: he little suspected that nearly 50,000 good troops occupied the lofty ridge.

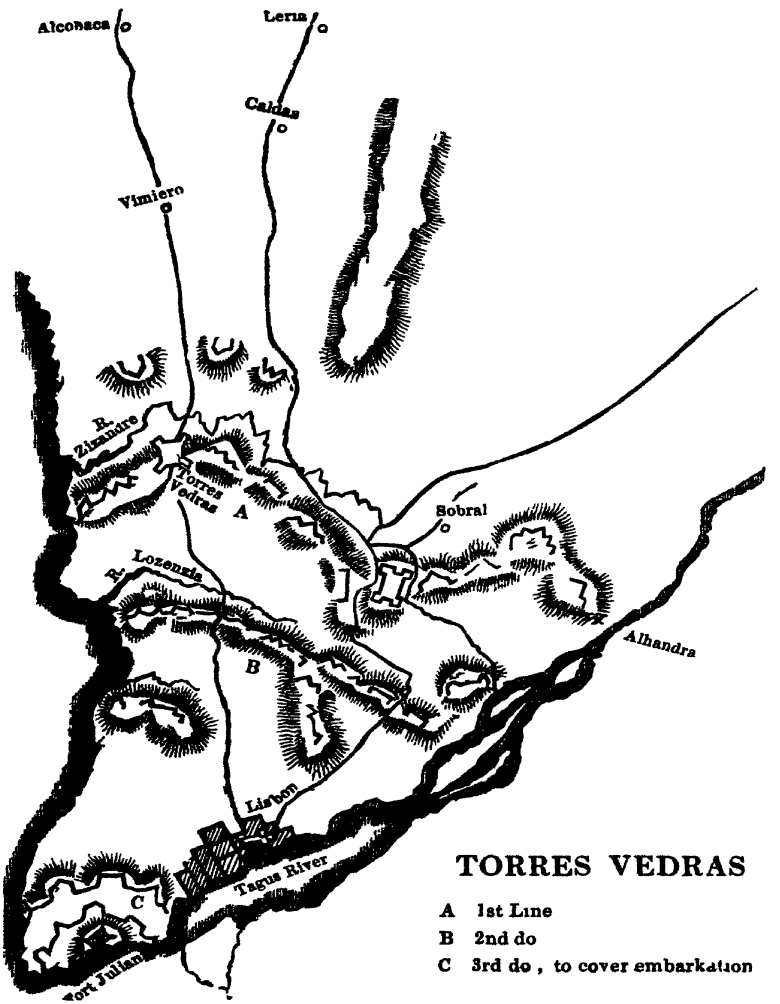
With the earliest dawn the French were in motion, in five heavy columns of attack. On the right two columns under Regnier threatened the position held by Picton, on the left three more led by Ney, advanced against the convent of La Trappe, where the British head-quarters were posted. Regnier's columns soon came into action; in the face of a fearful fire they scaled the sides of the ridge, and one column actually established itself on the top of the mountain, until the 88th and 45th made so furious a charge, that the exhausted French broke and went down the hill in confused masses, mingled with their pursuers. Regnier's other column never reached the summit, but gave way before the onset of the 74th, and a brigade of Portuguese infantry. In this quarter the battle was soon over. With equal gallantry Ney's columns pressed

up the ridge in front of the convent, utterly regardless of the storm of cannon shot that swept through their ranks. Led by Loison, one brigade reached the ridge of the position, and pressed back the line of infantry that stood on the crest of the mountain. Apparently the victory was gained, for no troops appeared in support save some German guards, at least a quarter of a mile in the rear. A few minutes disclosed the strength of the position; from a hollow suddenly two British regiments sprang up, and lapped both flanks of the column with a close fire from 1800 muskets. * With all the bravery of veterans, the French bore three terrible volleys, poured in at pistol range, and then fled in confusion down the slope from the bayonets of their enemies, until the pursuit was arrested by the movement of the reserve to their succour. Ney's other column, led by Marchand, never reached the summit of the ridge, and was easily held in check by Pack's Portuguese brigade. By two o'clock the battle was over, and every effort of Massena foiled, with a loss of nearly 2,000 killed, and as many wounded, including several generals, whilst the allied loss hardly reached 1300 casualties.

Convinced of his inability to carry the British position by an attack in front, Massena moved to his right, and by a pass over the mountains gained the high road to Coimbra at Sardao, before that post could be seized by Trant's Portuguese. To attack the French during their march was a strong temptation to Wellington, but he again refrained from risking his troops, the only organized army left in the Peninsula, and contented himself by falling back on Torres Vedras, where a series of works awaited him, against which he felt certain the waves of the French invasion must break in vain. Justly satisfied as he was with the conduct of the Portuguese troops, he still forbore to weaken their present courage and confidence by a too severe trial with the veterans of the German campaigns.

By the 15th of October the entire allied army was collected within the first range of the lines of Torres Vedras, which for nearly twelve months our engineers had

* The 43rd and 52nd regiments were in the hollow, the 95th on the ridge.



been constructing. From Alhambra on the Tagus to Zezambre on the sea-coast, the first range of fortified heights extended. Thirty redoubts, mounting nearly 150 cannon, and commanded by the great central fortification

of Sobral, presented a barrier against the French only to be carried at a countless loss of life. Every road and every valley was commanded, and the very hills scarped and cut to afford a clear range for the fire of the guns, whilst within the lines, numerous encampments awaited the troops, and ready means of communication over the twenty-nine miles of defence were afforded by a good road along the entire line. Within this range, about eight miles from the sea, lay another line of forts, stretching from Quintella on the Tagus to the mouth of the St. Lorenzo on the coast, and originally intended as the permanent resting place of his forces, had not the dilatoriness of Massena's movements enabled the British engineers to complete the defences of the outer line. Again a third line extended from Passo D'Arcos on the Tagus, to the tower of Jonquera on the sea, covering an entrenched camp, by which an embarkation was ensured under the most disastrous circumstances.

Within the outermost line of these defences 30,000 British troops, with an equal number of Portuguese, and about 5,000 Spaniards, were collected before the end of October; and such were the arrangements, that though, including the population of Lisbon, nearly 400,000 persons were thus shut up, there was ample subsistence, and so little fear of attack, that the encampments assumed the character of cantonment in a friendly and unoccupied country, rather than in a chain of forts beleaguered by a powerful opponent. The Portuguese Regency of course were dissatisfied, but they found that Wellington "would not suffer them, nor anyone else, to interfere with the military arrangement of which he had the exclusive conduct; and as he knew, and did not hesitate to assert, that he knew best where to station his troops, and where to make a stand against the enemy, he would not alter a system framed upon mature consideration, upon any suggestion of theirs. I," he continued, "am responsible for what I do, and not they; and I recommend them to look to the measures for which they are responsible, the tranquility of Lisbon, and the food of the army, and the people, whilst the troops are engaged with the enemy.*

* To C. Stuart, Esq., Rio Mayor, 6th October, 1810.

To the foot of these almost impregnable positions Massena marched by the middle of October. Had his expedition into Portugal been founded on merely military principle, it would have ceased with his repulse at Busaco, and the occupation of his line of communication with Spain by Colonel Trant; but the real object was the plunder of Lisbon and Oporto, in the hopes of, in some degree, compensating his army for their wants and their means of pay, and therefore movements in his rear were utterly disregarded. Though 5,000 of his wounded were seized by Trant at Coimbra, but a day after Massena's march through the place, he still pressed on towards Torres Vedras, ignorant indeed of the lines which were prepared against him, and still trusting to drive the British to embark, and wreak his vengeance on the capital.* With the vain hope that Wellington would be starved into offensive operations, for two months Massena lay at the foot of the lines, and subsisted 60,000 men and 20,000 horses, where on the British system it had been impossible to maintain even the English cavalry, with all our money and all our favour with the inhabitants, but "the French took every thing, and left the unfortunate inhabitants to starve.†"

At length, on the 14th of November, the French began to retreat, retiring on Santarem, about forty miles from their original position, and followed by the bulk of the allied forces. Still Wellington refused to attack his opponents, well aware that the chance was not worth the risk; and assured that with the first commencement of winter, the storms and floods must force Massena to the evacuation of Portugal. And so it was. For, though joined by 10,000 men, no sooner was Massena aware that British reinforcements had arrived, than he broke up from Santarem; and by the beginning of March 1811 was in full retreat on Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo.

The retreat of Massena was counterbalanced by the fall of Badajos. Entrusted originally to a brave Spaniard, that fortress might easily have held out until relief could arrive from Wellington's army; but this brave man's death placed

* To Lord Liverpool, Pero Negro, 3rd November, 1810.
† To Lord Liverpool, Cartaxo, 21st December, 1810.

the command in the hands of the irresolute Imaz, and terrified at the defeat of the Spaniards under Mendizabel, and the apparent strength of the besieging army under Soult, he surrendered the fortress with 8,000 men and 150 guns but forty-eight hours before Beresford's arrival to his aid, and at the very moment when Massena was in full retreat on the Tagus, and Victor crippled by the gallant victory of Barossa.

Slowly, and well defended by a strong rear guard under the gallant Ney, Massena retreated before Wellington, closely followed by his vigilant opponent, who only waited until the certain disasters of retreat should have had their effect, before attacking his retreating foe. For a month the retreat continued, and hardly a day passed in which some detachment was not captured or destroyed by the pursuers. At length, by the beginning of April, Massena was convinced that he must seek safety beneath the guns of Ciudad Rodrigo, and throwing a strong garrison into Almeida, he crossed the frontier and entered the plains of Castile. With 70,000 men he had entered Portugal, 10,000 had joined him at Santarem, and as many later in his retreat; he could now hardly collect 40,000 men of all arms beneath the walls of Ciudad Rodrigo. Such had been the effects of Busaco, and the retreat from before the lines of Torres Vedras.

Not a moment was lost by Wellington in forming the siege of Almeida and pressing it on with vigour. Peremptory orders from the emperor again brought Massena into contest with his opponent, and with an army reinforced to 50,000 men, including 5000 splendid cavalry, he crossed the Aguada, and threatened the besieging army. Drawing up his covering army, about 30,000 men, on the vast plateau between the Turones and the Dos Casas, with his left at Fort Conception, his centre opposite to Almeida, and his right at Fuentes d'Onoro, Wellington awaited the French marshal. Along the left and centre the ravine in which the Dos Casas runs, covered the army with a strong position; but beyond the village of Fuentes d'Onoro the ravine became gradually obliterated, and only a swampy wood covered the right on the plain of Poco Velho.

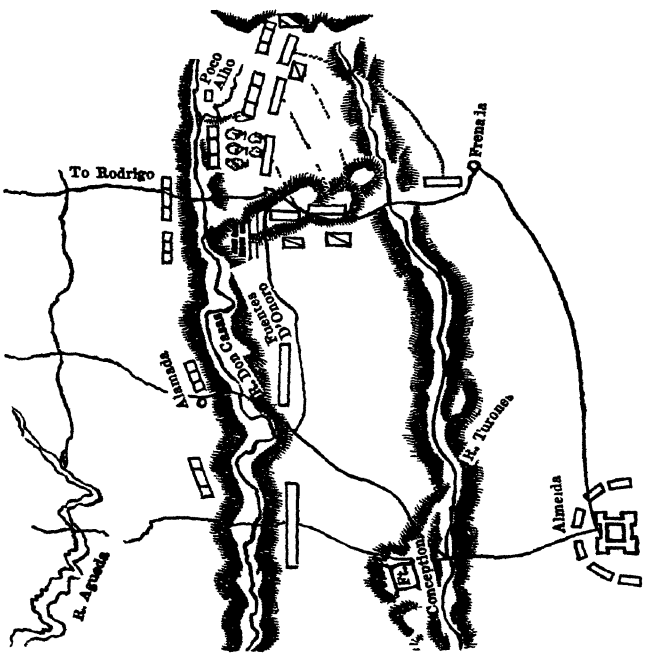
The right was the weak point, and on this and the

village of Fuentes, Massena congregated his forces; though supported by some slight reinforcements, the British right had to maintain a very unequal contest, and was compelled to throw itself into squares, in order to resist the fierce charges of Montbrun's cuirassiers. It was at this point of the battle that Captain Ramsay's battery of horse artillery was completely enveloped by the enemy, and regarded as lost. But before the roll of a dense volley of musketry, with which the 7th division drove back the French cuirassiers had died away, a strange commotion was marked to agitate the French squadrons. Men and officers were seen clustering to one point, whence pistol shots rang quick, and swords gleamed brightly amid a contending throng. "Suddenly," says Colonel Napier, "the multitude was violently agitated, an English shout arose, the mass was rent asunder, and Ramsay burst forth at the head of his battery, his horses breathing fire, and stretching like greyhounds along the plain, his guns bounding like things of no weight, and the mounted gunners in close and compact order protecting the rear."

The progress and numbers of the French were so overwhelming, that Wellington determined to draw back his right, and in the face of so powerful an enemy, take up a new and stronger position at right angles to his present centre, on a ridge running from Fuentes d'Onoro to the banks of the Turones. Sending one division across the latter river, the rest of the right formed into squares, and protected by the cavalry, moved leisurely across the three miles of plain that lay between them and their new position. Although encumbered with stragglers, and surrounded at times with the French cavalry, and threatened by their dark line of infantry, Crawford led his men slowly and surely across the plain, and at last reached the ridge where their new front, protected by rugged rocks, and well lined with troops, delivered the French from further efforts, and reduced the combat on the right to a distant fire of artillery.

Still, however, the combat raged in the village of Fuentes with varied success. There were times when the lower part of the village was wrested from our troops, and the upper rocks alone held by them; but soon the battle

changed, and the gallant 88th cleared the enemy from their position, and forced them to retire a good cannon shot from the village. The battle was over, and the loss had been severe and nearly equal on both sides. Wellington's object had been attained; the siege of Almeida had been covered, and the French convoy destined for its relief prevented from crossing the Dos Casas. For two days he remained in his position in expectation of a renewal of the conflict, but Massena declined a further attempt, and in a few days broke up his camp, retired across the Agueda, and left Almeida to its fate.



PLAN OF BATTLE OF FUENTES D'ONORO.

The evacuation of Almeida was no longer delayed, relief was clearly impossible, and all that remained to Brennier was skilfully to render the fortress as useless as he could to

the English, and then cut his way to Massena with his little garrison; in this he was eminently successful, partly through his own skill, and partly through the negligence of an officer in transmitting the orders to the fourth regiment. Every attempt was made to retrieve the error, but it was too late, and with a trifling loss Brennier brought off his soldiers, and left Almeida a ruined fortress.

Colonel Erskine's neglect of orders drew from his commander a severe and well-merited rebuke. "I entertain no doubt of the readiness of the officers and soldiers of the army to advance on the enemy; but it is my duty, and that of every general and officer in command, to regulate this spirit, and not to expose soldiers to contend with unequal numbers in situations disadvantageous to them. and above all, not to allow them to follow up trifling advantages to situations in which they cannot be supported, from which their retreat is not secure, and in which they incur the risk of being prisoners to the enemy they had before beaten. The desire to be forward in engaging the enemy is not uncommon in the British army; but that quality which I wish to see the officers possess, who are at the head of the troops, is a cool, discriminating judgment in action, which will enable them to decide with promptitude how far they can and ought to go with propriety; and to convey their orders, and act with such vigor and decision, that the soldiers will look up to them with confidence in the moment of action, and obey them with alacrity. The officers of the army may depend upon it *that the enemy are not less prudent than they are powerful. Notwithstanding what has been printed in gazettes and newspapers, we have never seen small bodies unsupported successfully opposed to large; nor has the experience of any officer realized the stories which all have read, of whole armies being driven by a handful of light infantry or dragoons.*"*

For a time these severe but excellent rebukes had their effect, but still insubordination and inattention to orders, especially among the higher officers, was a continued stumbling block in the way of perfect success; and when to this inattention and disobedience on the part of old officers was added, the ignorance of their duty exhibited by those

* To Major-General A. Campbell, 15th May, 1811.

who were every day arriving from home, it may well be conceived "that details were increased to such an extent as to render it almost impracticable to carry on duty; and that the British general but hardly depended on any movement however well regulated or ordered." * It was not till after years of long tried services that the officers began to learn how superior their commander was to them; and that strict adherence to his orders was the best chance of victory; and as late as the end of 1812, Wellington declared that nobody in the army read a regulation or order as if it were to be a guide to his conduct, or in any other manner than as an amusing novel; and that the consequence was that, when complicated arrangements had to be carried out, every gentleman proceeded according to his own fancy, and then, when it was found that the arrangement failed, came upon him to set matters to rights." †

* Lieutenant-General Hill, Frenada, 13th October, 1811.
† Colonel Torrens, ditto, 6th December, 1812.

CHAPTER IV.

SALAMANCA.

1811.—1812.

The march into Spain.—Albuera.—Retreat to the Coa.—Wellington's difficulties at home and abroad —Opening of the campaign of 1812.—Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos —Condition of the allied army.—State of Spain.—Advance to Salamanca.—Marmont's defeat.

DISASTROUS as had been the retreat of Massena, still the coming campaign presented great difficulties in the way of effectual offensive movements on the part of the allies. With nominally 80,000 men on his muster rolls, Wellington could never calculate on more than 50,000 fit for actual service, of whom hardly 20,000 would be British soldiers. His opponents, on the contrary, had forces reaching to more than 350,000, of whom 240,000 could be regarded as present in the field, and capable of offensive operations: giving nearly one half of this force to the defence of fortresses and the watching the undisciplined corps of the Spaniards, there was still more than 100,000 good troops, capable of combined action against the allied army. And yet Wellington did not hesitate to commence the offensive; strong in his central position, between his own depots at Torres Vedras and the scattered forces of the French marshals, materially aided by his command over the great navigable rivers, secure of the assistance and good-will of the people of the country, confident in the tried valour of his soldiers, and trusting not a little to the heart burnings and dissensions between the French generals, and the rapidly increasing hostility produced every day by the authorized and regulated plundering of the French army, added to the severity of the military executions by which these exactions were levied, and the cruelty with which

the imperial decrees were enforced, Wellington hesitated not to commence his advance from the frontiers of Portugal

The recovery of Badajos, the fall of which Wellington had regarded as the most serious blow to the allies, was the primary object with the British general. Marshal Beresford moved into Estremadura early in April, and though much retarded by the floods of the Guadiana, commenced his approaches against the fortress by the first week in May. Before any material progress could be made Soult had moved his forces from the banks of the Guadalquiver, and by the middle of the month threatened the allied army before Badajos. Raising the siege, Marshal Beresford moved his entire army to the heights on the north of the streamlet of Albuera: with a motley array of 30,000 men, of whom but 7,000 were British, and 8,000 Portuguese, the English general awaited the attack of Soult, who led about 20,000 good troops into the field, and was superior in cavalry and artillery.

The British held the centre, with the Germans in their front, in the village of Albuera, and the Portuguese on their left, whilst the right was entrusted to the Spaniards, and thrown back in a semi-circle, in order to prevent the army being turned on that flank. Beyond the extreme right rose other lofty heights, unoccupied by the allies; and behind these Soult clustered the great mass of his army, and from thence precipitated 15,000 men, aided by a powerful artillery, on the Spanish line, whilst the rest contested the village and bridge of Albuera. Hardly had the Spanish commander been warned of the intended attack, ere the French masses were upon him, and in a few moments, in despite of the most vigorous efforts, his troops were pierced through and driven back in confusion. In vain were two British brigades moved up from the centre: confused by the masses of flying Spaniards, and prevented from seeing their opponents by a sudden mist, they were taken in the rear by the Polish lancers, and one brigade scattered, destroyed, or driven as prisoners into the enemy's rank. One brigade, indeed, had scaled the heights, but unaided, and exposed alike to the fire of the bewildered Spaniards and the French, it was gradually retiring, and

the battle was all but lost; when the bold act of one man saved the lives and the honour of the army. Anticipating the commands of his leader, Colonel Hardinge ordered up the fusileer brigade on one flank of the French column, and that of Abercrombie on the other; thus aided, Houghton's brigade stood their ground, closer and closer the volleys lapped round the head and sides of the French column, and though the mass struggled fiercely to resist the charge and to deploy under the fire, rapidly the head of every formation was swept away, and they were pushed back from the heights, on which the remnant of 6000 British, now mustering but 1500 bayonets, stood victorious. Immediate advantage was taken of the repulse; the French were pressed on every side, and owed their escape to the cool intrepidity of their powerful artillery. The battle was over; on either side the loss was nearly equal; but "the influence of that day," says the French historian, "was great and disastrous on the spirit of the French soldiers." The inefficiency of the attack in column against British troops had been proved to the uttermost.

To the siege of Badajos the allied army returned, freed, by Soult's retreat, from further anxiety, and thither came Wellington with the bulk of his army in order to press the siege to extremities. In despite of unremitting exertion on the part of the army, so bad and ill-formed was the material of the siege train, that it was soon found impossible to continue the siege with any prospect of success, before the great armies already gathering for its succour could approach. It was useless to expect bodies to do the work of battering cannon, and therefore, when the approach of Marmont and Soult was certain, Wellington once more retreated to the frontiers of Portugal, and awaited his enemies in a strong position on the banks of the Coa. But, though at the head of 60,000 good troops, the two generals could not act together, and soon retired each to his own work, Soult towards Seville, Marmont towards Talavera.

Whilst Marmont was consuming his time in fortifying the bridge of Almarez, in order to secure the passage of the Tagus, Wellington moved suddenly towards the north of Portugal with about 40,000 of his troops. The late

successes of the French in Gallicia afforded a fair pretext for the manœuvre. With the ostensible purpose of rescuing the province of Gallicia from the enemy, and removing his troops from the malaria-smitten plains of the Guadiana, Wellington in reality manœuvred for the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo. The defective scale of the supplies of that fortress, and the scattered position of the French generals, gave him hopes of achieving this project, the more especially as he had secretly conveyed a heavy and effective battering train to within fifty miles of the city. On the 8th of August Wellington was in the vicinity of Ciudad Rodrigo, and without delay preparations for the siege were commenced. Soon, however, he learnt that the forces capable of concentration for its succour were far more numerous than he could expect, and he was compelled to turn his siege into a blockade, and prepare to meet the advancing armies.

Rapid and energetic were the endeavours of the French generals, and soon from one side Dorsenne advanced with a convoy and an army of 30,000 men, whilst from the valley of the Tagus Marmont brought up another convoy and an army of 50,000 men; for this time the British general's scheme was foiled. Onward pressed the French troops, and Rodrigo was re-victualled under the eyes of the British forces. Burning for the combat, the French, chiefly cuirassiers, made a sudden attack on a small division of two British and a Portuguese regiment, eight Portugese guns and five squadrons of German horse, on the height of El Bodon. Partially unprepared, Wellington hastened to send for reinforcements, whilst the little band maintained the ridge against every attempt of the enemy, for three dreadful hours. But though victorious, their rear was being threatened by another French column, and a retreat across six miles of plain, surrounded by Montbrun's famed horsemen, was necessary; formed into squares, and now aided by the advance of Picton, the little band moved unshrinkingly across the plain, only halting to receive their baffled pursuers with repeated volleys, that emptied many a saddle, and repeatedly scattered them as

* To C. Stuart, Esq., Villa Fermosa, 11th April, 1811. Ditto Elvas, 17th June, 1811.

by the explosion of a mine. The cool bravery of Picton was never more conspicuous; when within a mile of their entrenched camp at Fuente Guinaldo, a sudden movement of the cuirassiers seemed to threaten a change. "Had we not better form square?" said many of the officers. "No, no," rejoined the general, who had stopped to view them, shading his eyes with his hat. "It is but a ruse to frighten us, but it wont do." At length the intended ground was gained, and the troops were concentrated at Guinaldo; still it was a night of deep anxiety, but 15,000 were yet arrived, and the chief divisions were twelve and fifteen miles off, whilst Marmont with 60,000 men, was within cannon shot of the British centre. Ignorant of the difficulties of his opponent, Marmont contented himself with a demonstration of force; gradually the allied forces collected, and then a fresh retreat, utterly unmolested, placed them in a strong position on the coast. But the winter was now commencing, and by the end of September both armies were in cantonments, the one along the rugged banks of the coast, the other in their old quarters on the Tagus, whilst the allied cavalry watched Ciudad Rodrigo.

For the year 1811 the campaign was at an end; to all save a military eye, little had been accomplished. During the stay in cantonments, some few gallant actions of detached corps kept alive the military spirit. In one, the governor of Ciudad Rodrigo fell a captive to the clever partisan Don Julian Sanches; in another, an entire division of the French army, amounting to more than 3,000 men, were completely surprised by General Hill at Aroyo de Molinos, and left all but 600 men either dead, wounded, or prisoners, to their active enemies. At Tarifa the skill of French engineering, and the tried valour of some of France's best veterans, were foiled at the breach, and a loss on the part of the allies of about 150 men, obtained for them the entire defeat of the besieging army, and the destruction of their artillery, ammunition, and equipages.

Besides his active and intelligent opponents, Wellington had to contend with the weakness of the government at home, the treachery, imbecility, and national jealousy of

his Peninsular allies, and the growing distate among the superior officers of his army, to a longer continuance of this fatiguing contest. It was not merely the old want of exertion on the part of the Portuguese, and entire absence of the supplies required by their own troops, that now harassed the British general, and forced him to give them notice that he should recommend his own government to withdraw their army, but an actual refusal on their part to grant that accommodation to the men who had suffered in their defence, which common gratitude might have prompted them to afford. "I have frequently," wrote Wellington, "endeavoured to prevail on the Portuguese government to allow us to establish hospitals on the Rope Walk at Belem, of which no use can at present or ought to be made: and I find that the convents which were used as hospitals at Lisbon by the British army heretofore, are now applied to other purposes, and all accommodation of this description is now refused."* Such were the allies for whom we were fighting. Besides internal factions, the mutual antipathy of the Spaniards and Portuguese formed a sad item in the troubles of the English general. So bitter was the national hatred, that the Spanish muleteers would not transport provisions for the Portuguese soldiers. At home the government was weak, the people complained of the expense of the contest, and clamoured for brilliant victories and a rapid advance to the Pyrenees. Not denying the expense, and the apparently small proceeds for it, Wellington continued to impress on them the absolute necessity of carrying on the war in Spain, if they would avert it from their own island. He was well aware that were the British army once removed from the Peninsula, Napoleon would hazard every risk to land an army on the shores of England. "I know," he wrote, "that the contest is expensive, and affords no hope of success, excepting by tiring out the French. After all, military success probably could not be reasonably expected, in a combat between he powers of the Peninsula and Great Britain on the one side, and the French on the other, which had begun by the French seizing the armies, the fortified places, the arms, and the resources of the Peninsula.

* To Colonel Torrens, Cartaxo, 28th January, 1811.

These are circumstances to which people do not advert in general, but *they bear on every event in the contest:* and the folly and treachery of the Spaniards, in the loss of battles and strong places, have increased our difficulties; but still I am not without hopes. We have already, in some degree, altered the nature of the war, and of the French military system. They are now, in a great measure, on the defensive, and are carrying on a war of magazines. They will soon, if they have not already, come upon the resources of France, and as soon as that is the case, you may depend upon it the war will not last long. We may spend ten millions a-year in this country, but it is a very erroneous notion to suppose, that all that expense is incurred by the war in the Peninsula. Our establishments which we have here would cost very nearly half that sum, if they were kept at home, and the surplus only should be charged as the expenses of this war." Lastly, the general weariness and want of energy in his officers and subordinates, imposed constant anxiety on Wellington. He threw every difficulty that he could in the way of their returning home, but still, in spite of all, he was at times so deserted, that sometimes on the same day, he had to perform the duties of a general of cavalry of the advanced guard, and leader of two or three columns, besides Commander-in-Chief.* Thoroughly understanding his position, his profound sagacity and indomitable perseverance overcame even these difficulties.

The close of the year 1811 left Napoleon in ostensible possession of Spain, and Wellington occupying a defensive position on the frontiers of rescued Portugal. The French possession was, indeed, little better than apparent, so prevalent and powerful was the guerilla or partisan warfare throughout Spain. The plains and the fortified towns were lost to the nation, but every mountain fastness and forest teemed with bodies of guerillas burning with fierce revenge, and led by able and courageous chiefs. No small French detachment could move without the certainty of destruction, hardly a small garrison could be left without the chance of a coup-de-main from some neighbouring guerilla captain. Every courier moved with a strong

* Lord Liverpool, Santa Marinha, 23rd, March, 1811.

escort, and King Joseph himself went out to hunt even in the vicinity of his capital, with a guard of 1500 men. Severity was useless, and only brought severe retaliation; and for every guerilla who was sacrificed, ten seemed to spring up in his place. In combination with every peasant in the country, the guerillas knew the least movement of the French, whilst they were in ignorance, or subject to deception.

The recapture of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos had long occupied the attention of the British general; powerful armies lay near to succour both places, but towards the close of 1811 a feint made by General Hill into Estremadura drew the entire attention of Soult to Badajos, at the very moment when the portable bridge was being laid down over the Agueda, preparatory to the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. On the 8th of January Wellington crossed the Agueda; and on the following day Rodrigo was invested; vith the utmost rapidity and skill the siege was pressed, nd at the end of the fifth day the capture of the fortified convent of San Francesco, that flanked the trenches, enabled the besiegers to draw their breaching batteries nearer to the devoted walls. For five more days the fire continued with the utmost vigour on both sides, and the wall came down in such masses, that on the tenth day of the siege the breach was deemed practicable. The capture of the fortress was of paramount importance. Within its walls were the entire siege equipages of the army of Portugal, and its fall would secure that country from attack on the side of Almeida. Not a day was to be lost, for Marmont was hastening to the rescue, and would soon be in the vicinity with 40,000 men. Immediate preparations were made for storming the first, just practicable breach, on which preparations of the most formidable kind were ready to receive the attacking columns. Wellington's orders were decisive. "Ciudad Rodrigo must be carried by assault this evening at seven o'clock." The difficulties and horrors of that assault can hardly be described; and yet over every resistance that nature, art, and undaunted courage could supply on the part of the French, the breach was carried, and the great fortress of Castile was in the hands of the allies. Plunder, intoxi-

cation, and violence, too dreadful to be particularised, immediately ensued: flames soon burst forth from many quarters, and the cool intrepidity of a few brave men alone saved conquered and conquerors from annihilation, by extinguishing a fire wantonly lighted in the midst of a powder magazine. Gradually the arrival of new troops, not excited by the terrific contest, restored order, and bridled the horrible licence of victory.

The effect of the victory was great. In twelve days, in the depth of winter, 40,000 men had been gathered round a strong fortress, with such secrecy and celerity, that before the vast armies of the enemy could arrive to its succour; before, as they calculated, the breaching batteries could have been effectually placed, the great frontier fortress had fallen, and with a loss of but 1,300 men, the stores, the artillery, and the material of Marmont's army had been captured, and a severe blow struck against the power of France. The gallant capture calmed even the radicals of Spain, and the Cortes, amid the acclamations of the people, granted to the victor the dukedom of Ciudad Rodrigo, whilst the Portuguese gave him the marquisate of Torres Vedras. In England, too, clamour became silent, the Crown granted another step in the Peerage, and the representatives of the country settled 2,000*l.* a year on the new earldom of Wellington.

The agitation of the French marshals was extreme, the anger of the Emperor excessive; from every side they began to collect their armies, ignorant how great a blow was in preparation on the side of Badajos. The utmost secrecy was requisite on the part of the allies, the battering train was embarked at Lisbon, as if for Oporto, transferred at sea into small craft, and sent up the river Caldao to Alsacer da Sol, whence the carriages of the country were able easily to convey it to the banks of the Guadiana. So completely did Wellington's manœuvres deceive Napoleon, that, though Marmont insisted that Badajos was threatened, he wrote him "that the English general was not mad, and that an invasion on the side of Salamanca was alone to be guarded against." On the 9th of March Wellington began to move to the south, on the 17th, though much hindered by the inactivity of the Portuguese, Badajos was

invested with 30,000 men; Hill covered the siege, which Wellington conducted with 22,000 picked troops.

For twenty days, in despite of the murderous inventions of Philippon, the French engineer, the siege made slow but sure progress in favour of the allies; the outlying fort of the Picurina had fallen, and already the walls of the Trinidad bastion were crumbling beneath the besiegers' fire. By the morning of the 6th of April three breaches in its walls were pronounced practicable. The following day was named for the assault, for Marmont was already concentrated at Salamanca and threatening Ciudad Rodrigo, and Soult moving up from Andalusia. Three attacks were ordered: on the right Picton led against the castle, in the centre General Colville assaulted the breaches, on the left Leith's division menaced the outwork of Pardaleras and the San Vincente bastion. In the three breaches the defences were insurmountable, sharp-shooters, each provided with four loaded muskets, commanded every inch of the ground, heavy guns flanked the ditches, hundreds of shells lay ready to be rolled down on the assailants, and an immense beam of wood studded with sword blades barred all entrance to the great breach. Still the men struggled to ascend the ruins, and a contest too awful to be depicted stretched two thousand killed and wounded in the crowded ditches at the foot of the breaches. Equally undaunted was the defence of the other parts, but success eventually crowned the efforts of Picton's and Leith's divisions, and from San Vincente and the castle the men soon streamed in force to the rear of the long contested breaches. Still the contest raged, but every minute turned it more and more in favour of the assailants, and the great defences before which so many had vainly fallen, were turned in the rear and rendered nugatory. The bugles sounded an English air in the heart of Badajos, Philippon hastily retreated to the fort of San Cristoval, and on his surrender on the following morning the second border stronghold was in the possession of the allies. Again rapine and debauchery, if possible more awful than that at Ciudad Rodrigo, disgraced the victory, and it was not until new troops were marched in, and some of the worst of the marauders

were openly gibbetted in the market-place, that the horrors ceased, and on the third day order was restored in the streets of the captured city. The second great prize was thus snatched from beneath the very eyes of the enemy.

Unparalleled had been the loss, 5,000 had suffered during the siege, and of these 3500 had been killed or wounded during the assault.

The great exertions of the allies required some delay, before offensive movements could be continued. Wellington had committed the custody of Ciudad Rodrigo to the Spaniards, and impressed on them the necessity of replenishing its magazines and repairing its breaches; he soon found that neither was done or likely to be done, and that Spanish indolence and self-sufficiency might endanger both that fortress and Badajos before the end of the summer. Wellington therefore threw the responsibility of revictualling Badajos on the Portuguese, and himself superintended the repair and revictualling of Ciudad Rodrigo, quartering the bulk of his army so as to cover the transit of the stores. As for the Spaniards, he gave them notice that if they did not take measures to support the garrisons which they required him to place in their recaptured fortresses, "he would raze both to the ground, determined not to be tied by the leg in guarding those fortresses against the consequence of their failure to provision or garrison them."*

The time for action was rapidly approaching. Four years of continued fighting had raised the allied army to a height of discipline unequalled in the world, and its numbers were now recruited to an extent more nearly approaching to the continental armies; 80,000 good and tried men were ready for the field, confident in their own powers and the sagacity of the leader. Of these 53,000 were British or German troops, the rest Portuguese, now able to contend in line with their red-coated allies. The French, on the contrary, though still mustering four times the numbers of the allies, were gradually being weakened by drafts for the Russian expedition, and exchanging veteran troops for less effective soldiers.

* To Sir H. Wellesley, April 28th, May 3rd, 1811.

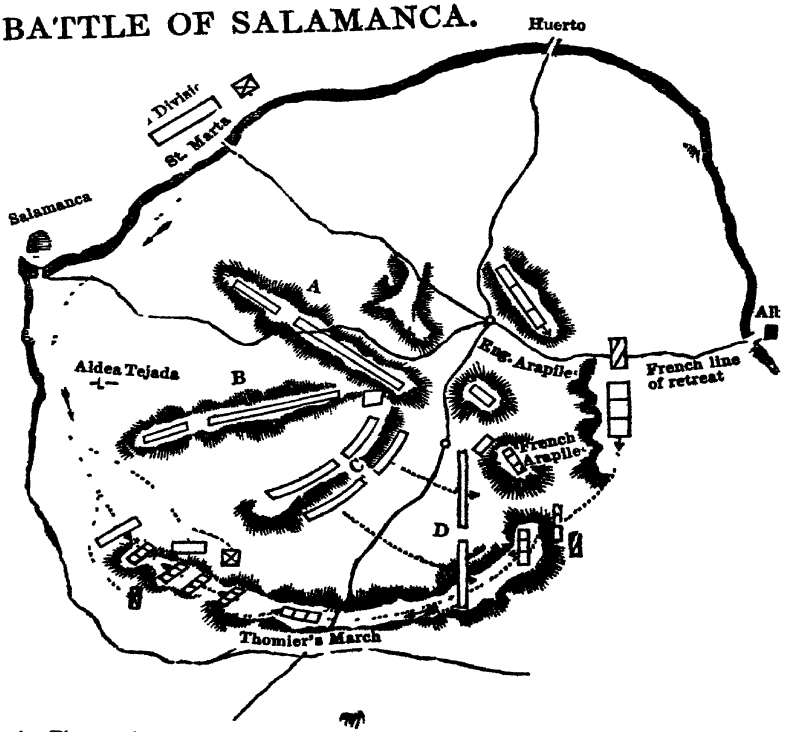
Early in June, after Hill had destroyed the forts and bridge of Almarez, Wellington broke up from the Agueda, and moved towards Salamanca. The forts which the French had constructed there, and some 800 prisoners, fell into his hands, and Marmont retreated towards the Douro, closely followed by his active antagonist. By concentrating his forces on the right bank of that river, the command of its bridges enabled Marmont to effect a junction with the army of Asturias under Bonnet, and thus to raise his forces to a number superior to those of his adversary. Then began a series of movements unintelligible save to a military mind, in which for days the army of Wellington retreated in a parallel line to that of Marmont, over an open and level country, within cannon shot, each waiting for some favourable opportunity for commencing the long expected attack. Between the two forces the horse artillery and cavalry patrolled, and hardly a day passed but some slight skirmish roused the tempers of the opposing forces. By the 21st both armies drew near Salamanca, and Marmont's left wing was so far advanced, that the communication with Ciudad Rodrigo seemed menaced. At this critical juncture, when the right and left wings of the respective armies were close to each other on the small rocky eminences of the Arapiles, the over confidence of Marmont, and his anxiety to strike a blow before superseded by a senior marshal, precipitated his fate.

The change of position deemed necesssary by Wellington brought the British right as far as Aldea Tejada, on the road to Ciudad Rodrigo, whilst the left lay on the British Arapiles. The movement of the allied baggage deceived Marmont; he considered them in full retreat on Ciudad Rodrigo, and hastened by a rapid movement of his left wing to cut them off from that fortress, whilst the rest of his army fell perpendicularly on the allies in their expected march. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when he commenced his manœuvres, and in less than two hours he had fallen into the very trap which he had laid for Wellington. Already Thomiere with his entire left wing was in full march towards Ciudad Rodrigo, followed by Brennier's and Mancune's divisions

of the centre, whilst the rest of the army was moving behind the French Arapiles, ready to fall from that point perpendicularly on the British line of march.

No sooner was the British general informed of his opponent's movement than he hastened to the summit of the English Arapiles, and with his field-glass surveyed their line of march. "At last," he said, as he looked

BATTLE OF SALAMANCA.



upon their left already separated from the centre by more than a league of distance, "at last I have them." In the instant his orders were issued; and when he saw that

they were already being executed, he grasped the arm of General Alava, who stood by him, as he said, "Mon cher Alava, Marmont est perdu."

With the additional advantage of moving on the cord of the arc round which the French were toiling, Wellington could collect his troops with the utmost rapidity. In a few minutes his right was strengthened, one portion ordered to move so as to take Thomiere in front, whilst the other, moving perpendicularly on the French line of march, should interpose between the left and Brennier's division. The movement of the British troops revealed his error to Marmont, and he did his utmost to retrieve it. But now nearly two leagues of distance lay between the division of Thomiere and that of Brennier, and at the moment when the latter division was hastening to its appointed place, the red coats burst in between it and Thomiere, whilst our extreme right met and enveloped that general at the time when he expected from the next rising ground to see the British in full retreat to Ciudad Rodrigo, and Marmont on their track. Enveloped on every side, and surprised during their march, in vain the French struggled against their opponents, and performed deeds worthy of their reputation. Rapidly their array became confused, their cavalry routed and driven back on their infantry, whilst the allied horse broke through the openings unresistedly. Bravely fighting to the last, Thomiere fell at their head, and then they were driven in a confused mass towards the division of Clausel that was hastening to their assistance. Three thousand prisoners attested the completeness of the defeat.

Clausel was rapidly hastening to the aid of Thomiere when Leith's and Cole's divisions attacked him in front, whilst the heavy dragoons and light cavalry threatened his flank; for a time his men bore up against the storm, but when the mass of the cavalry burst suddenly on their already hesitating lines, the rout was immediate, and so complete that of a small division 2,000 prisoners were made, and every gun fell into the hands of the assailants. The French left was totally discomfited.

In the centre and left the tide of war was turning against the British. Led on by their early success, Pack's

Portuguese had been suddenly assailed by fresh troops and driven in confusion down the sides of the French Arapiles. This advance of the French brought their fresh and victorious troops on the flank of the 4th division, then abreast of the French Arapiles, in its steady progress against Bonnet, with whose division it was engaged in front; the effect was decisive. The men staggered, both their generals fell wounded, and at last, in utter confusion, they fled before their opponents. At this critical moment a sudden movement of a division by Beresford arrested the immediate danger, and soon after Wellington restored the conflict by his reserves, and by dint of hard fighting regained the long contested ridge.

Already two generals had been wounded on the side of the French, Bonnet had succeeded Marmont, and now Clausel succeeded Bonnet. It was now a contest for safety, not for victory. His right wing was coming on the ground, and afforded the means for saving the remnants of the army: with great ability Clausel gathered the fragments of his left and centre into a compact body, and, covering them with the yet untouched divisions of the right, retreated to the heights behind the Ciuba streamlet, and there maintained his ground until his reserve and baggage had effected their retreat towards Alba de Tormes. The fort at this place was of the utmost importance. It was held by the Spaniards, and as usual evacuated during the day, without even a hint to Wellington of the occurrence. Trusting to its being held, Wellington had pressed the retreat in another direction, calculating that that road was safe. The event saved the defeated army from annihilation.

Forty-four thousand men had collected round Marmont's eagles on that eventful morning; hardly half that number could be numbered in their retreat behind the Douro. Above 130 officers and 7,000 soldiers had been made prisoners. Eleven guns, two eagles, and six standards were the other trophies of the battle. Such a victory could not be gained without a heavy loss on our side. Above 5,000 had suffered, including many officers of high rank. Of these 3,000 were British, 2,000 Portuguese, and just eight Spaniards. No one can doubt on whom the brunt of the

battle fell, and to whose exertions its victory was due. Whilst leading the pursuit of the light division, Wellington fell in with a squadron of French dragoons. As quick as thought they fled, but discharged their pistols in bravado. One shot hit the holster of the British general, and struck him sharply on the thigh. Happily momentary pain was the only result.

In forty minutes 40,000 men had been completely defeated, and hardly half the number that fought at Salamanca could be collected round the eagles on the retreat to the Douro. Neglecting this defeated mass, Wellington hastened towards Madrid, and in the beginning of August entered the Spanish capital. His reception was the most glorious moment of his life; there was but little of idle clamour or popular applause, for oppression and famine had long since broken the hearts of the Madrilenos. Crowding round his horse, they kissed the skirts of his garments, hung upon his stirrups, or flung themselves in paroxysms of joy on the ground, and with tears blessed him as the deliverer of their country. The palace and fortress of the Buen Retiro still held a garrison of two thousand French veterans, against whom the earliest endeavours of the British were directed. Deserted by their new king and his marshal, the garrison offered but a feeble resistance, and within two days a capitulation placed Madrid in the possession of the allies.

With about 50,000 men the allied armies were now in the centre of Spain, whilst three armies of almost equal forces were capable of being concentrated against them. The cooperation of the Spaniards might have rendered this concentration impossible, but save as guerillas, they were useless, and where they did not actually refuse obedience to orders, their indolence rendered their acts utterly inefficient. Thus it was that Soult and his army were unmolested, and the entire success of the allied expedition centered on the reduction of Burgos, when it was known that the expedition which our government had sent from Sicily to Catalonia had failed in distracting the attention, and separating the forces of the enemy. It was in vain, however, that with utterly inadequate artillery, Wellington pressed the siege of Burgos, and again and again sought to carry

its walls by assault. After five weeks of useless expenditure of life and limb, the retreat of the allied force became inevitable, and the French armies were rapidly concentrating in the allied rear. Then commenced a long and most trying retreat towards the frontiers of Portugal, almost unexampled in military history. With long halts and short marches, and many a brave and successful repulse of the pursuing enemy, river after river was passed with but little loss, and at last, by the middle of October, the entire army was in safety behind the Agueda, and prepared to retire into its winter cantonments in the vicinity of Ciudad Rodrigo.

The demoralization suffered by the army during the retreat from Burgos called forth the severest rebukes from their general, and demanded his most earnest attention. Regardless of the murmurs he might raise, Wellington did not hesitate to attribute the disasters to their right cause, the habitual inattention of his officers to their orders and their duty. His most judicious orders had been neglected, either from carelessness or wilfulness, and he openly charged on the neglect or incapacity of his officers the sufferings and losses to which his willing and ready soldiers had been subjected. The severity and publicity of a rebuke conveyed in a general order drew down on the general much abuse and slander. But little did they know the man if they thought that he would be moved by unmerited censures. Able to appeal to his own acts for the principles on which they were performed, he left the malignants to their devices, and calmly bad the officers act on the principle which, it was evident, actuated their general.*

At home, the victory of Salamanca, and the reduction of Madrid were followed by additional substantial honours; the Prince Regent granted him another step in the peerage, as Marquis Wellington, and an augmentation of his coat of arms commemorative of his services, to which the country added the grant of £100,000 adequately to maintain his increased rank in the peerage. All the winter of 1812 was devoted to the reconstruction of the army, and its

* To General Hill, Frenada, 13th October, 1811. General Orders, ditto 28th November, 1811.

preparation for an effective campaign in the ensuing spring. The command of the Spanish armies was now offered to Wellington, and accepted by him with the hope of in some degree raising the efficiency of their troops. Soon, however, he found that political intrigue was busy in thwarting his best designs, and it was not until he had threatened to resign the command, that he awakened the Spaniards to a due sense of their dependence on the British and Portuguese troops, and rendered them more willing to listen to the advice, and profit by the example, of the allied generals.

CHAPTER V.

VITTORIA.

1813.

Spanish politics —Farewell to Portugal.—March to Vittoria.—Rout of the French.—The battles of the Pyrenees.—Soult's attempt.—St. Sebastian.—Pampeluna.

THOUGH apparently idle in winter quarters, the entire close of the year 1812, and spring of the next, was consumed by Wellington in energetic measures to raise the character of the Spanish army so as to make it of some use, and in improving the condition and comfort of his own troops, so as to take advantage of the coming campaign. He certainly did not expect much from the exertions of the Spaniards. "They cried viva," said he, "and are very fond of us, and hate the French; but they are, in general, the most incapable of useful exertion of all the nations that I have known; the most vain, and at the same time the most ignorant, particularly in military affairs, and above all of military affairs in their own country."* The utmost that he expected to be able to teach them was how to avoid being beat. No sooner was he appointed by the Cortes to the command of their troops, than he directed his best energies to the reformation, or rather the construction of their armies. He had obtained for himself the most absolute powers as those alone by which any good would be effected, and one of his constant endeavours was to obtain such similar powers for the generals under him, as would ensure their ability to act without the interference of the Cortes and the newspapers. How difficult such a task must have been, will appear from the following description of the Spanish government:

* To Lord Bathurst. Madrid, 18th August, 1812.

"It is impossible to describe the state of confusion in which affairs are at Cadiz. The Cortez have formed a constitution very much on the principle that a painter paints a picture, viz., to be looked at; and I have not met one of the members, or any person of any description, either at Cadiz or elsewhere, who considers the constitution as embodying a system by which Spain is or can be governed. The Cortez have in terms divested themselves of the executive power, and have appointed a Regency for this purpose. This Regency are in fact the slaves of the Cortez; yet Cortez and Regency have so managed their concerns,—that neither knows what the other is doing, or what will be done upon any point that can occur. Neither the Regency nor the Cortez have any authority beyond the walls of Cadiz; and I doubt whether the Regency have any beyond the walls of the room in which they meet. Each party suspects the other. Notwithstanding the Regency are the creatures of the Cortez, the Regency suspect that the Cortez intend to assume the executive power; and the Cortez are so far suspicious of the Regency, that although the leading members admit the expediency, nay necessity, of their removal from Cadiz, the principal reason alleged for remaining there is, that we know the people of Cadiz are attached to them; but that if they were to go elsewhere, to Seville or Granada, for instance, they are apprehensive that the Regency would raise the mob against them. I wish that some of our reformers would go to Cadiz to see the benefit of a sovereign popular assembly, calling itself 'Majesty,' and of a written constitution; and of an executive government called 'Highness,' acting under the control of 'his Majesty,' the assembly. In truth, there is no authority in the state, excepting the libellous newspapers; and they certainly ride over both Cortez and Regency without mercy."*

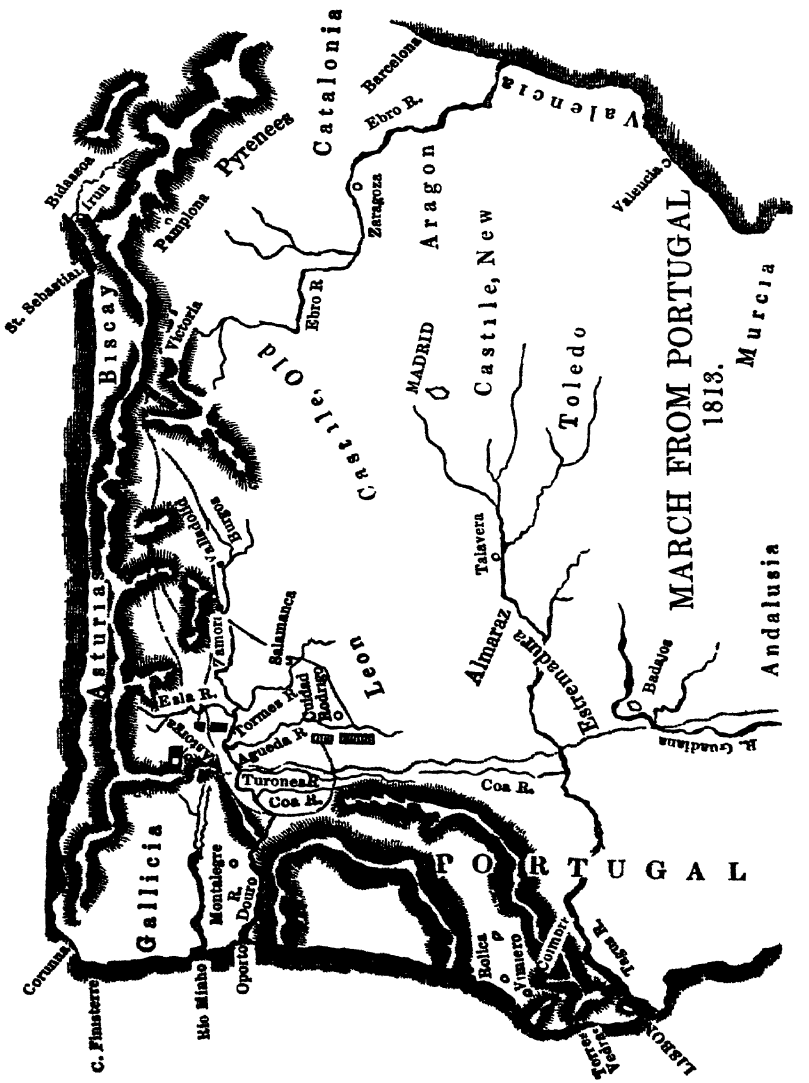
Such was the goverment with which Lord Wellington had to contend. The minister at war sent orders to the troops, and so did the commander-in-chief; and the consequence was, neither were obeyed. The Cortez took affront at British garrisons in Spanish fortresses, but succumbed

* To Lord Bathurst. Frenada, 27th January, 1813.

when threatened with their withdrawal; the government departed from almost every article of their engagements, and yet expected Lord Wellington to perform all his promises. The British commander had but one unfailing resource, to tender his resignation. All parties felt alarmed, and matters improved so much that towards the end of the spring some discipline appeared in the Spanish armies, and seemed to justify the grand movement of the allies against the weakened forces of their opponents.

Never had the allied army been so powerful for offensive operations as in the beginning of May, 1813. On the line of the Coa the noble Anglo-Portuguese army mustered 75,000 combatants, and nearly a hundred guns, and could count 44,000 British and German soldiers on its muster rolls. In the south-east of Spain, near Alicante, Sir John Murray commanded an army of 16,000 men, of whom 11,000 were British or German troops, and the rest Mediterranean soldiers in British pay. Within reach of Murray were Spanish corps, amounting to nearly 30,000 men: towards the centre of the line 27,000 more Spanish troops were mustered, and besides these, on the frontiers of Leon and Gallicia, the army of Estremadura under Castanos numbered 40,000 men. Numerous as were the Spanish corps, little dependence could be placed on any save those under Castanos, who were indeed unequal to continued regular conflicts with the French; but being for the most part old soldiers, inured to hardship, and trained to regular war, rendered important services in conjunction with the Anglo-Portuguese army. Weakened as the French undoubtedly were by disunion among the marshals and the king, and the drafts to supply the fearful losses of the Russian campaign, they still numbered 230,000 good troops, of which nearly 30,000 were admirable horse. This mass was divided into two great armies; that of King Joseph mustering above 100,000 men, and that of Suchet, in Valencia and Catalonia, numbering nearly 70,000 troops; the rest found ample employment in watching the numerous guerilla corps, and in keeping open the communications with France.

Having given such orders to Sir J. Murray as would ensure ample employment to Suchet, Lord Wellington

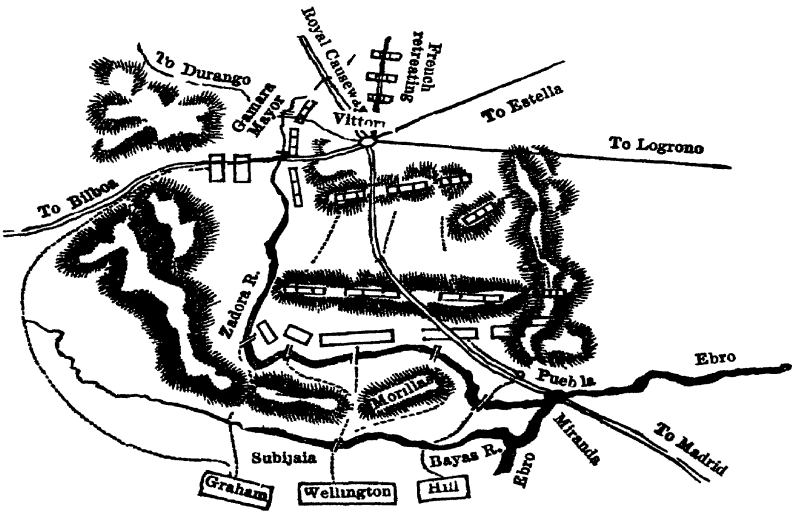

MARCH FROM PORTUGAL
1813.
Catalonia
Valencia
Aragon
Castile, New
Toledo
Murcia
Andalusia
Castile, Old
Leon
Asturias
Biscay
Gallicia
PORTUGAL
Pyrenees
Barcelona
Ebro R.
Zaragoza
Valencia
Bidassoa
Irun
St. Sebastian
Pamplona
Victoria
MADRID
Talavera
Almaraz
Estremadura
Badajos
R. Guadiana
Burgos
Zamora
Salamanca
Esla R.
Tormes R.
Agueda R.
Ciudad Rodrigo
Almeida
Turones R.
Coa R.
Coa R.
Montalegre R.
Douro
Oporto
Rio Minho
Coruna
C. Finisterre
Bolica
Vimiero
Lisbon
Tagus R.
Torres Vedras

prepared to enter Spain for the last time. Moving his left wing under Graham across the Douro, he directed its march to the Esla, then join itself to the forces of Castanos, and keep pushing forward in a straight line towards Vittoria, so as effectually to turn the line of the Ebro, whilst the rest of the army were led by him through Salamanca across the Tormes, and the Carrion in the direction of Burgos. Collected at first round Valladolid and Madrid, the French soon learned that the rapid progress of the allies was endangering their line of retreat through Bayonne, and therefore broke up in haste, gathered together all the vast spoil they had been collecting for so many years, and concentrated in the basin of Vittoria, in the hope of making such a resistance there as would enable their long trains of baggage to escape through the Pyrenees to Bayonne. "The road to Bayonne," says Napier, "was encumbered with an endless file of chariots, carriages, and waggons, which bore away the helpless multitude, and the rich stores of spoil towards the frontiers. The French army thus encumbered, exhibited a lively image of those hosts which the luxury of Asiatic warfare has in every age accumulated around the standard of their Sultans; for the riches which they carried with them were such as bespoke the regal state of a great monarchy; and the train of civil functionaries, officers of state, and ladies of pleasure, who followed the troops, recalled rather the effeminacy of Oriental magnificence, than the simple but iron bands of European warfare."

After the most trying difficulties, the allied left wing had cleared the mountainous country through which its route lay by the time that the main body of the army, moving by the now deserted fortress of Burgos, gained the crest of the opposite mountains, and thus from all sides the allies went streaming into the basin, in which lies the town of Vittoria, before which now 70,000 French troops stood to defend the plunder of their king and his followers.

The basin of Vittoria is inclosed by two heights, that on the right running from Puebla to the Logrono road; that on the left from the hill of Morillas to the Bilboa road. At Puebla the river Zadora enters the plain, running first to the left, and then turning so sharply as to form a right

angle; through the centre runs the great road from Madrid, and at Vittoria many roads meet from Bilboa, Guipuscoa, and Pamplona; the plain is eight miles in length, and has two small ridges across its surface. Five bridges led across the Zadora into the great basin. Two were on the French right at Gamara Mayor; those of Mendoza, Tres Puentes, and Vellodas lay opposite their right centre; those of Nauclares and La Puebla led towards their left. Not one of these bridges was broken down, one of them, that of Tres Puentes, was not even watched.



With early dawn on the 21st of June, the allies marched to the attack, from their positions on the Bayas. To the right Hill moved through the village and pass of Puebla, and attacked the heights beyond the village; in the centre Wellington menaced the bridges from Mendoza to Nauclares, whilst Graham made a circular movement on the left, and moved on the bridges at Gamara Mayor. Hill's progress was rapid, and though strongly resisted at Mendoza and Nauclares, Wellington eventually forced these passes, whilst other portions of his army passed over the undefended bridge of Tres Puentes, and menaced the right centre of the French. But now

it was one o'clock, and Graham's guns were distinctly heard in full action on the extreme left. Bravely the French struggled to repel the repeated attacks, and the whole line of the Zadora glittered with fire. Gradually the sound of Graham's guns came nearer, Hill renewed his violent attacks on the right, and one by one every spot of defence was wrested from its desperate defenders, and by six o'clock the French were driven back to their last line of defence, — the heights within a mile of Vittoria, — whilst the plain immediately behind them and for miles beyond Vittoria, was one moving mass of fugitives. The stand here was bold but short; rapidly the tide of war flowed over the last height, and Reille, who till then had held a good position on the left, though driven by Graham from his first defences, now taken in flank, was obliged to look to his own safety, and beat a hasty retreat.

The progress of the allies had left but one road open by which the French could retreat, that to Pamplona, and on that, as the English shot boomed over head, the vast crowd started and swerved with a convulsive movement, while a dull horrid sound of distress arose, but there was no hope, no stay for either army or multitude. Even that one road soon became impassable from the accidental overturning of a carriage, and as the British dragoons and horse artillery thundered behind, the crowd dispersed on all sides, throwing away every disposable article, and made their way over hedges and ditches, leaving the spoils of an army and a kingdom to their conquerors.

The battle had been fought with nearly equal forces; but yet the number who had fallen or had been taken prisoners was small, so utterly dispersed were the French, and so tempting was the rich spoil that lumbered the ground. The spoil was indeed untold in value, and most multifarious in kind. The baton of Marshal Jourdan, 150 cannon, and above 400 waggons of ammunition constituted the military trophies alone. But when it is remembered that the plunder of six years was on the field, that people of every rank and station, who had for years systematically robbed the richest places in the land, had brought their ill-gotten stores to the great heap, that the last contribution wrung from the broken Spaniards, of more

than 4,000,000 of dollars, and French treasure to pay arrears of nearly two more millions, were among the plunder, the scene may more easily be conceived than described. The dresses and jewels of the women lay mingled

with the stolen vestments of the priests, and the jewelled cups of the holy services. Pictures, the most secular and the most holy, lay mingled in confusion, mostly cut out from their frames in order to facilitate their transport.

"Never had defeat been so decisive," as an officer said; "they were beaten before the town and in the town, and through the town, and out of the town, and behind the town." Our loss had been comparatively small, and yet so annihilated was order and discipline by the immense plunder, that above 12,000 were absent from the rolls after the battle, many of whom skulked about in the villages, until their plunder was spent, and the hard-fought contest in the Pyrenees enticed them to rejoin their colours. About 1,000,000 of money had been shared among the soldiers, and but 100,000*l.* transferred to the public chest. In return for the baton of Marshal Jourdan, which was among the spoils of the battle, the Prince

Regent sent the successful General that of a British field-marshal. In the opening of the year Lord Wellington had exchanged his colonelcy of the 33rd regiment for that of the royal horse-guards, and been elected a knight of the garter; and now the unanimous and hearty thanks of Parliament completed the national rewards of the campaigns of 1813.

Such was the rout of Vittoria, a blow felt as well in the heart of Germany as in the plains of the Peninsula. A new conscription was ordered to fill the weakened ranks, and Soult sent from Germany to take the command. No man save Napoleon was better suited to the restoration of the French affairs than Soult. His great abilities, his utter indifference to the means which he used, his coolness in difficulty, and untiring energy in action, rendered him the ablest general in misfortune—that greatest test of fitness. By the time that Soult arrived at the Pyrenees, he found affairs in a situation that demanded his best energies. From the pass of Roncesvalles on the right, to the mouth of the Bidassoa on the left, the allied armies covered eleven leagues of the frontier of Spain; whilst behind their right wing the Spanish troops blockaded Pamplona, and behind their left Graham was pressing the siege of St. Sebastian, the last stronghold of the French in the north of Spain. Enabled by his energetic measures to concentrate nearly 100,000 troops, Soult devoted all his attention to forcing the passes of the Pyrenees, and raising the siege of one or both of the beleagured fortresses. Soult had many points in his favour, and not the least was his lying in the French plains at the foot of the mountains, where he could communicate from both extremes of his line with perfect ease and great rapidity, whilst his opponents lay in detached masses among the mountains, separated from each other by inaccessible heights, and driven to communicate by circuitous routes. He had thus the means of bringing superior numbers on portions of the allied positions

By the 25th of July Soult commenced his operations by a rapid move on the British right and centre at Roncesvalles and the valley of the Bastan, with the intention, if successful, of moving down the allied position to the relief

of St. Sebastian. The attack was most successful, and the allies gradually fell back towards Pamplona, and began rapidly to concentrate at Sauroren, whilst Graham raised the siege of St. Sebastian, and marched forwards to the Bidassoa. It was not until the evening of the 27th that Wellington joined his forces at their position, about four miles in front of Pamplona. They were still inferior to their opponents in number, as the 6th division had not arrived. A hearty cheer from the men greeted their great leader, and as the sound re-echoed among the opposite hills, the French paused in their advance. Aware how cautious Soult was, Wellington saw the advantage of this slight event. "He will delay his attack until he learns the reason of these cheers; that will give time for the 6th division to arrive, and then I shall beat him." Such was the case. During the night the division arrived, and with the dawn of the 28th the French attack commenced.

Still adhering to the French system of columns, Soult formed his right into one great mass, and moved it with apparently resistless force against his opponent's left. But when the regiments in front stood firm and ceased not to fire, and on both sides other regiments enclosed it with fire, the huge mass reeled under the storm, and recoiled in disorder from the attack. In the centre the French deployed into line, and their attack for a time shook the allied position; but soon the troops rallied, and with bayonet rushed down on the French, and bore them back by main force from the crest of the hills. In this moment of defeat, D'Erlon's corps came to Soult's aid, and he boldly sent them against the British left, in hopes of in some way retrieving the day. But now the victorious allies threatened his left and centre, and succoured their own left sufficiently to repel D'Erlon's attack. On every point the French were defeated, and by the last day of the month Soult's army retired from the passes of the Pyrenees, weakened by the loss of 15,000 men, whilst that of the allies had not reached to more than half that number. Once more the allies occupied their positions among the mountains, and St. Sebastian and Pamplona again suffered siege and blockade.

Thus freed from the interference of the French, the

siege of St. Sebastian was renewed with vigour, and now that more artillery had arrived from England, and a stricter watch was kept by our ships at sea, it proceeded rapidly. At length, on the last day of August, the breach was deemed practicable, and its apparent extent promised an easy work. Never was anything so fallacious. Great as it was in extent, it presented but one point of entrance, and that available for single file alone; a perpendicular fall of fifteen feet behind the breach, and well lined parallels on either side, rendered it unassailable with any prospect of success. Unaware of the nature of the work, Sir T. Graham ordered the attack, and it commenced with all the daring that had characterized the awful days of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos For two hours the vain attempts continued, and rank after rank fell dead or wounded in the fatal ditch. At this juncture the general confided in the skill of his artillery-men, and ordered the guns to be once more directed against the breach, so that the balls passed but a few feet above the heads of his soldiers at the breach. A severe loss to the enemy, and the combustion of a store of powder within the breach, was the immediate consequence of this bold step. The French began to waver; the breach was won, and a way forced into the town. Again, as at Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos, licence and violence of every kind disgraced the victorious soldiery, and force alone rescued the remnants of the city from entire destruction.

One last attempt had been made to relieve St. Sebastian on the day of its fall; crossing the Bidassoa, the French attacked the Spanish troops along their entire position; and to their honour be it recorded that, without the aid of either of their allies, they repulsed their assailants, and maintained the line of the Bidassoa.

Though at the head of such a powerful army, Lord Wellington had many reasons for arresting his steps on the French frontier, and delaying, at least for a time, his invasion of France. The Spanish Cortes had again relapsed into their usual inactivity, and suffered their armies to starve in the field. Though with above 40,000 Spanish troops in his cantonments, Wellington could calculate but little on them in the field, from the miserable state of their com-

missariat, and could far less trust them on the soil of France, where plunder would be their first and only object. The injudicious conduct of the Duke of York, the British commander-in-chief, had weakened the efficiency of the British troops by withdrawing many of the veteran regiments from the Peninsula and supplying their places with newly raised corps, in spite of the remonstrances of Wellington. And besides this the operations of Suchet in Valencia were of the utmost importance, and the British general would have gone there in person, had not the continued reverses of the Emperor in Germany rendered it evident that no new troops could be spared to assist that able general. For a month, therefore, Wellington submitted to the impediments offered by the inclemency of the weather, and remained inactive with the bulk of his army, whilst his right wing pressed the blockade of Pamplona, which still held out for another month.

PART III.—THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

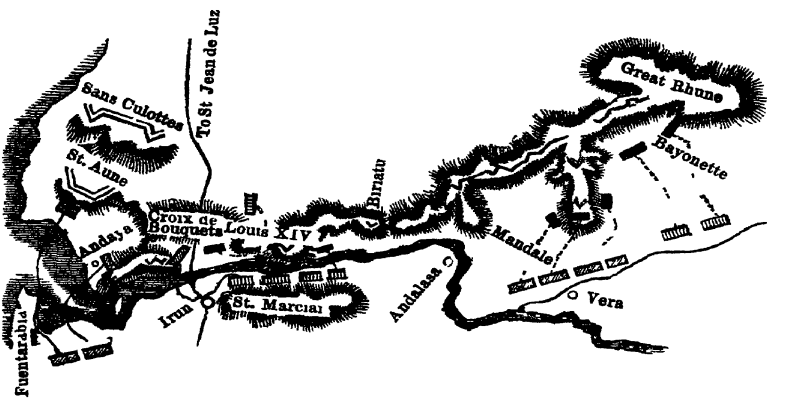
CHAPTER I.

1813—1814.

The passage of the Bidassoa.—Invasion of France.—Capture of the French positions on the Nivelle.—Passage of the Nive.—Battles in front of Bayonne.—The army winters in France.

During the first week in October, though Pamplona still engaged the services of his right wing, Wellington determined to bend a little to the views of the allies, and with his left wing force the passage of the Bidassoa, and commence the invasion of the French territory. The enemy's position presented powerful difficulties to be overcome. The Bidassoa was broad and ran strongly, and all its known fords were commanded by the French guns. On the coast opposite to Fuentarabia commenced a line of heights closely skirting the river as far as Andalasa, and then running backwards until completed by the lofty mountain of the Great Rhune. On these heights the French lay strongly intrenched, and with every accessible point defended by field works. On the coast, the camp of St. Anne, supported in the rear by that of the Sans Culottes, commenced the lines of defence. Opposite Irun, the Cafe Republican reared its rocky head, with the loftier and more difficult rocks of the Croix de Bouquets behind, whilst the points of Louis XIV., and Biriatu, completed the defences. Close to the river line, from the last point, the mountains retired; first came the Mandale mountain, then the Bayonette, and, lastly, the Great Rhune, whilst all along the ridge springs ran down towards the river.

Against the right of this position, from the sea to the Croix de Bouquets, the extreme allied left were to move, whilst the other portions of the defences were entrusted to the exertions of the Spanish army and the light division. It was yet dark, on the morning of the 7th of October, when the British left moved from Fuentarabia towards the mouth of the Bidassoa, where the width of the river and nature of



the sands seemed to render a passage impossible. It was low water when the men made for the two fords that had been discovered, and so unexpected was the attack, that they were half across the river before perceived by their enemies. At the same time, higher up the river, the various corps crossed with success, and within a short time the combat was engaged along the whole line from the Great Rhune to the village of Andaya. So complete had been the preparations, and the surprise of the French, that everywhere the positions fell with rapidity, and the enemy were driven in haste to the highest ridges of their mountain position. For five hours the dreadful struggle continued; but at last not a foot of their great line of defence remained to the French, save one half of the summit of the Great Rhune. For that night both armies bivouacked on the disputed mountain; but on the morrow a new attack wrested more of the ground from the French, and under cover of the height they retreated from their stronghold,

and took up a new position in the rear. With a loss but in a slight degree greater than that of the French, the first line of the French mountain defences had been stormed or turned by the allies, and the invasion of the French territory commenced.

The spirit in which the invasion of France was undertaken is as honourable to the British general as any of his greatest victories. "Private property," said Wellington's proclamation on the day after the passage of the Bidassoa, "Private property must be respected; the officers and soldiers of the army must recollect that their nations are at war with France solely because the ruler of the French nation will not allow them to be at peace, and is desirous of forcing them to submit to his yoke; and they must not forget that most of the evils suffered by the enemy in his profligate invasion of Spain and Portugal, have been occasioned by the irregularities of his soldiers and their cruelties, authorized and encouraged by their chiefs, towards the unfortunate inhabitants of the country. To avenge this conduct upon the peaceable inhabitants of France would be unmanly and unworthy of the nations to whom the commander of the forces now addresses himself."

Nor were these injunctions mere words. The first act of insurbordination and pillage was visited with its merited chastisement, and several men of all nations expiated their disobedience with their lives. The Anglo-Portuguese army soon returned to its old discipline, but the Spaniards were not so tractable, and several of their superior officers not only countenanced, but encouraged their villanies. With the same determination that had often led Wellington to execute marauders on the eve of a battle, he now hesitated not for a moment; and with a stern rebuke to their general, sent away the Spaniards to their own country, determined to carry out the principles he had avowed, caring little whether his army was small or large, so that it obeyed him, and abstained from plunder. He well knew that no force, however great, could be of use in an enemy's country, if the spirit of the invaded people was stirred up by violence and pillage. The complaints of opponents as well as the progress of events, have proved the truth of these principles. One

French writer admits the kind and gentle manner of the invading army, and contrasts it with the forced contributions of Soult and his surbordinates; another writer of the same nation acknowledges the effect of his conduct on the peasants to have been to render them favourable to the invaders, and to make them regard the presence of enemies as a blessing, that of their friends as a curse. The one writer deems the generosity a deep stroke of policy, the other attributes it to the fear of the peasantry entertained by the allied army.

On the last day of October, Pamplona surrendered, and the right wing was thus enabled to advance into the French territory, and Wellington prepared to renew offensive operations. The month consumed by the blockade of Pamplona had given Soult time to raise numerous field works along his entire new position, which now stretched from the coast in front of St. Jean de Luz, across the Nivelle to the mountain line between that river and the Nive. The right rested on the sea in front of St. Jean de Luz, and was covered by the fortified camp at Urogne; the centre held the Little Rhune, a precipitous mountain, standing parallel to the Great Rhune, and had in its rear another strong position on the heights above Ascain, whilst the right, connecting itself with the centre, by the position at Sane, and the bridge of Amotz, extended along the mountain ridge of Aimhoa, with another strong position in its front, on the parallel ridge of the Choupera and Mandarin mountains in the rear of the village of Urdax. Along the entire line, fortifications of a most formidable nature crowned every accessible spot; and in the centre, on the heights of Ascain, redoubt and fort were so thickly planted as to seem almost impregnable. Within these defences, Soult had above 60,000 combatants; but Wellington's plans soon congregated overwhelming numbers on the enemy's weakest points.

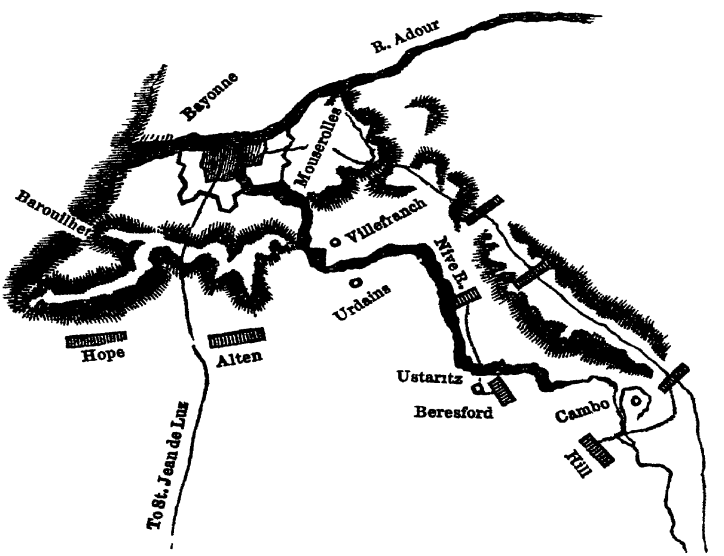
The weakest part was in front of Amotz, and on the flank of La Petite Rhune. Thither Wellington's chief efforts were directed, and such were his combinations, that, 40,000 good troops were directed on the line from the left to the positions above the Rhune Mountain; whilst on the left a weaker body watched rather than attacked the

lines in front of St. Jean de Luz. The combat was long and severe, and the enemy defended every inch of the naturally strong and artificially strengthened ground. But nothing could resist the combinations of the general, and the valour of his troops. Post after post fell before the allied charges, and before the day closed the centre and right were driven from every position, and pursued across the river, whilst the left were soon glad to retreat from before St. Jean de Luz to prevent their being intercepted by our victorious troops, who, before the day closed, were two leagues in advance of their morning's position, and in possession of the entire line of the Nivelle. During the evening, St. Jean de Luz was evacuated, and its post taken possession of by the allies. For a short time Soult halted his defeated battalions on a third line of defence, between the Nivelle and the Nive, but the dispirited condition of his troops, and the unfinished state of his works, rendered him unwilling again to risk a combat with his pursuers, except on very strong ground. Retreating, therefore, towards Bayonne, he confined his line of defence to the entrenched camp round that city, and the line of the Nive as far as Cambo; whilst the allies moved their head-quarters to St. Jean de Luz, and pushed their advance posts as far as Espellette and Cambo.

Up to this period the greater part of the Spanish contingent of 25,000 men, now fair troops, had joined in the invasion, but from this point their services were refused. The Spaniards' thirst for vengeance could not be repressed; and as the Cortes and government would lend no assistance to Wellington, but employed their time and abilities in devising libels on him and his army, the general sent the whole of them back to the Peninsula, and prepared to carry on the war with his Anglo-Portuguese army alone. He was still strong, 80,000 men in all, and the poor country which his late battles had gained for him was ill-suited to the maintenance of so great an army. The passage, therefore, of the Nive, and the shutting up of the enemy within the trenches of Bayonne, so as to obtain the use of the valley of the Nive, was the next manœuvre of the allied commander. "The dreadful state of the weather acting on the clay soil of the

district rendered this movement impossible for some weeks, and it was not until the beginning of December that Wellington was enabled to move.

On the 9th of December, however, the allies prepared for action. Resting in his fortified camp, on which considerable labour had been expended from the time of the rout at Vittoria, Soult held a position by which he could command both sides of the Nive and the country between that river and the Adour. His extreme right held the range of heights between the Nive and the sea at Baroulhet; his centre occupied Villefranche, on the other bank of that river, and his left stretched along by Cambo, and communicated with the division of General Paris at St. Jean Pied de Port, whilst within all lay the entrenched camp and the heights round the city of Bayonne



At day-break the allies moved to their several positions. On the left Sir John Hope and General Allen attacked the heights about Baroulhet, and between the road to St. Jean de Luz and the Nive, with vigour, and drove back the enemy to the inner circle nearer Bayonne; but did not

follow up their success, as the great object to be obtained was to distract the enemy's attention from the movements of the rest of the allied army. At Cambo, General Hill pushed the British left across the river, seized the great road to Bayonne, and moved along the crest of the mountains towards Villefranche, everywhere driving the enemy before him; whilst at Ustaritz, Beresford crossed the Nive and aided his advance. Success crowned the efforts of the allies, and the investment of Bayonne was completed from the Adour to the sea.

But now the advantage of Soult's central position, and the danger of the British were seen. Enabled, by the bridge of Bayonne, to move his troops with rapidity to either side of the Nive, Soult could concentrate his forces against either wing of the British before assistance could be brought from the other part of their semicircular position. Soult was not the commander to lose such an opportunity; and the distance to which the British left had retired rendered a sudden rush on that side most dangerous. At daybreak Soult, withdrawing all but a strong guard from the left of the Nive, hurled the entire mass of his army against the weak left of the allies on the position of Barouilhet. Undaunted courage, and a sure hope that assistance must arrive if the position could but be maintained, enabled the allies to meet every attack, and after a long and arduous struggle, in which the tide of war ebbed and flowed, to maintain such a front that the further progress of the enemy was arrested, and time given to Wellington to bring up succours from his other positions. Every hour rendered the French attempts less likely to succeed, and by night-fall Soult drew back his tired regiments, content to occupy, as his trophy of temporary success, the line which the British picquets had held before the battle. With the morning of the next day the French again attacked the allies, but with no success; and at night, baffled and dispirited, Soult retired into his entrenched camp, and left only strong picquets on the contested position.

The gradual extinction of the French watch-fires, and the withdrawing of the troops, revealed to Wellington the intention of Soult to make a sudden attack with his entire forces against the allied right on the heights of

Villefranche. Beresford was immediately sent to support Hill, and Wellington himself hastened to the right, but did not arrive until Hill had earned a glorious victory, and driven back his opponents within their entrenched camp.

Every object of the late advance had been gained. Soult was driven from the Nive and cooped up in Bayonne, the courses of the Nivelle, the Nive, and the Adour, were in the power of the allies, and, well supplied through St. Jean de Luz, and the other towns on the coast, they commanded comfortable quarters in the valley of the Adour, whilst the French were compelled to throw their left on its right bank, and leave their right within the entrenched camp of Bayonne: thus they had little command beyond their lines, whilst the allies threatened their communications and supplies.

The effects of this defeat were increased by the defection of the German contingent in the French army. At the close of the evening of the 10th the commandant of the Frankfort and Nassau battalions found himself in front of the British 4th division. He had just learnt the truth of the news from Germany, that his country had thrown off the yoke of France, and drawing his sword he told his men the facts, and bade them follow him into the opposite ranks, in order to be sent to fight their country's battles in their own land. With loud cheers the Germans left the French ranks and marched into the allied position. This defection not only weakened the army of Soult by so many men, but effectually embarrassed the movements of Suchet in Catalonia, and compelled him to disarm his German troops, who formed some of his best soldiers.

Perfect as Napoleon's system of repressing information was, he could now no longer conceal from his subjects that the Anglo-Portuguese army was wintering on the soil of France. How they had arrived was not revealed to the French, and now that they were there, it was only in order more completely to ensure their destruction that they were permitted to encamp on the sacred land. Every day, said the French authorities, the situation of the allied force became more and more critical, its retreat was threatened, its convoys and provisions cut

off or wrecked on the coast, and converted to the use of the French army. With such statements the Imperial Government endeavoured to conceal the dawning fact that the English leopards, whom Massena had driven to the sea at Lisbon, were in winter quarters in one of the fairest portions of the French territory.

CHAPTER II.

TOULOUSE

1814.

Soult's new line —Advance of Hill.—Investment of Bayonne —Battle of Orthez.—Advance on Bordeaux —Retreat to Toulouse.—Battle of Toulouse.—Close of the Peninsular war.

THE late defeats had driven Soult to assume a new position in order to maintain his communications with St. Jean Pied de Port, where the French Catalan army lay, without neglecting Bayonne, where his extreme right maintained the entrenched camp with 10,000 men. Following the line of the Adour, Soult's centre extended as far as Port de Lande, whilst his left under Clauzel followed the line of the Bidouze river from Guiche to St. Palais, and thus communicated with St. Jean Pied de Port by the other road. Bridge-heads defended the passage of the Bidouze, and at Peyrehorade, behind the Gave de Pau, strong entrenchments were erected and redoubts placed along the entire line of the Adour. Against this position the allies prepared to move so soon as the opening of the weather should give them an opportunity.

In spite of the great successes he had achieved, Lord Wellington received but little encouragement to advance further into France. The necessary repose in winter quarters revived the restless spirit of the English ministers, and they eagerly turned towards some new expedition, neglectful of the immense advantages that must flow from the prosecution of Wellington's invasion. At the very time when the arrears of pay were such that Wellington was obliged to give bills in order to retain the services of his muleteers and other store-carriers, the English

ministry, instead of combining all their forces in the south of France, planned two new expeditions, one to Hanover and the other to Holland. Urged on by the Russian minister, the Government demanded of their general his objects in so strongly urging the continuance of his advance. His answer was plain; he was on the most vulnerable side of France, where Bayonne alone offered any impediment to his advance to the Garonne, by which he would do more to weaken Napoleon than ten expeditions into a country like Holland, replete with strong places. For six years, with but a small army, he had employed more than 200,000 French troops, and thus relieved the allies on the northern frontier, besides destroying the prestige of the French army by his repeated and decisive victories. Some little deference was paid to these remonstrances, but still several veteran regiments were drafted from his army, and then, with marked inconsistency, his advance was urged without a thought of his increased difficulties. To one of these attacks Wellington's answer was brief and emphatic. "There are some things that cannot be done; one of these is to move troops in this country during or immediately after rain." Another source of anxiety was the eagerness of the royalists to obtain Wellington's sanction to a projected rising in favour of the Bourbons. The British general saw the danger that would arise from precipitate movements, and yet desired so far to encourage the party as to ensure their support at the right moment. Caution was utterly foreign to their designs; and it required all the skill and power of the general to restrain their rashness until his own movements should render their position safe.

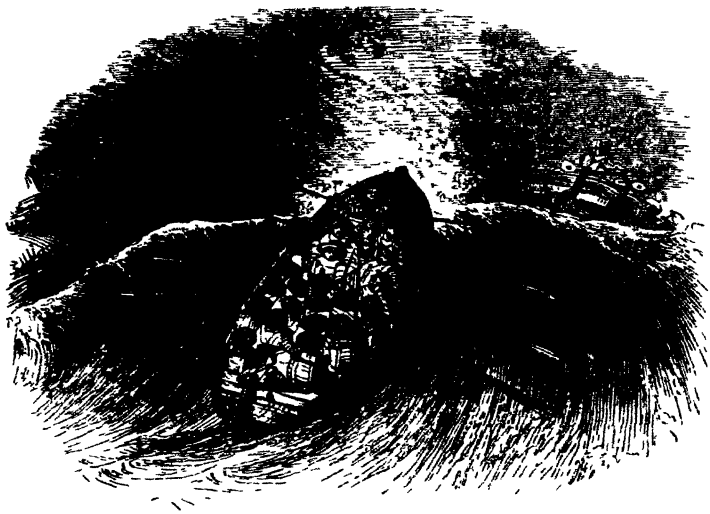
Excepting a few sharp actions between the outposts, little was done by either army until the beginning of February, when the improvement of the weather rendered operations possible. The capture of Bayonne and the obtaining the mouth of the Adour as a harbour, was the main object of the allied movements, and could only be obtained by either bridging the Adour between the sea and the city, or forcing the very strong entrenchments that covered it on the land side. With a river so broad at its mouth, and so open to the most

violent tides and gales, such a project required the utmost care and skill, and the distracting of the enemies' attention as far as possible from the real point of attack. With this object the British right wing, under Sir Rowland Hill, advanced against the French left, cut off its communication with St. Jean Pied de Port with great ease, rapidly drove them across the Bidouze and Gave d'Oleron, and forced them to take up a new position on the Gave de Pau and at Orthez.

Whilst Sir Rowland was thus employed, Wellington's preparations for the passage of the Adour advanced to completion, and at last the weather seemed sufficiently favourable for the attempt, and the naval force, under Admiral Penrose, stood in to aid the attempt, but the wind proved adverse, and the ships could not make the mouth of the river. Towards evening it was determined to push a small corps to the right bank by means of boats and pontoons; the labour and danger were immense, but at length about 500 men had crossed over, when the garrison marched two battalions of about 1300 men to drive them back. Taken in flank by the allied artillery on the left bank, and met in front by a steady line, the French made but little progress, and when some Congreve rockets flew across the river and dashed amid their ranks, they fled in haste to their entrenchments, and left the little brigade in its hard-earned position.

Towards night the wind changed, and the flotilla stood in to the river's mouth. But with the change of the wind came also the change of the tide, and a surf presenting a barrier not to be passed by boats. Still the boats led in and braved the dangers of the bar. Vain, however, was their courage, boat after boat attempted the pass, and with but few exceptions were swamped in the surf, and their crews drowned in the raging waters. For that night and that tide the attempt had failed; but still the troops kept crossing higher up in small parties, and increasing the gallant brigade on the right bank. With the next tide the boats again stood in, and regulated their course by the signals which a pilot made, who had been landed at the mouth, and now from within side the bar endeavoured to assist their efforts. The boats came boldly on, but

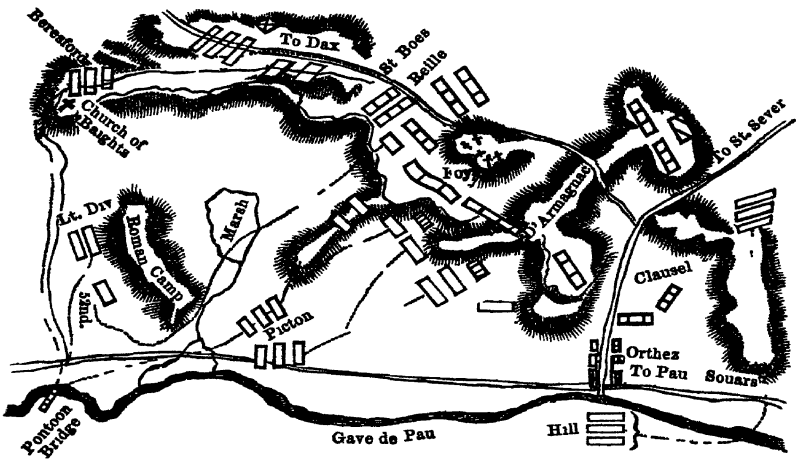
hardly had the first entered the surf, when she sank with all her crew. Still the seamen persevered, as British seamen will, and before the tide turned, thirty heavy boats had crossed the bar, and the bridge had been commenced.



Already 6,000 good troops had been ferried over; the construction of the bridge was therefore readily accomplished, and in about three days Bayonne was as effectually cut off from the sea by Wellington's bridge, as from the land by the advance of the allies to the foot of the entrenched camp from the Adour to Barouillet. Pressed on all sides, the garrison were confined to their lines, and the bridge defied the tide with its strength of construction, and the efforts of the French by the gun-boats that lined its sides. The success was important, a new line of communication, and a new post had been obtained, and the garrison of Bayonne rendered useless to Soult.

The passage of the Adour enabled Wellington to move additional troops towards his right, and to prosecute the advance of Sir Rowland Hill with effect. Driven by a succession of skilful movements from the Gave d'Oleron across the Gave de Pau, the French fell back towards

Orthez, with the intention of making a final stand in that strong position.



The semicircular range of heights that commences at the church of Baights, and runs through the village of Boes to Orthez, was occupied by the French army, mustering still nearly 40,000 men, of whom 7,000 were conscripts, and the rest veteran soldiers. Reille held the extreme right at St. Boes, with the divisions of Taupin and Roguet. Foy and D'Armagnac occupied the centre, and Clausel with the left defended Orthez and its ancient bridge, that had defied even the mines of the French engineers. Crossing by a pontoon bridge, the British left under Beresford threatened St. Boes and the road to Dax; the centre under Picton moved against Foy and D'Armagnac; whilst Hill with the right endeavoured to force the bridge of Orthez, or gain any other passage over the Gave de Pau in that direction.

Immediately opposite the French centre a lofty hill, surmounted by an old Roman camp, commanded a view of the entire field, and served as a shelter to the allied light division, which there acted as a reserve, and as the connecting link between Picton and Beresford. The various divisions of the allied army mustered rather more than

37,000 combatants, and the artillery of the contending parties was nearly equal.

By nine in the morning of the 25th the battle began by the advance of Beresford against St. Boes, and Picton against the French centre. For a time the advance of the allies was irresistible, St. Boes was taken, and the troops hastened to deploy on the heights in its rear, in order to sweep the French right. But this manœuvre was impossible; commanded by a great central battery, and assailed on all sides in the narrow pass behind the village, the men fell back from the fire, and then again and again tried in vain to carry the deadly ridge. The crisis of the battle had arrived; and already Soult was moving up his reserves, whilst Picton was for the moment retiring from his attack on the centre. Pressing on through St Boes, the French right with loud shouts followed the retiring allies, and gradually lengthened their distance from Foy's division. Wellington from the Roman camp marked the error, and took advantage of it. Rapidly moving the light division up, he sent the 52nd regiment across the marsh, and hurled it into the interval between the French centre and left, whilst fresh divisions moved to aid the British left and to renew the combat in front of St Boes. Picton, too, renewed his attack with success, and whilst Reille was met in front by Beresford, and taken in flank by the 52nd, Foy was too hard pressed by Picton to be able to detach any troops to his aid, and already Hill, who had crossed the river at the ford of Souars, was threatening the French left by the road to St. Sever.

From that moment the battle was lost to Soult, and his manœuvres were wisely turned to securing a good retreat. From every side his troops fell back in splendid order, and each division taking it by turns defended the ridges behind the original position, whilst the rest of the army retreated by the St. Sever road, to the banks of the Luy de Bearn, that ran about five miles in the rear. So long as the French were on the ridges the retreat was most orderly, but when the plain was gained, and Hill was seen moving rapidly on the French left, the troops fell into disorder, were charged by the British cavalry, and driven in haste and confusion to the river,

across which they passed in scattered parties. Here the pursuit ceased, for Wellington himself had been struck by a spent ball, which prevented his urging the chase with his accustomed vigour. The victory, if judged by its trophies, was of little import. By the loss of about 2,000 men, the enemy had been weakened by less than double that number, and six guns had fallen into the hands of the allies. If judged by its effects, the victory was of the utmost importance; it had led thousands of the conscripts, who cared but little for the Emperor, to throw away their arms and desert their standards, had broken the spirit of resistance, opened the road to Bordeaux, and driven Soult to retreat from the coast towards Toulouse.

Heavy rains again impeded the advance of the allies; but by the first week in March the rivers had fallen, the bridges broken down by the enemy had been repaired, and the allies were in full march after their enemies in the direction of Toulouse, whilst General Fane took possession of Pau de Bearn, and Marshal Beresford moved with 12,000 men towards Bordeaux. Repeated exhortations had come from the citizens of that place to the allies, promising to receive them as friends, and beseeching the Duc d'Angouleme, who was with the English army, to come to the Bourbon city and re-establish the exiled family. With every inclination to assist the royalists, Wellington constantly impressed on their emissaries, "that the allies were engaged in negotiations for peace; and that if terms should be made with Napoleon as sovereign of France, all assistance to the Bourbons must of necessity cease." Neither did he hesitate to repress with a strong hand the ill-advised proclamation of the Duc d'Angouleme, in which that prince asserted that the sole object of the allies was the restoration of the Bourbons. He refused in any way to aid any government he might establish, and forced him to recal his unauthorized proclamation. His instructions to Marshal Beresford were most judicious. He ordered him to retain the magistrates in office if they expressed their willingness to remain, and to state to the Bourbon party, if they should ask him to consent to their proclaiming Louis XVIII., that the allies wished well to his cause, and that, so long as the public peace was

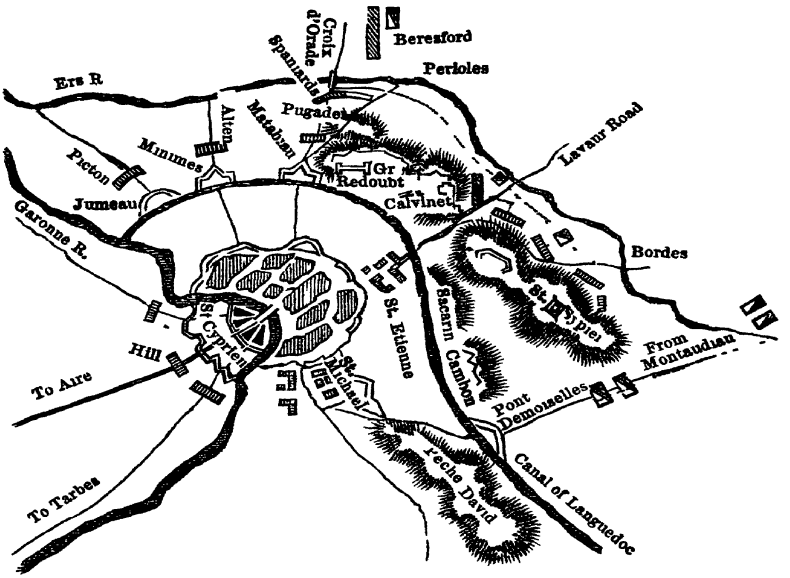
maintained, they would not interfere to prevent his party from doing what they might deem for his interest, and would willingly assist any who might show themselves inclined to assist them in overthrowing Bonaparte. Further than this he would not promise. "The object of the allies," he continued, "in the prosecution of the war, and above all in entering France, is, as stated in my proclamation, *Peace;* and it is well known that the allies are now engaged in negotiating a treaty of peace with Bonaparte." "However inclined I might be to aid and support any set of people against Bonaparte while at war, I could give them no further aid when peace should be concluded, and I beg the inhabitants will weigh this matter well before they raise a standard against the government of Bonaparte and involve themselves in hostilities."* The advance of the British troops decided the fate of Bordeaux, the old government fled, the white flag was hoisted, and though some gallant attempts were made for its recovery, the city remained in the hands of the allies, and the nucleus of the revived royalist party in France.

Deprived by his late defeat of all his magazines, Soult retreated by Aire and Tarbes towards Toulouse. Several sharp and gallant stands were made, and at Aire, Tarbes, and Vic de Bigore many a gallant fellow fell, before the entire French army was forced to concentrate around the works of Toulouse. By the 25th of March Soult was there in position, whilst Wellington, encumbered with heavy artillery and a pontoon train, did not arrive in the vicinity until three days after the French had assembled round the city.

Soult's position presented a series of strong defences. Besides the old walls and bastions of the city and the suburbs of St. Cyprian, the canal of Languedoc covered the entire face of the city, and beyond it a long and lofty range of hills called the Mont Rave defended the ground between the canal and the Ers river. The destruction of every bridge on the Ers, save that at Croix D'Orade, and the nature of the ground and roads on the St. Michael suburb side, confined any attack to the line of the Ers, and compelled the expulsion of the French from the entrench-

* To Marshal Beresford, St. Sever, March 7th, 1814.

ments with which they had covered the line of the Mont Rave, from the hill of Pugade on the left, to that of St. Sypiere on the right. The entrenchments were of



the most formidable nature; behind the hill of Pugade the great redoubt covered that end of the Mont Rave, whilst the fortification of the Columbete and the platform of the Calvinet defended the other part of the mountain. On the other side of the Lavaur road the fort of St. Sypiere and other works defended the extreme right of the mountain range. Between this hill and the canal ran another range equally strongly fortified, whilst every bridge-head over the canal presented formidable works to all but breaching batteries or regular storming parties.

On the morning of the 10th of April the manœuvres for the battle began, and the last victory in the great Peninsular contest hung in the scale. Numbers were on the side of the allies, for nearly 40,000 Anglo Portuguese were available, besides 12,000 Spanish troops, and 84 pieces of cannon. On the side of the French

between 38,000 and 39,000 men were in line besides the national guard of the city, and 80 pieces of cannon crowned the formidable works, at which they had so long laboured. Sending Hill to menace the suburb of St. Cyprian, Picton to threaten the bridge-head of Jumeau, and Alten with the light division to occupy the defenders of the bridge and works of Minimes, Wellington prepared to engage his real battle on the extreme right of the Mont Rave. Compelled by the destruction of the bridges on the Ers to cross that river at the Croix d'Orade, Wellington sent the Spanish troops against the hill of Pugade, whilst Beresford with 13,000 men moved along the bank of the river in the hollow between its waters and the fortified heights. With great courage the Spaniards rushed on, and at first carried the outer works, and drove the French back to their greater fortifications. But soon the scene changed, the carnage became too great to be endured by such troops, and they fled in confusion down the slope, until a rapid charge of English cavalry, and aid from the light division, enabled them to reform on the lower height of Pugade. Nor was Picton more successful on the extreme right. Not content with merely menacing the bridge-head at Jumeau, and thus engaging the attention of its defenders, he forced on his troops without the means of scaling its entrenchments, and suffered the loss of above 400 of his men.

Slowly Beresford marched along the valley, exposed to the fire of the heights, and every step losing men from its effect. At last the road to Lavaur was reached, and the troops deployed to the attack of St. Sypiere and the right of the Mont Rave. The attack was irresistible; one by one the heavy redoubts were stormed or turned, and when for a time the battle ceased, the combatants shared the heights between them, and the French had fallen back to the Calvinet platform. Shortly after one, Beresford renewed the attack, aided now by his artillery, which had just arrived, whilst Soult had sent enormous reinforcements from his posts, perceiving that the Mont Rave was the point to be lost or won. With the utmost violence the battle raged again for nearly four hours, and though there were times when the British were driven from newly-cap-

tured redoubts, yet in the end their progress was not to be arrested, and the whole range of the fortifications of the Mont Rave were in their possession before four o'clock in the evening. And now on all sides Soult drew in his men and retired to his second line of defence, behind the canal, though still holding his advanced posts on the lower heights, behind the Mont Rave, at Sacarin and Cambon. Thus ended the last battle of the Peninsula. 4,500 men had suffered on the side of the allies, of whom one half were British, whilst Soult was weakened by more then 3,000, including three general officers.

Already the war had closed, and the occasion of the great struggle ceased to reign, when thus thousands of human beings fell in the dreadful strife before Toulouse. Aware that the allies had entered Paris, but as yet utterly ignorant of the abdication of Napoleon, Soult had determined to hold out Toulouse, and, like a good soldier, fight to the last and best for his falling master. Unable to hold out with effect, on the 11th Soult retired from Toulouse, and Wellington, who was then aware of the state of affairs at Paris, and the progress of the negotiations, in no way retarded his retreat. On the next evening both generals became aware of the abdication of Napoleon, and Wellington at once proffered an armistice to Soult. Finding, however, that he was only negotiating to gain time, on the 17th he put his army in motion on that marshal's line of retreat, and was rapidly approaching him, when he received his submission to the *provisional government*, and hostilities ceased along the entire line of operations, and the armies went into winter quarters with but little prospect of further contests.

Little more than four years had elapsed since Lord Wellington had commenced his successes at Rolica. In the face of the wide spread opinion that the Imperial armies were irresistible, he had driven them foot by foot from the Peninsula. Though libelled at home, and at times but ill-supported by his government, he had endured and prospered. He had raised the Portuguese from the depth of ignorance as soldiers to be the rivals of his own countrymen; he had overcome the pride and the laziness of the Spaniards, and won their hearts, as far as they can ever be

won by a foreigner, by the boldness with which he censured their errors, and the calmness with which he ridiculed their fears and their libels of him. Of a truth the Spaniards could not understand how a great general could go on in such a career of success, and be day by day gathering greater power and greater influence, and persevere with such effect as not only to silence his opponents but convert them into admirers, without aiming at sovereign power, and designing to win the scenes of his glory for his own rule. To them, and to the French also, it was incomprehensible how so great a man, who, for so many years had been the practical king of the Peninsula, and had so many thousands of good soldiers at his command, could be content with the rewards of a subject, and quietly return to his country as a mere soldier, by both nations the loyal and honourable character of a British officer was so little understood.

PART IV.—CAMPAIGN IN FLANDERS.

CHAPTER I

LIGNEY AND QUATRE BRAS.

1815.

Wellington in peace.—Reception by the House of Commons.—Congress of Vienna and its functions —Escape from Elba. — Renewed coalition. —Preparations for force —Concentration of forces in Flanders.—Advance on the French.—Ligny —Quartre Bras.—Retreats to Wavres and Waterloo.

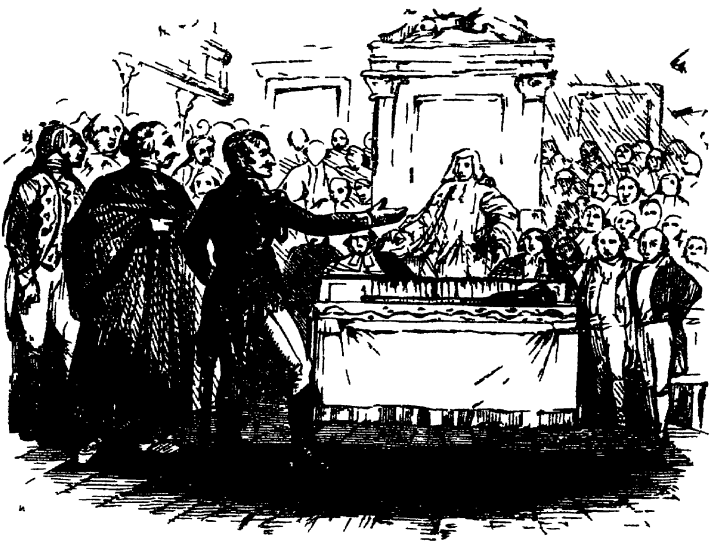
With no unreasonable hope of enjoying in peace the honours and rewards which he had so well earned, Wellington left his victorious army, and joined the allied sovereigns and ministers at Paris. The state of Spain, however, rendered his stay there short, and the embarkation of some thousands of his veterans for the fatal plains of North America demanded his superintendence. Sad, indeed, was the state of Spain. The return of Ferdinand had been the origin of two parties, the Absolutists and the Constitutionalists. At the head of the first O'Donnel struggled for the absolute and despotic power of the King; whilst the other party contended for a constitution, the greatest fault of which was that it went far beyond the ideas of the nation for which it was designed. The majority of the nation declared for the king and absolutism, and the constitutionalists began to calculate on the armies that had joined in the invasion of France, and prepared to renew the flames of war in their desolated country. At this crisis the presence of Wellington at the head-quarters of the armies secured their allegiance to the king, and

crushed the seeds of war. Opposed as he was to such measures as the constitutionalists contemplated, Lord Wellington endeavoured to impress on the king the necessity of governing on really constitutional opinions, and threatened Ferdinand with the detention of the part of the subsidy that was in arrear, until the government was constituted on a proper basis. Promises of amendment were easily obtained, but beyond promises the absolute king was as little inclined to proceed, as the most revolutionary Cortes during the war.

Disgusted with the conduct of the Spanish crown, the British commander hastened to Bordeaux to take leave of the gallant troops whom he had so long led to victory. With unrestrained feeling he congratulated them no less upon the events which had restored peace to the world than upon the high character with which they would quit the country, over whose hills and plains they had marched as enemies. Tendering them his thanks for their services, their general assured them, that though circumstances might alter the relations which he had stood towards them, so much to his satisfaction, he should never cease to feel the warmest interest in their welfare and honour.

Hastening to England, Lord Wellington was received with every mark of gratitude and respectful admiration, that the Court, the Legislature, and the people could bestow. Both Houses of Parliament had again voted him their thanks for his eminent and unremitting services to his Majesty and the country. The acclamations with which he was greeted in public were beyond description, and the last and highest step in the peerage had been already added to the many honours conferred on him by the Prince Regent. He had left England a knight, he returned a duke, and on his first introduction into the House of Lords, he was placed in the highest rank of the Peerage. On the same day to a crowded house, his several patents of viscount, earl, marquis, and duke were read, and he received, through the mouth of the Chancellor, the thanks of his fellow peers for his long and tried services. The Commons had heightened the honor of their vote of thanks by the appointment of a deputation of their body to tender to him, in person, their sense of his services. The Duke

requested permission to attend the House, and return his acknowledgments in person. The scene was truly memorable; the House was crowded with members, and military and naval uniforms were mixed with court-dresses throughout the assembly. As the Duke entered and proceeded to the chair placed for him within the bar, the whole house rose, and standing uncovered greeted him with repeated cheers. For a few moments his grace sat in obedience to the Speaker's invitation, and then rose and expressed, in



his terse and manly language, his sense of the honour conferred upon him, and his admiration of those great efforts of the Commons, and the country, in times of unexampled pressure and difficulty, for supporting on a great scale those operations by which the contest had been brought to so happy a conclusion. Nor was the Speaker's reply less effective. "My Lord," he said, "Since last I had the honour of addressing you from this place, a series of eventful years has elapsed; but none without some mark and note of your rising glory. The military triumphs which your valour has achieved upon the banks of the Douro and the Tagus, of the Ebro and the Garonne, have called

forth the spontaneous shouts of admiring nations. Those triumphs it is needless to recount. Their names have been written by your conquering sword in the annals of Europe, and we shall hand them down with exultation to our children's children. It is not, however, the grandeur of military success which has alone fixed our admiration or commanded our applause; it has been that generous and lofty spirit which inspired your troops with unbounded confidence, and taught them to know that the day of battle was always a day of victory; that moral courage and enduring fortitude, which, in perilous times, when gloom and doubt had beset ordinary minds, stood nevertheless unshaken; and that ascendancy of character which, uniting the energies of jealous and rival nations, enabled you to wield at will the fate and fortunes of mighty empires."

The Duke soon left England to take Lord Castlereagh's place as ambassador at Paris, whilst that able minister proceeded to the great Congress of the allies at Vienna, to which all the numerous questions arising out of the long war had been referred. At that council board sat the Emperors of Russia and Austria, the Kings of Prussia, Bavaria, and Wurtemburg, and the representatives of all those European powers who joined on either side in the last great contest. The reconstruction of the kingdoms of Europe was their task, and now that the dread of Napoleon was removed, individual interest soon assumed the place of national patriotism. The repartition of Poland became the test, and two great parties were developed in the Congress. Russia claimed all Prussian Poland as the reward of her great services; Prussia, promised by her powerful neighbour, an equivalent from the territories of Saxony, coalesced with the northern emperor. So great an acquisition of territorial power, and so cruel a confiscation of the dominions of the powerless King of Saxony was resisted by the united powers of Austria, France, and England. From disputes, the great powers prepared for blows; each side suspended the disbanding and disarming of their troops, and England moved forces into Belgium. Prussia prepared to retain her hold on Saxony, a tripartite treaty united Austria, France, and England, and a new war seemed on the eve of breaking out, when the evasion of

Napoleon from Elba became known, and mutual fear once more restored mutual confidence. Within a few days of the knowledge of this event, everything was arranged; a proclamation denounced Napoleon as beyond the protection of treaties, and assured the world that the allies would advance with their entire forces to the succour of the Bourbon king. From every side preparations began, and all nations hastened with eagerness into the renewed contest for life or death.

During eight months Napoleon had played the Emperor in his little kingdom of Elba, and persuaded the world that the man who had ruled the continent was now content to fritter away his time and his intellect on the drilling of a few hundred guards, the erection of Lilliputian palaces, or the conquest of a few yards of barren rock rendered desolate by the Moorish pirates. Like the Douglas, Napoleon bided his time; but when he saw how injudicious were the acts of the restored family, how they governed and lived as if the great quarter of a century of revolution and conquest was a dead letter, when he felt assured that disgust at the new regime had spread further and further in ever-widening circles of society and of the country, he could no longer hold back, but rushed on to his fate, and made one bold stroke for renewed fame and increased power.

On the 26th of February, 1815, with about a thousand men, Napoleon sailed from Elba, escaped the cruisers of England, and on the 3rd day landed at Cannes in Provence. Everywhere greeted with enthusiasm, Napoleon pushed on towards the capital, and at every step his little army increased, regiment after regiment tore down the white flag and reproduced the eagles they had secreted. By the 19th of the month, the Emperor was at Fontainebleau at the head of an enormous army, and Macdonald, as true to his king as he had been to his Emperor, lay between him and Paris with the remnants of the royal army. Determined to oppose his old master's return, the marshal prepared for action; but the first sight of the Emperor disclosed the impossibility of resistance, and Macdonald could but fly in haste from his army, whilst the cries of Vive l'Empereur were ringing in his ears. The king had fled,

the Emperor arrived in Paris, the people were in transports, but the leaders trembled at the danger of the game that Napoleon had played. Civil offices were but unwillingly taken, but the army returned to him as one man, and those who had been loudest in their denunciations of his attempt, deserted the Bourbons. Aware that on the army alone he could depend for the maintenance of his throne, Napoleon applied his whole powers and resources to its reconstruction, and with his usual success. Before the beginning of June 200,000 men, most of them the veteran troops who had been released by the treaty of Paris from the various German fortresses and prisons of the allies, were in arms, new regiments daily raising, and his arsenals filling with stores.

Nor were the allies unprepared; four great armies were preparing to march each by its own route on the French capital. From the Upper Rhine Schwartzenberg led half-a-million of men; on the Lower Rhine Marshal Blucher moved with 140,000 Prussians. In the Netherlands the Duke commanded nearly 80,000 mixed troops; and in Italy, Murat, now in arms for Napoleon, was menaced by another Austrian force But one alteration was made in this scheme, and that by the advice of the Duke. The Prussians were united with his forces in the Netherlands, and mustering 110,000 effective men, were divided in four corps at Fleurus and Charleroi, Thuin, Ciney, and Hannut. The Anglo-Belgian army mustered 78,000 combatants, of whom 40,000 were British, though chiefly new levies, 6,000 were Hanoverians and Brunswickers, and the rest Belgian, Dutch, and Nassau troops. Divided into two corps, and a reserve, the one division, under the Prince of Orange, occupied Braine le Compte, Enghien, Nivelles, and Soignies; the second, under Hill, held Ath, Lens, and Oudenarde, whilst the reserve was concentrated at Brussels and Ghent.

On the 30th of May, having committed the defence of the capital to his brother Joseph, Napoleon left Paris and journeyed slowly towards the head-quarters of his grand army, now collecting in masses along the Flemish frontier from Sambre to Philipville. Brussels was the great political object of the Emperor's movements, and his position enabled

him to threaten the four great roads leading to the Flemish capital, and to leave the allies in uncertainty on which of them the force of the storm would break. Namur, Charleroi, Nivelles, and Halle were all alike liable to the great attack, and the positions of the allies had been taken in such a way as to enable them to concentrate with rapidity on whichever road was first threatened.

Behind the line of the Sambre, and about a league within the French frontier, Napoleon had now collected 122,000 excellent troops and 350 guns. Delay was prejudicial in the extreme, and immediate success his only hope. A proclamation containing the usual allusions to Marengo, and Jena, Friedland, and Austerlitz, elevated the spirits of his soldiers to the highest pitch. He could not appeal to any such victories over the English. With respect to that nation he could only remind many of his veterans of the prison ships of England, and their sufferings in captivity. At this critical moment some writers, whose experience ought to have taught them better, would lead the world to believe that the allied generals were either without information or the victims of false information transmitted by one of Napoleon's ministers. It is now needless to raise the question, a sufficiently authoritative denial is on record,* whilst those who can understand the advantage of a central position when several distant points are threatened, and the disadvantage of detached parties placed in posts of imminent danger on a menaced frontier will not require more than a consideration of the allied position to induce them to disbelieve in this wonderful story, and the surprise of Wellington by the Emperor.

At daybreak on the 15th of June the French troops moved across the frontier, and driving in the advanced posts of the Prussians, passed the Sambre at Chatelet, Marchiennes au pont, and Charleroi. By five in the morning it was evident that the movement on the Charleroi road was a bona fide attack, and yet, though but forty miles of good roads were between the Prussian outposts in that quarter and Wellington's head-quarters, no news of the

* Quarterly Review, 1845

movement reached the Duke until three in the afternoon. It was at this time that the Prince of Orange rode in to dine with the Duke, and communicated the intelligence of Napoleon's movements. Immediate orders were issued to the troops to prepare to march, and when, within an hour or two, more detailed news arrived of the direction of the French, the different corps were ordered to concentrate at Quatre Bras, and aid the Belgian and Dutch troops in maintaining that point of communication between the British and Prussian armies. Desirous of allaying the fears of the inhabitants, the Duke requested the Duchess of Richmond to give the ball she had intended, and desired his officers to attend, and drop off one by one during the evening, so as not to attract attention to their departure.

Whilst the British were thus verging from their various positions towards Quatre Bras, Blucher was gathering his Prussians on the heights between Bry and Sombref, where the two small villages of Ligny and St. Amand occupy the front of the position. By the morning of the 16th, with the exception of the 4th corps under Bulow, the whole Prussian force was on the ground, and 80,000 men and nearly 300 guns stood in battle array about three miles to the left of the British position at Quatre Bras. Against this position the Emperor advanced with the bulk of his army, whilst Ney, with somewhat under 50,000 men, was ordered to hasten towards Quatre Bras, seize that position before the British troops could arrive, and then move by Bry on the rear of the Prussians. Until this should be effected and Ney's guns heard in the Prussian rear, Napoleon was to forbear his attack, in order that the defeat might be the more effective. Utterly unable to carry out the orders of the Emperor, Ney moved on Quatre Bras, and strove to effect by force what he had failed in doing by speed. Hour after hour Napoleon waited to hear the sound of Ney's guns in the Prussians' rear, but the only sound of war came from the right, and louder and sharper the conflict grew, until at last the Emperor determined no longer to wait for Ney, but to engage his adversary at once before Bulow's corps should arrive on the field.

At a little after three in the afternoon, the French columns advanced on the villages of Ligny and St. Amand. For more than three hours the masses of armed men struggled and fought in the narrow streets of the villages, and the slopes that rose behind them; and whilst thousands fell in the confined area of the conflict, nothing was decided, whilst the continued roar from the right showed that Ney was not a whit nearer his expected position. At this crisis Napoleon determined to sacrifice Ney, in order to secure his own victory; D'Erlon's corps, forming one half of Ney's forces, had remained some miles in that marshal's rear, and bore no part in the battle at Quatre Bras. At the moment when Ney was looking to its arrival to retrieve his losses, the Emperor ordered it to move towards the Prussian right. At seven in the evening D'Erlon's columns appeared to the right of St. Amand, menacing the flank of the fatigued Prussians; the effect was immediate. Above 20,000 new troops came fresh into the combat, and retreat from the bloodstained position was immediately necessary.

Pressing through the narrow lanes behind the villages, the Prussians soon fell into confusion, their artillery stuck fast in the ways, and in despite of the gallant charges of their cavalry, the dreadful cuirassiers of Millhaud dashed on with irresistible force, and enveloped the retreating columns with a cloud of horsemen. In one of these charges the old veteran Blucher, the ceaseless and continued opponent of Napoleon, fell entangled in the trappings of his wounded charger.

Twice the contending cavalry rode over the fallen marshal and his aid-de-camp Nostitz, who had alighted to aid his general. At last the cuirassiers were checked, the veteran was drawn from beneath his dying horse, mounted on a stray trooper's charger, and carried off safe from his imminent danger. Though weakened by the loss of 15,000 men and 21 pieces of cannon, the Prussians retreated but a short distance—less than a league, from the field of battle, at first, until Blucher was aware of the arrival of Bulow at Gembloux, when he retired by Lilly to the Wavres road, and pursued his march with all his forces to that town.

During this conflict at Ligny, Ney was marching on Quatre Bras to execute his required movement. Thither, too, were hastening the allied battalions, and from a very early hour partial skirmishing of outposts had been preluding the battle. Leaving D'Erlon in his rear at Gosselies, Ney moved on Quatre Bras with 22,000 men, of which more than 4,000 were cavalry, and 60 guns, about two o'clock in the day, when the allied forces consisted of less than 20,000 men, with no cavalry save a few Brunswick hussars, no guns, and most of the troops but just arrived on the field after long and fatiguing marches. Early in the morning the Duke had ridden across to Ligny, concerted measures with the Prussian general, and then returned to defend his own position at Quatre Brass Assured at once by his great experience of French manœuvres that Ney's threatened attack was in force, he advised the Prince of Orange to withdraw his native troops from their advanced positions, and then, placing his few battalions in the best places that offered, awaited the battle which Ney was hastening to deliver.

Confident in their cavalry and artillery, the French advanced boldly to the battle, and the cuirassiers dashed impetuously against the allied lines. Steadily forming in square, the troops received the horsemen with a close and deadly fire, that sent them backward in confusion, and foiled every charge, save where the unfortunate 42nd were charged before their square was completed, ridden through and through, and sacrificed nearly to a man. For two hours the combat raged with the utmost fury, and gradually the batteries of the enemy began to tell with fearful effect on the allied squares, and to render their resistance to the charges of the cuirassiers less effective. But now the leading columns of Maitland's brigade of Guards and Alten's light division were appearing on the ground, and though all but fainting with fatigue and hunger, the gallant fellows rushed with eagerness to the assistance of their brethren, and soon expelled the French from the wood of Boisu, which they had gained, and restored the entire British position Every half hour was of advantage to Wellington, as it brought more and more troops to his aid, whilst to Ney, no longer able to calculate on D'Erlon's aid, it rendered his attacks less and less effective. Still the gallant marshal strove for victory, until the British cavalry and artillery were seen to reach the field, and then he fell back from the terrible battle field, and collected his disheartened columns at Frasnes. No guns and but few prisoners were taken on either side, but the return of sufferers bore witness to the nature of the strife, and to the due effect of the artillery with which the French were strengthened. The French had lost more than 4,000 men, but the allied loss amounted to a thousand more, and above half of that had fallen on the British troops.

So near were the two fields of battle, that the Duke could see the progress of events at Ligny from his own position at Quatre Bras. Besides this, he received constant intelligence from Sir Henry Hardinge, who was attached to Blucher's staff, and received the last intelligence towards nightfall by the hands of Captain Hardinge of the artillery, after his brother had been wounded, and was carried from the field with the loss of his hand. Aware

then of the event of the battle and of the Prussian retreat, with daybreak on the 17th, the Duke sent a patrol of the 10th hussars across to Ligny, who reported the entire departure of the Prussians and the extreme quiet of the French. A second patrol under Sir A. Gordon advanced

entirely unmolested as far as Sombref, communicated with the Prussian rear-guard, and returned with accurate intelligence of the route pursued by the retreating Prussians. An immediate retreat on Waterloo followed this intelligence. In the face of the enemy, covered by their cavalry and guns, the allies retreated on the Gemappe road, and through that village to the ridge of Mont

St. Jean immediately in front of the wood of Soignies. Before the Duke left the field, he had witnessed Grouchy's march in pursuit of Blucher, and seen the mass of the French army moving from Sombref along the high road to Quatre Bras. But once was the allied retreat molested. One attempt the French lancers made on the 7th hussars as they covered the retreat, and soon proved that light sabres were no match for long lances But the first Life-guards were close at hand, and one dashing charge from that regiment rolled the lancers over and over, and prevented any further annoyance to the retreating troops

CHAPTER II.

WATERLOO.

JUNE 18, 1815.

The positions of Waterloo and La Belle Alliance.—The Prussians at Wavre —Awful state of the weather —Commencement of the battle.—Hougomont.—Attack on the British left.—Death of Picton —Charge of the heavy cavalry.—Attacks on La Haye Sainte—its capture.—The French cavalry and the allied squares —Advance of Prussians.—Preparations for grand attempt.—The fall of the Imperial Guard.—The battle lost and won.—The march on Paris, and the rewards of the victors.

WEARIED and wet, for the rain had fallen incessantly during the retreat, the allies reached their new position, and bivouacked on the soaking ground. Assured by Blucher, with whom he communicated through Ohain, that he would join him on the field of Waterloo, Wellington prepared to take his stand on the ridge that runs across the high Brussels road in front of Mont St. Jean and the village whence the battle has derived its name. His left extended as far as La Haye towards Ohain, and was defended along its entire extent by a precipitous bank. In the centre the farm-house of La Haye Sainte formed an advanced post on the high road, from which his line ran to the front of the ridge opposite Hougomont, where the hills suddenly bend back at right angles towards the wood of Soignies. Along this ridge as far as Merke Braine his right extended, whilst in the valley the Chateau, garden, and wood of Hougomont formed an important post at the angle. Such was the position occupied by the allies, in which the range of the hills afforded good ground for a defensive struggle, and an excellent position for their admirable artillery, whilst the crest of the line, and a hollow road that ran behind the greater part of it, pre-

sented a considerable defence for the troops from the driving cannonade from the opposite hills, on which the French were assembling. But 1200 yards of valley separated the English position from the ridge on which the French lay with their extreme right at Frischermont, their centre in front of Planchenoit, and their left coming round behind Hougomont to the end of the ridge towards Braine La Leude.

On this small field, the last battle of twenty-two years of war was to be decided, between forces of nearly equal numbers, arranged under the two masters of the art. Napoleon had in hand 80,000 good troops, all of one nation, mostly veterans, and aided by 250 guns. Wellington could array in line nearly 73,000 men, of whom 40,000 were British, not the veterans of the Peninsula, for they had fallen ingloriously in America, but chiefly 2nd battalions of new troops, as well drilled as the practice could make them, but utterly ignorant of the real face of war. Besides these he had 16,000 good Hanoverian and Brunswick troops, a few thousand Dutch soldiers, 15,000 or 16,000 Belgian troops, on whom hardly any dependence could be placed except on parade. The allied artillery was numerous, but still nearly 100 pieces less than that of their opponents. But Wellington calculated on the arrival of Blucher on his extreme left, and had but to maintain his position until the Prussian arrival to ensure a decisive victory. The Prussian marshal had promised to be on the field by one o'clock, moving by Ohain and St. Lambert, so as to strengthen the British left and menace the right flank and rear of the French by Frischermont and Planchenoit Between Wavre and the allied left the distance was some fourteen miles, and patrols kept up the communication with the Prussians through Ohain, but the ground was covered with wood and exceedingly rugged, and the tempestuous weather had rendered the highways all but impassable.

The English position extended rather less than two miles. Its centre, composed of the Prince of Orange's brigade, supported by the contingents of Brunswick and Nassau, stood between the Charleroi and Nivelles road; its left under Picton, reached to Ter la Haye; whilst its

right under Hill was thrown back towards Merke Braine, and communicated with a small detached corps that watched the road to Halle. In front of the left centre the German rifles held the farm-house of La Haye Sainte, and opposite the right centre the chateau, garden, and wood of Hougomont were occupied by Byng's brigade of guards and a detachment of Brunswickers. Ranged in two lines, the allied infantry held the crest of the ridge, with their artillery in front sweeping the rising slope, and their cavalry, still above 7,000 strong, stood in masses in the rear. Hougomont was the key of the Duke's position;

so long as that was held his right was unassailable. Comprising a small Flemish chateau, with its chapel and old tower, its offices, farm-yard, walled garden and orchard, it occupied more than four acres, besides a beech-wood of some extent that skirted it. Every means that time would permit had been taken to strengthen this position, by raising scaffolds behind the walls so as to allow the men to fire over the coping, whilst another line commanded the approaches through numerous loopholes, and

felled trees laid crossways rendered the access yet more difficult, and open to the fire of the garrison.

Fearful had been the evening and night of the 17th. The rain had fallen in torrents, the thunder pealed incessantly, and the wind swept away from the bivouacs every attempt at a camp-fire. With the morning—the Sunday morning—the weather began to lighten, at nine the sun came forth, fires glittered on the opposite heights, and a rapid and irregular discharge told how the men were drying their muskets and preparing for the approaching combat. At daybreak the Duke had been on the field, visited Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, and seen that each regiment was at its appointed station. Already assured of the co-operation of Blucher, the Duke's quick eye had recognized the Prussian cavalry collecting on the Waterloo side of the defile of St. Lambert, at least an hour before the battle began. It was just upon eleven when a single gun from the French centre gave the signal for the action, and several massive columns were seen descending the French heights and gathering round Hougomont.

With rapid steps, and covered by a tremendous cannonade from the French guns on the heights above, 6000 men descended from the left, and swarmed round Hougomont. Every bush and every tree was contested, but still the defenders fell back, when thirty guns from the British ridge arrested the progress of the French. More artillery came up from the French, and more troops poured down to aid in the attack, and gradually the wood and orchard were taken, and the guards fell back to the garden wall and the old chateau. Before the fire that there met them even the French veterans recoiled, and a bold push again wrested from them the much contested orchard; faster and faster flew the shot from the French heights, whilst shells fell on the building and soon laid more than half the chateau in ashes. But still the British held the remnant of their post. At one critical moment the French entered the court, and, in a moment, the gallant fellows were bayonetted or captured, and Colonel Macdonell, the giant of his regiment, with main strength dashed to its heavy gates in the face of the advancing enemy. From that

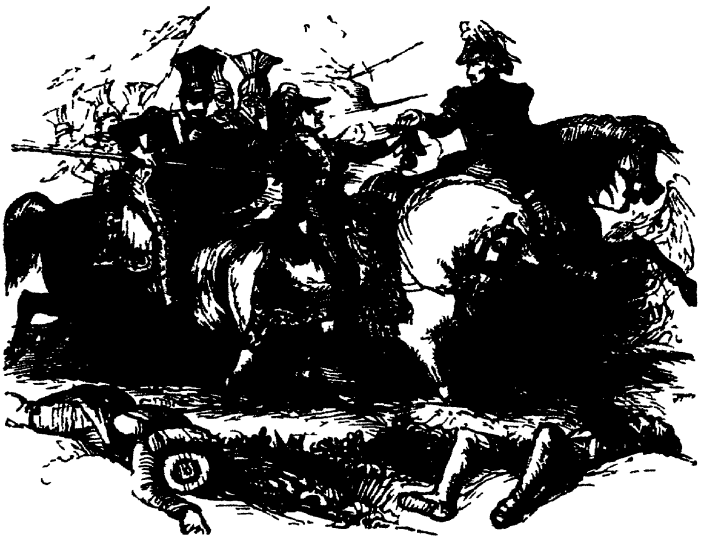
time the attacks became less and less effective, and until the close of the battle, Hougomont was held by the allies.

But before this, the tide of battle surged away to the British left, and 20,000 men, headed by the hero of the Russian campaign, the gallant Ney, advanced against La Haye Sainte and the line to its left. It was about two o'clock, or perhaps a little earlier, when the dense masses of D'Erlon's brigades were seen moving in columns, and thus launching 18,000 men, comprising the best cavalry of the army, supported by the fire of seventy guns, against the entire allied left, between the Charleroi road and Ter La Haye. On the extreme left of the allies the nature of the ground so materially aided the efforts of Prince Edward of Saxe Weimar's brigade in the defence of Papellotte and La Haye, that the extreme right column of the French made little progress, whilst that on the extreme left of the enemy, moving into the Charleroi road, drove in the defenders of La Haye Sainte, and for a time confined them to the walls and inner garden of the farm. In the face of a fearful cannonade, Ney's central columns pressed onwards, and rapidly mounted the allied slope immediately in front of Byladt's brigade of Belgian troops. Never counting much on these men, Picton had determined that they should have a taste of the battle, and was more disgusted than surprised when he found them break up and disperse on the first approach of the French. With the utmost difficulty Picton restrained his men from receiving the fugitives on their bayonets, and then rapidly forming the remnants of Kempt's and Pack's brigades, little more than 3000 men, he awaited the charge of the French column, The close and biting fire of the British line arrested the progress of the French column, and staggered its leading files. In vain it tried to deploy under the fire, until Picton marked the opportunity, called on his men to charge, dashed on at the head of his gallant division, and fell dead at the very moment when the French column reeled and fled down the slope it had so gallantly ascended. Not less ill-fated was the other column to its left, or the gallant cavalry that swarmed up the Genappe causeway. Onward now through the intervals of the victorious infantry came the heavy cavalry, piercing the wavering masses

through and through, riding down by main force the cavalry that sought to cover their foot soldiers, and in a

few moments sabering hundreds, dispersing entire columns, and capturing 2000 prisoners and two eagles. Maddened with success, and disarrayed by their pursuit, the British horse swept onwards towards the French position, dashed among the batteries of d'Erlon's troops, carried them without a moment's delay, and rendered thirty guns useless for the remainder of the fearful conflict. Again they dashed on, swept irresistibly through another battery, and disordered and fatigued, fell an easy conquest to fresh squadrons of dragoons and lancers that now charged them from the French line. Thus attacked, the cavalry retired as they best could to their own lines, suffering far more in the retreat than in the fiercest charges during their onward progress. In this retreat fell the gallant Ponsonby, pierced through and through by a Polish lancer, as he vainly strove to disengage his charger from a miry field. Great as was the loss, far greater was the gain; the *prestige* of the French forces was broken, the eagle of the 45th regiment whose banner bore the names of Jena, Austerlitz, Wagram, Eylau, and Friedland — the famous invincible — was

among the trophies, and the allied left was freed for the day from further danger.



Foiled in his attempt on the allied left, Napoleon prepared a general cavalry attack on the centre of the allied line, supporting this movement with renewed efforts on the burning buildings of Hougomont, and the German garrison of La Haye Sainte. More and more continuous became the fire of the artillery as the cavalry formed in the hollows between Hougomont and the French slopes; and as the exact range had now been obtained, the loss was fearful, though the allied infantry were in some degree sheltered by the ridge behind which they lay on the ground. During this terrible conflict of artillery, Ney was mustering his squadrons, and soon forty squadrons of cavalry stood ready to charge. Of these more than half were Milhaud's famous cuirassiers, and glittering in their steel breastplates and black horse-hair crested helmets, they presented an unequalled array of gallant horsemen. Formed in a double line of squares, with the remnants of their cavalry in the rear, the allies awaited the coming storm.

It was full four o'clock when the cessation of the French batteries marked the near approach of their cavalry, and the helmets of the cuirassiers were seen mounting the allied slopes, though constantly torn and shattered by their artillery. Nearer and nearer came that noble band, until, when within forty yards of the allied line, one awful and last discharge from the guns tore them through and through, and broke their order, but shook not their courage. In a moment they were among our guns, but the gunners were safe inside the squares or lying down under the projecting bayonets of the front lines. For a moment there was a silence, and not a shot was fired; with the front ranks kneeling, the second at the charge, and the rest aiming over the shoulders of the second line, the squares stood silently. Elated at the capture of the guns, the cuirassiers raised one loud cheer and dashed up to the faces of the squares. With the command to fire, the leading files of horsemen fell or recoiled, and the line went surging between the squares, flanked by the fire of their sides, and faced by that of the inner line of squares. Rapidly weakened by the fire, and disordered, they fell an easy conquest to the British cavalry, and in one mass were swept from the ridge, and torn through and through by the grape which the artillerymen poured on them from their recovered guns. Again and again were the charges repeated, but with equally ineffectual results, until at length the broken squadrons retreated to their own position, and the contest on all points returned to a distant cannonade.

Determined at all hazards to break the allied right centre, seven and thirty squadrons more, chiefly of Kellerman's heavy cavalry, were ordered to support Ney, and aid in sweeping the allies from the ridge. Preceded as before by the severest fire of artillery, the glittering masses swept up the ridge, again and again dashed at the squares, cut at the bayonets with their long swords in useless rage, and, as the Duke expressed it, "walked about among the infantry squares as if they had been their own;" until the time came for the usual cavalry charge, and the usual sweeping of the enormous masses down the blood-stained slopes.

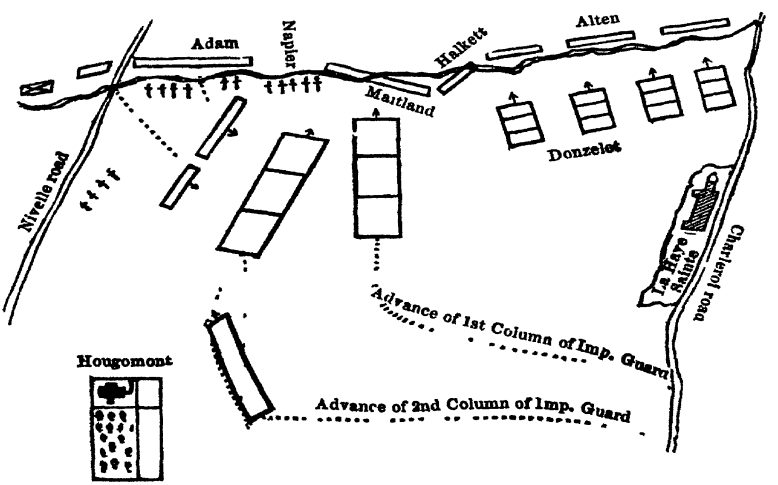
Whilst for hours these fruitless attacks were made on the British right centre, until at last they began to be re-

garded with delight, as for a time stopping the driving fire of the French batteries, Ney's infantry had gathered closer and closer round La Haye Sainte, and the 400 German riflemen that still held that important outpost. Unable to spare a man to their aid, or even to convey to them ammunition, as the only access to their little fortress was commanded by the French batteries, Wellington saw with sorrow their gallant defence and equally bold retreat, when the house became no longer tenable. The loss of this post caused constant annoyance to the British centre, as it enabled the French columns to attack from under cover, and it required the strongest efforts of the Duke to preserve his line at that point.

The crisis of the battle was rapidly approaching. Already Wellington had called in his corps from the extreme right, and brought them forward towards Hougomont, placing Adam's brigade of Guards on his extreme right, and calling up Chassé's Dutch troops to strengthen that part of his position. The Prussians, too, were nearing the scene of action, and already threatening the French right at Frischermont. But the old guard were moved against them, and for a time they made little progress, until new corps came into action, and not only Frischermont was taken, but the guard driven back to the lanes and streets of Planchenoit. Though menaced at Wavre by the corps of Grouchy, Blucher, true to his promise, had left Thielman with 20,000 men to maintain the post of Wavre till the last moment, whilst with the rest of his forces he pushed forward through St. Lambert, struggling with bad roads and a wooded country, and thus retarded by many hours in his expected junction with the British left. On the extreme left of the allies a small Prussian corps was coming into line, a dismounted battery was already replaced by a fresh Prussian one; and Vivian and Vandeleur's brigades of cavalry enabled to be spared and sent to support the thin single line that now represented the allied cavalry brigades of the centre. It was not until nearly seven o'clock that the Prussians appeared in force upon the field, and were able to drive back the guard from the village of Planchenoit. But before that, Napoleon had felt that their entire force was rapidly moving upon him, and that in

spite of the wretched roads, he would have their powerful battalions on his flank and rear with disastrous effect, unless he could previously drive back the British right from their position above Hougomont.

Sending the young guard into Planchenoit to resist the renewed attacks of the Prussians, and leaving four battalions of the old guard as his last and only reserve near La Belle Alliance, Napoleon formed his middle guard into two dense columns, and leading them himself as far as the hollow near La Haye Sainte, sent them against the British right, whilst Reille's remnants streamed down about Hougomont, and Donzelot renewed his attacks from La Haye Sainte on the allied centre With loud cries of Vive l'Empereur these veterans moved up the Charleroi road, and then turning to their left the leading columns began to ascend the slope immediately behind which Maitland's



brigade of guards was lying down in four lines, whilst the second column, verging nearer to the enclosures of Hougomont, directed their course towards the front of Adam's brigade. From the moment that it left the hollow of the road the leading column was ceaselessly torn by the concentrated fire of the batteries of the British right wing,

and officers and men fell quickly beneath the driving iron shower. Still the dense column bore onwards, and even the grape from Napier's battery at little more than forty yards distance did not arrest its march. At length the crest of the ridge was gained, and save a few mounted officers, among whom was the Duke himself, visible behind the smoke of Napier's battery, not an opponent shewed himself in front of their column. Onwards the column pressed, when suddenly, at about fifty paces in their front, four lines of men sprang as from the earth, and a close and withering fire suddenly stretched 300 of their bravest men on the ground. It was Maitland's guards; concealed in the unpaved country road that ran along the whole position, they had waited until a few magic words from the Duke bade them rise and face the enemy. Staggered by the fire, and yet not dismayed, the veterans of the guard again and again tried to deploy and return the fire of the guards. Company after company melted away in the attempt, confusion became prevalent, the charge was ordered, and springing forwards to Lord Saltoun's cry of "Now's the time, my boys," the guards dashed on with the bayonet, and the huge mass reeled down the slope in confusion.

But the second column was close at hand, and the guards were rapidly brought back to their old position lest they should be taken in flank by it during their pursuit of the leading column. Originally directed against Adam's position, this column had suddenly bent more to the right, and now came on against the face of Napier's battery and the right of Maitland's guards. The error was seen and taken advantage of. Rapidly Adam's brigade was ordered to bring their right shoulders forward, and advance parallel to the flank of the column. The effect was irresistible; torn by Napier's guns in front, lapped on their right flank by Maitland's fire, and with their entire left side exposed to the musketry of Adam's brigade, to and fro the great column swayed, and many a noble attempt was made to press onward, and reply to the desolating storm. But when to the stream of musketry the glittering bayonet succeeded, breaking into the wildest confusion, the second column shared the fate of the first,

even broke into greater confusion, and with a severer loss went headlong down the allied slope.

From that moment the battle was lost. For onward now went Adam's brigade after its beaten foes, whilst on its right Vivian galloped down with his cavalry and broke in upon the few reserves that still stood firm about La Belle Alliance. The guard was broken; those troops never before defeated, and never called into action but to decide the battle. The effect was immediate among the other French troops; already they began to waver; when at a word every unhurt man sprang over the allied ridge, and 50,000 men went streaming into the valley in all the pride and power of victory. From every side the allies drew closer and closer around the French position. Many bold stands were attempted, but it was in vain, and did but increase the loss already suffered. Nobly indeed the veterans of the old guard stood their ground, but encumbered with thousands of fugitives, and pressed on all sides by victorious opponents, they were constrained to fly and add their numbers to the crowd that now pressed in confusion along the Charleroi road. Just beyond La Belle Alliance Wellington and Blucher met, and from that time the pursuit was resigned to the less fatigued troops of the Prussians, who had at length driven their opponents from Planchenoit and forced them back on the Charleroi causeway.

That so great, so fearful a contest should have been maintained at a great loss of life and limb no one can wonder. In the allied army two men out of every eleven had suffered, and not less than 5,000 had been killed and wounded in the Prussian army. And when the conduct of the Belgian troops is borne in mind, the majority of whom fled from the range of fire, the comparative severity of the loss is greatly increased, and it becomes a matter of astonishment that human beings endured so long such a desolating fire. Among the officers and especially among the staff the loss was awful. Towards the close of the battle the Duke had but one left by whom to convey his orders, a Piedmontese officer of the name of De Salis. Never was a victory more complete. The road of retreat resembled the sea-shore after some great shipwreck, and so great was

the panic, that men who had all that day dared death at the cannon's mouth, now fled in hundreds at the sight of ten, and begged pardon with an abject fear that would have stamped them as cowards had not the bodies of their comrades on the field borne witness to their bravery.

On the effect of this defeat it is needless to enlarge. So rapid was Napoleon's flight from the field, that he brought the first authentic intelligence of his own defeat to Paris. Every attempt to palliate the late defeat, and to obtain powers for the creation of a new army were met with strenuous opposition, and after a short and vain struggle with all parties, and an attempt to obtain the recognition of his son, he abdicated his throne, and soon after took refuge on board an English frigate, preferring to trust to the most pertinacious of his enemies, to running the risk of falling into the hands of the now excited populace, or his exasperated continental opponents. The escape from Elba had taught the allies a severe lesson, and the barren and sea-girt rock of St. Helena now received its illustrious prisoner.

The march to Paris was now unopposed, and rapidly by almost parallel roads the victorious armies passed through the French territory. Along the Prussian route, every peasant hurried away from the approaching troops, well aware how long a score of cruelties and insults that nation had to revenge on their now humbled foes On the English route not a village nor a house was deserted; their moderation in the south of France was remembered, and the humanity of the troops not less than the stern discipline of their commanders confided in, and with reason. Thus marched the British army through a conquered country as peaceably as through the fields of their own land, always as well and as readily supplied as at home, and often as cordially received as by a friendly nation. At Paris some slight resistance for a time delayed the fall of the capital, and produced a momentary collision between the remnants of the French forces and the Prussian troops. But the folly of resistance soon became evident, the voluntary abdication of Napoleon freed the people from their latest pledges, and a military convention gave up Paris to the English and Prussian armies, and

secured the lives of its inhabitants, and the monuments and property of the capital. On the 6th of July the allies entered Paris. The Prussians burned to revenge the loss at Jena, and the occupation of their country; the destruction of the bridge by which that battle was commemorated, and the imposition of a heavy contribution on the Parisians were proposed, when the Duke's stern yet friendly interference compelled the observance of the terms of the convention, and confined the acts of the allies to the recovery of the various pictures and trophies which Napoleon had torn from their museums and galleries, and with which the walls of the Louvre were covered and the public buildings decorated.

The transports with which the news of the victory was received in Brussels and London were enhanced by the many evil reports of defeat and loss that had prevailed during the few previous days. In the Belgian capital the constant arrival of the wounded, and the frequent appearance of Belgian runaways spreading the worst reports, filled the inhabitants with the utmost anxiety, and led many to prepare for flight and hasten to convey their most valuable effects to a more distant place. At length the truth became known, and the joy became the greater from the previous terror. More and more wounded poured into the streets of Brussels. But no longer in fear of the French approach, every inhabitant, from highest to lowest, devoted their time, their strength, and their resources, to alleviate the sufferings of their gallant protectors. In England the excitement was at its height. On the 20th of June Sir Maurice Fitzgerald, the Knight of Kerry, by chance a traveller near the scene of action, had hastened to England and brought to the ministry the news to the midday of the great battle, and the firm belief of the Duke that his defences would be successful. Two days after the Duke's dispatch brought the welcome news. Bonaparte's army was dispersed only twelve guns of all his number left to him, and the allies in full march on his capital.

So completely had the previous actions of the great Duke exhausted the rewards of the crown, that nothing remained to be given to him by the fountain of honour. But the country could still express their grateful thanks, and sup-

port that expression by such gifts as marked their sense of his and his comrades' services. To the Duke himself, 200,000*l.* were voted to purchase an estate that might commemorate the last scene of his military triumphs. To the glorious dead, the lamented Picton, the lamented Ponsonby, national monuments were raised. And whilst the crown with a liberal hand distributed the stars and ribbons of the military orders among the surviving officers, the country commemorated every man's services with a medal to record the great day, and every man counted that day, henceforth as two year's service, whether for his discharge, his pension, or his pay.

Thirty-one years have elapsed since that last of the great man's great triumphs was fought. "Never," said he, "have I seen such a battle, never may I see such another;" his prayer has been heard. Age has now blanched his hair, age has stamped its character on his features and his form, but he still lives to feel thankful for that awful day as the peace-maker of Europe, and daily to receive the increased respect and admiration of his countrymen and the world. Of all the great men who shared in the contests which have been here sketched, Soult and Wellington alone remain. Since the day that they met at Toulouse and at Waterloo they have met in amity and [illegible] in this country. Full of admiration of one another, they were seen together in public, the common object of attraction and applause, and it was with no false welcome that an English multitude hailed with delight the great warrior of their enemies, who had fought the best fight with their own conquering hero. The military career of the great Duke is now closed. A summary of his character is needless, for every occasion of his life developes some characteristic of his mind.

THE END.

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